

THE DAY IS DONE.

The day is done! the shades are gathering deeper; Hark! from the skies there falls the voice of One: Lay down thy task and rest, my loyal reaper, For day is done.

Wearied are we and harvest is not ended— Our weapons fail us, and our sands are run: To others be the triumph we intended: Our day is done.

Farewell, the faintest on the field—forever Farewell: few are the sheaves we bring or none: Yet will the Master's welcome wait endeavor, Now the day is done.

Farewell, O Earth, thy bleak grey skies of sorrow! For now the homestead of our faith is won, Thy clouds shall cast no shadow on tomorrow— Thy day is done.

Fast fades the light: in secret gloom before us The voiceless shadow that no foot may shun! Courage, my soul! one star is steadfast o'er us, Tho' day is done.

Our day is done! do Thou, O God, ingather Safe to Thy harvest home each wandering one— Leave not one outcast to the tempest, Father, When day is done.

—James Mackintosh Stimson, in Good Words.

A FIRST APPEARANCE.

Ruthyndale House was one blaze of light from garret to basement. From either side of the wide Georgian portico, long lines of carriages stood in ranks that narrow Park Lane to half its normal width. From every open window, music and laughter, and the heavy scent of hot-house flowers floated out into the night air and vexed the slumbers of the sparrows in Hyde Park.

The last great ball of the season was at its height, and under the wide roof of Ruthyndale House, the most beautiful woman in town had gathered together all that was rich, handsome, and celebrated in London Society.

In the hugh ball-room, festooned with circles of rose-wreaths and lit by thousands of waxen candles, a quadrille, in which a Royal Prince and Princess had been dancing with their host and hostess, had just reached a glorious end, in which the frou-frou of silken skirts and the dainty tap-tap of high-heeled shoes had mingled with the ring of light laughter and the crash of music.

The Countess of Ruthyndale, gorgeous in priceless lace, and blazing with jewels, swept a deep courtesy to the Prince as the dance concluded.

"Lady Ruthyndale, your ball is charmingly done. Thanks to you, the season will make a fitting end."

The Countess smiled, showing her even, white teeth, and waving her huge feather fan with her slender hand.

"But," the Prince went on, looking about him as he spoke, "how comes it that at the very moment when the season's sun is about to set, a new star appears in the firmament?"

"A new star, sir—I don't quite understand—"

The Prince nodded his head towards one end of the long room, where a high marble mantelpiece made a fitting foundation for a magnificent display of crimson and yellow roses which were piled from floor to ceiling.

Lady Ruthyndale followed the direction of her royal guest's eyes, and flushed a little as she noted on whom his gaze was so intently fixed.

"Oh! sir, that is my sister—Perdita. She's but a child still, and only came here from her school at Boulogne late last evening. I wished to send her down to Ruthyndale Mount this morning, but the Earl would keep her here—and—"

"She is a divinely beautiful—child," said the Prince, as he turned to speak a few words to the ambassador of a great foreign Power.

The Prince was not the only man that night whose curiosity was excited by the marvellous loveliness of Perdita Harrington; though, apart from the quaint simplicity of her gown, the fact that among the brilliant throng, she was the only woman who was not covered with jewellery, would alone have made her remarkable. But her eyes, set beneath thinly pencilled brows and half veiled by jetty lashes, were bluer than the finest sapphires; while her mouth, arched like a bow, dewy as a rain kissed rose, was redder and certainly more charming than the dozen big rubies that flared on the neck of Mrs. Silas Blozgs, from Chicago.

Perdita's gown was of some soft gossamer web that swayed and floated about her as she moved; and, though it was simplicity personified, the fashion of the folds about the snowy bust and polished shoulders, betrayed Perdita's knowledge of her own charms.

One jewel only she wore. It was a small diamond-headed dagger, thrust through the heavy coils of her dark hair. An insignificant girlish toy, which at the last moment the Countess of Ruthyndale had given to the child.

As the evening wore on, the Countess was besieged for introductions to the new beauty, who, nevertheless, treated all her admirers to nothing more than a shy glance or two and the demurest of little smiles. Man after man worshipped at her shrine. Wealthy nobodies, ineligible "swells" besought her for a dance. The Prince himself placed her on his left hand at supper, and the young Duke of Loamshire, who had just come into his kingdom after a long minority, and was fabulously wealthy, valed with her twice.

It was this fact, brought to the Countess's notice by the Prince, who always took a kindly interest in the feminine belongings of

his particular friends, that roused Lady Ruthyndale to speak to her young sister, and she glided to Perdita's side as the Duke of Loamshire left her.

"Be clever, Perdita, and you'll land the biggest catch of this end of the century before you are three months older. Do you dance with him again this evening?"

"The Duke has said 'Good-night,' but he is coming to inquire for us to-morrow morning, and hopes you will be kind and ask him to luncheon," said Perdita, with her modest smile coming and going round the corners of her dewy, fresh mouth.

"Then you'd better go to bed at once," said the Countess. "Young girls can't stand late hours till they're seasoned to them. Run up the little staircase, child, and come to my room about twelve o'clock to-morrow."

Lady Ruthyndale turned once more to her guests, and Perdita, like some white spirit of maiden purity, glided through the long suite of rooms towards the east wing of the house, where the apartments of the family were situated.

She had left the brilliant scene behind her, and was in a narrow, dimly-lit side passage, from which a heavily-padded door gave on to the little staircase she wished to reach. Her hand, slender, and white as milk, was already thrust out, when another hand, large and strong, stretched from the gloom and clasped her cool fingers.

"Hush! don't scream. It is I, Perdita."

With a stifled cry the girl drew back, her face was whiter than her gown, her great eyes straining to see the face of the man who had dared arrest her progress.

"Don't you remember me—Harold Vane?"

"Harold Vane! You here?"

A dark flush stained the purity of the girl's face and throat as she gasped forth her words.

"Yes! I'm here—and I want to speak to you."

"How did you get into this house? How did you know that I was here? How dare you—?"

"How dare I? My dear child, surely you remember how much I love you?"

Through the dimness the sneering words fell on the girl's ear, and she shuddered as she caught the full significance of their tone. Yet she had courage to say,

"You must go away at once. I don't want to see you ever again."

Perdita, how cruel you are. You who used to be so kind. Are you the same sweet girl who let me love her and loved so tenderly in return; are you that Perdita who—"

But she, frantic with terror lest someone should overhear her tormenter's words, laid her white hands above his mouth and besought him to be silent.

Still he would not leave her for all her entreaties. And by degrees, when she would let him speak, he told her enough to show her, that a silly schoolgirl flirtation, a trifling with the fire of a bad man's passion, might go far to ruin her on the very threshold of her life.

"To tell you the truth Perdita, although you were a dear little thing and promised to grow into beauty, I did not think much about you after the summer you were at Boulogne with your governess, and we had met and talked and written to one another, until I saw by the papers that your elder sister had married the Earl of Ruthyndale. Then I thought you were good enough to keep an eye on. I should like to be brother-in-law to a Countess."

He laughed, and she shuddered to the depths of her being.

I crossed the Channel on the same boat as you did yesterday, and was at the Park gates this morning as you drove in. To slip in here to-night was child's play, and in such a crowd it was not difficult to hang about and wait a chance to speak to you—"

"And now you have spoken to me, what do you want?"—cried Perdita driven to bay.

"I want you to introduce me to your sister and the Earl to-morrow, as your fiancé and then to name our wedding day—"

"Marry you? You're mad," she cried, an unutterable scorn filling her voice.

"Oh, no. I don't call it mad for a man in my position to wish to marry a girl in yours."

"You seem to forget what you are."

"Indeed I don't. I know that I am a forger, only permitted to drag out an existence at Boulogne by those I wronged, who promised not to prosecute me so long as I do not set foot in England. I know I'm a gambler, and almost a beggar. But my dear if I was good enough for you to play at love-making with I am good enough for you to marry. Your sister would make you an allowance, and those people I robbed can doubtless be squared by the Earl."

"How dare you, an outcast, a criminal, speak to me like this. True when I was a child, vain, silly, you fascinated me, taught me to deceive my governess, and enjoy the stolen sweets of secret meetings and hidden letters. I deserve to pay for my folly; but marry you—never!"

"Do you mean that?" His face peered into hers through the gloom; his hot breath fanned her white cheeks.

"Never. Never. Never!"

"Are you going to marry any one else? For the life of her, Perdita could not help

that demure smile from flickering at the corners of her mouth.

"Perhaps."

"Then, by heavens, I'll betray you to the man— whoever he may be."

"How? Your word against mine would not go far."

"But your letters, so coy, so passionate, so innocent, so loving, will drag you from the position you would attain, down to my level."

"My letters—you have them—still?"

So faint was her speech, he scarcely caught it.

"My dear, I've never parted from them. They are the most valuable things I possess."

No answer was vouchsafed to his taunting words.

Suddenly through the heavy gloom of the little passage came the sound of a slight shuffle, a slow slipping on the ground of a heavy body, the swift passage of hands grasping papers, the swinging-to of a door.

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The papers that announced the engagement of the Countess of Ruthyndale's sister, Miss Perdita Harrington, to the Duke of Loamshire, commented on the danger that party-givers on a large scale run from criminals, who gain access to houses at such times and commit suicide in their temporary harbor of refuge.

The Duchess of Loamshire has a great dislike to daggers of all kinds, for which reason she never wears a little diamond-hilted affair given her by her sister before her first ball.

Fighting the Walrus.

It is doubtful whether there is a more exhilarating sport than fighting the walrus. In tiger-hunting you kill your prey—if it does not kill you first—and that ends it. In walrus-hunting, you kill your prey and then your trouble begins. It is easy enough to shoot your first walrus. He will lie on an ice cake, along with his companions, and allow you to come within a hundred feet if you approach gently in a small boat. Then, raising his superb head until it offers the best possible target for your bullets, he will regard you in silence, and you can plant a shot in his vulnerable neck off-hand. Then there will be flops on many neighboring ice-floes, and splashes in the water, and loud, hoarse barking will ring out, and in a moment you will see something that will make your heart jump, even though you be experienced in danger. In all hunting, you will not see a more terrible nor a more magnificent bit of action than the charge of a herd of walrus. When one of their friends is wounded, they collect in groups of twenty or thirty. Their large circular eyes, bright red in the sunlight, glare with hatred; their long white tusks gleam fiercely, and, lifting their great heads high out of the water, dashing the foam away from their breasts with their motion, they rush upon you in a mass. If one gets his tusk over the gunwhale of your boat, your life is worth exceedingly little. A walrus weighs nearly a ton, and he is strong in proportion. He may either tip your boat over or punch a hole through it with his tusks; in either case you would fall into water so cold, that you would not be able to survive five minutes, even if the walrus did not attack you.

Flight from the charge is impossible; the walrus can rush through the water much faster than you can row. Your only safe course is to shoot the leaders of the herd. Then the rest are encumbered by the helpless bodies of their comrades lying upon the water; the charge is broken; the walrus becomes confused and frightened. There is a mass of heads wildly bobbing up for a moment, and then they halt, turn with one accord and flee. That is their method of fighting when they are assembled in numbers. When only two or three are gathered together they lack the confidence for a charge, but they pursue tactics that are just as exciting to those against whom their ire is kindled. They lift up their heads afar off, and gauge the distance between themselves and your boat. Then they dive, with much ungraceful exhibition of a black back and flopping of broad hind flippers. The interval which they are under water is not pleasant for you. Fortunately they do not often calculate their distance perfectly. Usually a great black head appears ten or fifteen feet away from you. And you must be quite ready to shoot it with great promptness, or it will disappear again, and in a moment you will feel a scraping upon the bottom of your boat, and it will begin to rise bodily out of the water.

If a snail's head is cut off and the animal placed in a cool, moist spot, a new head will grow.

A Norwegian woman living near Yankton, in America, is thirty years old, and said to be the mother of twenty-four children.

It is strange, though true, that in Asia and Africa, where grass will not grow, the most beautiful flowers flourish to perfection.

The longest train on record was that of Catherine de Medici on the occasion of her marriage. It was forty-eight yards, and borne by ten pairs of pages.

A Georgia couple have been remarried, after being divorced for twenty-eight years, at the home of a daughter who never saw her father till the day of the ceremony.

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