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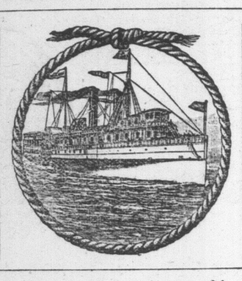

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Poetry.

The Thread of Life.

Years of the past, when youth and bloom and beauty
Flashed from the roseate sky,
Your flowers are growing old, your blossoms fruity
And falling off to die!

O, radiant scenes from life's fair landscape banished,
Vain was your transient light!
As ships upon the ocean so ye vanished
And sailed into the night!

Yet, Time has borne us bravely on our journey,
Till yonder looms the end!
As champions of old we wage the journey
Where'er our fortunes trend!

Though some have fallen in the mad arena,
Many are battling still!
Slowly we climb the summit of the scena
To hasten down the hill!

But 'mid the labyrinth of wild confusion,
A strenuous force we feel
Throughout the tumult to its dire conclusion,
The thread from Clotho's reel.

A silken cord that leads us to Love's fountain!
A rope to draw the plow!
A cable to ascend Ambition's mountain!
A band about the brow!

The line of destiny our fate is guiding
Along the winding stream!
As o'er the tide our argosies are gliding,
Their freight a fleeting dream.

Years that are gone, we miss ye and we mourn ye,
Gardens where roses grow!
Wreaths of the past with withered leaves adorn ye;
Your buds but sadly blow!

Years yet to come we welcome and adore ye!
Fresh are the fields we see!
Visions of glory deck the skies before ye!
Strange skein of destiny!

— *David Graham Adee.*

Select Literature.

Her Vocation;

OR

BETWEEN TWO FIRES.

BY ELLA CHEEVER THAYER.

For a moment Theresa had a frantic impulse to rush to him, throw her arms about his neck, and tell him she would give up anything for his sake, rather than have the slightest shadow betwen them. Pride and a sense of injustice, however, prevented her. He would be sorry enough after she had gone, and she must steel her heart to leaving him like this.

Her aunt was very curious to know why Malcolm "had not been around," and Theresa had been obliged to admit there had been a little misunderstanding. She managed, however, to conceal her distress from those prying eyes, but she cried and sobbed convulsively in Mrs. Greenough's little parlor, to which she fled for refuge.

'Really, my dear child, you must not go on like this, or you will spoil your voice,' Mrs. Greenough said, putting her arm about her consolingly. 'It will come out all right. *I* know what men are, my dear. Malcolm will repent soon enough, and make all the better husband for learning that he cannot have his own way in everything. I will see to it that he knows where to find you when he wishes, if you keep me informed of your movements. Think of the success you are going to earn—and not of his ridiculous assumption of authority.'

With such comfort Theresa was obliged to go and meet the new experiences for which she had longed. Yet her heart felt as if a heavy weight of pain rested on it, when the next morning the train steamed out of the depot, and she knew she had gone—away from the sound of his voice, from his love. She had hoped to the last that he would come repentantly to see her off, but he had remained obdurate.

Perhaps the unhappy circumstances under which she left home made her turn with added zest for relief to the life of comparative excitement into which her life had merged. There were no dishes to wash now, but rehearsals that were only a pastime; no fault-finding ringing contin ually in her ears in her aunt's querulous tones, but the appreciative encores of audiences with whom her youth and prettiness and grace, added to the sweetness of her voice, made her a favorite. There were new acquaintances and new scenes, for the Bertram Concert Company only remained one night in a place; there was a new and ardent admirer in the form of the tenor, whose hair was very black and curly, whose mustache curved up daintily at the ends, and whose cheeks were almost suspiciously pink; but with all she realized the void left by Malcolm could not be filled.

Yet she found the draught she was drinking so intoxicating, notwithstanding the loss it had entailed upon her, that she had no need to question as to what was and what was not her vocation, as she had to Malcolm. For what could she possibly be better fitted than to sing her way on and up, receiving nightly homage; and seeing through the vista opening before her the adulation which the world gives to those who win its favor by its songs. She buoyed herself up, too, by the belief that her estrangement with Malcolm was only temporary, and pictured the joy of their union when he had gained wealth, and she fame.

Mrs. Greenough's letters were expected more and more anxiously as the time went on and the message longed for did not come, but they were ever a recurring disappointment.

'My dear Theresa, a man so obstinate and predjudiced would not fail to be very uncomfortable to live with,' the music-teacher wrote at last. 'Twice I have given him very strong hints as to my willingness to help bridge the gulf between him and you, but he received them with look so freezing that it was enough to ruin my voice—what there is left of it. He has changed very much, is pale and quiet, and not near as handsome as he used to be. The best thing you can do is to marry that fascinating tenor, and forget there is such a person as Malcolm Wentworth.'

It was on a sombre afternoon in a small town which did not need a storm of sleet and snow to make it seem gloomy and dreary that Theresa read these lines from her sincere but injudicious friend.

Forget Malcolm Wentworth! A shudder went over her, and such a feeling of desolation went over her as she had never known before. Forget Malcolm! What could success or fame or anything in the world be worth without him?

The tenor looked in at the parlor door, and perceiving her, entered the room, his full red lips parting in a smile.

'Our soprano has a serious look. Will she not favor her adorer with a welcome?' he asked, then warbled sentimentally:

"For neither bolts nor bars can part
My own true love from me."

Theresa rose impatiently. However much she might be entranced by his high notes, his conversation bored her. In her present state of mind his presence was intolerable. Marry him, indeed, with his effeminate complexion and white hands, and unapproachable vanity—marry him when there was such a man as Malcolm in the world! Mrs. Greenough had no business to think of such a thing.

'I must go and write some letters home before supper,' she said, and hurried away to the privacy of her own room.

Now at last regret and self-reproach began to haunt her. If Malcolm was ill and changed, it was because she had made him suffer. He had not had the help of change and excitement during their separation, but had been obliged to remain among the old scenes where she had shared his hopes and disappointments always until now, and to take up the work alone, which he had expected was to give him his wife as its reward. She was able to understand now how she had hurt him. Ah yes! she was much to blame. If only she had not given him reason to believe she loved something else more than she loved him!

For a week there was a struggle in her breast from which she had no respite. But it finally resolved itself into the determination to give up anything—sacrifice anything, rather than lose Malcolm's love. Her better self and love had conquered, and a peace of mind followed which she had not known since leaving Malcolm that night by the stile. She was no longer between two fires.

She would write and tell him she would do whatever he wished; that she was sorry that she had so disappointed him, and that nothing could make her happy as long as there was a cloud between them. She had been wrong to think that they had better work apart—hereafter she would be content if only they were together.

But this contrite epistle was destined to be nothing more than an intention. Before she had written a line one of Mrs. Eaton's rare communications reached her, and there was in it what changed everything.

'Folks here say you have mittened Malcolm Wentworth, and are going to marry one of those singer fellows,' wrote Mrs. Eaton, after a page of complaints about the children and household matters. 'But I guess you will be sorry enough now, for Malcolm's rich cousin is dead, and has left him all his money. There's a big pile of it, folks say. If I were you, I'd try and get him back. He had to leave town in a hurry, and it ain't thought that he is likely to come here to live any more. I can find out his address for you, if you want it.'

'Get him back!'

A sob that was like a groan of utter despair broke from Theresa's lips. Then she sat still and white, her eyes staring tearlessly and hopelessly into vacancy.

For she realized that now indeed there was no going back; that his wealth had placed a barrier between them more insurmountable than all that had gone before. She could not write to him now—he would not know, he would believe that it had been prompted by his changed circumstances; and he—could she hope that he would ask her, who had scorned to share his poverty, to come to him for the bribe of his money? Never until now had the possibility of their separation being a final one presented itself. To see, in imagination, the desolate years stretching on and on without Malcolm, was to suffer something more terrible than death. What a mockery the applause which had been so pleasant to her ambition and vanity seemed, as she thought of it now,—now when there was nothing else to look forward to! She must indeed abide by the choice which she had made, which she had not intended should be a final choice at all. How bitter was her punishment for holding his love too lightly.

From this time there was a change in Theresa which her associates could not fail to notice. She was no longer the enthusiastic, bright-faced girl who had been so ready to enjoy the freshness of her new experiences, but was subdued and sad, and too preoccupied to even notice the comment she was causing. Mr. Bertram, a kindly but extremely practical man, thought that travelling so much had affected her digestion. The contralto, a very stout lady who was jealous of her slimness, hoped she was in danger of losing her voice. The basso, and his wife, the pianist of the party, and the lady who was billed as 'The World Celebrated Elocutionist,' were inclined to agree that she had fallen a victim to the fascinations of the tenor. This gentleman himself had no doubts on subject at all, and Theresa found herself the recipient of attentions and flatteries which jarred upon her feelings continually; although sometimes, in moments when despair made her reckless, she would ask herself if she should not make the mockery of her fate complete by marrying this man, and so riveting more firmly the links of the life Malcolm had thought she preferred to one by his side. How she hated the necklace now which, some way, seemed to have begun all her troubles!

As time went on, however, such poor comfort as she was able to take from the ambitious hopes which were all that was left her was denied to the clearer understanding which experience brought. For the knowledge came to her slowly but surely, that the voice on which she had based her anticipations did not warrant them; that it was hardly more than mediocre; and that even had it been of greater compass, years of cultivation would have been necessary in order to qualify herself herself for the success into which she had so foolishly fancied she could jump at a bound. It was a long way from Bertram's Concert Company to Grand Opera, and she realized her inability to climb very far up that steep ascent. There was one thing in this mistaken past—the past which already seemed such a long way behind her—for which she could be thankful, she thought, sadly. It was that, although he might never know it, she had been willing to give up everything for Malcolm before her illusions fell in ruins about her life.

Perhaps Theresa was disposed now to undervalue, as she had formerly, in the egotism of youth, overrated her musical ability. Certainly she was a favorite with the not too critical audiences in those small towns through which the company made their way, with such success, as it proved, that after filling their engagements in New England, they were able to round out a prosperous season in New York and Pennyslvania.

They were traveling through the oil regions, in the latter State, when they found themselves in a place so much larger and wealthier than those in which they were accustomed to sing that there was a prevailing nervousness about the impression they would be able to make. Theresa alone was calm. It did not seem to her as if anything mattered now.

It was she who won the first applause of the evening. The tenor had sung false, a fact which he attributed to his having fallen a victim to the charms of a very pretty dark-eyed woman, conspicuous in the front row of the audience. But this, perhaps, was said to excite Theresa's jealousy, for her recent coldness had piqued his vanity beyond endurance. It was after their duett together that he found a chance to thrust this dagger into her breast, as he expressed it to himself.

Watching her as she stepped on the platform immediately afterwards, for her solo, he felt that his aim had been true. For her glance had gone directly towards the pretty stranger, and she had grown pale as death. The pianist stopped, confused and astonished at her failure to commence her song at the proper time, and the contralto thought, with a thrill of elation, that she was going to break down at last.

But only Theresa knew why the color had faded from her cheeks, why her limbs trembled, why her lips refused to sing; only she knew that it was the sight of Malcolm Wentworth sitting in the previously vacant seat beside that beautiful woman, who was smiling at him, which had been responsible for all.

There was a stir of surprise among the audience. Then Malcolm looked up, and their eyes met. Suddenly the blood returned in a rush of crimson to her cheeks; she drew herself up straight and still; and, to the utter discomfiture of the pianist and astonishment of every one, she began to sing a plaintive love-ballad, instead of the operatic selection put down on the programme.

It was one that she had often sung to Malcolm in days that had gone, but never as she sang it now. The listeners were hushed and thrilled, carried out of themselves by the intensity of feeling that rang out in the music of her voice, in the passion and magnetism of her words. Could she have sung like that always, she might indeed have become the great artist of whom she had dreamed.

All that she had suffered, all that she had lost, seemed to be speaking and bearing her away from all knowledge of anything else, except that it was into Malcolm's eyes that she was gazing, to Malcolm that she was singing. With a pathos that went to the heart of every one who heard, her voice died in the last words of the song, '*Why should we ever parted be?*'

At the same moment that which had sustained her vanished, leaving her dizzy ahd weak. Before the audience had had recovered from the spell in which she had held them she had turned away and was gone from sight. Then as such applause as a member of the Bertram Concert Company had never evoked shook the house, she was compelled to go back and bow in response. But she did not glance at Malcolm, and refusing the encore, staggered into the dressing-room.

'You have surpassed yourself—it was great!' the tenor exclaimed, meeting her. 'But what a very odd thing it was to change your song like that. How pale you are! I am sure you are ill. Come—come—you needn't feel so bad over my admiration of that pretty woman. I have been asking one of the lyceum committee about her. She's married—a Mrs. Wentworth—and I suppose the good-looking fellow by her side is her husband, so there is no chance for me, even if I did not think *you* so adorable.'

Theresa had caught at the door of the dressing-room for support. Only one part of this speech had reached her comprehension, and that was a death-blow to her last hope. For in that moment she realized that hope had never wholly died until then; there had lived a spark to which she had clung.

'Married!' she moaned. 'Married!'

Her companion stared.

'What is the matter?' he questioned. 'You look and act very strangely. They are calling you—you must go back and sing again.'

Bewildered, but still attributing her excitement to jealousy, he said, soothingly:

'Be calm, for you need not fear a rival. Of all those who have loved me, you are the only one I ever really cared enough for to ask to marry me.'

She tore herself away from his detaining hand.

'*You!*' she exclaimed. 'Do you suppose I have a single thought for you, when you have just told me that the only man I ever loved was married—married to another woman? Let me go—I tell you I shall not sing again to-night. Mr. Bertram must make some excuse—I am ill—I must have the air, or I shall go mad.'

With this she rushed into the dressing-room and shut the door upon him. Confounded by her words and manner, he yet comprehended them sufficiently to understand how much he had been misled by his own egotism.

He turned away angrily, and though obliged to quiet the clamor of the audience as best he could by singing in her place, he found a consolation for all in the thought that it was from him she had heard of the marriage of the one whom, it seemed, she loved.

Theresa, too much overpowered to think of consequences, seized her cloak, and made her way by a rear door, unobserved, to the street. The cold, clear air blew upon her hot head, allaying a little of its fever. Where she went she did not know, or care, but wandered on, and on, regardless of the darkness; of the snow over which her light blue silk dress trailed; of the need of her presence in the concluding part of the of the concert; regardless of everything except the cruel pain of the knowledge that Malcolm had forgotten her so soon—O so soon!

How far she had gone she had no means of finding out, when at last she was brought to a sudden stop by perceiving her further progress was barred by a great house looming up through the obscurity beyond. Looking around in a dazed way, she presently became conscious that she had come up the broad avenue of private grounds. Where was she, she could see no lights anywhere. In what direction had she come? As she stood, irresolute, with a sense of desolation seeming to surround her like a pall, she heard the sound of a footstep coming nearing and nearer along the avenue. It was that of some one who lived here, undoubtedly. She must ask her way back to the hotel. What else could she do except go back—go back and bear life and its burdens as best she might. If only she had died here in the cold and darkness!

In her condition of mind it did not occur to her that the presence of a woman at such an hour, alone and in such a place, might require an explanation she could not give. But as a man's form became discernible she moved wearily towards it.

That the person approaching was startled by such an unexpected apparition coming through the obscurity with the rustle of a woman's skirts was apparent in his quick recoil. But recovering immediately, he asked:

'Who is there? What is it?'

At the sound of his voice Theresa stopped with a cry. Had she really gone mad during her wild, reckless walk? Was it the voice of a stranger speaking in those old familiar accents?'

'Is there anything the matter?' he questioned again, coming nearer.

'Malcolm?' she gasped out, then. 'Malcolm?'

He rushed to her side and caught her in his arms as she reeled backward, and bent his face close to hers, scanning it with an eagerness that was almost fierce.

'Theresa! It is Theresa!' he cried at length, brokenly. 'It is Theresa. Did you come—tell me—did you come to find me?'

She had rested in his embrace for a moment, forgetful of everything except the new life which seemed to flow through her chilled veins at the contact; of everything except the time when she had a right to lie like this, with her head upon his breast. But as she spoke remembrance re-awakened—she thought of their long separation—*of his wife*—and wrenched herself from his clasping arms.

'It is quite by accident—our meeting like this—' she said, incoherently. 'I lost my way. I supposed this was a public road, and spoke as to a stranger. I am feverish, I think—my head is dizzy—that was why I came out.'

Malcolm allowed her to withdraw and stand apart from him, although he saw she was trembling from head to foot. But his tone was intense with suppressed emotion as he replied:

'They said you were ill when I went to find you after that song—that song which it seemed as if you were singing to me. The audience were greatly disappointed at not hearing you again, and I—I made bold to go to the hotel, but no one knew where you were. So finding you here, at my home, I could not help hoping that you had come—as you had sung—to me.'

'But your wife—where did you leave her?' asked Theresa, painfully.

'My wife?' he ejaculated.

'You did not know that I had heard? O yes! They told me it was Mrs. Wentworth sitting beside you at the concert. I—I congratulate you, Malcolm. Now will you show me the way to the hotel?'

For a moment she did not speak. But as she would have passed him he caught her hand.

'Listen to me an instant, Theresa. I wanted to tell you to-night that I did not blame you, who could so thrill all those people with the power of your singing, for yielding to the longing which separated us. I have suffered enough to repent my obduracy, and should have told you so before this, if I had not heard from your aunt and Mrs. Greenough that you intended to marry a singer belonging to your company.'

'It was not true!' Theresa cried, vehemently. 'If they said so, it was from a mistaken idea. I have never cared for any one but you, Malcolm, and long before I learned my limitations I was ready to give up everything for your sake. But my determination to ask your forgiveness came too late. I heard how your fortunes had improved, and then—how could I hope you would not mistrust my motives? O Malcolm, it was indeed to you that I sang to-night. To no one but you could I sing like that. It is not I, it is you—*you*, who have forgotten, and found consolation in a new love.'

The words rang out passionately in the still night air. But when she would have pulled her hand away and left him, he held it firmly; and when he spoke there was no accent of sorrow in his tone.

'My darling, you, too, have been misled. Wait, dear, and do not struggle so to get away from me. The lady beside me to-night, who bears the same name as mine by a coincidence only, is a wife of a friend of my dead cousin. Tell me, dear love, was it because you made the mistake of thinking I could call any one except you by the sacred name of wife—was it because of this that you went wandering through the darkness—my poor darling?'

He had gathered her unresisting in his arms now, and her hot, weary head fell once more upon its old resting-place. He laid his cheek down against hers, whispering:

'You will sing for me always, Theresa?'

'Always,' she answered, winding her arms about his neck, and clinging to him with the fervor left by the despair which had gone. 'This, Malcolm—*this* is my vocation.'—*True Flag.*

[THE END.]

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Should have Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. It saves thousands of lives annually, and is peculiarly efficacious in **Croup, Whooping Cough, and Sore Throat.**

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A Gorilla on Board Ship.

A TROUBLESOME PASSENGER ON A VOYAGE FROM AFRICA TO BOSTON.

Capt. Sargent of the barque Margaret, which arrived at this port on Saturday from the east coast of Africa, had a very stormy passage. His vessel reached the harbor in a much battered condition, having passed through several very severe gales, and she was a long time overdue, so much so that it had been reported that she was lost. But the trouble which the captain suffered from the weather was very slight compared with that which his passengers gave him. Among them were 12 snakes, 400 cockatoos and parrots, an orang-outang, two small monkeys, two crocodiles and a gorilla, which he was bringing from Durban, Africa, to Austin & Stone's museum. There were some stowaways on the barque, too. They were rats, and they caused the death of all but four of the cockatoos and parrots by eating up all the corn that was provided for the food of the feathered passengers. Then the snakes, orang-outang, monkeys and crocodiles were killed in the most severe of the storms through which the Margaret passed, and when the vessel reached Boston, of all the animals intended for the entertainment and instruction of the patrons of the museum, there were left but the four cockatoos and the gorilla.

The captain says, however, that he could have enjoyed the voyage very well if it had not been for the gorilla, and it seemed almost a pity that this individual could not die. But he was made of too stern stuff to succumb to the fury of the elements. He seemed to thrive on it, and made life miserable for all on board, who were in constant fear lest he should escape and kill all hands. He was imprisoned in a stout wooden box just large enough to contain his 3½ feet of anatomy, and this box was strengthened on the outside by many bands of heavy strap iron, so arranged as to form a cage by themselves. The feats which his gorillaship performed with this box showed that the stories which travellers have told of the immense strength of these animals have not been exaggerated. He tore away great pieces of the wood, and wrenched the bars of iron from their strong fastenings so that several times he nearly effected his escape. One day he got possession of a large stick, two of the strongest sailors were unable to take it from him. At another time, when a negro sailor was passing by his cage, the beast's big black hand suddenly darted through the bars with the rapidity of lightning and buried itself in the poor darkey's wool, and it required strenuous efforts on the part of the whole crew to compel Mr. Gorilla to release his hold. The man whom he had been holding was almost killed by pain and fright. During the voyage there was a continued series of incidents like these, and Capt. Sargent was bound to get rid of his troublesome passenger as soon as possible. He was obliged to keep him over Sunday, but this morning he sent a note to Manager Stone of the museum, which read: 'Take your gorilla off my vessel before noon, or I shall shoot him.' Mr. Stone at once got a force of men and a dray and hurried to the wharf, and, after many hairbreadth escapes from annihilation on the part of those who helped handle the cage, the beast was finally landed in the museum, where he will be exhibited to-morrow forenoon.

—There are lost pieces of silver, aye, and of gold, which have long ago been missing from the Father's treasury, and are trampled under foot of man and beast alike—lives crowded so full of cruelty and penury and vice that though they are God's children, they themselves do not even dream it. But, if you can find them in the mire, if you will wash them with your tears, and burnish them back to brightness and beauty by your patient and loving touch, you will find on them the image of Him who made them and the superscription of His immortal children. Light the candle of your love, then, and sweep diligently till you find them.—*Bishop Potter.*

Make a Note of This.

Pain banished as if by magic. Polson's Nerviline is a positive and almost instantaneous remedy for external, internal or local pains. The most active remedy hitherto known falls far short of Nerviline for potent power in the relief of nerve pain. Good for external or internal use. Buy a 10 cent sample bottle. Large bottles 25 cents, at all druggists.

—A dozen feminine inspectors of customs at New York city have been removed. They examined the luggage of women who were passengers on the European steamers, and complaints were made that they examined non-dutiables too closely, and commented on them too much.

—Do to-day's duty, fight to-day's temptation; do not weaken and distract yourself by looking forward to things you cannot see, and could not understand if you saw them.—*Charles Kingsley.*

—Many of the school-houses of Dakota are now being provided with barrels of water, potatoes, beans, coffee and cooking utensils, and in case thirty or forty scholars are penned up by a blizzard for two or three days this winter there will be no danger of starvation.

If You Have a Cough,

Do not neglect it. It should be loosened as soon as possible, and to do this nothing excels Hagyard's Pectoral Balsam. Obstinate coughs yield at once to its expectorant, soothing and healing properties, while colds, hoarseness, whooping cough, asthma, etc., are promptly relieved by its perfect action on the throat and bronchial tubes.