

# POOR DOCUMENT

## POETRY.

### THE OLD WAY AND THE NEW.

I've just come from the meadow, wife, where grass  
is tall and green;  
I hobbled out upon my cane to see John's new  
machine;  
It made my old eyes snap again to see that mower  
now.  
And I haven't a sigh for the scythe I swung some  
twenty years ago.  
Many and many's the day I've mowed 'neath the  
rays of the scorching sun  
Till I thought my poor old back would break ere  
my task for the day was done.  
I often think of the days of toil in the fields all  
over the farm.  
Till I feel the sweat on my wrinkled brow, and the  
old pain come in my arm.  
It was hard work, it was slow work, a-swinging the  
old scythe then;  
Unlike the mower that went through the grass like  
death through the ranks of men.  
I stood and looked till my old eyes ached, amazed  
at its speed and power—  
The work that it took me a day to do, it done in one  
short hour.  
John said that I hadn't seen the half; when he  
put it into his wheel  
I shall see it reap and rake it, and put it in bundles  
neat;  
Then soon a Yankee will come along, and set to  
work and larn  
To reap it, and thresh it, and bag it up, and send it  
into the barn.  
John kinder laughed when he said it, but I said to  
the hired men:  
"I have seen so much on my pilgrimage through  
my three-score years and ten,  
That I wouldn't be surprised to see a railroad in  
the air,  
Or a Yankee in a flying ship a-goin' most any-  
where."  
There's a difference in the work I done, and the  
work my boys now do;  
Steady and slow in the good old way, worry and  
fret in the new.  
But somehow I think there was happiness crowded  
into those toiling days.  
That fast young men of the present won't see till  
they change their ways.  
To think that I should live to see work done in this  
wonderful way!  
Old tools are of little service now, and farm'n's  
is almost play;  
The women have got their sewing machines, their  
wringers, and every such thing,  
And now play croquet in the dooryard, or sit in the  
parlor and sing.  
'Twasn't you that had it so easy, wife, in the days  
so long gone by;  
You ran up early, and sat up late a toiling for you  
and I.  
There were cows to milk, there was butter to make,  
and many a day did you stand  
A washing my toil-stained garments, and wringing 'em  
out by hand.  
Ah, wife, our children will never see the hard work  
we have seen,  
For the heavy work and the long task is now done  
with a machine.  
No longer the noise of a scythe I hear; the mower  
—there, hear it afar?  
A rattling along through the tall, stout grass, with  
the noise of a railroad car.  
Well, the old tools now are shovled away; they  
stand a paler'st rest,  
Like many an old man I have seen put aside with  
a crust;  
When the eyes grow dim, when the step is weak,  
when the strength goes out of the arm,  
The best thing a poor old man can do, is to hold  
the deed of the farm.  
There is one old way that they can't improve, al-  
though it has been tried  
By men who have studied and studied, and worried  
till they died;  
It has shone undimmed for ages, like gold refined  
from its dross—  
It's the way to the kingdom of heaven by the simple  
way of the cross.

## SELECT STORY.

### A Strange Nemeses.

When Arthur Floriden married Paula  
Glenmore and went to America, he was  
a poor young man, but he thought him-  
self as rich as a king and a great deal  
happier than most monarchs, with his  
pretty little wife, his good education, and  
two strong willing hands.  
They were prosperous, and when they  
returned to England, they returned not  
only as the possessor of a great fortune,  
but to find themselves Sir Arthur and  
Lady Floriden, for Arthur's older brother,  
the baronet, had died during his absence.  
They went to live upon the family es-  
tate in Yorkshire, and for a time were  
very happy; and then a great affliction,  
in the shape of a terrible illness, robbed  
Lady Floriden of beauty and health at  
once, and left her a faded, sickly woman.  
Soon after this event, Idalia Warring-  
ton, an orphan cousin of hers, came to  
live with Lady Floriden as companion.  
She was very beautiful, but here was  
the beauty of a Circe; and she lost no  
opportunity to contrast her appearance  
with that of Lady Floriden, her benefac-  
tress.  
Her complexion was made more daz-  
zingly clear and pure by her gloomy  
mourning robes, and her glossy red-brown  
hair was not less rich in color because  
she did not wear it in ringlets about her  
face, while her speaking dark eyes were  
not less beautiful, because the passive,  
long-lashed eyelids sometimes veiled  
them. There was a varying wild-rose  
color in her cheeks, her parting lips were  
ruby-red, and she was altogether very  
beautiful, as I have said.  
Then, too, her ways were charming, and  
Lady Floriden soon loved and trusted her  
as sisters are supposed to be loved and  
trusted, while as for Sir Arthur—well, I  
am afraid he liked her a little too well.  
Everything went well and every one  
seemed happy until Lady Floriden be-  
came ill again; this time it was a fever  
which ended in her death.  
Idalia had been devotedness itself and  
had watched with her cousin night after  
night, until the roses had fled from her  
cheeks.  
One night the nurse sent her to take a  
little rest, and so Idalia, not being sleepy,  
went out upon the lawn and sat down in  
the broad moonlight, in sight of Lady  
Floriden's window.  
It was not long before Arthur Floriden,  
who had been wandering restlessly among  
the shrubbery, came up to where she sat  
and spoke to her.

"I can never repay you for your devo-  
tion to my wife," he said, as she arose,  
"But I can remember it, Cousin Idalia!"  
Circe said nothing just then. She only  
raised those glorious maddening eyes and  
looked up into his face with a world of  
expression in their liquid depths.  
While she sat there, her face toward  
the window, Arthur's hand on her arm,  
their lips talking common-places and  
their eyes speaking differently, while she  
stood there, I say, she was startled to see  
a figure come to the window—a figure  
clad in white, with long dusky hair fall-  
ing to its waist.  
It stood there one moment, as if turn-  
ing to stone, then wrung its hands and re-  
reated.  
It was Lady Floriden; though very sick,  
she was at that time conscious and would  
probably have recovered, had she not  
heard the nurse mutter, as she went to  
the window:  
"The brute! he ought to be shot! And  
that siren! she is a fiend! How I'd like  
to strangle her!" She paused a moment,  
and then went on: "See them now! His  
hand on her arm, and she lookin' up into  
his eyes! My poor abused sick mistress!  
Poor, poor thing!"

Then the honest and indignant nurse  
left the room, bent on some errand to the  
kitchen. The sick lady lay quite still,  
and with her eyes closed, until the nurse  
had gone, and then she arose, and going  
to the window, looked out into the clear,  
full moonlight.  
No pen can tell the agony of that one  
moment, when she knew her trusted  
friend, and beloved Arthur, to be un-  
faithful. She moaned and crept back to  
her bed, and from that moment her fate  
was sealed. She must die.

When Sir Arthur came in with his fair  
companion to inquire about her, he noted  
the change in her face. He may have  
felt something like remorse, for he bent  
over her and kissed her poor, thin cheek,  
and asked how she was. But she motioned  
him away, and turned with such a  
glance of horror and loathing towards  
her cousin, that Idalia shivered.

Then her eyes rested on Arthur's face,  
and he never forgot that steady, dying  
glance—a look of unutterable reproach,  
of mute surprise, of wounded love.  
"She saw us together on the lawn,"  
Idalia whispered in his ear, and then  
said, half aloud: "She will haunt you if  
she can, won't she?"

Was it only a fancy, or did Floriden  
see his wife's lips move and hear a faint,  
inaudible "Yes?"

It was about a year and a half after  
Paula's death that there came a new  
mistress to Floriden Hall. She was far  
more beautiful than the first Lady Flori-  
den, and seemed familiar with the place,  
and indeed she was, for the new mistress  
was no other than Idalia Warrington.  
For a time she was happy. She had  
everything that wealth could buy, she  
need not lift her hand, and she was now  
"my lady" to all the servants, and had at  
last attained a high social position.

"Yes, she was happy to a certain de-  
gree, until six months after her marriage,  
when she learned that her old lover,  
Roger North, had come home to England,  
and he, whom she had loved as well as it  
was possible for her to love any one, and  
whom she had rejected on account of his  
poverty, was now very wealthy.

"Why didn't I stay single six months  
longer?" she asked herself. "I could  
have then broken my engagement with  
Arthur and married Roger—my Roger!"  
she added, with a little womanly weak-  
ness—"for of course he loves me yet."  
Ah! but he was *her* Roger no longer,  
had she known it.  
"He will some day be Sir Roger, and  
so if I lose one title, I gain another. I  
will marry him yet."

So she began a plan to rid herself  
of her husband. She did not shoot or stab  
him in the dark—as most of such char-  
acters do in stories—and then manage to  
lay the blame on some innocent young  
persons; not she!

Now Arthur Floriden was still in love  
with the beautiful woman he had mar-  
ried, and though he knew she was far  
from being an angel, he could not cast  
her from his heart, and Idalia used that  
very love as a means of torture.  
When Lady Floriden persecuted him,  
and even told him openly that she did  
not love him, and never had, he remem-  
bered poor Paula and her loving kind-  
ness.

While in London, or at his country  
house, since his first wife's death, Sir  
Arthur Floriden seldom went to evening  
parties, balls, or even to the opera or  
theatre; he spent a good part of his day-  
time away from home, and most of his  
evenings he spent in his own house.  
After his seven o'clock dinner he would  
retire to the library to remain during the  
evening, while the brilliant and beautiful  
Lady Floriden was enjoying herself at the  
opera or some ball.

One night he was in the library, while  
Lady Floriden was supposed to be at a  
fine concert. He was not reading—no;  
he had not lighted the gas, and was now  
lying on the soft, dark-green sofa, staring  
into the darkness. At the other end of  
the long room there was a French win-  
dow, curtained with dark-green satin,  
looped back, and now open, so that the  
fresh spring air might enter.  
He chanced to look towards the win-  
dow—the air was becoming damp.  
What was that he saw? Did he really  
see a white figure standing there, with

long, dusky hair falling about it?—a  
white figure wringing its hands?  
He started up, while a cry of horror,  
came from his pale lips. He rubbed his  
eyes; he had only been dreaming, he  
thought, for the ghost, if ghost it were,  
had swiftly retreated at the sound of his  
voice.

"Only a dream!" he said; "but a ter-  
rible one!" And then he settled himself  
back on the sofa, rather uneasily, and  
closed his eyes.  
It was not more than an hour later  
that he was aroused from the slight slum-  
ber into which he had fallen by the  
touch of a hand upon his forehead. He  
was instantly awake, and, rising to his  
feet, cried, as he saw a white figure stand-  
ing in the clouded moonlight (for the  
moon had now risen).

"Great heavens! it was no dream! It  
is her phantom! Oh, Paula! why do you  
haunt me!" and he, strong man that he  
was, and not inclined to be superstitious,  
fell into a dead faint.

He never knew how long he lay there,  
and then awoke to find his wife bending  
tenderly over him, the gas lighted, and  
the window closed.  
But he could not shake off that vision.  
He began to grow thin and pale, and  
seemed almost afraid to stay alone, but  
still he had not confided in his wife. She  
did not know his secret, he thought.

He did not see the ghost again while  
they remained in London, but when they  
returned to their country-seat his noctur-  
nal visitor appeared more than once.  
As for Idalia, matchless actress that she  
was, she was very exultant as she saw him  
dying slowly before her eyes, but she hid  
her joy, and acted the part of the devoted  
wife to perfection.

And he, poor fellow, (we can't afford to  
pity him, for he was punished for his sins)  
he thought to himself, "Ah, she loves me  
now that she is afraid of losing me."  
It was well that he could not read her  
heart.

One evening she had gone to a grand  
ball at the residence of Sir John Bartlett,  
as he supposed, while he, as usual, spent  
the evening alone.

He was lying on the lounge in his own  
room when, for the fifth time since his  
stay at Floriden Hall, he saw the apparition.  
He had closed his eyes for a few  
moments, and when he opened them  
again, the waxen candles had burned  
low in their sockets, and there, in the  
dim, uncertain light, stood that white  
figure—Paula's figure.

It surely was her shade, he thought.  
Once he asked Idalia, soon after he  
first saw the ghost, whether she believed  
in ghosts, and she had said she did, and  
told him a frightful story of her grand-  
mother's ghost—a story true in every de-  
tail. So of course ghosts must be real.

The apparition appeared once too often  
for his well being, for as soon as he saw  
her there, he cried:  
"Leave me, leave me! Leave me,  
haunting fiend! You cannot be my  
Paula. She would never torture me so.  
Who are you, then?" and when he saw  
the white lips frame the words, "The  
ghost of Paula," he fell back with a shriek,  
and there, like one dead, Lady Floriden  
found him.

But he was not dead. After the usual  
restorative had been applied he became  
conscious, but only to sink into a nervous  
fever, from which he never recovered.  
It was at sunset, after a foggy day of  
clouds and rain, that he died. His wife  
was with him constantly, but she was well  
rewarded, for his will made her a rich  
young widow.

Just before he died he called her to his  
side.  
"Idalia," he said, "kiss me, and then I  
wish to make a little confession. I have  
been richly punished for my sin. Forgive  
me, my darling, won't you? for telling  
you even by my eyes, before Paula died  
—you remember out on the lawn—for  
telling you that I loved you. In that hour  
I dragged your womanhood down by that  
confession. My wife must have seen us  
there, for Idalia, she has haunted me."  
(Here his voice sank to a whisper, "and  
that is what has killed me. Ah, I have  
suffered cruelly—my punishment has been  
bitter.")

And was it not "a strange Nemeses!"  
The beautiful woman—nay, fiend—who  
led him away, who caused his wife's death,  
if the truth be told, by her conduct, also  
played the part of an avenger. She  
avenged the wife's wrongs when she  
caused the husband's infidelity; but she  
did not, of course, visit vengeance on her  
own head.  
She was the ghost.

Arthur Floriden had lain under the sod  
six months when Idalia next saw Roger  
North. How handsome he had grown,  
though bronzed and graver in looks, she  
thought, and so wealthy, too! She met  
him at the house of a mutual friend; of  
course she had not gone into society yet.  
It was at a very quiet dinner. He was  
kind and attentive, as he was to all ladies,  
but if she had not been as blind as a mole  
she must have seen that he no longer  
loved her. As for her, she showed her  
liking a little too plainly.

It was after dinner that they all went  
to take a sail on the lake near by. It  
chanced that the hostess, Mrs. Trehern,  
Lady Floriden and Sir Roger North were  
to occupy one boat, but just as they  
reached the shore, a servant announced  
the arrival of Sir Richard Markham, Mrs.  
Trehern's only brother, and so she, excus-  
ing herself, went to receive him.

Sir Roger and his fair companion now  
had the boat to themselves, and Idalia  
was delighted.  
She tried her best to draw him out, she  
brought up incidents of the days when  
they played together as children; she  
looked her best she knew, but it was in  
vain.

He was very silent, and his eyes had an  
absent, far-away look that she had never  
seen there before. She thought in her  
vanity, "He is afraid to speak. I will pave  
the way for him. He's thinking of those  
days when we were so happy. Oh! all  
will end well!"

Lady Floriden *did* pave the way. They,  
Sir Roger and herself, returned to the  
shore before the others, as the lady com-  
plained of being chilly; she had left her  
lavender shawl of Shetland wool at the  
house, she said. Just like her careles-  
sness!  
"Why, I don't think you're careless,"  
said North.

"Well, I used to be, anyway. Don't  
you remember, Rog—Sir Roger, I mean,  
how I left my new straw hat with the long  
blue ribbons on the island we played on  
so much, and how you waded back and  
got it? You always were good to me,  
Sir Roger!"

Sir Roger began to feel uncomfortable.  
Was Lady Floriden about to make love  
to him?  
"And how the housekeeper—I lived  
with my bachelor uncle then—how Mrs.  
Meggs gave me a scolding for spoiling my  
clothes?"

"Yes; and I was to blame. I always  
was a sinner; but I am sorry for that, and  
all my later sins. You know what I  
mean, Roger. I have been bitterly  
punished. Ah, forgive me; forgive me,  
for I still love you, Roger!"

Sir Roger stood quite still for a moment,  
and gazed at her in amazement, while he  
blushed for her want of delicacy.  
"Idalia!" was all he could say for an  
instant.  
"I did not suppose that you had sunk  
so low as that," he said, as soon as he had  
found voice to go on. "You love me yet!  
Let me tell you that I love you no longer.  
In the hour when you rejected me on  
account of my poverty, my love for you  
died, not without a struggle, I confess,  
but surely, I am perfectly indifferent to  
you; and even if I were still unmarried,  
I would scorn to marry you!"

"Married!" gasped Idalia. "Married,  
did you say? Ah, then I have lost the  
game!" (to herself).  
"Yes, married," said the baronet; "and  
to one as far above you as the angels in  
heaven are above Satan!"

You want to know how this story ends  
—whether Idalia, driven to desperation  
by Sir Roger's words, made away with  
herself by taking poison, and thus dying  
a horrible death; or whether she plunged  
into some deep, black pool on a pitch-  
dark night, and thus ended her miserable  
life?

No; she did neither. She went into  
society again, after the twelve months of  
mourning (a farce, of course, with her)  
had expired. She had received as deep  
a wound as such shallow hearts as hers  
are capable of receiving, and so she was  
not exactly happy. But still she had  
wealth, beauty and youth—three things  
much desired in this world.

And did she not thirst for revenge? Did  
she not wish to steal Sir Roger's only  
child, and break its fair-haired mother's  
heart? Yes, but she was powerless.  
Sir Roger was on his guard.  
You may think she did not receive her  
due; but she was punished. She lost  
the man she loved; and there came a  
time when she was no longer young, and  
beautiful, and brilliant, and though there  
was no lack of gold in her coffers. There  
came a time when life was but a dreary  
treadmill, and she, yearning to be loved,  
was still unloved, and, wishing to die and  
leave the hollow world, was yet afraid of  
death.

So ends my story.

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