

THREE KISSES.

Three, only three, my darling, Separate, solemn, slow; Not like the swift and joyous ones We used to know.

When we kissed because we loved each other Simply to taste love's sweet, And lavished our kisses as the summer Lavishes heat—

But as they kiss whose hearts are wrong, When hope and fear are spent, And nothing is left to give, except A sacrament.

First of the three, my darling, Is sacred unto pain; We have hurt each other often, We shall again,

When we pine because we miss each other, And we do not understand How the written words are so much colder Than eye and hand.

I kiss thee, dear, for all such pain Which we may give or take; Buried, forgiven before it comes For our love's sake!

The second kiss, my darling, Is full of joy's sweet thrill; We have blessed each other always; We always will.

We shall reach until we feel each other, Past all of time and space; We shall listen till we hear each other In every place;

The earth is full of messengers, Which Love sends to and fro; I kiss thee, darling, for all joy Which we shall know.

The last kiss, O my darling My love—I cannot see Through my tears as I remember What it may be.

We may die, and never see each other— Die with no time to give Any sign that our hearts are faithful To die as live.

Token of what they will not see Who see our parting breath, This one last kiss, my darling, seals The seal of death.

—Anonymous.

THE TIDE-LANDS.

Miss Vanderpool came down the steps of her lodging house and stood looking about her with an expression of discontent on her high-bred face. It was not a very genteel lodging house, and it was not in a very genteel quarter. The paint was off in patches, and one of the faded green blinds hung on a single hinge.

She pushed the gate open and went up the steps. A woman opened the door and led her to a darkened room. It was the custom of the neighborhood to give free admission to visitors at such a time. In a little white coffin lay the younger of the two children. Beside it sat the father and mother, the woman sobbing quietly, the father with his arm about her, and in his lap the remaining child, who had cried herself to sleep in his arms.

and there were none in the city gardens, just recovering from the shock of a severe Eastern winter. She had no money to buy them from a florist. Up in the great house on the bluff that had been her home there was a conservatory, and in it there was a magnificent climbing rose that she had planted herself, years gone by, and nurtured into a vigorous growth.

A little later and there would be plenty of wild flowers outside the town. The violets always came first. Nay, it was already the last of April, and with the soft wind blowing and the clear sunshine of the past two weeks, the violets must be already out. She quickened her steps at the thought.

To reach the place she had to pass through the business portion of the town. Walking swiftly along, looking to neither right nor left, she was surprised to have some one accost her. "Miss Vanderpool!" It was John Ashton, whom she had not seen since the day that she found her father's name dishonored and herself beggared and homeless.

What could he wish to see her for? She remembered what he had said that time. "If you were rich and honored I should have been too proud to address you." She had resented the speech then. Recalling it did now could not help admitting that it did honor to John Ashton. She was thinking of John Ashton the boy, the little ragged fellow who used to do chores about her father's house, picking up an education at the public schools, devoting himself to her service on holidays.

She was walking down the street, lined with low cottages, when she stopped before one of the poorest and meanest, where a stunted lilac, just budding in the front yard, gave evidence of some little refinement on the part of the occupants. But it was not this that attracted Miss Vanderpool's attention. Floating from the door-knob, she beheld a little piece of thin white crepe, tied with narrow ribbon, the wan banner of sorrow.

was better so. She would have chosen this very way of death, if she might. She had been tortured by one dread, over and over again, during these years of poverty and privation, and she gave a little hysterical laugh as she remembered it now.

Oh, the terror of it! Not death. Many were there who would know her and greet her gladly; father, mother, brother, friends of her childhood—the only friends she had kept. But that last thought! To drop out and never be missed; to leave behind her not a human being who would care. Why should she grieve over it now?

It was when that she sent up her first and only cry for help. Hitherto she had been silently resigning herself to death with a calmness and dignity befitting a Vanderpool. Now a prolonged and mournful cry went out over the marshes, startling the seagulls, which rose and wheeled aimlessly about against the darkening sky.

When she came to herself she was in her own little room. It was very quiet and comfortable. Her landlady fitted in and out, with a look of honest concern on her careworn face. So the world was not so hard, after all. She—the Gorgon—seemed glad that her delinquent lodger was alive, and said no word about the rent overdue.

"Now, my dear," said the Gorgon, pouring something into a clumsy earthen cup and handing it to her. "Just you take this cup of coffee and bit of hot roll, and it'll set you up in no time. You've been looking peaked and miserable this long time. Folks that feeds themselves don't take no proper care. I've been thinking, this long while, that if you'd just take your living along and give pianny lessons to my Sairy Ann—but I hardly dared ask it, you being such a fine player and she having no instrument unless you'd maybe let her come up and practice times when you was in and could watch and see she didn't dirty the pearl keys or spile it."

"Didn't dare ask it!" Miss Vanderpool would have acted as the child's nurse, scrubbed floors, washed dishes, if she had asked it. The backbone of her pride was broken. But what was the woman saying now?

"And now, if you'll let me tidy up a bit, and make things half-way decent, for the gentleman's been waiting to see you this long time." "The gentleman! What gentleman?" Miss Vanderpool was not used to callers. The landlady answered her inquiry.

"Why, who but him that saved you! Him that brought you here in his arms, looking like dead and all covered with mud—and a pretty sight you were, Miss Vanderpool. And awful work it was cleaning you up, it you be a lady!"

What made Miss Vanderpool's face aflame and her heart beat so? It might be any one of a thousand men. There was no reason, no reason in the world, she told herself, why it should be any particular one. Yet, as luck would have it, it was John Ashton! No, not luck. Chance rarely favors such men as he. All that they have is won by hard endeavor, and persistent faith, and dogged watchfulness.

But John Ashton was not the man to claim any recompense for the service he had rendered. The more serious her peril, the greater risk he had run on her behalf, the more need that he should be delicate and distant in all his bearing toward her; that he should try to make her forget he

had ever pressed any claims upon her. He would not have come now had he been his own free agent. She saw that the moment he opened the door, and shrank from her own thoughts. He surmised the look upon her face, and interpreted it in his own way.

"You are feeling better, Miss Vanderpool?" There was not a note in his voice beyond the ordinary requirements of courtesy. She answered him in kind. "Quite well now, I thank you. Won't you be seated?" motioning him to a chair. "I thank you." But he still remained standing, his hat in his right hand, his left hand—was it her fancy or were the fingers clenched?—hanging easily beside him.

"I came," he said, in a matter of fact way, "about a matter of business. I tried to speak to you on the street today. You were not willing to listen. You were right. It was not the proper place." "You mistook. It wasn't that. I was preoccupied; I couldn't have talked then—with any one," she explained, hurriedly, and in a low voice. He scarcely noted her words and did not at all comprehend them, but went on, in a formal business way: "A matter of business. I was authorized to conduct some negotiations with you. They concern the Vanderpool estate."

He drew a paper from his pocket and named a sum which took Miss Vanderpool's breath away. Enough to restore the lost glory of the Vanderpools. Enough—more than enough—to buy back the old home where her mother had died and she was born; enough to restore her to the life of affluence to which she had been bred; enough to place her forever beyond the reach of the petty privations and racking cares that had sat so heavily upon her but yesterday. She raised herself up on one elbow and looked at him. Her eyes, always large, shone with an unnatural brilliance. He thought her exulting over her restoration to wealth and power.

"I won't ask you for an answer now," he said; "perhaps you would better consult a lawyer. May I say to the company that you will give your answer in writing?" He was moving toward the door, not waiting for her answer, for he had determined to give her no opportunity to refer to the events of the day. He was arrested by a single word: "John!"

No woman ever speaks in such a way to a man she does not love, but the men do not always understand. John Ashton did not understand. He came back and stood by her side, looking down doubtfully into the shining eyes raised to his own, then turned quickly away. He was only a man, after all, and he had some bitter recollections to steel him against any betrayal of weakness. Besides, she was a rich woman now, richer than she had been in the days when he had assured her he would have been too proud to ask her to share his life.

Hardly a month passes but we read of terrible explosions, and loss of life from natural gas. One writer has raked up Chinese history, wherein it appears, that away back in the time when the famous Chinese wall was building, before the use of gas wells was discovered, a terrible explosion took place.

The big wells in some way got the start of the little ones, so that enormous volumes of air were sucked down into those subterranean magazines. When the air reached certain proportions, the whole thing went off like a leaky gasoline stove. The result was horrible in the destruction of lives. The same writer predicts similar conditions underlying the great natural gas belt of this country, from Toledo, through Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, whereby that whole vast region might be ripped up to the depth of 1500 feet, leaving a chasm for the waters of the great lakes to pour down into, blotting out every living human being in this now densely populated valley from the face of the earth.

Scores of people are dying daily with typhoid fever, diarrhea, dysentery, cholera-morbus, and infant summer complaints; all caused by poisonous gases and ferments, far worse than hydrogen gas or dynamite in their explosions. Fortunately this latter danger can all be averted, by the use of a simple old fashioned remedy, Johnson's Anodyne Liniment, used internally, as explained in a pamphlet sent free to any one, by L. S. Johnson & Co., Boston, Mass. No matter if you have used this remedy before, it will pay you to get a bottle and read the directions, or send for the pamphlet just to learn how to use it economically.—Advt.

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