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MY WIFE.

The following beautiful lines, written by the late Bishop Heber, were addressed to his wife while he was on an episcopal visit to his immense diocese in the East Indies:—

If thou wert by my side, my love,
How sweet would evening fall,
In green Bengala's palmy grove,
List'ning the nightingale.

If thou, my love, wert by my side
My babies at my knee,
How gladly would our pinnace glide,
O'er Gunga's troubled sea.

I miss thee at the dawning gray,
When, on our deck reclined,
In careless ease my limbs I lay,
And woo the cooling wind.

I miss thee when by Gunga's stream,
My twilight steps I guide,
But most beneath the lamp's pale beam,
I miss thee from my side.

I spread my books, my pencil try,
The lingering noon to cheer,
But miss thy kind, approving eye,
Thy meek, attentive ear.

But when at morn and eve the star,
Beholds me on my knee,
I feel, though thou art distant far,
Thy prayers ascend for me.

Then on! then on! where duty leads,
My course be onward still,
On broad Hindoستان's sultry meads,
O'er black Almorah's hills.

That course, nor Delhi's kingly gates,
Nor mild Mulwah detain,
For sweet the bliss us both awaits,
By yonder western main.

Thy towers, Bombay, gleam bright, they say,
Across the dark blue sea,
But ne'er were hearts so light and gay,
As then shall beam in thee.

ETNA—A THRILLING TALE.

Among the wondrous sights on the face of the earth, the volcano of Etna will hold a just preeminence. Renowned by past and present history, sublime by its elevation, its form, and the awful scenery of unknown terrors which lie concealed within its bosom, the Sicilian volcano will always be viewed with the deepest, the most solemn awe.

It was with such feelings and with such thoughts as these, that I began to ascend the volcano on the morning of the 5th of May, 1839. I had left Catania on the day before, in order to visit this wonderful spot. I did not wish to glance carelessly upon it—no; for to me there was always something reverend something almost divine, in connection with this great mass of upheaved lava, which led me to look earnestly at its rugged sides. I wished to ascend to view from its summit the fairest regions on the earth; to glance down into the unfathomable depths, where fire, in all its terror forever struggles!

It was with slow steps that I ascended the cone, after the patient and hardy ponies had been dismissed. I had been an invalid, and the fatigue of climbing up the steep and rocky declivity might well have daunted me. But after many haltings, I was able to obtain the summit.

The summit! Good heavens! can I ever forget the delirium, the transport of joy, which the boundless prospect there awakened within me? Can I

ever forget the glimpse which I first caught of all the glories and all the horrors of nature mingled together in such fearful union?

Far away on one side are spread the fertile plains; the green meadows and the gentle valleys of Sicily. There were streams glancing and flashing in the sun as they wandered to the sea with ten thousand and labyrinthian turnings, lakes whose glassy surface showed not a ruffle, not a ripple; there were terraces upon the sides of a hundred hills, where vineyards were planted, and where the trellised vines passed along, all green, all blooming; there were groves of orange trees amid the dark green foliage of which the golden oranges peered forth like flashes of phosphorescent light in a midnight sea; there were long avenues of cypresses, of acacias, of noble trees of many kinds, amid which king-like assemblage at times could be seen the noble summit of some stately palm, as it towered on high above all others.

And the sea—the wide, the boundless, the deep blue Mediterranean—there is spread away, on the other side, as far as the eye could reach, spreading away as far as thoughts could run—glorious as

"The dashing,
Silver flashing
Surges of San Salvador."

But turn aside—and there, beneath, lies an abyss like that of which Milton has sung in sublimest mortal strains.

I paused upon the brink, and shuddering I gazed down—down! The thick and funereal volumes of tortuously-ascending smoke came ascending upward as from a cauldron. It escaped from myriad crevices in the rocky, precipitous sides; it poured forth from behind projections, and united with the vast mass which came sublimely upward from the unfathomable depths.

Hère, upon the sandy, rocky edge, where sulphur and crumbled lava, and pumice-stone were all mingled together, to form a horrid soil, here I sat and looked down. From the scene beyond, from that glimpse of earth which made it seem like heaven; from that vision of all that was most overpowering; to turn and gaze into a volcano's awful depth—what a change!

Involved in a thousand thoughts, I sat there thinking myself alone, when a sudden grating struck my ear. I was startled exceedingly, and turned around. The place where I had been sitting was a peninsular projection of the cliff which formed part of this infernal chasm. Upon the narrow strip of land which joined it to the other cliffs—upon the isthmus—I saw a mild looking middle aged gentleman approach me.

He was dressed in plain black clothes, and in his hand he held a light stick.

"I beg your pardon, Signor," said he, in a polite manner, and with great softness of tone, "I beg your pardon for intruding myself upon your company. But it is not often that I see any visitor so far up."

"My dear sir, I beg you will make no excuses," I replied, "I was just admiring this scene below."

"Ah, yes, 'tis a glorious sight."

"Glorious! say, rather, a terrible one."

"Terrible, perhaps to you; but do not be surprised if I say that to me it is lovely, absolutely lovely."

And as he spoke, a smile of bewitching beauty crossed his features.

"I suppose your tastes are different from those of many people, Signor. I have not such feelings. But, may I ask you if you are often here?"

"Oh, oh yes, I live here," he replied waving his stick around, "I live here!"

I thought that he meant me to understand that his home was on the mountain where very many villas are situated.

"And I should suppose," I continued, "that you are often on the summit."

"Oh, yes, I am here always."

"Always! what a strange fascination it has for one."

"It has, it has," said the gentleman. "Oh, a fearful—and his voice grew low and hollow—a terrible fascination!"

I was silent.

"I will tell you," said he, sitting closely by my side, and turning his eyes full towards mine. "I do not wish you to inform any one. Promise me that you will not."

I had not noticed his eyes before, but I saw now that within their depths there gleamed a strange, sinister light.

I promised him; and at the same time I uneasily drew back further from the edge.

"Well, then, Signor," said he, "I am king here! I rule Mount Etna!"

"Yes, I am king here. In me you see the being who causes the lava to pour forth, and overwhelm the regions below. I have lived here for centuries. The spirits of the deep obey me; see!"

He leaped up from the ground. There was a fearful fire in his eyes, his nostrils were dilated, his pale face became as white as marble, and as bloodless, save that on either cheek there glowed a deep red spot.

"See!" he shrieked wildly and loudly, "spirits of the deep, arise! Ha!—yonder—see them! They are coming—in the clouds—enrobed in thunder's garments—see!"

I leaped up from the ground. I gazed at him.

He threw off his hat wildly, and it fell down in the abyss. He flung off his coat and threw it away.

"Signor," said I, in hopes that a mild tone might make him calm, "Signor, the winds obey you, let us go."

"Go? Where? Is not this my home? Is not my palace? Saw you not my servants? You are my guest!"

"Will you not sit down and tell me about your house?" said I shuddering.

"No; there are secrets that can never be spoken. Can you understand them? Who are you, a mortal that you dare to ask?"

I walked slowly towards the narrow passage of the bridge. But he saw me, and stood upon it. I could not go.

"Can this be all pleasantry?" thought I. An awful thought passed through me, which froze my heart's blood.

Pleasantry! There he stood, my wild companion, his eyes blazing, fixed piercingly on me, his hands clinched, his mouth foaming, every sinew in his body worked up. He stood screaming, laughing. O God! I was alone with a maniac!

"You are to go with me," he cried.

"Where?"

"There. I have come to carry you to my home."

He pointed with a cold, snaky smile, down the unfathomable abyss whence ascended the terrible column of inky and suffocating smoke.

I gazed at him; for there was some element of fascination in his glassy stare which forced me

compelled me to gaze. There was a cold smile

upon his lips, which were all bloodless, and his closed, as they parted his mouth and tightly shut his teeth.

"There is my home—there, and I have come to take you with me. Ha! ha! ha! how happy you will be! Come!"

Still I gazed, while my heart throbbled with slow but terrible pulsations.

He advanced one step towards me.

I looked all round. The spell was broken which enchanted my gaze. I looked all round; at the blue sky above, the scorched earth around, at the horrible chasm beneath. There was no hope. Oh! could I but leap the space which separated me from the main cliff! Could I but do it—but I could not! There was no hope!

"What! do you not answer?" he cried, suddenly lashed into fury by my silence, and stamping his foot in frenzy upon the rock, "do you not answer? Then I must carry you with me!"

The maniac sprang towards me!

With all my energies roused into frantic action, with every sinew braced, and every muscle contracted, I planted my foot backward against a small angular rock which projected above the loose, sandy soil, and tried to meet the shock.

With a wild scream, which arose in the air, his eyes all bloodshot, his mouth foaming, on he came. He struck me—his arms surrounded me in a fearful embrace, his hot breath came burningly on my cheek. I stood firm; or despair, and all the bitterness of death had given no place to fear and timidity cut had bestowed on me the coolness one in an ordinary situation. I throw my left arm beneath his, my right I passed over his neck, and crouched upon his back, thus seeking to press him to the earth.

It was a moment of horror such as no mortal tongue could ever tell. A struggle with a maniac! To be on a small surface of a rock, while three thousand feet beneath, lay the abyss of untold horrors! At this hour, my heart beats more forcibly, even as I think upon the fearful time.

Thus we stood breast to breast face to face—the madman and I—he with his arms encircling me, I seeking to save myself. He pressed me toward the cliff. He plunged his feet deep in ground; he laughed mockingly, and screamed, as he tried to destroy me. But against that rock my feet were firmly braced; and I held him tightly, and I pushed him, and sought to hurl him from me. Hurl him from me!—as well might the hungry tiger be hurled from his prey.

Oh! the agony of that struggle. I know not how long it was; but to me it seemed like many hours. The wild eyes of the madman glared at me all the time, and I found it impossible to look away. His fearful face, all white and ghastly, was upturned towards me, as he sneered in his fiendish, mocking laughter.

"Oh, heaven! Oh, horror! Can this endure forever?" cried I, in the agony of fear. The maniac howled with derisive shouts. I felt that I was growing weaker. But he was a madman, and would he grow weaker also? A thousand thoughts fled through me.

Suddenly the maniac gave one fearful plunge. It was with the strength of a giant that he seized me. He raised me from my feet. The rock, the saving rock—I had lost it; I was gone. I threw my arms high into the air, and my screams of terror ascended in unison with the maniac's mocking yell.

"Down! down to the bottomless pit! To the