

POETRY.

THE DIAL'S SHADOW.

Go, Cupid, say to her I love
That roses fall and time is fleeting.

SELECT STORY.

THE HIDDEN HAND

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CONTINUED FROM THE CAPITAL.

"Indeed I liked you before I saw you!

I always did like people that make other

people's hair stand on end?"

Black Donald looked at the girl from

head to foot, and said, coolly:

"Miss Black, I am afraid you are not

good."

"Yes I am—before folks!" said Cap.

"And now if you really like me as well

as you say, do come give me a kiss."

"I would!" said Cap, "until you have

done your supper and washed your face.

Your beard is full of crumbs!"

"Very well, I can wait awhile! mean-

time just brew me a bowl of egg-nog, by

way of a night-cap, will you?" said the

outlaw, drawing off his boots and stretch-

ing his legs to the fire.

"Agreed; but it takes two to make egg-

nog; you'll have to whisk up the

whites of the eggs into froth, while I beat

the yolks, and mix the other ingredi-

ents," said Cap.

"Just so," assented the outlaw, stand-

ing up and taking off his coat, and fling-

ing it upon the floor.

Cap, shuddered, but went on calmly

with her preparations. There were two

little white bowls sitting one within the

other upon the table.

Black Donald sat down in his shirt-

sleeves, took one of the bowls from Capita-

la and began to whisk up the whites with all

his might and main.

Capitola beat up the yolks, gradually

mixing the sugar with it. In the course

of her work she complained that the heat

of the fire scorched her face, and she drew

her chair farther towards the corner of

the chimney, and pulled the stand after

her.

"Oh! you are trying to get away from

me," said Black Donald.

Cap, smiled, and went on beating her

eggs and sugar together. Then she stirred

in the brandy and poured in the milk,

and took the bowl from Black Donald, and

laid on the foam. Finally, she filled a

goblet with the rich compound, and hand-

ed it to her uncanny guest.

Black Donald untied his neck cloth,

threw it upon the floor, and sipped his

egg-nog, all the while looking over the top

of the glass at Capita.

"Miss Black," he said, "it must be past

twelve o'clock."

"I suppose it is," said Cap.

"Then it must be long past your usual

hour of retiring."

"Of course it is," said Cap.

"Then what are you waiting for?"

"For my company to go home," replied

Cap.

"Meaning me?"

"Meaning you," said Cap.

"Oh, don't mind me, my dear."

"Very well," said Cap, "I shall not

trouble myself about you," and her tones

were steady though her heart seemed

turned into a ball of ice through terror.

when your young soul was as white as

your skin, before she ever dreamed her

boy would grow black with crime. I will

call you simply Donald, and entreat you to

hear me for a few minutes."

"Talk on, then, but talk fast, and leave

my mother alone. Let the dead rest!"

"Donald," she said, "men call you a

man of blood; they say that your hair is

red and your soul is black with crime."

"They may say what they like; I care

not," laughed the outlaw.

"But I do not believe all this of you. I

believe that there is good in all, and much

good in you; that there is hope for all, and

strong hope for you."

"Boh! stop talking poetry! Taint in

my line, nor yours either!" laughed Black

Donald.

"But truth is in all our lines. Donald! I

repeat it, men call you a man of blood!

They say that your hands are red and

your soul is black with crime. Black Donald

they call you! But Donald, you never yet

stained your soul with a crime as black as

that which you think of perpetrating to-

night!"

"It must be near one o'clock, and I'm

tired."

"All your former acts," continued Capita-

la, "have been those of a bold, bad man! I

think that would be that of a base one!"

"Take care, girl! You are in my power!

I know my position; but I must con-

tinue. Hitherto you have robbed mail

coaches and broken into rich men's houses.

In doing thus, you have always boldly

risks your life, often at such fearful odds

that men have trembled at their furies to

hear it. And even woman, while de-

ploring your crimes, have admired your

courage."

"Ha-ha-ha! Oh, you flatterer. Come—

have you done? I tell you it is after one

o'clock, and I am tired to death? I am

tired of all this nonsense. I mean to carry

out, and there's an end of it," said the

outlaw, doggedly raising from his seat.

"Stop!" said Capita, turning ashen

pale—"stop, sit down and hear me for just

five minutes; I will not tax your patience

longer."

The robber sank again into his chair,

saying:

"Very well; talk on for just five

minutes and not a single second longer."

"Donald, do not sink your soul to per-

dition by a crime that Heaven cannot

pardon. Listen to me; I have jewels here

worth several thousand dollars. If you

will consent to go, I will give them all to

you, and let you quietly out of the front

door, and never say one word to mortal

of what has passed here to-night."

"Ha-ha-ha! my dear, how green

you must think me! What hinders me

from possessing myself of your jewels as

well as of yourself?" said Black Donald,

impudently rising.

"Sir, the five minutes' grace

are not half yet!" said Capita, in a breath-

less voice.

"So they are not! I will keep my promise."

"Donald, uncle pays me a quarterly sum

for pocket-money, which is at least five

times as much as I can spend in this quiet

country place. It has been accumulating

for years until now I have several thou-

sand dollars all of my own. You shall have

it if you will only go quietly away and

leave me in peace!" cried Capita.

"My dear, I intend to take that any-

how; take it as your bridal dower, you

know. For I'm going to carry you off and

make an honest wife of you!"

"DONALD, give up this heinous purpose!"

cried Capita, in an agony of supplication,

as she leant over the back of the outlaw's

chair.

"Yes, you know I will! ha-ha-ha!"

laughed the robber.

"Man, for your own sake give it up!"

"Ha-ha-ha! for my sake!"

CHAPTER I.

THE NEXT MORNING.

Oh, such a day!

So fought, so followed and so fairly won

Came not till now to dignify the times

Since Caesar's fortunes.—SHAKESPEARE.

It was late in the morning when at last

the sun shone down, and Capita, as usual

on a dewy morning, she had been sleeping

she was aroused from a profound state of

insensibility by a loud, impatient knock-

ing at her door.

She started up wildly and gazed around

her. For a minute she could not remem-

ber what were the circumstances under

which she had lain down or what was

that vague feeling of horror and alarm

that possessed her. Then the yawning

trap-door, the remnants of the supper, and

Black Donald's coat, hat and boots upon

the floor, drew in upon her reeling brain

the memory of the night of terror.

The knocking continued more loudly

and impatiently, accompanied by the voice

of Mrs. Condiment, crying:

"Miss Capita! Miss Capita! why

what can be the matter with her?—Miss

Capita!"

"Eh! what? yes!" answered Capita,

pressing her hands to her feverish fore-

head, and putting back her dishevelled

hair.

"Why, how soundly you sleep, my dear!

I've been calling and rapping here for a

quarter of an hour. Good gracious child,

what made you oversleep yourself so?"

"I did not get to bed till very late,"

said Capita, confusedly.

"Well, well, my dear, make haste now,

your uncle is none of the patientest, and

you have been waiting breakfast for some

time! Come, open the door, and I will

help you to dress, so that you may be

ready sooner."

Capitola rose from the side of the bed,

where she had been sitting, and went

cautiously around that gaping trap-door

to her chamber door, when she missed the

key, and suddenly remembered that it had

been in a Black Donald's pocket when he

fell. A shudder thrilled her frame at the

thought of that horrible fall.

"Well, well, Miss Capita, why don't

you open the door?" cried the old lady,

impudently.

"Sir, the five minutes' grace

are not half yet!" said Capita, in a breath-

less voice.

"So they are not! I will keep my promise."

"Donald, uncle pays me a quarterly sum

for pocket-money, which is at least five

times as much as I can spend in this quiet

country place. It has been accumulating

for years until now I have several thou-

sand dollars all of my own. You shall have

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as she leant over the back of the outlaw's

chair.

"Yes, you know I will! ha-ha-ha!"

laughed the robber.

"Man, for your own sake give it up!"

"Ha-ha-ha! for my sake!"

"Yes, for yours! Black Donald, have

you ever reflected on death?" asked Capita,

in a low and terrible voice.

"I have risked it often enough; but as

to reflecting upon it, it will be time enough

to do that when it comes. I am a power-

ful man, in the prime and pride of life,"

said the athlete, stretching himself exult-

ingly.

"Black Donald—will you leave my

room?" cried Capita, in an agony of

prayer.

"No," answered the outlaw, mocking

her tone.

"Is there no inducement that I can hold

out to you, to leave me?"

"None!"

Capitola raised herself from her leaning

posture, took a step backwards so that she

stood entirely free from the trap-door;

then slipping off her foot under the rag, she

placed it lightly on the spring-board, which

she was careful not to press; the ample

fall of her dress concealed the position of

her foot.

"Man, I will give you one more chance.

Oh, man, pity yourself as I pity you, and

consent to leave me."

"Ha-ha-ha! It is quite likely that I will

not! I'm not a fool. And now the five min-

utes' grace are quite up."

"Stop! don't move yet! before you stir

say, 'Lord have mercy on me!' said Capita

solemnly.

"Ha-ha-ha! that's a pretty idea! why

should I say that?"

"Say it to please me! only say it, Black

Donald!"

"But why to please you?"

"Because I wish not to kill both your

body and soul. I mean to take you and

your property into the presence of your

Creator! For, Black Donald, within a few

seconds your body will be hurled to swift

destruction, and your soul will stand be-