

The snow sprites are abroad to-night,
Tossing flocks of feathery white,
Making the heath fire brighter seem,
As o'er the window falls a glistening stream,
And wither'd flowers, as the wind blows, shunt,
Gathering the creaking house about;
And strike the face with piercing lance,
If out the door you try to glance,
To fast of frost the very lance
Though but a moment open be;
They drive in a snowy white mound,
Through each little crevice around,
To rattle the floor with their hoarse
And shrill and shrill and shrill and shrill,
That causes the timid heart to quake,
And draw nearer the roaring fire,
While the drifts without grow higher,
And the delight of the winter night
Shriek and scream and whistle in place,
Unloose his scarf and strike his face,
To find the wind the very lance play cease;
Dress a cart in curious gaudy
To bewilder his tired eyes;
A wayside stump in towering cap,
Looks around him with a stare
Tolling through the huge drifts along,
With all familiar landmarks gone,
Sprites peer at him through fancies strange,
His beard and hair and wig they change
They even into his boots step
Give his toes a mischievous nip,
Boldly purse him to his door,
Where there they stand more
Will tap upon the window pane,
Daring him to come forth again;
But such a storm of snow and ice more,
With his little one upon his knee,
As warmth of the blazing fire he feels,
From his heart a thankful prayer steals,
To him who sits in the stormy night,
Still permitted him through it in safety to

Caroline's cry attracted the attention of the new comer, who instantly started to her feet, and, looking through the thickets, she beheld the young girl regarding her with burning eyes, and pale, lowering face. The recognition was mutual, and for a few moments neither spoke, overcome by the surprise of their unexpected encounter.

"How came you here?" at length demanded Caroline, moving nearer, and parting the thicket with her trembling hands.

"Caroline Durward!" exclaimed the other, without heeding her query, the look of a hunted deer in her eyes, the sound of bitter pain in the sweet voice.

"Yes, I am Caroline Durward, and I perceive that you are not over and above glad to see me either."

"No, I am not; the sight of you gives me deep pain," returned Nina, the gentle but forsaken bride, her face becoming like marble in its hue.

"You are frank, at all events," laughed Caroline, scornfully. "I cannot blame you, however; and no wonder my presence gives you pain, since doubtless it brings to mind so much of treachery, which I have been instrumental in revealing."

"I have been guilty of no treachery, Miss Durward," returned Nina, with quiet dignity: "it was you who were treacherous."

"Me!" cried Caroline, in mock astonishment.

"Yes; you played the false friend, that you might ruin me."

"Those are very plain words for such as you to use to me!" retorted Caroline, angrily. She was exceedingly galled by Nina's proud, calm demeanor.

"Indeed! and why should I not speak the truth to you, Miss Durward?"

"The truth, forsooth! A person in your position has no right to use such language to a lady of the realm," she retorted, loftily.

"A faint smile of scorn curled Nina's beautiful lips.

"I think I would prefer my own position rather than yours, notwithstanding that you call yourself a lady of the realm." was the scathing reply.

"And permit me to add," she continued, "that I have a very poor opinion of one who would play the part of a spy and mischief-maker, as you have done."

Caroline's blood was boiling now, and could Kenneth have seen her, her hypocrisy would have been laid bare before him.

"How dare you!" she whispered, in a voice hoarse with passion. "However, I flatter myself that I played the spy, as you called it, to some purpose," she concluded, viciously.

"Yes; you have succeeded in ruining two lives—a noble work truly!"

"Two?" Caroline demanded, pretending not to understand her, yet quivering with anger beneath the stinging sarcasm of her last words.

"Yes, two—Lord Malcolm's and mine," was the sad reply.

"Truly! How do you know that Lord Malcolm's life is ruined?" sneered her companion.

"I do know it—how, I do not choose to reveal," said Nina, calmly.

Caroline laughed harshly.

"Did you flatter yourself that he had broken his heart for you?" she sneered.

"At all events, he does not look as if he considered all his prospects in life ruined—or at least like it either."

"As he returned?" cried Nina, bending eagerly toward her tormentor, her white face flushing a lovely color, her delicate lips quivering with emotion.

Caroline said at once that she had made a mistake in revealing the fact of Kenneth's return, for Nina might insist upon seeking an interview with him, and not for worlds would she have them meet now.

"Yes," she replied, after a moment's thought; "I was obliged to return for such a very important business, which he is anxious to have off his mind as soon as possible."

Nina shivered. The stab was a cruel one.

Well did she know to what "business" she referred.

"Is—is he well?" she breathed, longing with such unutterable longing for just one look into his dear face.

Yes, very well, and in excellent spirits, returned the heartless girl, glancing in the pain she knew she was inflicting.

Nina clasped her quivering hands tightly over her beating heart; it seemed as if it would burst with its bitter pain.

"Caroline," she cried, in tones which made the girl cringe in spite of herself, "why have you done this fearful thing?"

"Why have I done this fearful thing? What do you mean?"

"You know what I mean; you know that but for you I should at this moment be Kenneth Malcolm's happy, beloved wife."

The words maddened Caroline beyond endurance. Kenneth Malcolm's happy, beloved wife!—how dare she twit her of the fact?

"I told you," she cried, recklessly, and bending toward her, with the look of fury on her face—"I told you," she repeated, "that I hated you, that night at Bathurst House, and that my life should be devoted to revenge upon you for coming between me and my dearest hopes. Do you think I had forgotten?"

"I do,"

would be willing to satisfy my curiosity upon that point, and tell me who he was," Caroline said, with shameless insolence.

"I shall tell you nothing, Miss Durward," replied Nina, haughtily.

"Oh, very well; it does not signify, only one would be naturally curious upon the subject. I am witnessing such a tender interview, particularly after the disastrous consequences which followed."

"Are you utterly heartless, Caroline?" Nina asked, regarding the girl with a mixture of compassion and loathing.

"Oh, no; I am conscious of quite strong pulsations of that member of my organization at this moment. But how does it happen that we meet here this morning? Are you residing in Leamington?"

"I am."

"Is madam well?"

"She is well."

"You copy her dignity very well," Caroline retorted, condescendingly, to these cold answers. "By the way," she added, with a sneer, "I always thought it a pity that you both were not born on a higher plane of society, since you seemed so well fitted for it."

With what shame she afterward recalled these words!

Nina's delicate lips curled with infinite scorn.

How utterly beneath her this rude, ill-bred girl seemed! Her coarse insults were too mean and low even to sting her, and she stood looking down upon her with calm indifference.

Caroline listened a moment to see if Kenneth was coming.

She meant to torture her victim until the last moment, and then run away just in season to prevent their meeting.

"Is it not just a little singular that you should come here to live?" she asked.

"I do not consider it so," Nina returned, coldly.

"You doubtless knew that this was papa's native place, and that he had returned here. Perhaps you were hoping to meet Lord Malcolm, and explain some little matters before it should be too late."

The fair face quivered a moment with pain; but the answer came proud, distinct, decided.

"No, I have no desire to meet Lord Malcolm again."

"Indeed," exclaimed Caroline, in surprise, "his heart bounded with delight. I must confess," she added, "that I consider you very wise upon that point, for I assure you it would only make matters more complicated. Kenneth seems to be recovering finely from the shock and mortification which he met at first experienced. Since his return, mamma and I have done all in our power to amuse and entertain him, and he seems to appreciate our efforts. We rode out here this morning to take a look at the Priory and—"

"Is he here—Kenneth here—in this place?" cried Nina, an eager joy at first in her voice, then dying away to a bitter wail as she sank nervously into her chair and looked happily around.

She had said she had no desire to meet him again, and she believed that she had schooled her heart to bear patiently what seemed to be her inevitable fate. But the knowledge that he was near—only a few steps, perhaps, separating them—broke down all her forced composure, and put to flight all her stern resolves, never to give way to long windings again.

"No," he had a delightful ride out from the towers on horseback, and I must go now; or he will be wondering what has become of me, and come to seek me, and it would be very unwise for you two to meet—it might stir up so many unpleasant memories on your part, and cause him some mortification," said the wicked girl, viewing with keenest delight the misery she was causing.

Nina's gentle nature was at last aroused.

She forgot her weakness, she forgot her misery for the moment, in the righteous indignation which arose at the girl's heartlessness.

She left her chair, and came close to the hedge where Caroline was standing.

"Go, then," she said, sternly, and waving her away with her white hand; "and you are shameless—you are merciless—you are a worthy daughter of the man whom you call your father, but something tells me that there may come a time when you would gladly exchange places with me, and when you will suffer as keenly as you are striving to make me suffer at this moment. Go."

She pointed toward the entrance to the grounds, and fixed her deep, pure eyes upon a look of authority full upon Caroline's face.

Caroline little imagined with what force she would remember her words when next they should meet. She cringed for a moment in spite of herself.

With her fiery temperament she was no match for the calm, quietly girl, who overawed her with her quiet dignity and conscious superiority. She could not stay after that stern command, but she determined to fire her parting shot.

"Why, yes, as I was saying, I must go only I wanted to ask you if you remembered the invitation which you extended to me the day before your unfortunate wedding? I mean your asking me to come to Melrose Park when you returned from your tour. Well, we are going to Melrose Park—Kenneth and I—this day after tomorrow. And the thinking of making such repairs and alterations, and desiring my advice and taste in the matter."

"Go,"

"Yes, presently—don't be impatient; I wanted to tell you of something which may be beneficial to you, but you nearly put it out of my mind by your lofty ways. I have been thinking of it a good deal, and think, and I fear your health is falling. Tell madam to give you plenty of cream and eggs; they are excellent when one is weak, and they will do you good. But best of all is to keep your mind free from care and anxiety; there is nothing so ruinous to health as depression of spirits. Good-by, Miss Leicester; we may meet again, and she sprang lightly to the saddle.

"If you improved then," and with a mocking laugh, the wicked girl gathered up her skirts and tripped away, leaving Nina so full of grief and pain and outraged feeling, that it was with difficulty that she crept back to her chair and sank into it again.

"Caroline had been so kind in coming with the horses, and she spared toward him as if her feet had wings.

"I do not believe, Kenneth, that we shall have time to go around the other way," she said, when she came up to him.

They would be obliged to pass directly by where Nina was sitting, and she was so angry that she could not help looking over her shoulder to see how away from the crowd she was as quickly as possible.

"Oh, yes, we've plenty of time, Caro," he replied, as he received her light glance. "I shall have an hour to get home, and I shall be in time to choose," Kenneth returned, as he too mounted and turned to follow her, all unconscious of the lovely girl so near him, and who, for the first time, he had seen so close to him.

"I suppose it would not matter much if we did not go to Maresfield Park until next week," he said, as he turned away, and he was making all haste to get away.

"Oh, yes, it would. I have set my heart upon going, so please do not let any more of this kind of thing happen. I am raising her eyes with a beseeching look to his face.

"Very well, it shall be just as you say," he replied, smiling at her earnestness.

But when she turned away, and he saw she did not seem so quiet and—pure as when they had started.

There was an expression in them which rendered the situation very painful, and he felt that he had known in London a year ago—something (of which he was conscious yet could not explain) that made him feel unpleasantly.

"Oh, I am sorry," he said, in the old days. They touched their horses lightly with the whip, and passed quickly down the hill, and out of sight of the old Priory Rectory.

"Not until they reached the busy streets of the town did Caroline breathe freely; she was constantly fearing that something might happen that Kenneth and Nina would meet.

CHAPTER XXV.

"NOTHING CAN MOVE ME."

Had Kenneth Malorne glanced behind him as he passed down the hill, he might have seen a face, white and drawn with grief, and full of burning eyes upon him from the shrubbery.

A pair of burglary eyes were fastened hungrily upon their retreating form, and the wicked lips unceasingly murmured, "Oh, I am sorry, my king," Kenneth said hard to hear. "I did not think it would be so hard to hear."

"Oh!" Nina murmured, the tears starting from her eyes, "I am so sorry, I wish I might but look just once more into your eyes—I might but hear you say that you are convinced of my truth and purity, I would not believe you false, while that cruel, wicked girl backs in the sunlight of your smiles, and listens to the music of your clear voice, that she should turn away from you, and your worth, is more than I can endure."

She sank upon the ground as the two figures disappeared from view, and, covering her face with her hand, gave way to her sorrow.

She saw that Kenneth was looking well and even content.

She had heard him speak, and thought that the cheerful tones showed her heart thrilled anew with the old love, yet she experienced bitterest pain that another, and that other so utterly unworthy of her, should be so happy, and that she, who loved him so passionately, should have to compare herself cheerlessly.

"Oh! she murmured, "I am only twenty, and many people live to be seventy—can I ever hear?"

"She gently came up to the Priory—and it was a favorite resort of hers.

Often she and madam would take their books or embroidery and ride up to the Rectory, and sit on the grass, and try to spend an hour or two in the delightful shade of the noble old trees, or roam about the wild and deserted grounds from which they could look down upon the Priory, and the old Warwick Castle on the north, and Leamington Towers on the south.

Nina had grown to love the place; the old Priory, with its quaint old windows and picturesque, with their russet-colored roofs, bright with exquisite stone-embroidery and liver-colored gables.

"It seemed to her, as if, with her own life—seemingly, forgotten, forsaken—

"Dying insensibly away From human thoughts and purposes, It seemed—wall, window, roof and tower, To be a part of the old Priory, And blend with the surrounding trees."

She loved the spacious garden and lawns with their grand old trees—beech, ash, oak and pine, which spread out their branches and boughs like giant arms, and paths and tangled undergrowth, as if with sheltering benediction and care.

She loved the tiny mountain stream, which unobstructed, wound its graceful way through the garden, and its crystal fringes among ivy, heath, and gentian, singing its mournful, lonely song in answer to the whispering zephyrs above, and then, like the life into the green valley below.

She loved that solemn stillness, the impressive glow of every prevailing, and the light of the sun, the fragrance of the flowers had been out now, not a part of itself; and it was here that she could best commune with herself and God, and thus gather strength to bear with patience her loneliness.

The hillside into the green valley below.

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To-day madam had been unavoidably detained at home, and so Nina, tempted by the mildness and beauty of the day, had been alone with only the driver for an escort.

She had never before encountered an, whom she knew; and the sheltered spot, which was her retreat, resort, and refuge, had been so long a solitude, and he held, that it was not often that her solitude was disturbed or invaded.

It seemed to cruel that, just as she was about to enter the Rectory, and rest—just as she had lulled—as she thought—her aching heart to repose, and had accepted her fate as inevitable, that she should be thus interrupted and bitten by this interview with Caroline Durward. She had not dreamed of Kenneth's return.

He had seemed so utterly foreign to England during her last talk with him in the convent at Lille, that she believed him to be still a lonely and unhappy wanderer.

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in written record, he would regret his cruel injustice, and remember her with something of tenderness, and sorrow somewhat for her loss."

Madam Leicester, indignant at what she deemed Kenneth's willfulness and stubbornness, argued and pleaded with her, as the time drew near for the hearing of the case.

Mr. Horace Vere also advised her to go before the judge and make a simple statement of facts, even if she did not oppose the suit; but she steadfastly refused, unwilling to take any action whatever against the man who no longer desired to remain her husband, but whom she loved so devotedly even yet.

"I care not what he regarded her worth, as she sat there so miserable, meditating upon these things, that Caroline had at last cast a glamour over him, and that she would eventually win him."

She thought she could bear to have him wed a true and noble woman, but to this false and hypocritical girl—never!—she certainly his attentions to her seemed to indicate that he regarded her worth more of favor than he used to. Could it be possible that he had determined to follow the advice she had given him, when he lay upon his sick bed, regarding the duties he owed his proud name and position!

Had he then early determined to marry again when he became free?

"If it was what he intended, why did he not tell her, in his invitation to Caroline to go with him, to Melrose Park, and give him the benefit of her taste and judgment regarding alterations and repairs which he contemplated making?"

"It must be," moaned Nina, helplessly, "and I know that it will be right for him to form new ties when the old ones are broken, and when a poor bleeding heart, how hard it is to cure it seems, how hard it is to live disowned and forgotten."

But the hour which she had given William, the driver, had expired, and she now heard him come whistling up the hill to take her home.

With an effort she controlled herself, and she then uttered a word of murmuring or complaint; she did not even tell madam of her interview with Caroline, or that she had seen Kenneth.

Since her return from Lille she had resolutely set her face against yielding to her grief.

She knew, as she had told her mother, that for her sake it was but right, that she should conquer; that though the future had been dark in some of its details, she held duties, and she endeavored to devote herself faithfully to the fulfillment of her resolve. Hitherto she had found much of comfort in it, and something of the blessedness of forgetfulness also.

She had recovered much of her usual health, and was very like the stately beauty which she had known, and which followed that bright morning in Regent Street.

Yet there was a sadness about the beautiful eyes—a look of such hopeless yet patient endurance, that made one long to weep for her, as he looked into their mournful depths.

She now went out every day.

She met out the poor and friendless in the vicinity of the vicarage, and many a needy, suffering family, many a weary and fever-parched invalid, blessed the pale, sweet girl who ministered so gently and so generously to their necessities.

She strove to be cheerful when in her mother's presence, and succeeded so well that madam was often rejoiced by seeing her lovely girl relax into something of their old familiar smile; but there were times when frail humanity would exerted out against the unnatural restraint forced upon her, and the long pent-up torrent of her grief would burst forth until it had exhausted itself, when she would again meekly take up her cross and go on as before.

One day, however, from the Confession of Mr. Horace Vere, had been a frequent visitor at the little woodbine covered cottage, where he always met with cordial welcome from its inmates.

Nina found him there to-day upon her return, and she knew as soon as she entered that some subject of great importance had been under serious discussion.

Madam looked up with a flushed and troubled countenance as Nina came into the room, and said:

"My dear, Sir Horace has a communication which he desires to make to you, and then we wish your counsel and judgment upon the matter; and, my child, prepare yourself to hear some thing which may startle and distress you, though am sorry to add in an hour's time, I am sure, that which you have already experienced."

"Mamma, is it anything regarding Louis? Is he——"

"No; Louis is still improving, and will be with us before long. I trust. The matter of which I speak dates further back than either you or Louis can remember," Madam said, rising and going to the window to conceal the emotion which moved her.

Nina seated herself near Sir Horace, wondering what could affect her usually stately and self-possessed mother thus.

"For an hour she listened to Sir Horace's story as one spell-bound."

But we have not time to give it here as it will necessarily have to be repeated by and by, and it is sufficient to say that the young girl was amazed beyond measure by the story, and that she had never been so much disturbed than madam had appeared to be.

"Mamma," she cried, with a look of horror, when he had finished, "who have you not told me of this before!"

"Because I could not. I had not the courage to speak of it; and besides, could not endure to cloud your young mind with such a story, which you could do no possible good to know."

"Mamma, said Nina, flushing again, then growing pale again, "is this what you were intending to tell us on the sad day, a little over a year ago?"

"Yes, Nina; this is what I was to have told you on your wedding day, just before you started on your tour."

"I shrink from the ordeal which this revelation will entail more than I can express," the agitated girl said, with a gasp.

"Yes, it is not pleasant to be made conscious; but, my child, I am determined that you shall no longer remain under the suspicions and *contempt* which have been heaped upon you. You say you will not take measures to vindicate yourself; but the knowledge of these things will enter you in the eyes of all who will bring to justice those who have trampled upon the privileges you beyond endurance. There are other circumstances, too, which seem to demand that what has been concealed for so many years should now be revealed," madam replied, with a troubled face, but firm, unrepenting tones.

"Is this the reason why you came to London?"

"This is why I came to Leamington."

"Mamma, did you feel no sorrow or regret for those who must be made to suffer for this?"

"I have no sorrow, no regret for those who have sought *their own ends* and unpunished wrongs; and justice will only

where it is deserved," was the bitter
 "But—but it is horrible! Just think of the misery which this knowledge will entail! Is it not possible to avoid it?" Nina persisted, much excited and distressed.
 "No, my tender-hearted little friend! I fear it is not," interposed Sir Horace.
 "In my opinion, this is very tardy justice, and ought to have fallen upon the culprits long ago. You all have been deprived of your rights far too long."
 "Ah, I believe I would rather never have any rights at all, than to secure them at such a cost," she answered, sadly.
 "You forget what the cost has been to me," said madam, in a voice of pain.
 "It will be but just retribution upon one at least, and, if I am not mistaken, upon more than one," added Sir Horace, severely.
 "No, dear madam, I do not forget but you have borne it all so bravely and beautifully for so many years, and—I—do not like the idea of revenge. There is One who will mete out retribution more justly than we can ever hope to do."
 "Revenge, my child! There was a time, when I was wild, that I would gladly have sought revenge; but I trust that that unworthy sentiment was eradicated from my heart long ago. Now I should only cry out with pain when the old woman do protest, I feel that duty demands that retribution be made," returned Madam Leicester, in a softened tone, and weeping quietly.
 "And what were we to gain by it?" Nina asked thoughtfully.
 "Property, a name, and a position which should have been yours for many years, not to mention an unblemished character, which none can hereafter dispute," said Sir Horace.
 "Sir Horace, I believe I do not care for position. My life has little prospect of enjoyment or happiness in the future, as you very well know," rejoined Nina, with a hopeless which madam's tears of sympathy start to his fine eyes.
 "Not like us for property," she added.
 "have we not enough for all our needs in a modest way?"
 "Yes, I suppose we have, if that was all that needed to be thought of; but the future must be considered in more ways than one," said madam.
 "Mamma, I am content to live just as we do now. We have enough for comfort, and I feel the need of it. I do not like, after what has already occurred, to become so conspicuous as what you propose will necessitate."
 "And that is one of my strongest reasons in hastening matters at this time. In a few days—forgive me, dear child, but these things must be faced—the papers will probably contain statements to your discredit, and I am determined that you shall stand acquitted before every individual who has ever known of your existence. This I am decided upon, and nothing can move me," was the firm response.
 Nina sighed, but held her peace.
 Sir Horace regarded her with admiration for a moment, then said:
 "You forget something very important. And as for me," he asked, then bent forward and whispered something in her ear.
 She started.
 "Ah, yes, I did forget for the time being, but I think me selfishly bound upon my own sorrows."
 "You think, then, that it would not be right to suspend all action in the matter?" he pursued.
 "No, I see not that it would not, and I suppose all must come out, as you say, but I cannot help thinking that it will be better to temper justice with mercy, as far as is practicable," was the somewhat sad and beseeching response.
 "I honor you, my friend, for your noble sentiments, and for your tender feelings toward me, and Sir Horace warmly replied, "I promise you that," "that since your mother has intrusted this matter to me, everything shall be done in as kind and considerate a manner as possible, and will give all the quarter we can."
 "Thank you," replied Nina, wearily.
 "if only the guilty were to suffer, should feel no compunction, but it does seem hard that the innocent must be involved also."
 "You forget who have been the wronged sufferers for so many years, and who are also innocent," replied Sir Horace, meaningly.
 "I know, but I believe I am becoming used to sorrow," was the sad response.
 "It is the old story about the sins of the parents being visited upon future generations over again, and I do not see how we can possibly help it," sighed madam.
 (To be continued.)

Humorous

The most humorous man is not always the happiest; the man who has scrofulous humor or any obstinate humor of the blood, does not feel very lively, at least not until he is cured, which, by the way, Burdock's Blood Purifier, the most trouble some of blood humors.

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 Tenant—"Every won of them, su, I every wan!"
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 10. Cancer of the Colon, Cancer of the Liver, Cancer of the
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 13. Throat, Cancer of the Larynx, Cancer of the
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 15. Pleura, Cancer of the Peritoneum, Cancer of the
 16. Ovary, Cancer of the Uterus, Cancer of the
 17. Cervix, Cancer of the Vagina, Cancer of the
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