

## FORGIVEN.

All the people in the house a great beholder of workmen—situated in the Rue Delambre, where Tony Robec had occupied a room for six months, took him for a widower lately bereaved, for his little son with whom he had lived alone, a small child, dressed as nicely as though he had a mother, was hardly 6 years old. However, neither the father nor the son wore any crape either on their caps or sleeves.

Every day, early in the morning, Tony Robec, who worked as a typesetter in a printing shop in the Latin quarter, went off with his little Adrien, still half asleep, on his shoulder, and would leave him at a school in the neighborhood, where after his days work was done, he would call for him, and leading the little fellow by the hand would stop at the butcher's and milkman's and take home in the child's schoolbasket, just as a woman would have done, what was necessary for their dinner, and then would shut himself up in his room till the next day.

The tender-hearted gossips of the house pitted the poor father, who was a still fine looking man scarcely 40 years old, but with such a sad pale face, his beard already streaked with gray and his earnest eyes looking like those of a lion in repose, and they said as they looked after him:

"That man ought to marry again. He is a good fellow, and a good drinker. He could easily find a nice girl to take care of him and his clean. Have you noticed how clean he keeps the little boy? Never a hole or spot on his clothes. He is an orderly man. You can see it at once, and seems he earns 10 francs a day."

They would have liked to have made his acquaintance. Generally it is not difficult to make friends with one's neighbors in these popular houses, where they live half the time with their doors open. But Tony had a reserved air, a polite way of bowing to them on the stairway which intimidated them.

Every Sunday the father and son clean as two new pennies, went for a walk. They had met them in the museums in the Jardin des Plantes. They had also seen them before dinner time in a little cafe of the quarter, where Tony treated himself to his sole luxury in the week, a glass of absinthe, which he drank slowly, while Adrien, seated by his side on a leather covered bench, looked at the illustrated papers.

"No, mesdames," said the concierge of the house, who was sentimental, to her friends, "that widower will never marry again. A Sunday or two ago I met him in one of the paths of the Montparnasse cemetery. His wife, no doubt, is buried there. It made me sad to see him with his motherless child. He must have adored his lost one. It is rare, but there are some like that; he is inconsolable."

Alas! yes. Tony Robec had loved his wife deeply and could not be consoled for her loss; only he was not a widower.

His history was a very simple and not a happy one. He was a conscientious workman, but only moderately clever at his trade, and it was not before a long time that he succeeded in setting type well and in earning his livelihood in a small way, and that was the reason why he never had thought of marrying until he was over 30 years of age. He should have chosen a serious minded girl, acquainted with poverty, as he had been himself. But love laughs at reason, and Tony lost his heart to a young flower girl 19 years old, who, although she was virtuous, had a very frivolous character, thinking only of dress and knowing how to make herself look like a little princess with her lovely face, a few bits of ribbon, and some bright colored stuff.

He had put by a small amount of money, sufficient to furnish the wee apartment quite well, and besides the usual necessary furniture he bought a wardrobe with a looking glass in it for 80 francs in the Faubourg St. Antoine in order that his sweetheart could see herself in it full length, and then he married his Clementine, and at first they were blissfully happy. How they did love each other, to be sure!

They had two rooms in the fifth story in a house on the Boulevard Port Royal, with a small balcony and a view over all Paris. Every evening when he left his printing house, situated on the left bank of Seine, Tony Robec, with his overcoat hiding his workman's blouse, looking quite like a gentleman, would go to the corner of the bridge of Saint Peres to wait for his little wife, who would come from the Rue Saint Honore, where her workshop was, and arm in arm, close together, they would hurry to their distant home and eat their merry evening meal.

But their Sundays, above all, were delightful. They were so happy at home they did not go out. Oh, their breakfasts in summer, with the windows open looking out over the great city and the blue sky, how good they were! While he was sipping his coffee and smoking his cigarette Clementine would go to watch the flower pots on the balcony. "She is so clever," he would say to himself, and then would get up from his chair softly and surprise her by kissing her on the back of the neck. "Will you never have done, you silly fellow?" she would say laughingly.

And then in due time a child was born, their little Felix, whom they put out to nurse at Margency, where they would go to see him every two weeks. But he died when he was a year old of convulsions. However, they were soon consoled by Adrien's birth, whom the mother wished to keep with her, and so she left her workshop and took in work at home, earning only about half as much, but managing all the same to dress herself very prettily, and would play the lady in the Luxembourg

gardens, rolling her baby before her in a little straw carriage.

But, although Tony toiled harder than ever, working besides in a newspaper office at night, he could not earn enough for their expenses and fell into debt. Then, when the child became strong enough to wear and was left during the day at the children's refuge, the mother who was often unemployed, fell into the dangerous habit of gadding about in the streets alone.

You can imagine the difference between the poor man, grown old before his time with care and worn out with hard work, and this frivolous girl, only 23 and as pretty as a picture of Greuze. One evening, on coming home with his little son, for whom he had stopped as he passed by the refuge Tony Robec found a letter on the mantelpiece from which, as he opened the envelope, Clementine's wedding ring fell out. In this latter the heartless creature bade him and her son good bye and asked their forgiveness at the same time.

The romantic juryman of the present day, who always acquit outraged husbands who kill their wives and their lovers under the pretext of "passionate crimes," would find our Tony very ridiculous and even a little despicable if they knew that he felt more sorry than anger. He wept a great deal, and when little Adrien said to him: "Where is mamma? Is mamma not coming home soon?" he kissed the little fellow passionately and replied: "I do not know."

Clementine had gone away at the beginning of May—ah, me, for how much is the odor of roses responsible sometimes!—and Tony, when the July rent day came sold nearly all his furniture and paid his debts and went to live in the Rue Delambre, wishing to be as far as possible from his former home. And there he lived quietly and honorably with his little boy, and his neighbors took him for a widower.

Toward the end of September he received a letter from his wife—four incoherent and despairing pages, whereon the ink was all blotted with tears. Her lover, a medical student, had gone away for his vacation to his family far down in the south, and he did not write to her or give her any sign of life. She, the traitress, was abandoned, betrayed in her turn, and she repented and begged and implored to be forgiven. This made poor Tony suffer terribly. But do not get excited, ferocious juryman, who have, all of you, a heart like the Moor's of Venice, and give back, if you please your esteem to the poor fellow, for he was proud and did not answer his culpable wife's epistle.

He heard no further news of Clementine till on Christmas day. Now, for many years he had had the touching custom of going on that day with his wife to carry an humble bouquet—a half half frozen violets, with a little rose-bud in their midst—to their firstborn's, their little Felix's tomb, who had died when he was out at nursing, and for whom, wishing to have his grave near to them, they had bought a right of burial for five years at Montparnasse, the concession of which had been already renewed.

For the first time Tony Robec had to make this pilgrimage alone with his little boy Adrien, and as he passed through the gate to the cemetery under a funeral winter's sky—and now, cruel Othello of the jury, you will again despise this weak-hearted husband when I tell you that he suffered more than ever as he remembered his absent wife, the fugitive.

"Where is she now?" thought he. "What has become of her?"

But on reaching Felix's tomb, which he had some trouble in finding, he stopped surprised. There was laid on his tombstone two or three playthings, such as the poorest people buy—a wooden trumpet, a polichinelle and a wooden dog—which had just been placed there, for they were quite new and had evidently been bought that very day at some cheap street stall.

"Oh, playthings," Adrien exclaimed as he saw the poor offerings. "But his father, having perceived a piece of paper pinned to one of the toys, stopped and picked it up and read there these words, written in a handwriting he well knew: "For Adrien, from his little brother, Felix, who is now in heaven with the Christ child."

Suddenly Tony felt his son press up against him and heard him murmur in a frightened voice, "Mamma!" and Tony saw a few steps off kneeling under a clump of cypress trees a woman clad in a beggar's dress and shawl, and, oh, so pale and with such sunken eyes, who stretched her clasped and supplicating hands toward him.

Between ourselves, sanguinary gentlemen of the jury, I do not believe that Tony Robec thought then of him who taught us both by word and by example to "forgive offences," for this workman was really ignorant of self-love and rancor. He trembled less from anger at the memory of the outrage he had suffered than from pity at seeing the woman he had so tenderly loved in such a miserable state, and he pushed his little son gently toward her.

"Adrien," he said, "go and kiss your mother."

She seized her child in a passionate embrace, covered his face with kisses as she sobbed with happiness, then turning a beseeching look toward her husband:

"How good you are!" she murmured. But he was already near to her and said, half choking, almost harshly: "Do not speak—and take my arm."

It is not far from the cemetery to the Rue Delambre, and they walked there quickly. Tony felt Clementine's arm trembling on his. The child trotted along beside them, thinking already only of his toys.

The concierge of the house Tony inhabited stood at the door.

"Madame," he said, "this is my wife who has been for six months in the country with her mother, who was very ill, and who has come home again."

And as they went up stairs he was obliged to support, almost to carry, the wretched woman, who had burst into sobs and was nearly fainting from emotion and from joy.

When he reached his humble room, Tony made his wife sit down in the only arm-chair he possessed and placed her son in her arms again. Then he went to his bureau, opened a drawer, from which he took out a small paper box in which he had kept Clementine's wedding ring and went and replaced it on her finger, and then, for the first time, without a word of anger or reproach about the past, with the great generosity of simple hearts, he kissed her silently, reverently on the forehead, so that he might be sure he had forgiven her—Francis Coppee in Philadelphia Press.

## Imported Jokes.

The surgeon major goes the round of the sick wards.

"Well, No. 6, how are you getting on?"

"Oh, doctor, I'm as hungry as a horse!"

"As hungry as a horse? Very good (turning to the sergeant in attendance); put down half a gallon of hay for No. 6."—*Il Corriere dei Bagni.*

"What will you do when you are grown up, Toto?"

"I shall be a soldier."

"But you will run the risk of being killed."

"By who?"

"The enemy."

Toto, after a moment's reflection

"Then I'll be the enemy."—*La Tribuna.*

"How dare you take off your hat to that fellow?"

"Why not?"

"You ought to know that he was mixed up with a very dirty gambling story."

"Indeed? Tell me all about it."

"The fact is, I don't remember whether he was the swindler or the victim."—*El Liberal.*

Turacioletti has discovered a stratagem for saving himself from annoyance on certain occasions. He pretends to be deaf. Yesterday he met a friend who said to him: "Will you lend me five francs?"

"What? I didn't hear," said Turacioletti.

"Lend me 10 francs."

"You said five the first time!"

"Il Motto per Ridere."

## A Prospector's Luck.

We were camped alongside of an emigrant train in Nebraska, and just after supper a woman about 40 years of age, who was smoking a pipe, came over to our fire and seized the crowd up, and said: "I've got sunthin' to say. I'm a plain-spoken woman. When I've got a thing on my mind, I don't beat around the bush."

We looked at her with curiosity and surprise, and she leaned against the wheel of a wagon and continued:

"I've been a widder for three years. Over that I've got a span of mules, a good horse, a new wagon filled with housekeeping stuff, and I can rake up about \$80 in cash. I can along with the party to take up a claim. I'm good-tempered, healthy, and can swing an ax or hold a plow with most anybody."

As I said, I'm a plain-spoken woman. If there's a critter among you who wants to get married, let him stand up while I take a look at him."

The eleven of us promptly stood up.

"Git into line," she continued, with a wave of her hand. "I hain't after beauty or eddeshum, but I can't take up with a fellow who'd skeer a wolf to death."

She passed down the line and then returned half way and said to a middle-aged man named Remington:

"You'll do, I reckon. Ther's a preacher in camp, and 'twon't take fifteen minutes to settle things. All of you as want to see the marrying come on."

We followed the couple, who were made man and wife inside of twenty minutes, and next morning as we passed the wagon on the road to town the woman looked out and bowed and said:

"Sorry for the other ten of ye, but perhaps you'll meet with another train soon and strike luck."

—*Louisville Commercial.*

## Perfectly Legal.

A young man, who probably belonged to the class known as "hired men" among farmers, called on a Detroit lawyer for advice, for \$3, says the Detroit Free Press. Then he laid down three silver dollars and said:

"Sposen I put \$3 in a savings bank?"

"Well?"

"Then I take a pen and put 000 after the figure 3?"

"Would it be agin the law?"

"No, not unless you tried to draw the \$3000."

"But I'm not going to try to, I probably shan't even ask for the \$3?"

"What's the object?"

"Girl out my way, I love her. She partly recips. I sh'd recip altogether if she thought I had lots of sugar."

"And you'll show her the bank-book?"

"I will."

"But after your marriage, what then? How'll you ever explain?"

"Easy as grease. Just tell her that the bank has busted, and that we must live for each other alone. Law can't tech me, eh?"

"No."

Good day. Got the \$3 in the bank now, and here goes to nail the ciphers. Mary Ann, thou art

my own sweet whippoorwill, and I'll bet a penful of hogs agin an ox-yoke thou art."

## He Could Tell Her.

A man with "Inspector" on his cap stood a little way from me. A woman who had purchased a ticket halted a minute, and then walked up to the inspector and said:

"I don't want to waste any steps in walking around. I do get so awfully tired. Can you tell me where the building is that has the artificial human beings?"

The inspector stared at her a minute and then said to her:

"No, madame, I cannot tell you, for I have never heard of them."

A man near who had heard the question said to her:

"I have heard of them. They are over in the woman's building. Just ask the lady managers"—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

## With the Children.

BITS OF WIT AND WISDOM FROM THE MOUTHS OF BABES.

One day after a race in the garden with the birds and butterflies, Lottie came in flushed, happy and out of breath to her invalid mother's side.

"What lovely pink roses my little girl has in her cheeks," said mamma. "I would give a fortune to have some like them in mine."

Lottie affectionately patted her mother's faded cheek.

"O, mamma dear, you have roses, too, yellow ones just as well as I do pink ones!"—Youth's Companion.

## IT MADE A DIFFERENCE.

Mamma—Come, little daughter, you must wash your hands after playing with the cat.

Little daughter—Yes, mamma; but I'll jes have to rinse 'em this time. I been playing with the kitten.—Harper's Young People.

## PANSIES ARE NICE, BUT—

Little Mary had been playing hard all the morning, and when the dinner-bell rang she ran in quickly and took her place. She found only some flowers on the table. Looking at a dish of pansies placed near her, she said: "Pansies are awful nice, but oh, I wish it was hash."—Youth's Companion.

## BIG THOUGHTS IN LITTLE HEADS.

Tommy—Papa, you tell me to have big thoughts. If the thoughts I have fill my head, how can they be any bigger?"

Papa—I don't think they fill it, dear, when they slip out so easily.—Harper's Young People.

## She Was a Paragon.

"Yes, there was one girl who lived right along with us for twenty-two years," said the old lady, with a reminiscent sigh, "and she might have been with the family yet if she had wanted to stay."

"She must have been a jewel," said one of the callers.

"Yes. We never had any trouble about her about wages or afternoon out or anything of that kind."

"Good cook?"

"Excellent. She could play the piano beautifully, too."

"Did you let her do that?"

"O, yes. And she read the papers to us and kept the library in order, and could keep accounts and paint on china and embroider on silk as nicely as anything you ever saw."

"I never heard of the like! How in the world did you happen to let her go?"

"Well, there came a young man along one day—a professor in college—and said he wanted her, and—here's one of her children now. Come, darling, and sit on grandmother's lap!"—Chicago Tribune.

## He Wanted More Realism.

"What you want," said Jaw-slugger, the tragedian, "is more realism, see?"

"But," replied the manager, "we have real water, real real fire engines and about everything in that line except real actors."

"Dat's all right," said the star, disdainfully to notice the sarcasm: "dat's all right, but 'tain't 'nough."

"What would you suggest?"

"Let's give 'em 'Ten Nights in a Bar-room' with real liquor."

## A Good Excuse.

Judge—You are charged with assaulting this man.

Prisoner—I plead guilty, your honor, but I have a good excuse. I addressed this man, civilly three times and he never answered me.

Judge—Why, this man is deaf and dumb!

Prisoner—Well, why didn't he say so?—Schalk.

## Her Time of Probation.

Ho—Gladly, I must beg of you, while you are an engaged girl, to observe a few of the limits of propriety. Your flirtations are the talk of the town.

She—Well, but you knew I was a flirt when you asked me to be your wife. You can't expect that marriage will make any difference.

He—I don't expect it—of course not! But I should like you to show some slight sense of decency until we are married!—Puck.

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## Hotels.

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Rooms are connected by direct speaking tubes with the office, and guests will be able to summon their waiters, or call on the office, or ascertain the name and location of others, etc., without having to call on bell-boys, or when a guest desires to leave his room, by notifying the office, the room can be connected with a system of alarms, so that no one can enter it by the door, the window or balcony, and the alarm signal to every room and to the Metropolitan Fire Department.

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