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THE GREAT NORTH SHORE ROUTE!

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HIS SPIRIT WIFE.

A Union that Lasted Even Beyond the Grave.

PART I.

"Who says there is nothing in it?" exclaimed Parkinson. "You have no right to make such a statement, for you can't possibly base it on any grounds of reason. Nothing in it! Good heavens, if one-half the skeptics, the laughing, jeering—fools knew as much about it as I do, they would proclaim it from the house-tops, and the world would soon believe, whether or no! Nothing in it! I wish there were not, but I—you are a disbeliever!"

"Well," said I, falteringly, for the man's vehemence frightened me, "well, I don't know much about it, to tell the truth."

"Then don't make any positive statement, as you did a moment ago, for, until you have inquired into the subject, you can't have any idea of the horrible reality of all the things concerned with it that people laugh at and put down as hypothetical. Listen—I want to tell you something."

Then, in the seclusion of the corner of the club room, where we were seated, he told me a story that I will give in words as near like his as my memory will allow.

"Five years ago," said Parkinson, "I was an unbeliever; to-day I have a knowledge of the subject that, were I able to prove what I know, would have more to do with converting all the skeptics than you or anyone can imagine. Five years ago I laughed with the rest of them. But now—I had a wife, a beautiful, loving creature. We were scarcely out of our honeymoon, and had just returned to town and gone into our new home, when she became the idol of society as she was of my life."

"One night we went out to a friend's, and there, among many other beautiful women, she was queen of all. I remember how I stood in the doorway and watched her, the centre of a group of admirers, her black eyes shining like diamonds as she talked earnestly to a man sitting near her. Everyone seemed interested in what the two were discussing, so I drew near."

"They were talking about this very subject, which had just begun to become a topic of general speculation. My wife was holding an animated argument with the man. He was a German, Schulz, I heard him called, who was somewhat of a lion on account of his wide knowledge of the matter under discussion."

"And you mean to say, Herr Schulz, my wife was saying, 'that anyone can do these wonderful things?'"

"Annette," he replied, 'who has a strong, firm will, can exercise control of another that is weaker.'

"And you—could you control the mind, the impressions of another? Of me, for instance?"

"The German's eyes flashed. He had an opportunity, he seemed to think, of riding his hobby."

"Perhaps," he said, 'Would you be willing to let me make a simple, harmless test?'"

"Before I could gainsay her, my wife had assented to his proposal, he had made a few passes with his smooth, long hand over her brow, and I saw her fall into a soft, easy sleep."

"When we arrived at our house we sat talking of the strange occurrences. I was still an unbeliever, to a certain extent, for I almost thought she had, in a spirit of fun, feigned the sleep into which it appeared she had been thrown by Schulz."

"No, no," she persisted, 'if I fell asleep as you say I did, it was real, perfectly real, I believe you could influence me in the same way if you tried.'

"I laughed at her. 'Try,' said she. 'We are alone now and it will be all right. Try, please, just for fun!'"

"Ah, if I had only resisted her pleading! If I had but been strong enough to keep from letting her persuade me! But she drew me to her, kissed me, and before I knew what I was doing, I made a pass before her eyes as Schulz had done."

"Those great eyes closed, her lips parted in a smile, and, with a long, happy sigh of sweet content, whose warmth bathed my face as I bent to kiss her, she fell into a sleep, a deep, hypnotic sleep."

"For a moment I stood and watched her, reclining in a deep armchair, one alabaster arm thrown behind her head and twining in the raven locks that were her greatest wealth, her bosom rising and falling like the sea in a summer wind, and an expression such as I had never seen before on her lovely face, even in her happiest moments, lighting her features. She was an angel, a dream fair and sweet as the one she was having. I think she was in paradise during those moments, in the seventh heaven, as I stood and watched her."

"I thought I would waken her, but she seemed too happy, and I let her sleep on. I could not bear to tear her from the delight she seemed to be experiencing, and I bent and kissed her once more."

"At last, however, I felt that it had gone far enough, and suddenly thought what might be the consequences of this frolic. I passed my hand over her forehead, and she smiled. I snapped my fingers in front of her face, and the smile grew more heaven-like, but she did not wake. Again and again I did as I had seen Schulz do, and the smile was brighter each time, but the sleep was as deep as ever."

"Then a fear seized me. I could not waken her! I kissed her face, her neck, her hands. I chafed her wrists, I called madly to her, and then, receiving no response, I lifted her in my arms and half carried, half dragged her across the room and back again, trying to bring her back to consciousness. But the sweet smile still illumined her face, the long eyelashes swept her cheeks, and she slept in still, peaceful slumber."

"I could do nothing. Laying her on the bed, I fell on my knees beside her, and buried my face in the folds of her dress. I dare not raise my eyes, for that smile crazed me; I could not endure it."

"What possessed me to act as I did I do not know. If I had it all to go over again I should never give way to my grief as I then did. I took no steps to bring her out of the stupor, but grovelled there like a madman."

"Suddenly I was aroused. Her breath seemed to be growing shorter. Her bosom was not rising as it did at first. I looked at her, and, merciful God! she seemed to be dying."

"I knew it! I could tell by the quickened breathing, the heightened pallor of the cheek, the—everything told me she was going, and, in a frenzy of despair, I fairly drowned her with kisses; I tried with her fingers to force her eyes open; I tried to give her breath with my breath, but it was no use."

"I saw her dying there, I watched every sign in stupid amazement and horror, and I let her die without making any further attempt to save her life."

"And she died as she had slept, with her lips parted in that same sweet smile, the smile that never woman wore, the smile that the music of heaven and the caresses of the angels alone can produce on the face; with her waving tresses of burnished jet crowning a brow more fair than marble from the heart of the earth, and her eyes closed, their long fringes lying on her cheek like feathers from the raven's wing on the new snow."

"She died, and as she died, the blood rushed to my brain, my heart stopped like a shot, and with one last look at that smile I shrieked and fell!"

"I drew my arm away, numb where Parkinson had gripped it in telling me his story. I looked in to his wild eyes and felt that I was with a madman. His hand was raised as though pointing to something he saw, his lips apart as though forming a word he could not speak, and his whole demeanor denoted the terrible state into which he had wrought himself."

"Pardon me," he whispered, "I did not mean to let my feelings overcome me as they have done. I—I will go on in a moment."

He staggered to the sideboard, poured

out a gill of brandy, threw it into his throat and seemed better. Then he returned to his seat, and, with more composure than he had before shown, continued his strange and startling story.

PART II.

"When I awoke I found myself in a strange room. I looked at the walls, the ceiling, and all about me, but could not divine where I was. Gradually, however, as the events of that horrible night came back with more and more of their horrible distinctness, I was able to collect my thoughts, and it at last recurred to me that I had been ill. But where I was, what was the nature of this strange place, I could not tell. A jail! The thought came to me suddenly, and it seemed to me that I had been arrested for her murder. Then I screamed: 'No, no, I am not guilty,' and tried to rise in my bed."

"A young woman came into the room softly, and gently forced me back upon the pillows."

"You must not try to rise," she said, 'you are too weak, and anything you want you must ask for.'

"Who are you?" I inquired.

"Your nurse."

"Then this was not the prison; but a hospital, and I was not suspected. Relieved beyond utterance at the thought I grew more restful, and allowed the nurse to bathe my head and administer my medicine, while I took the opportunity to ask her some questions."

"I learned that my wife had been buried two weeks; that they had found me delirious at her bedside the day after her death, and had brought me here to the hospital. She had died, they said, of heart failure, brought on by some unknown cause, and that was all they could tell me."

"You may conceive of my relief when I found that the truth was not known, and I grew strong very fast."

"It was a few days later, and I was alone in my room, which was filled with the fragrance of the flowers my friends had sent me as an expression of their sympathy for my great bereavement. I lay on my bed, inhaling the sweetness of a bunch of roses I held in my hand, when suddenly I felt a presence—at my side, and heard a voice, saying: 'They seem to be sorry that I have died.'

"I opened my half closed eyes, looked and saw—my wife. My Annette, beautiful as in the flesh, standing by the bed, smiling at me. Smiling as she smiled when she died, so rapturously, so sweetly! Her great eyes were wide open, and from their soulful depths there shone the light of an unutterable love. She was clad, not as I remembered her, but in robes of clinging white, and on her locks of black, twining in the tresses, gleamed many gems. And as she stood and smiled at me, all the horror that had first struck me vanished, and I raised my thin, wasted arms to her, murmuring: 'Annette, my love, do you forgive me?'"

"In tones so sweet and low, so full of love and tenderness that my eyes welled with tears and my joy consumed me, she answered: 'Forgive you? Forgive you? It is I who was to blame, for I caused you suffering, and I have come back to ask you to give me your pardon.'

"Then the kiss she gave me was just as warm, the arms she folded about my neck were just as clinging, and she toyed with my hair with fingers that were as light and soft as when she was alive. Alive? She seemed as much of the flesh as she had ever done, and it suddenly came to me that the whole matter of her death, my crime and all was only a dream, and that I had at last awakened to the pleasant reality. But her next words hurled me back into the same despair. She said: 'When I died I went to paradise, and in all that beautiful land I was unhappy, for I could look down and see you suffering and sorrowful, until I begged that I might come back to earth, in the spirit if not in the flesh, and cheer you. They let me come, and I shall always be with you, to cheer you and make you as happy as I can; nor will it be a sacrifice on my part, for Paradise, though it is beautiful beyond compare, is dreary while you are not there.'

"And it was the kiss she printed on my brow, the soothing caress she gave me, that made me too happy to contain my joy, and I swooned."

"When I awoke, Annette was no longer there, and the nurse, when I asked what had become of her, shook her head, and told me I was too weak to excite myself. Annette was dead, she told me quietly and sympathetically as she could. But the nurse did not know what I meant, and when I asked I she had seen no one pass out of my room, she smiled and told me

to be quiet, lest the delirium should return. Then she went out, and I was left alone."

"As I lay there and thought I had not lost Annette entirely my mind grew easier, and my conscience seemed relieved of the heavy weight that had been bearing it down. So, when on the morrow she appeared to me, coming into the room heralded, it seemed, by a sweet fragrance. I was not at all startled, but greeted her with a smile of glad welcome."

"It is as you suppose," she said, as if in answer to a question she knew I would ask, 'they cannot see me. I am invisible to all earthly eyes but yours, love. To you alone I live, and for you only!'"

"The days wore on, and again I mingled with the world. It sympathized with me, and I tried to show the grief I ought to have felt, when I was given words of pity and comfort. But my sorrow was feigned though no one knew it, for how could I be unhappy when she who was so much more beautiful than when of the earth was with me all the time?"

"She would sit with me in my studio all day long, or stand, looking over my shoulder as I painted, now and then offering suggestions that were of inestimable value to me. The inspiration of her sweet presence showed itself in every stroke of my brush, in every light and shadow, and my work was never so excellent. While I worked we would talk, and the people who passed my door wondered at hearing my voice, for they could not hear hers, and thought I was alone. We were very happy."

"A desire to paint her portrait came upon me one day, and I spoke of it to Annette. She was delighted with the idea and I commenced. I painted her as she appeared to me, clad in the soft robes that left her arms and throat exposed, her hair loosely fastened and falling in waving tresses over her shoulders. The portrait was never intended for mortal eyes, but it would have made me famous had I wished to exhibit it, I am sure. When it was finished, we stood looking at it."

"Am I so beautiful, then?" she asked. I had done her poor justice and told her so. Then I covered the face of the picture and hid it. I will show it to you some day."

"I saw a look of longing, I thought, in her eyes one day. 'Do you never grow tired of this place and wish to go back to your heavenly home?' I asked her."

"Never," she said, I was thinking just now of my present happiness, and not, as you think, of that which I am losing by staying with you."

"Could you leave me if you wanted to?" I asked. I shall never forget the sadness, the reproach, of her expression when she exclaimed: 'And do you want me to go, then?'"

"No, no," I hastened to reply, and kissed her reassuringly. 'No, Annette, but what I meant was this: Does not your desire to come back to me prevent your returning to the land beyond?'"

"I do not know. I believe, nay, I am sure, that you have a control over me such as you exercise on my earthly self when we went home that night. I don't think I could leave you, for my will is as much yours now as ever. But I don't want to leave you, and you—you must never make me. You must never grow weary of me as some men do of their wives. Will you?'"

"Never, Annette."

"Then she seemed much relieved, and we sat in silence for a long time. Suddenly she said: 'I want you to take me to our old home, where we were on that night when you—'"

"I would not let her finish the sentence. 'No, no,' I exclaimed, 'it is full of unpleasant memories.' I had never entered the place since that fatal night, feeling that I should be too much overcome by the sensations that would result from a visit to the scene of my—crime. The house had remained locked and no one had entered it. I tried to dissuade her, therefore, from her desire to go there, but she was set upon it, and I had to consent at last."

"So we went. The house was still as the grave and as dark. It was summer, and as we opened the window, a soft, warm breeze blew in upon us, and the scent of the heliotropes and the roses growing in the garden was wafted in upon it. A strange sensation, a premonition of danger, seemed to take possession of me in the midst of all the beauty of the day and scene, and in an anxiety of sudden fear I started to go away. But Annette would not have it."

"No," she said, 'I am going upstairs to see all there is to see. Come on.'

"Stop," I cried, 'you must not. Let us get out of here as soon as we can.'

"Silly," she laughed, 'don't be so foolish. I am going upstairs, and if you want to come you must follow me.'

"I tried to hold her, but with a rippling laugh she broke away from my grasp, and eluded me, running lightly up the stairs. I followed her unwillingly, though there was nothing to be afraid of that I could see or imagine. Yet that same feeling of danger filled me, and when we reached the threshold of the door of the room where the events of that night had taken place, I tried once more to make her come down stairs again with me. But she would not, and stood looking about with an air of interest."

"It does not come back to me very clearly," she said at last. 'I cannot remember all that happened. I remember coming into the room, sitting in that armchair, and—see, like this.'

"Before I could prevent her she had run across the room and taken her seat in the very chair where she had thrown herself on that fatal night. Yes, in the very chair, and, as if that were not enough to inflict upon me, who would forget it all, in the same position as she sat when it occurred, bringing it back with terrible distinctness."

"Her head was thrown back, and rested on one white arm; her lips were parted in a smile, her eyes closed, and she seemed as one asleep."

"Annette, Annette," I cried, 'for God's sake, don't.'

"She opened her lustrous eyes and smiled at me. 'What is the matter, my love?' she asked. 'Why are you afraid. I am not. Come, come and kiss me.'

"Then I bent over and kissed her, as I had done that other time, and as I did so I felt a sudden, awful desire come upon me. I do not know why it was, for at that moment I loved Annette more than I ever loved her before, but I felt as though I should like to try my power upon the spirit as I did upon the fleshly Annette. The former, she had told me, was as much in my power as the body had been, and if that were so, why could I not influence it as well? I never thought of the consequences—why, I do not know, I cannot tell. I only know that as I stood there, with one of her warm arms about my neck, the other serving as a soft pillow for her pretty head, her eyes closed and that same radiant happy smile upon her lips, I had to do what I did, and heaven can testify that it was not of my own volition."

"Holding my breath I bent over her, and placed my hand upon her forehead, gently stroking the alabaster brow. She did not open her eyes, but said dreamily, 'What are you doing?'"

"Brushing the hair away from your forehead so that I may kiss it the better," I said.

"Ah, if she had opened her eyes and seen me, seen the expression of my face as I lied thus to her, she would have started up in fright and the rest of what I am going to tell you would not have happened."

"I brushed my hand across her forehead again, her lips went wider apart, her smile deepened. Again, and her breath came more softly, while her bosom rose and fell with the gentle regularity that is seen only in sleep. Her arm released its hold upon my neck and fell at her side. She was asleep, sound asleep."

"Once more I smoothed her forehead, and this time the flesh was strange to my touch. Its solidity was not there, nor the warmth, and my fingers appeared to sink, sink into air, nothingness. Merciful heaven! As I looked at Annette my eyes could not see her so well. Where her white arm rested on the chair I could see through it; I could see through her body, I could see—I laughed at the delusion, for that it must be, and tried to rub my eyes into brightness, but as I looked again I saw—I did not see—"

"She, my Annette, was fading, vanishing away, like a mist. I reached out my hands, there was nothing between them and the chair. She had gone, disappeared! For a moment my heart stood still. Then, as the terrible truth dawned upon me, I reeled, and would have fainted, but a sound came to my ears. A sound like her voice, and it was full of the sadness of a broken heart, full of burning tears, and it said: 'My own, my love, how could you?'"

"O, the reproach of it! the rebuke! I staggered; the blood rushed to my brain, choking me, and I fell, senseless, to the floor!"

"They told me I should not have gone back to the house, for I ought to have known that the shock would prove too much for me, and the recollections a visit would bring to me would overcome me. They did not know, and I let them pity me and offer me solace in their ignorance. It was better—far better!"

Parkinson's head fell forward upon his breast, his eyes assumed a glassy stare, and he said the last few words in a hollow whisper. I could not speak in my great amazement and horror at the story he had told me, and could only wait until he went on, for he had something more to say."

"That my influence over the spirit was as strong as that which I had over the living Annette was not remarkable, I think, but I cannot see why she should have vanished, why she should die again, under the mesmeric sleep. Why did she! Why, O, why, could she have not simply fallen into slumber, as the other one did? Why did I have to lose her—why did I?"

The man's suffering was frightful to behold. He foamed at the mouth and raved, as he muttered the last words."

We took him to his home, and all was done that could be, but before morning he died with one word on his last breath—"Annette!"

We searched the studio for the picture, and found it. Those who knew Parkinson's wife all said it was a beautiful portrait of her, but too ideal. I did not tell them the story then, so they never knew how he came to paint it. I took the picture at a good price, and still have it, though, if Parkinson had his say in the matter I suppose he would want it destroyed."

The Toronto Home for Incurables.

PARKDALE, Ont., 27th, 1888.—Gentlemen, it gives me pleasure to let you know I have derived great benefit from the use of Nerviline. I have been a great sufferer from Neuralgia in the face, and last two years was quite a martyr to the malady. So soon as I observed the Nerviline advertised I obtained a bottle from our druggists, Messrs. John Gray & Co., Parkdale, and the effect was marvellous; pain ceased and I can enjoy sound sleep at night, and rise refreshed. I cannot speak too highly of it and heartily recommend it.

ALEXANDER STEEN.

A Life on the Ocean Wave.

A steam packet company of Liverpool desired to enlarge their premises and decided to purchase the piece of land adjoining, and which belonged to a maiden lady. The lady was willing to sell, and at so low a figure that the directors were astonished. She had a clause inserted in the deed to the effect that during the term of her natural life she and a companion should at any time travel free in any of the company's vessels. The directors were delighted with their bargain and readily agreed to this."

On the following day the lady sold her furniture, rented her house and went on board the first outward bound vessel belonging to the company, without troubling herself about her destination. Since that time, now twenty years ago, she has always lived on one ship or another, and is generally accompanied by some lady traveller for whom she advertises. She is believed to have made more than ten thousand dollars by the transaction, and the company has offered her this sum to get rid of her, but without success, as she is earning more in this than she could in any other way."

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Is the complaint of many poor mortals, who know not where to find relief. Hood's Sarsaparilla possesses just those elements of strength which you so earnestly crave, it will build you up, give you an appetite, strengthen your stomach and nerves. Try it."

Hood's pills act especially upon the liver, rousing it from its torpidity to its natural duties, cure constipation and assist digestion."

Eyes of Men and Women.

A physiological observer has come to the conclusion that women have a larger proportion of brown eyes than men. He also finds that the color of the eyes in children does not become fixed until they have arrived at the age of ten years. It has been pointed out by another investigator that when both parents have eyes of the same tint the chances are forty to four that the eyes of the children will develop the same color as they grow up; and that when the parents have eyes of different colors the chances are fifty-five to forty-five in favor of brown as against blue or gray eyes in their offspring."

TWO HARVEST EXCURSIONS.

Via the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul R'y., on Tuesday, August 30th, and September 27th, 1892.

Where the grasses are kissed by the wandering breeze, And the fields are rich with the golden grain; Where the schooner plows through the prairie sand, To its destined port on a western plain; Where homes may never be sought in vain, And hope is the thriftest plant that grows; Where man may ever his rights maintain, And land is as free as the wind that blows.

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