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Frank Frankfort Moore**

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**DAIREEN**

**Volume 1 of 2**

**By Frank Frankfort Moore**



<sup>D</sup> "At her feet was Oswin Markham."



# DAIREEN

BY

FRANK FRANKFORT MOORE

AUTHOR OF

'FLYING FROM A SHADOW' 'MATE OF THE JESSICA' 'SOJOURNERS TOGETHER' ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

LONDON

SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE

1879



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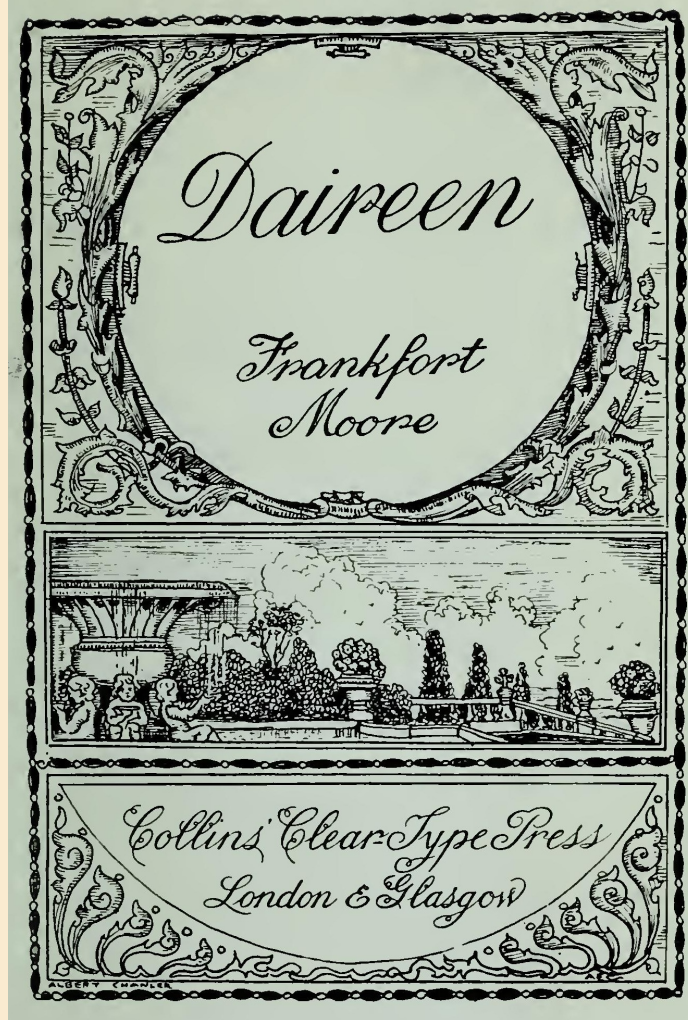
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## CHAPTER I.

A king  
Upon whose property...  
A damn'd defeat was made.

A king  
Of shreds and patches.

The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more?  
*Hamlet.*

**M**Y son," said The Macnamara with an air of grandeur, "my son, you've forgotten what's due"—he pronounced it "jew"—"to yourself, what's due to your father, what's due to your forefathers that bled," and The Macnamara waved his hand gracefully; then, taking advantage of its proximity to the edge of the table, he made a powerful but ineffectual attempt to pull himself to his feet. Finding himself baffled by the peculiar formation of his chair, and not having a reserve of breath to draw upon for another exertion, he concealed his defeat under a pretence of feeling indifferent on the matter of rising, and continued fingering the table-edge as if endeavouring to read the initials which had been carved pretty deeply upon the oak by a humorous guest just where his hand rested. "Yes, my son, you've forgotten the blood of your ancient sires. You forget, my son, that you're the offspring of the Macnamaras and the O'Dermots, kings of Munster in the days when there were kings, and when the Geraldts were walking about in blue paint in the woods of the adjacent barbarous island of Britain"—The Macnamara said "barbarious."

"The Geraldts have been at Suanmara for four hundred years," said Standish quickly, and in the tone of one resenting an aspersion.

"Four hundred years!" cried The Macnamara scornfully. "Four hundred years! What's four hundred years in the existence of a family?" He felt that this was the exact instant for him to rise grandly to his feet, so once more he made the essay, but without a satisfactory result. As a matter of fact, it is almost impossible to release oneself from the embrace of a heavy oak chair when the seat has been formed of light cane, and this cane has become tattered.

"I don't care about the kings of Munster—no, not a bit," said Standish, taking a mean advantage of the involuntary captivity of his father to insult him.

"I'm dead sick hearing about them. They never did anything for me."

The Macnamara threw back his head, clasped his hands over his bosom, and gazed up to the cobwebs of the oak ceiling. "My sires—shades of the Macnamaras and the O'Dermots, visit not the iniquity of the children upon the fathers," he exclaimed. And then there came a solemn pause which the hereditary monarch felt should impress his son deeply; but the son was not deceived into fancying that his father was overcome with emotion; he knew very well that his father was only thinking how with dignity he could extricate himself from his awkward chair, and so he was not deeply affected. "My boy, my boy," the father murmured in a weak voice, after his apostrophe to the shades of the ceiling, "what do you mean to do? Keep nothing secret from me, Standish; I'll stand by you to the last."

"I don't mean to do anything. There is nothing to be done—at least—yet."

"What's that you say? Nothing to be done? You don't mean to say you've been thrifling with the young-woman's affection? Never shall a son of mine, and the offspring of The Macnamaras and the——"

"How can you put such a question to me?" said the young man indignantly. "I throw back the insinuation in your teeth, though you are my father. I would scorn to trifle with the feelings of any lady, not to speak of Miss Gerald, who is purer than the lily that blooms——"

"In the valley of Shanganagh—that's what you said in the poem, my boy; and it's true, I'm sure."

"But because you find a scrap of poetry in my writing you fancy that I forget my—my duty—my——"

"Mighty sires, Standish; say the word at once, man. Well, maybe I was too hasty, my boy; and if you tell me that you don't love her now, I'll forgive all."

"Never," cried the young man, with the vehemence of a mediaeval burning martyr. "I swear that I love her, and that it would be impossible for me ever to think of any one else."

"This is cruel—cruel!" murmured The Macnamara, still thinking how he could extricate himself from his uneasy seat. "It is cruel for a father, but it must be borne—it must be borne. If our ancient house is to degenerate to a Saxon's level, I'm not to blame. Standish, my boy, I forgive you. Take your father's hand."

He stretched out his hand, and the young man took it. The grasp of The Macnamara was fervent—it did not relax until he had accomplished the end he had in view, and had pulled himself to his feet. Standish was

about to leave the room, when his father, turning his eyes away from the tattered cane-work of the chair, that now closely resembled the star-trap in a pantomime, cried:

"Don't go yet, sir. This isn't to end here. Didn't you tell me that your affection was set upon this daughter of the Gerald's?"

"What is the use of continuing such questions?" cried the young man impatiently. The reiteration by his father of this theme—the most sacred to Standish's ears—was exasperating.

"No son of mine will be let sneak out of an affair like this," said the hereditary monarch. "We may be poor, sir, poor as a bogtrotter's dog——"

"And we are," interposed Standish bitterly.

"But we have still the memories of the grand old times to live upon, and the name of Macnamara was never joined with anything but honour. You love that daughter of the Gerald's—you've confessed it; and though the family she belongs to is one of these mushroom growths that's springing up around us in three or four hundred years—ay, in spite of the upstart family she belongs to, I'll give my consent to your happiness. We mustn't be proud in these days, my son, though the blood of kings—eh, where do ye mean to be going before I've done?"

"I thought you had finished."

"Did you? well, you're mistaken. You don't stir from here until you've promised me to make all the amends in your power to this daughter of the Gerald's."

"Amends? I don't understand you."

"Don't you tell me you love her?"

The refrain which was so delightful to the young man's ears when he uttered it alone by night under the pure stars, sounded terrible when reiterated by his father. But what could he do—his father was now upon his feet?

"What is the use of profaning her name in this fashion?" cried Standish. "If I said I loved her, it was only when you accused me of it and threatened to turn me out of the house."

"And out of the house you'll go if you don't give me a straightforward answer."

"I don't care," cried Standish doggedly. "What is there here that should make me afraid of your threat? I want to be turned out. I'm sick of this place."

"Heavens! what has come over the boy that he has taken to speaking like this? Are ye demented, my son?"

"No such thing," said Standish. "Only I have been thinking for the past few days over my position here, and I have come to the conclusion that I couldn't be worse off."

"You've been thinking, have you?" asked The Macnamara contemptuously. "You depart so far from the traditions of your family? Well, well," he continued in an altered tone, after a pause, "maybe I've been a bad father to you, Standish, maybe I've neglected my duty; maybe——" here The Macnamara felt for his pocket-handkerchief, and having found it, he waved it spasmodically, and was about to throw himself into his chair when he recollected its defects and refrained, even though he was well aware that he was thereby sacrificing much of the dramatic effect up to which he had been working.

"No, father; I don't want to say that you have been anything but good to me, only——"

"But I say it, my son," said The Macnamara, mopping his brows earnestly with his handkerchief. "I've been a selfish old man, haven't I, now?"

"No, no, anything but that. You have only been too good. You have given me all I ever wanted—except——"

"Except what? Ah, I know what you mean—except money. Ah, your reproach is bitter—bitter; but I deserve it all, I do."

"No, father: I did not say that at all."

"But I'll show you, my boy, that your father can be generous once of a time. You love her, don't you, Standish?"

His father had laid his hand upon his shoulder now, and spoke the words in a sentimental whisper, so that they did not sound so profane as before.

"I worship the ground she treads on," his son answered, tremulous with eagerness, a girlish blush suffusing his cheeks and invading the curls upon his forehead, as he turned his head away.

"Then I'll show you that I can be generous. You shall have her, Standish Macnamara; I'll give her to you, though she is one of the new families. Put on your hat, my boy, and come out with me."

"Are you going out?" said Standish.

"I am, so order round the car, if the spring is mended. It should be, for I gave Eugene the cord for it yesterday."

Standish made a slight pause at the door as if about to put another question to his father; after a moment of thoughtfulness, however, he passed out in silence.

When the door had closed—or, at least, moved upon its hinges, for the shifting some years previously of a portion of the framework made its closing an impossibility—The Macnamara put his hands deep into his pockets, jingling the copper coins and the iron keys that each receptacle contained. It is wonderful what suggestions of wealth may be given by the judicious handling of a few coppers and a bunch of keys, and the imagination of The Macnamara being particularly sanguine, he felt that the most scrupulous moneylender would have offered him at that moment, on the security of his personal appearance and the sounds of his jingling metal, any sum of money he might have named. He rather wished that such a moneylender would drop in. But soon his thoughts changed. The jingling in his pockets became modified, resembling in tone an unsound peal of muffled bells; he shook his head several times.

"Macnamara, my lad, you were too weak," he muttered to himself. "You yielded too soon; you should have stood out for a while; but how could I stand out when I was sitting in that trap?"

He turned round glaring at the chair which he blamed as the cause of his premature relaxation. He seemed measuring its probable capacities of resistance; and then he raised his right foot and scrutinised the boot that covered it. It was not a trustworthy boot, he knew. Once more he glanced towards the chair, then with a sigh he put his foot down and walked to the window.

Past the window at this instant the car was moving, drawn by a humble-minded horse, which in its turn was drawn by a boy in a faded and dilapidated livery that had evidently been originally made for a remarkably tall man. The length of the garment, though undeniably embarrassing in the region of the sleeves, had still its advantages, not the least of which was the concealment of a large portion of the bare legs of the wearer; it was obvious too that when he should mount his seat, the boy's bare feet would be effectually hidden, and from a livery-wearing standpoint this would certainly be worth consideration.

The Macnamara gave a critical glance through the single transparent pane of the window—the pane had been honoured above its fellows by a polishing about six weeks before—and saw that the defective spring of the vehicle had been repaired. Coarse twine had been employed for this purpose; but as this material, though undoubtedly excellent in its way, and of very general utility, is hardly the most suitable for restoring a steel spring to its original condition of elasticity, there was a good deal of jerkiness apparent in the motion of the car, especially when the wheels turned into the numerous ruts of the drive. The boy at the horse's head was, however, skilful in avoiding the deeper depths, and the animal was also most considerate in its gait, checking within itself any unseemly outburst of spirit and restraining every propensity to break into a trot.

"Now, father, I'm ready," said Standish, entering with his hat on.

"Has Eugene brushed my hat?" asked The Macnamara.

"My black hat, I mean?"

"I didn't know you were going to wear it today, when you were only taking a drive," said Standish with some astonishment.

"Yes, my boy, I'll wear the black hat, please God, so get it brushed; and tell him that if he uses the blacking-brush this time I'll have his life." Standish went out to deliver these messages; but The Macnamara stood in the centre of the big room pondering over some weighty question.

"I will," he muttered, as though a better impulse of his nature were in the act of overcoming an unworthy suggestion. "Yes, I will; when I'm wearing the black hat things should be levelled up to that standard; yes, I will."

Standish entered in a few minutes with his father's hat—a tall, old-fashioned silk hat that had at one time, pretty far remote, been black. The Macnamara put it on carefully, after he had just touched the edges with his coat-cuff to remove the least suspicion of dust; then he strode out followed by his son.

The car was standing at the hall door, and Eugene the driver was beside it, giving a last look to the cordage of the spring. When The Macnamara, however, appeared, he sprang up and touched his forehead, with a smile of remarkable breadth. The Macnamara stood impassive, and in dignified silence, looking first at the horse, then at the car, and finally at the boy Eugene, while Standish remained at the other side. Eugene bore the gaze of the hereditary monarch pretty well on the whole, conscious of the abundance of his own coat. The scrutiny of The Macnamara passed gradually down the somewhat irregular row of buttons until it rested on the protruding bare feet of the boy. Then after another moment of impressive silence, he waved one hand gracefully towards the door, saying:

"Eugene, get on your boots."

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## CHAPTER II.

Let the world take note  
You are the most immediate to our throne;  
And with no less nobility of love  
Than that which dearest father bears his son  
Do I impart toward you.

How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl.

Hamlet.

**W**HEN the head of a community has, after due deliberation, resolved upon the carrying out of any bold social step, he may expect to meet with the opposition that invariably obstructs the reformer's advance; so that one is tempted—nay, modern statesmanship compels one—to believe that secrecy until a projected design is fully matured is a wise, or at least an effective, policy. The military stratagem of a surprise is frequently attended with good results in dealing with an enemy, and as a friendly policy why should it not succeed?

This was, beyond a question, the course of thought pursued by The Macnamara before he uttered those words to Eugene. He had not given the order without careful deliberation, but when he had come to the



conclusion that circumstances demanded the taking of so bold a step, he had not hesitated in his utterance.

Eugene was indeed surprised, and so also was Standish. The driver took off his hat and passed his fingers through his hair, looking down to his bare feet, for he was in the habit of getting a few weeks of warning before a similar order to that just uttered by his master was given to him.

"Do you hear, or are you going to wait till the horse has frozen to the sod?" inquired The Macnamara; and this brought the mind of the boy out of the labyrinth of wonder into which it had strayed. He threw down the whip and the reins, and, tucking up the voluminous skirts of his coat, ran round the house, commenting briefly as he went along on the remarkable aspect things were assuming.

Entering the kitchen from the rear, where an old man and two old women were sitting with short pipes alight, he cried, "What's the world comin' to at all? I've got to put on me boots."

"Holy Saint Bridget," cried a pious old woman, "he's to put on his brogues! An' is it The Mac has bid ye, Eugene?"

"Sorra a sowl ilse. So just shake a coal in iviry fut to thaw thim a bit, alana."

While the old woman was performing this operation over the turf fire, there was some discussion as to what was the nature of the circumstances that demanded such an unusual proceeding on the part of The Macnamara.

"It's only The Mac himsilf that sames to know—. knock the ashes well about the hale, ma'am—for Masther Standish was as much put out as mesilf whin The Mac says—nivir moind the toes, ma'am, me fut'll nivir go more nor halfways up the sowl—says he, 'Git on yer boots;' as if it was the ordinarist thing in the world;—now I'll thry an' squaze me fut in." And he took the immense boot so soon as the fiery ashes had been emptied from its cavity.

"The Mac's pride'll have a fall," remarked the old man in the corner sagaciously.

"I shouldn't wondher," said Eugene, pulling on one of the boots. "The spring is patched with hemp, but it's as loikely to give way as not—holy Biddy, ye've left a hot coal just at the instep that's made its way to me bone!" But in spite of this catastrophe, the boy trudged off to the car, his coat's tails flapping like the foresail of a yacht brought up to the wind. Then he cautiously mounted his seat in front of the car, letting a boot protrude effectively on each side of the narrow board. The Macnamara and his son, who had exchanged no word during the short absence of Eugene in the kitchen, then took their places, the horse was aroused from its slumber, and they all passed down the long dilapidated avenue and through the broad entrance between the great mouldering pillars overclung with ivy and strange tangled weeds, where a gate had once been, but where now only a rough pole was drawn across to prevent the trespass of strange animals.

Truly pitiful it was to see such signs of dilapidation everywhere around this demesne of Innishdermot. The house itself was an immense, irregularly built, rambling castle. Three-quarters of it was in utter ruin, but it had needed the combined efforts of eight hundred years of time and a thousand of Cromwell's soldiers to reduce the walls to the condition in which they were at present. The five rooms of the building that were habitable belonged to a comparatively new wing, which was supported on the eastern side by the gable of a small chapel, and on the western by the wall of a great round tower which stood like a demolished sugar-loaf high above all the ruins, and lodged a select number of immense owls whose eyesight was so extremely sensitive, it required an unusual amount of darkness for its preservation.

This was the habitation of The Macnamaras, hereditary kings of Munster, and here it was that the existing representative of the royal family lived with his only son, Standish O'Dermot Macnamara. In front of the pile stretched a park, or rather what had once been a park, but which was now wild and tangled as any wood. It straggled down to the coastway of the lough, which, with as many windings as a Norwegian fjord, brought the green waves of the Atlantic for twenty miles between coasts a thousand feet in height—coasts which were black and precipitous and pierced with a hundred mighty caves about the headlands of the entrance, but which became wooded and more gentle of slope towards the narrow termination of the basin. The entire of one coastway, from the cliffs that broke the wild buffet of the ocean rollers, to the little island that lay at the narrowing of the waters, was the property of The Macnamara. This was all that had been left to the house which had once held sway over two hundred miles of coastway, from the kingdom of Kerry to Achill Island, and a hundred miles of riverway. Pasturages the richest of the world, lake-lands the most beautiful, mountains the grandest, woods and moors—all had been ruled over by The Macnamaras, and of all, only a strip of coastway and a ruined castle remained to the representative of the ancient house, who was now passing on a jaunting-car between the dilapidated pillars at the entrance to his desolate demesne.

On a small hill that came in sight so soon as the car had passed from under the gaunt fantastic branches that threw themselves over the wall at the roadside, as if making a scrambling clutch at something indefinite in the air, a ruined tower stood out in relief against the blue sky of this August day. Seeing the ruin in this land of ruins The Macnamara sighed heavily—too heavily to allow of any one fancying that his emotion was natural.

"Ah, my son, the times have changed," he said. "Only a few years have passed—six hundred or so—since young Brian Macnamara left that very castle to ask the daughter of the great Desmond of the Lake in marriage. How did he go out, my boy?"

"You don't mean that we are now—"

"How did he go out?" again asked The Macnamara, interrupting his son's words of astonishment. "He went out of that castle with three hundred and sixty-five knights—for he had as many knights as there are days in the year."—Here Eugene, who only caught the phonetic sense of this remarkable fact regarding young Brian Macnamara, gave a grin, which his master detected and chastised by a blow from his stick upon the mighty livery coat.

"But, father," said Standish, after the trifling excitement occasioned by this episode had died away—"but, father, we are surely not going—"

"Hush, my son. The young Brian and his retinue went out one August day like this; and with him was the hundred harpers, the fifty pipers, and the thirteen noble chiefs of the Lakes, all mounted on the finest of

steeds, and the morning sun glittering on their gems and jewels as if they had been drops of dew. And so they rode to the castle of Desmond, and when he shut the gates in the face of the noble retinue and sent out a haughty message that, because the young Prince Brian had slain The Desmond's two sons, he would not admit him as a suitor to his daughter, the noble young prince burnt The Desmond's tower to the ground and carried off the daughter, who, as the bards all agree, was the loveliest of her sex. Ah, that was a wooing worthy of The Macnamaras. These are the degenerate days when a prince of The Macnamaras goes on a broken-down car to ask the hand of a daughter of the Gerald's." Here a low whistle escaped from Eugene, and he looked down at his boots just as The Macnamara delivered another rebuke to him of the same nature as the former.

"But we're not going to—to—Suanmara!" cried Standish in dismay.

"Then where are we going, maybe you'll tell me?" said his father.

"Not there—not there; you never said you were going there. Why should we go there?"

"Just for the same reason that your noble forefather Brian Macnamara went to the tower of The Desmond," said the father, leaving it to Standish to determine which of the noble acts of the somewhat impetuous young prince their present excursion was designed to emulate.

"Do you mean to say, father, that—that—oh, no one could think of such a thing as——"

"My son," said the hereditary monarch coolly, "you made a confession to me this morning that only leaves me one course. The honour of The Macnamaras is at stake, and as the representative of the family it's my duty to preserve it untarnished. When a son of mine confesses his affection for a lady, the only course he can pursue towards her is to marry her, let her even be a Gerald."

"I won't go on such a fool's errand," cried the young man. "She—her grandfather—they would laugh at such a proposal."

"The Desmond laughed, and what came of it, my boy?" said the Macnamara sternly.

"I will not go on any farther," cried Standish, unawed by the reference to the consequences of the inopportune hilarity of The Desmond. "How could you think that I would have the presumption to fancy for the least moment that—that—she—that is—that they would listen to—to anything I might say? Oh, the idea is absurd!"

"My boy, I am the head of the line of The Munster Macnamaras, and the head always decides in delicate matters like this. I'll not have the feeling's of the lady trifled with even by a son of my own. Didn't you confess all to me?"

"I will not go on," the young man cried again. "She—that is—they will think that we mean an affront—and it is a gross insult to her—to them—to even fancy that—oh, if we were anything but what we are there would be some hope—some chance; if I had only been allowed my own way I might have won her in time—long years perhaps, but still some time. But now——"

"Recreant son of a noble house, have you no more spirit than a Saxon?" said the father, trying to assume a dignified position, an attempt that the jerking of the imperfect spring of the vehicle frustrated. "Mightn't the noblest family in Europe think it an honour to be allied with The Munster Macnamaras, penniless though we are?"

"Don't go to-day, father," said Standish, almost piteously; "no, not to-day. It is too sudden—my mind is not made up."

"But mine is, my boy. Haven't I prepared everything so that there can be no mistake?"—here he pressed his tall hat more firmly upon his forehead, and glanced towards Eugene's boots that projected a considerable way beyond the line of the car. "My boy," he continued, "The Macnamaras descend to ally themselves with any other family only for the sake of keeping up the race. It's their solemn duty."

"I'll not go on any farther on such an errand—I will not be such a fool," said Standish, making a movement on his side of the car.

"My boy," said The Macnamara unconcernedly, "my boy, you can get off at any moment; your presence will make no difference in the matter. The matrimonial alliances of The Macnamaras are family matters, not individual. The head of the race only is accountable to posterity for the consequences of the acts of them under him. I'm the head of the race." He removed his hat and looked upward, somewhat jerkily, but still impressively.

Standish Macnamara's eyes flashed and his hands clenched themselves over the rail of the car, but he did not make any attempt to carry out his threat of getting off. He did not utter another word. How could he? It was torture to him to hear his father discuss beneath the ear of the boy Eugene such a question as his confession of love for a certain lady. It was terrible for him to observe the expression of interest which was apparent upon the ingenuous face of Eugene, and to see his nods of approval at the words of The Macnamara. What could poor Standish do beyond closing his teeth very tightly and clenching his hands madly as the car jerked its way along the coast of Lough Suangorm, in view of a portion of the loveliest scenery in the world?

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## CHAPTER III.

How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world.

Gather by him, as he is behaved,  
If't be the affliction of his love or no  
That thus he suffers for.

Break my heart, for I must hold my tongue.  
Hamlet.

THE road upon which the car was driving was made round an elevated part of the coast of the lough. It curved away from where the castle of The Macnamaras was situated on one side of the water, to the termination of the lough. It did not slope downwards in the least at any part, but swept on to the opposite lofty shore, five hundred feet above the great rollers from the Atlantic that spent themselves amongst the half-hidden rocks.

The car jerked on in silence after The Macnamara had spoken his impressive sentence. Standish's hands soon relaxed their passionate hold upon the rail of the car, and, in spite of his consciousness of being twenty-three years of age, he found it almost impossible to restrain his tears of mortification from bursting their bonds. He knew how pure—how fervent—how exhaustless was the love that filled all his heart. He had been loving, not without hope, but without utterance, for years, and now all the fruit of his patience—of his years of speechlessness—would be blighted by the ridiculous action of his father. What would now be left for him in the world? he asked himself, and the despairing tears of his heart gave him his only answer.

He was on the seaward side of the car, which was now passing out of the green shade of the boughs that for three miles overhung the road. Then as the curve of the termination of the lough was approached, the full panorama of sea and coast leapt into view, with all the magical glamour those wizards Motion and Height can enweave round a scene. Far beneath, the narrow band of blue water lost itself amongst the steep cliffs. The double coasts of the lough that were joined at the point of vision, broadened out in undulating heights towards the mighty headlands of the entrance, that lifted up their hoary brows as the lion-waves of the Atlantic leapt between them and crouched in unwieldy bulk at their bases. Far away stretched that ocean, its horizon lost in mist; and above the line of rugged coast-cliff arose mountains—mighty masses tumbled together in black confusion, like Titanic gladiators locked in the close throes of the wrestle.

Never before had the familiar scene so taken Standish in its arms, so to speak, as it did now. He felt it. He looked down at the screen islands of the lough encircled with the floss of the moving waters; he looked along the slopes of the coasts with the ruins of ancient days on their summits, then his eyes went out to where the sun dipped towards the Atlantic, and he felt no more that passion of mortification which his reflections had aroused. Quickly as it had sprung into view the scene dissolved, as the car entered a glen, dim in the shadow of a great hill whose slope, swathed in purple heather to its highest peak, made a twilight at noon-day to all beneath. In the distance of the winding road beyond the dark edge of the mountain were seen the gray ridges of another range running far inland. With the twilight shadow of the glen, the shadow seemed to come again over the mind of Standish. He gave himself up to his own sad thoughts, and when, from a black tarn amongst the low pine-trees beneath the road, a tall heron rose and fled silently through the silent air to the foot of the slope, he regarded it ominously, as he would have done a raven.

There they sat speechless upon the car. The Macnamara, who was a short, middle-aged man with a rather highly-coloured face, and features that not even the most malignant could pronounce of a Roman or even of a Saxon type, was sitting in silent dignity of which he seemed by no means unconscious Standish, who was tall, slender almost to a point of lankness, and gray-eyed, was morosely speechless, his father felt. Nature had not given The Macnamara a son after his own heart. The young man's features, that had at one time showed great promise of developing into the pure Milesian, had not fulfilled the early hope they had raised in his father's bosom; they had within the past twelve years exhibited a downward tendency that was not in keeping with the traditions of The Macnamaras. If the direction of the caressing hand of Nature over the features of the family should be reversed, what would remain to distinguish The Macnamaras from their Saxon invaders? This was a question whose weight had for some time oppressed the representative of the race; and he could only quiet his apprehension by the assurance which forced itself upon his mind, that Nature would never persist in any course prejudicial to her own interests in the maintenance of an irreproachable type of manhood.

Then it was a great grief to the father to become aware of the fact that the speech of Standish was all unlike his own in accent; it was, indeed, terribly like the ordinary Saxon speech—at least it sounded so to The Macnamara, whose vowels were diphthongic to a marked degree. But of course the most distressing reflection of the head of the race had reference to the mental disqualifications of his son to sustain the position which he would some day have to occupy as The Macnamara; for Standish had of late shown a tendency to accept the position accorded to him by the enemies of his race, and to allow that there existed a certain unwritten statute of limitations in the maintenance of the divine right of monarchs. He actually seemed to be under the impression that because nine hundred years had elapsed since a Macnamara had been the acknowledged king of Munster, the claim to be regarded as a royal family should not be strongly urged. This was very terrible to The Macnamara. And now he reflected upon all these matters as he held in a fixed and fervent grasp the somewhat untrustworthy rail of the undoubtedly shaky vehicle.

Thus in silence the car was driven through the dim glen, until the slope on the seaward-side of the road dwindled away and once more the sea came in sight; and, with the first glimpse of the sea, the square tower of an old, though not an ancient, castle that stood half hidden by trees at the base of the purple mountain. In a few minutes the car pulled up at the entrance gate to a walled demesne.

"Will yer honours git off here?" asked Eugene, preparing to throw the reins down.

"Never!" cried The Macnamara emphatically. "Never will the head of the race descend to walk up to the door of a foreigner. Drive up to the very hall, Eugene, as the great Brian Macnamara would have done."

"An' it's hopin' I am that his car-sphrings wouldn't be mindid with hemp," remarked the boy, as he pulled the horse round and urged his mild career through the great pillars at the entrance.

Everything about this place gave signs of having been cared for. The avenue was long, but it could be traversed without any risk of the vehicle being lost in the landslip of a rut. The grass around the trees, though by no means trimmed at the edges, was still not dank with weeds, and the trees themselves, if old, had none of the gauntness apparent in all the timber about the castle of The Macnamara. As the car went along there was visible every now and again the flash of branching antlers among the green foliage, and more than once the stately head of a red deer appeared gazing at the visitors, motionless, as if the animal had been a painted statue.

The castle, opposite whose black oak door Eugene at last dropped his reins, was by no means an imposing building. It was large and square, and at one wing stood the square ivy-covered tower that was seen from the road. Above it rose the great dark mountain ridge, and in front rolled the Atlantic, for the trees prevented the shoreway from being seen.

"Eugene, knock at the door of the Gerald's," said The Macnamara from his seat on the car, with a dignity the emphasis of which would have been diminished had he dismounted.

Eugene—looked upward at this order, shook his head in wonderment, and then got down, but not with quite the same expedition as his boot, which could not sustain the severe test of being suspended for any time in the air. He had not fully secured it again on his bare foot before a laugh sounded from the balcony over the porch—a laugh that made Standish's face redder than any rose—that made Eugene glance up with a grin and touch his hat, even before a girl's voice was heard saying:

"Oh, Eugene, Eugene! What a clumsy fellow you are, to be sure."

"Ah, don't be a sayin' of that, Miss Daireen, ma'am," the boy replied, as he gave a final stamp to secure possession of the boot.

The Macnamara looked up and gravely removed his hat; but Standish having got down from the car turned his gaze seawards. Had he followed his father's example, he would have seen the laughing face and the graceful figure of a girl leaning over the balustrade of the porch surveying the group beneath her.

"And how do you do, Macnamara?" she said. "No, no, don't let Eugene knock; all the dogs are asleep except King Cormac, and I am too grateful to allow their rest to be broken. I'll go down and give you entrance."

She disappeared from the balcony, and in a few moments the hall door was softly sundered and the western sunlight fell about the form of the portress. The girl was tall and exquisitely moulded, from her little blue shoe to her rich brown hair, over which the sun made light and shade; her face was slightly flushed with her rapid descent and the quick kiss of the sunlight, and her eyes were of the most gracious gray that ever shone or laughed or wept. But her mouth—it was a visible song. It expressed all that song is capable of suggesting—passion of love or of anger, comfort of hope or of charity.

"Enter, O my king-," she said, giving The Macnamara her hand; then turning to Standish, "How do you do, Standish? Why do you not come in?"

But Standish uttered no word. He took her hand for a second and followed his father into the big square oaken hall. All were black oak, floor and wall and ceiling, only while the sunlight leapt through the open door was the sombre hue relieved by the flashing of the arms that lined the walls, and the glittering of the enormous elk-antlers that spread their branches over the lintels.

"And you drove all round the coast to see me, I hope," said the girl, as they stood together under the battle-axes of the brave days of old, when the qualifications for becoming a successful knight and a successful blacksmith were identical.

"We drove round to admire the beauty of the lovely Daireen," said The Macnamara, with a flourish of the hand that did him infinite credit.

"If that is all," laughed the girl, "your visit will not be a long one." She was standing listlessly caressing with her hand the coarse hide of King Cornac, a gigantic Wolf-dog, and in that posture looked like a statue of the Genius of her country. The dog had been welcoming Standish a moment before, and the young man's hand still resting upon its head, felt the casual touch of the girl's fingers as she played with the animal's ears. Every touch sent a thrill of passionate delight through him.

"The beauty of the daughter of the Gerald's is worth coming so far to see; and now that I look at her before me——"

"Now you know that it is impossible to make out a single feature in this darkness," said Daireen. "So come along into the drawing-room."

"Go with the lovely Daireen, my boy," said The Macnamara, as the girl led the way across the hall. "For myself, I think I'll just turn in here." He opened a door at one side of the hall and exposed to view, within the room beyond, a piece of ancient furniture which was not yet too decrepit to sustain the burden of a row of square glass bottles and tumblers. But before he entered he whispered to Standish with an appropriate action, "Make it all right with her by the time come I back." And so he vanished.

"The Macnamara is right," said Daireen. "You must join him in taking a glass of wine after your long drive, Standish."

For the first time since he had spoken on the car Standish found his voice.

"I do not want to drink anything, Daireen," he said.

"Then we shall go round to the garden and try to find grandpapa, if you don't want to rest."

With her brown unbonneted hair tossing in its irregular strands about her neck, she went out by a door at the farther end of the square hall, and Standish followed her by a high-arched passage that seemed to lead right through the building. At the extremity was an iron gate which the girl unlocked, and they passed into a large garden somewhat wild in its growth, but with its few brilliant spots of colour well brought out by the general *feeling* of purple that forced itself upon every one beneath the shadow of the great mountain-peak. Very lovely did that world of heather seem now as the sun burned over against the slope, stirring up the

wonderful secret hues of dark blue and crimson. The peak stood out in bold relief against the pale sky, and above its highest point an eagle sailed.

"I have such good news for you, Standish," said Miss Gerald. "You cannot guess what it is."

"I cannot guess what good news there could possibly be in store for me," he replied, with so much sadness in his voice that the girl gave a little start, and then the least possible smile, for she was well aware that the luxury of sadness was frequently indulged in by her companion.

"It is good news for you, for me, for all of us, for all the world, for—well, for everybody that I have not included. Don't laugh at me, please, for my news is that papa is coming home at last. Now, isn't that good news?"

"I am very glad to hear it," said Standish. "I am very glad because I know it will make you happy."

"How nicely said; and I know you feel it, my dear Standish. Ah, poor papa! he has had a hard time of it, battling with the terrible Indian climate and with those annoying people."

"It is a life worth living," cried Standish. "After you are dead the world feels that you have lived in it. The world is the better for your life."

"You are right," said Daireen. "Papa leaves India crowned with honours, as the newspapers say. The Queen has made him a C.B., you know. But—only think how provoking it is—he has been ordered by the surgeon of his regiment to return by long-sea, instead of overland, for the sake of his health; so that though I got his letter from Madras yesterday to tell me that he was at the point of starting, it will be another month before I can see him."

"But then he will no doubt have completely recovered," said Standish.

"That is my only consolation. Yes; he will be himself again—himself as I saw him five years ago in our bungalow—how well I remember it and its single plantain-tree in the garden where the officers used to hunt me for kisses."

Standish frowned. It was, to him, a hideous recollection for the girl to have. He would cheerfully have undertaken the strangulation of each of those sportive officers. "I should have learned a great deal during these five years that have passed since I was sent to England to school, but I'm afraid I didn't. Never mind, papa won't cross-examine me to see if his money has been wasted. But why do you look so sad, Standish? You do look sad, you know."

"I feel it too," he cried. "I feel more wretched than I can tell you. I'm sick of everything here—no, not here, you know, but at home. There I am in that cursed jail, shut out from the world, a beggar without the liberty to beg."

"Oh, Standish!"

"But it is the truth, Daireen. I might as well be dead as living as I am. Yes, better—I wish to God I was dead, for then there might be at least some chance of making a beginning in a new sort of life under different conditions."

"Isn't it wicked to talk that way, Standish?"

"I don't know," he replied doggedly. "Wickedness and goodness have ceased to be anything more to me than vague conditions of life in a world I have nothing to say to. I cannot be either good or bad here."

Daireen looked very solemn at this confession of impotence.

"You told me you meant to speak to The Mac-namara about going away or doing something," she said.

"And I did speak to him, but it came to the one end: it was a disgrace for the son of the—— bah, you know how he talks. Every person of any position laughs at him; only those worse than himself think that he is wronged. But I'll do something, if it should only be to enlist as a common soldier."

"Standish, do not talk that way, like a good boy," she said, laying her hand upon his arm. "I have a bright thought for the first time: wait just for another month until papa is here, and he will, you may be sure, tell you what is exactly right to do. Oh, there is grandpapa, with his gun as usual, coming from the hill."

They saw at a little distance the figure of a tall old man carrying a gun, and followed by a couple of sporting dogs.

"Daireen," said Standish, stopping suddenly as if a thought had just struck him. "Daireen, promise me that you will not let anything my father may say here to-day make you think badly of me."

"Good gracious! why should I ever do that? What is he going to say that is so dreadful?"

"I cannot tell you, Daireen; but you will promise me;" he had seized her by the hand and was looking with earnest entreaty into her eyes. "Daireen," he continued, "you will give me your word. You have been such a friend to me always—such a good angel to me."

"And we shall always be friends, Standish. I promise you this. Now let go my hand, like a good boy."

He obeyed her, and in a few minutes they had met Daireen's grandfather, Mr. Gerald, who had been coming towards them.

"What, The Macnamara here? then I must hasten to him," said the old gentleman, handing his gun to Standish.

No one knew better than Mr. Gerald the necessity that existed for hastening to The Macnamara, in case of his waiting for a length of time in that room the sideboard of which was laden with bottles.

## CHAPTER IV.

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?  
You told us of some suit: what is't, Laertes?

He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow' leave  
By laboursome petition; and at last,  
Upon his will I sealed my hard consent.

Horatio. There's no offence, my lord.  
Hamlet. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,  
And much offence too.

—Hamlet.

THE Macnamara had been led away from his companionship in that old oak room by the time his son and Miss Gerald returned from the garden, and the consciousness of his own dignity seemed to have increased considerably since they had left him. This emotion was a variable possession with him: any one acquainted with his habits could without difficulty, from knowing the degree of dignity he manifested at any moment, calculate minutely the space of time, he must of necessity have spent in a room furnished similarly to that he had just now left.

He was talking pretty loudly in the room to which he had been led by Mr. Gerald when Daireen and Standish entered; and beside him was a whitehaired old lady whom Standish greeted as Mrs. Gerald and the girl called grandmamma—an old lady with very white hair but with large dark eyes whose lustre remained yet undimmed.

“Standish will reveal the mystery,” said this old lady, as the young man shook hands with her. “Your father has been speaking in proverbs, Standish, and we want your assistance to read them.”

“He is my son,” said The Macnamara, waving his hand proudly and lifting up his head. “He will hear his father speak on his behalf. Head of the Gerald, Gerald-na-Tor, chief of the hills, the last of The Macnamaras, king's of Munster, Innishdermot, and all islands, comes to you.”

“And I am honoured by his visit, and glad to find him looking so well.” said Mr. Gerald. “I am only sorry you can't make it suit you to come oftener, Macnamara.”

“It's that boy Eugene that's at fault,” said The Macnamara, dropping so suddenly into a colloquial speech from his eloquent Ossianic strain that one might have been led to believe his opening words were somewhat forced. “Yes, my lad,” he continued, addressing Mr. Gerald; “that Eugene is either breaking the springs or the straps or his own bones.” Here he recollected that his mission was not one to be expressed in this ordinary vein. He straightened himself in an instant, and as he went on asserted even more dignity than before. “Gerald, you know my position, don't you? and you know your 'own; but you can't say, can you, that The Macnamara ever held himself aloof from your table by any show of pride? I mixed with you as if we were equals.”

Again he waved his hand patronisingly, but no one showed the least sign of laughter. Standish was in front of one of the windows leaning his head upon his hand as he looked out to the misty ocean. “Yes, I've treated you at all times as if you had been born of the land, though this ground we tread on this moment was torn from the grasp of The Macnamaras by fraud.”

“True, true—six hundred years ago,” remarked Mr. Gerald. He had been so frequently reminded of this fact during his acquaintance with The Macnamara, he could afford to make the concession he now did.

“But I've not let that rankle in my heart,” continued The Macnamara; “I've descended to break bread with you and to drink—drink water with you—ay, at times. You know my son too, and you know that if he's not the same as his father to the backbone, it's not his father that's to blame for it. It was the last wish of his poor mother—rest her soul!—that he should be schooled outside our country, and you know that I carried out her will, though it cost me dear. He's been back these four years, as you know—what's he looking out at at the window?—but it's only three since he found out the pearl of the Lough Suangorm—the diamond of Slieve Docas—the beautiful daughter of the Gerald. Ay, he confessed to me this morning where his soft heart had turned, poor boy. Don't be blushing, Standish; the blood of the Macnamaras shouldn't betray itself in their cheeks.”

Standish had started away from the window before his father had ended; his hands were clenched, and his cheeks were burning with shame. He could not fail to see the frown that was settling down upon the face of Mr. Gerald. But he dared not even glance towards Daireen.

“My dear Macnamara, we needn't talk on this subject any farther just now,” said the girl's grandfather, as the orator paused for an instant.

But The Macnamara only gave his hand another wave before he proceeded. “I have promised my boy to make him happy,” he said, “and you know what the word of a Macnamara is worth even to his son; so, though I confess I was taken aback at first, yet I at last consented to throw over my natural family pride and to let my boy have his way. An alliance between the Macnamaras and the Gerald is not what would have been thought about a few years ago, but The Macnamaras have always been condescending.”

“Yes, yes, you condescend to a jest now and again with us, but really this is a sort of mystery I have no clue to,” said Mr. Gerald.

“Mystery? Ay, it will astonish the world to know that The Macnamara has given his consent to such an alliance; it must be kept secret for a while for fear of its effects upon the foreign States that have their eyes upon all our steps. I wouldn't like this made a State affair at all.”

"My dear Macnamara, you are usually very lucid," said Mr. Gerald, "but to-day I somehow cannot arrive at your meaning."

"What, sir?" cried The Macnamara, giving his head an angry twitch. "What, sir, do you mean to tell me that you don't understand that I have given my consent to my son taking as his wife the daughter of the Gerald's?—see how the lovely Daireen blushes like a rose."

Daireen was certainly blushing, as she left her seat and went over to the farthest end of the room. But Standish was deadly pale, his lips tightly closed.

"Macnamara, this is absurd—quite absurd!" said Mr. Gerald, hastily rising. "Pray let us talk no more in such a strain."

Then The Macnamara's consciousness of his own dignity asserted itself. He drew himself up and threw back his head. "Sir, do you mean to put an affront upon the one who has left his proper station to raise your family to his own level?"

"Don't let us quarrel, Macnamara; you know how highly I esteem you personally, and you know that I have ever looked upon the family of the Macnamaras as the noblest in the land."

"And it is the noblest in the land. There's not a drop of blood in our veins that hasn't sprung from the heart of a king," cried The Macnamara.

"Yes, yes, I know it; but—well, we will not talk any further to-day. Daireen, you needn't go away."

"Heavens! do you mean to say that I haven't spoken plainly enough, that—"

"Now, Macnamara, I must really interrupt you—"

"Must you?" cried the representative of the ancient line, his face developing all the secret resources of redness it possessed. "Must you interrupt the hereditary monarch of the country where you're but an immigrant when he descends to equalise himself with you? This is the reward of condescension! Enough, sir, you have affronted the family that were living in castles when your forefathers were like beasts in caves. The offer of an alliance ought to have come from you, not from me; but never again will it be said that The Macnamara forgot what was due to him and his family. No, by the powers, Gerald, you'll never have the chance again. I scorn you; I reject your alliance. The Macnamara seats himself once more upon his ancient throne, and he tramples upon you all. Come, my son, look at him that has insulted your family—look at him for the last time and lift up your head."

The grandeur with which The Macnamara uttered this speech was overpowering. He had at its conclusion turned towards poor Standish, and waved his hand in the direction of Mr. Gerald. Then Standish seemed to have recovered himself.

"No, father, it is you who have insulted this family by talking as you have done," he cried passionately.

"Boy!" shouted The Macnamara. "Recreant son of a noble race, don't demean yourself with such language!"

"It is you who have demeaned our family," cried the son still more energetically. "You have sunk us even lower than we were before." Then he turned imploringly towards Mr. Gerald. "You know—you know that I am only to be pitied, not blamed, for my father's words," he said quietly, and then went to the door.

"My dear boy," said the old lady, hastening towards him.

"Madam!" cried The Macnamara, raising his arm majestically to stay her.

She stopped in the centre of the room. Daireen had also risen, her pure eyes full of tears as she grasped her grandfather's hand while he laid his other upon her head.

From the door Standish looked with passionate gratitude back to the girl, then rushed out.

But The Macnamara stood for some moments with his head elevated, the better to express the scorn that was in his heart. No one made a motion, and then he stalked after his son.

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## CHAPTER V.

What advancement may I hope from thee  
That no revenue hast...  
To feed and clothe thee?

Guildenstern. The King, sir,—  
Hamlet. Ay, sir, what of him?  
Guild. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.  
Hamlet. With drink, sir?  
Guild. No, my lord, rather with choler.  
Hamlet. The King doth wake to-night and takes his  
rouse.  
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels.

Horatio. Is it a custom?

Hamlet. Ay, marry is't:  
But to my mind, though I am native here,  
And to the manner born, it is a custom  
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.  
This heavy-headed revel...  
Makes us traduced and taxed.—Hamlet.

**T**O do The Macnamara justice, while he was driving homeward upon that very shaky car round the lovely coast, he was somewhat disturbed in mind as he reflected upon the possible consequences of his quarrel with old Mr. Gerald. He was dimly conscious of the truth of the worldly and undeniably selfish maxim referring to the awkwardness of a quarrel with a neighbour. And if there is any truth in it as a general maxim, its value is certainly intensified when the neighbour in question has been the lender of sundry sums of money. A neighbour under these conditions should not be quarrelled with, he knew.

The Macnamara had borrowed from Mr. Gerald, at various times, certain moneys which had amounted in the aggregate to a considerable sum; for though Daireen's grandfather was not possessed of a very large income from the land that had been granted to his ancestors some few hundred years before, he had still enough to enable him from time to time to oblige The Macnamara with a loan. And this reflection caused The Macnamara about as much mental uneasiness as the irregular motion of the vehicle did physical discomfort. By the time, however, that the great hill, whose heather slope was now wrapped in the purple shade of twilight, its highest peak alone being bathed in the red glory of the sunset, was passed, his mind was almost at ease; for he recalled the fact that his misunderstandings with Mr. Gerald were exactly equal in number to his visits; he never passed an hour at Suanmara without what would at any rate have been a quarrel but for Mr. Gerald's good nature, which refused to be ruffled. And as no reference had ever upon these occasions been made to his borrowings, The Macnamara felt that he had no reason to conclude that his present quarrel would become embarrassing through any action of Mr. Gerald's. So he tried to feel the luxury of the scorn that he had so powerfully expressed in the room at Suanmara.

"Mushrooms of a night's growth!" he muttered. "I trampled them beneath my feet. They may go down on their knees before me now, I'll have nothing to say to them." Then as the car passed out of the glen and he saw before him the long shadows of the hills lying amongst the crimson and yellow flames that swept from the sunset out on the Atlantic, and streamed between the headlands at the entrance to the lough, he became more fixed in his resolution. "The son of The Macnamara will never wed with the daughter of a man that is paid by the oppressors of the country, no, never!"

This was an allusion to the fact of Daireen's father being a colonel in the British army, on service in India. Then exactly between the headlands the sun went down in a gorgeous mist that was permeated with the glow of the orb it enveloped. The waters shook and trembled in the light, but the many islands of the lough remained dark and silent in the midst of the glow. The Macnamara became more resolute still. He had almost forgotten that he had ever borrowed a penny from Mr. Gerald. He turned to where Standish sat silent and almost grim.

"And you, boy," said the father—"you, that threw your insults in my face—you, that's a disgrace to the family—I've made up my mind what I'll do with you; I'll—yes, by the powers, I'll disinherit you."

But not a word did Standish utter in reply to this threat, the force of which, coupled with an expressive motion of the speaker, jeopardised the imperfect spring, and wrung from Eugene a sudden exclamation.

"Holy mother o' Saint Malachi, kape the sthring from breakin' yit awhile!" he cried devoutly.

And it seemed that the driver's devotion was efficacious, for, without any accident, the car reached the entrance to Innishdermot, as the residence of the ancient monarchs had been called since the days when the waters of Lough Suangorm had flowed all about the castle slope, for even the lough had become reduced in strength.

The twilight, rich and blue, was now swathing the mountains and overshadowing the distant cliffs, though the waters at their base were steel gray and full of light that seemed to shine upwards through their depth. Desolate, truly, the ruins loomed through the dimness. Only a single feeble light glimmered from one of the panes, and even this seemed agonising to the owls, for they moaned wildly and continuously from the round tower. There was, indeed, scarcely an aspect of welcome in anything that surrounded this home which one family had occupied for seven hundred years.

As the car stopped at the door, however, there came a voice from an unseen figure, saying, in even a more pronounced accent than The Macnamara himself gloried in, "Wilcome, ye noble sonns of noble soyers! Wilcome back to the anshent home of the gloryous race that'll stand whoile there's a sod of the land to bear it."

"It's The Randal himself," said The Macnamara, looking in the direction from which the sound came. "And where is it that you are, Randal? Oh, I see your pipe shining like a star out of the ivy."

From the forest of ivy that clung about the porch of the castle the figure of a small man emerged. One of his hands was in his pocket, the other removed a short black pipe, the length of whose stem in comparison to the breadth of its bowl was as the proportion of Falstaff's bread to his sack.

"Wilcome back, Macnamara," said this gentleman, who was indeed The Randal, hereditary chief of Suangorm. "An' Standish too, how are ye, my boy?" Standish shook hands with the speaker, but did not utter a word. "An' where is it ye're afther dhruvin' from?" continued The Randal.

"It's a long drive and a long story," said The Macnamara.

"Thin for hivin's sake don't begin it till we've put boy the dinner. I'm goin' to take share with ye this day, and I'm afther waitin' an hour and more."

"It's welcome The Randal is every day in the week," said The Macnamara, leading the way into the great dilapidated hall, where in the ancient days fifty men-at-arms had been wont to feast royally. Now it was black



in night.

In the room where the dinner was laid there were but two candles, and their feeble glimmer availed no more than to make the blotches on the cloth more apparent: the maps of the British Isles done in mustard and gravy were numerous. At each end a huge black bottle stood like a sentry at the border of a snowfield.

By far the greater portion of the light was supplied by the blazing log in the fireplace. It lay not in any grate but upon the bare hearth, and crackled and roared up the chimney like a demon prostrate in torture. The Randal and his host stood before the blaze, while Standish seated himself in another part of the room. The ruddy flicker of the wood fire shone upon the faces of the two men, and the yellow glimmer of the candle upon the face of Standish. Here and there a polish upon the surface of the black oak panelling gleamed, but all the rest of the high room was dim.

Salmon from the lough, venison from the forest, wild birds from the moor made up the dinner. All were served on silver dishes strangely worked, and plates of the same metal were laid before the diners, while horns mounted on massive stands were the drinking vessels. From these dishes The Macnamaras of the past had eaten, and from these horns they had drunken, and though the present head of the family could have gained many years' income had he given the metal to be melted, he had never for an instant thought of taking such a step. He would have starved with that plate empty in front of him sooner than have sold it to buy bread.

Standish spoke no word during the entire meal, and the guest saw that something had gone wrong; so with his native tact he chatted away, asking questions, but waiting for no answer.

When the table was cleared and the old serving-woman had brought in a broken black kettle of boiling water, and had laid in the centre of the table an immense silver bowl for the brewing of the punch, The Randal drew up the remnant of his collar and said: "Now for the sthory of the droive, Macnamara; I'm riddy whin ye fill the bowl."

Standish rose from the table and walked away to a seat at the furthest end of the great room, where he sat hidden in the gloom of the corner. The Randal did not think it inconsistent with his chieftainship to wink at his host.

"Randal," said The Macnamara, "I've made up my mind. I'll disinherit that boy, I will."

"No," cried The Randal eagerly. "Don't spake so loud, man; if this should git wind through the counthry who knows what might happen? Disinherit the boy; ye don't mane it, Macnamara," he continued in an excited but awe-stricken whisper.

"But by the powers, I do mean it," cried The Macnamara, who had been testing the potent elements of the punch.

"Disinherit me, will you, father?" came the sudden voice of Standish echoing strangely down the dark room. Then he rose and stood facing both men at the table, the red glare of the log mixing with the sickly candlelight upon his face and quivering hands. "Disinherit me?" he said again, bitterly. "You cannot do that. I wish you could. My inheritance, what is it? Degradation of family, proud beggary, a life to be wasted outside the world of life and work, and a death rejoiced over by those wretches who have lent you money. Disinherit me from all this, if you can."

"Holy Saint Malachi, hare the sonn of The Macnamaras talkin' loike a choild!" cried The Randal.

"I don't care who hears me," said Standish. "I'm sick of hearing about my forefathers; no one cares about them nowadays. I wanted years ago to go out into the world and work."

"Work—a Macnamara work!" cried The Randal horror-stricken.

"I told you so," said The Macnamara, in the tone of one who finds sudden confirmation to the improbable story of some enormity.

"I wanted to work as a man should to redeem the shame which our life as it is at present brings upon our family," said the young man earnestly—almost passionately; "but I was not allowed to do anything that I wanted. I was kept here in this jail wasting my best years; but to-day has brought everything to an end. You say you will disinherit me, father, but I have from this day disinherited myself—I have cast off my old existence. I begin life from to-day."

Then he turned away and went out of the room, leaving his father and his guest in dumb amazement before their punch. It was some minutes before either could speak. At last The Randal took adraught of the hot spirit, and shook his head thoughtfully.

"Poor boy! poor boy! he needs to be looked after till he gets over this turn," he said.

"It's all that girl—that Daireen of the Gerald's," said The Macnamara. "I found a paper with poetry on it for her this morning, and when I forced him he confessed that he was in love with her."

"D'ye tell me that? And what more did ye do, Mac?"

"I'll tell you," said the hereditary prince, leaning over the table.

And he gave his guest all the details of the visit to the Gerald's at length.

But poor Standish had rushed up the crumbling staircase and was lying on his bed with his face in his hands. It was only now he seemed to feel all the shame that had caused his face to be red and pale by turns in the drawing-room at Suanmara. He lay there in a passion of tears, while the great owls kept moaning and hooting in the tower just outside his window, making sympathetic melody to his ears.

At last he arose and went over to the window and stood gazing out through the break in the ivy armour of the wall. He gazed over the tops of the trees growing in a straggling way down the slope to the water's edge. He could see far away the ocean, whose voice he now and again heard as the wind bore it around the tower. Thousands of stars glittered above the water and trembled upon its moving surface. He felt strong now. He felt that he might never weep again in the world as he had just wept. Then he turned to another window and sent his eyes out to where that great peak of Slieve Docas stood out dark and terrible among the stars. He could not see the house at the base of the hill, but he clenched his hands as he looked out, saying "Hope."

It was late before he got into his bed, and it was still later when he awoke and heard, mingling with the

cries of the night-birds, the sound of hoarse singing that floated upward from the room where he had left his father and The Randal. The prince and the chief were joining their voices in a native melody, Standish knew; and he was well aware that he would not be disturbed by the ascent of either during the night. The dormitory arrangements of the prince and the chief when they had dined in company were of the simplest nature.

Standish went to sleep again, and the ancient rafters, that had heard the tones of many generations of Macnamaras' voices, trembled for some hours with the echoes from the room below, while outside the ancient owls hooted and the ancient sea murmured in its sleep.

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## CHAPTER VI.

What imports this song?

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail  
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee.

Hamlet. I do not set my life at a pin's fee...

It waves me forth again: I'll follow it.

Horatio. What if it tempt you toward the flood?...

Look whether he has not changed his colour.

—Hamlet.

THE sounds of wild harp-music were ascending at even from the depths of Glenmara. The sun had sunk, and the hues that had been woven round the west were wasting themselves away on the horizon. The faint shell-pink had drifted and dwindled far from the place of sunset. The woods of the slopes looked very dark now that the red glances from the west were withdrawn from their glossy foliage; but the heather-swathed mountains, towering through the soft blue air to the dark blue sky, were richly purple, as though the sunset hues had become entangled amongst the heather, and had forgotten to fly back to the west that had cast them forth.

The little tarn at the foot of the lowest crags was black and still, waiting for the first star-glimpse, and from its marge came the wild notes of a harp fitfully swelling and waning; and then arose the still wilder and more melancholy tones of a man's voice chanting what seemed like a weird dirge to the fading twilight, and the language was the Irish Celtic—that language every song of which sounds like a dirge sung over its own death:

Why art thou gone from us, White Dove of the Irish  
woods?  
Why art thou gone who made all the leaves tremulous with  
the low voice of love?  
Love that tarried yet afar, though the fleet swallow had  
come back to us—  
Love that stayed in the far lands though the primrose had  
cast its gold by the streams—  
Love that heard not the voice sent forth from every new-budded briar—  
This love came only when thou earnest, and rapture thrilled  
the heart of the green land.  
Why art thou gone from us, White Dove of the Irish  
woods?

This is a translation of the wild lament that arose in the twilight air and stirred up the echoes of the rocks. Then the fitful melody of the harp made an interlude:—

Why art thou gone from us, sweet Linnet of the Irish  
woods?  
Why art thou gone from us whose song brought the Spring  
to our land?  
Yea, flowers to thy singing arose from the earth in bountiful  
bloom,  
And scents of the violet, scents of the hawthorn—all scents  
of the spring

Were wafted about us when thy voice was heard albeit in  
autumn.  
All thoughts of the spring—all its hopes woke and breathed  
through our hearts,  
Till our souls thrilled with passionate song and the perfume  
of spring which is love.  
Why art thou gone from us, sweet Linnet of the Irish  
woods?

Again the chaunter paused and again his harp prolonged the wailing melody. Then passing into a more sadly soft strain, he continued his song:—

Why art thou gone from us, Soul of all beauty and joy?  
Now thou art gone the berry drops from the arbutus,  
The wind comes in from the ocean with wail and the  
autumn is sad,  
The yellow leaves perish, whirled wild whither no one can  
know.  
As the crisp leaves are crushed in the woods, so our hearts  
are crushed at thy parting;  
As the woods moan for the summer departed, so we mourn  
that we see thee no more.  
Why art thou gone from us, Soul of all beauty and joy?

Into the twilight the last notes died away, and a lonely heron standing among the rushes at the edge of the tarn moved his head critically to one side as if waiting for another song with which to sympathise. But he was not the only listener. Far up among the purple crags Standish Macnamara was lying looking out to the sunset when he heard the sound of the chant in the glen beneath him. He lay silent while the dirge floated up the mountain-side and died away among the heather of the peak. But when the silence of the twilight came once more upon the glen, Standish arose and made his way downwards to where an old man with one of the small ancient Irish harps, was seated on a stone, his head bent across the strings upon which his fingers still rested. Standish knew him to be one Murrough O'Brian, a descendant of the bards of the country, and an old retainer of the Gerald family. A man learned in Irish, but not speaking an intelligible sentence in English.

"Why do you sing the Dirge of Tuathal on this evening, Murrough?" he asked in his native tongue, as he came beside the old man.

"What else is there left for me to sing at this time, Standish O'Dermot Macnamara, son of the Prince of Islands and all Munster?" said the bard. "There is nothing of joy left us now. We cannot sing except in sorrow. Does not the land seem to have sympathy with such songs, prolonging their sound by its own voice from every glen and mountain-face?"

"It is true," said Standish. "As I sat up among the cliffs of heather it seemed to me that the melody was made by the spirits of the glen bewailing in the twilight the departure of the glory of our land."

"See how desolate is all around us here," said the bard. "Glenmara is lonely now, where it was wont to be gay with song and laughter; when the nobles thronged the valley with hawk and hound, the voice of the bugle and the melody of a hundred harps were heard stirring up the echoes in delight."

"But now all are gone; they can only be recalled in vain dreams," said the second in this duet of Celtic mourners—the younger Marius among the ruins.

"The sons of Erin have left her in her loneliness while the world is stirred with their brave actions," continued the ancient bard.

"True," cried Standish; "outside is the world that needs Irish hands and hearts to make it better worth living in." The young man was so enthusiastic in the utterance of his part in the dialogue as to cause the bard to look suddenly up.

"Yes, the hands and the hearts of the Irish have done much," he said. "Let the men go out into the world for a while, but let our daughters be spared to us."

Standish gave a little start and looked inquiringly into the face of the bard.

"What do you mean, Murrough?" he asked slowly.

The bard leant forward as if straining to catch some distant sound.

"Listen to it, listen to it," he said. There was a pause, and through the silence the moan of the far-off ocean was borne along the dim glen.

"It is the sound of the Atlantic," said Standish. "The breeze from the west carries it to us up from the lough."

"Listen to it and think that she is out on that far ocean," said the old man. "Listen to it, and think that Daireen, daughter of the Gerald, has left her Irish home and is now tossing upon that ocean; gone is she, the bright bird of the South—gone from those her smile lightened!"

Standish neither started nor uttered a word when the old man had spoken; but he felt his feet give way under him. He sat down upon a crag and laid his head upon his hand staring into the black tarn. He could not comprehend at first the force of the words "She is gone." He had thought of his own departure, but the possibility of Daireen's had not occurred to him. The meaning of the bard's lament was now apparent to him,

and even now the melody seemed to be given back by the rocks that had heard it:

Why art thou gone from us, Soul of all beauty and joy?

The words moaned through the dim air with the sound of the distant waters for accompaniment.

"Gone—gone—Daireen," he whispered. "And you only tell me of it now," he added almost fiercely to the old man, for he reflected upon the time he had wasted in that duet of lamentation over the ruins of his country. What a wretchedly trivial thing he felt was the condition of the country compared with such an event as the departure of Daireen Gerald.

"It is only since morning that she is gone," said the bard. "It was only in the morning that the letter arrived to tell her that her father was lying in a fever at some place where the vessel called on the way home. And now she is gone from us, perhaps for ever."

"Murrough," said the young man, laying his hand upon the other's arm, and speaking in a hoarse whisper. "Tell me all about her. Why did they allow her to go? Where is she gone? Not out to where her father was landed?"

"Why not there?" cried the old man, raising his head proudly. "Did a Gerald ever shrink from duty when the hour came? Brave girl she is, worthy to be a Gerald!"

"Tell me all—all."

"What more is there to tell than what is bound up in those three words 'She is gone'?" said the man. "The letter came to her grandfather and she saw him read it—I was in the hall—she saw his hand tremble. She stood up there beside him and asked him what was in the letter; he looked into her face and put the letter in her hand. I saw her face grow pale as she read it. Then she sat down for a minute, but no word or cry came from her until she looked up to the old man's face; then she clasped her hands and said only, 'I will go to him.' The old people talked to her of the distance, of the danger; they told her how she would be alone for days and nights among strangers; but she only repeated, 'I will go to him.' And now she is gone—gone alone over those waters."

"Alone!" Standish repeated. "Gone away alone, no friend near her, none to utter a word of comfort in her ears!" He buried his face in his hands as he pictured the girl whom he had loved silently, but with all his soul, since she had come to her home in Ireland from India where she had lived with her father since the death of his wife ten years ago. He pictured her sitting in her loneliness aboard the ship that was bearing her away to, perhaps, the land of her father's grave, and he felt that now at last all the bitterness that could be crowded upon his life had fallen on him. He gazed into the black tarn, and saw within its depths a star glittering as it glittered in the sky above, but it did not relieve his thoughts with any touch of its gold.

He rose after a while and gave his hand to Murrough.

"Thank you," he said. "You have told me all better than any one else could have done. But did she not speak of me, Murrough—only once perhaps? Did she not send me one little word of farewell?"

"She gave me this for you," said the old bard, producing a letter which Standish clutched almost wildly.

"Thank God, thank God!" he cried, hurrying away without another word. But after him swept the sound of the bard's lament which he commenced anew, with that query:

Why art thou gone from us, Soul of all beauty and joy?

It was not yet too dark outside the glen for Standish to read the letter which he had just received; and so soon as he found himself in sight of the sea he tore open the cover and read the few lines Daireen Gerald had written, with a tremulous hand, to say farewell to him.

"My father has been left ill with fever at the Cape, and I know that he will recover only if I go to him. I am going away to-day, for the steamer will leave Southampton in four days, and I cannot be there in time unless I start at once. I thought you would not like me to go without saying good-bye, and God bless you, dear Standish."

"You will say good-bye to The Macnamara for me. I thought poor papa would be here to give you the advice you want. Pray to God that I may be in time to see him."

He read the lines by the gray light reflected from the sea—he read them until his eyes were dim.

"Brave, glorious girl!" he cried. "But to think of her—alone—alone out there, while I— oh, what a poor weak fool I am! Here am I—here, looking out to the sea she is gone to battle with! Oh, God! oh, God! I must do something for her—I must—but what—what?"

He cast himself down upon the heather that crawled from the slopes even to the road, and there he lay with his head buried in agony at the thought of his own impotence; while through the dark glen floated the wild, weird strain of the lament:

"Why art thou gone from us, Soul of all beauty and joy?"

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## CHAPTER VII.

Hamlet. How chances it they travel? their residence,  
both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Rosencrantz. I think their inhibition comes by the means  
of the late innovation.

Many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose-quills.  
What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Hamlet.

**A**WAY from the glens and the heather-clad mountains, from the blue loughs and their islands of arbutus, from the harp-music, and from the ocean-music which makes those who hear it ripe for revolt; away from the land whose life is the memory of ancient deeds of nobleness; away from the land that has given birth to more heroes than any nation in the world, the land whose inhabitants live in thousands in squalor and look out from mud windows upon the most glorious scenery in the world; away from all these one must now be borne.

Upon the evening of the fourth day after the chanting of that lament by the bard O'Brian from the depths of Glenmara, the good steamship *Cardwell Castle* was making its way down Channel with a full cargo and heavy mails for Madeira, St. Helena, and the Cape. It had left its port but a few hours and already the coast had become dim with distance. The red shoreway of the south-west was now so far away that the level rays of sunlight which swept across the water were not seen to shine upon the faces of the rocks, or to show where the green fields joined the brown moorland; the windmills crowning every height were not seen to be in motion.

The passengers were for the most part very cheerful, as passengers generally are during the first couple of hours of a voyage, when only the gentle ripples of the Channel lap the sides of the vessel. The old voyagers, who had thought it prudent to dine off a piece of sea-biscuit and a glass of brandy and water, while they watched with grim smiles the novices trifling with roast pork and apricot-dumplings, were now sitting in seats they had arranged for themselves in such places as they knew would be well to leeward for the greater part of the voyage, and here they smoked their cigars and read their newspapers just as they would be doing every day for three weeks. To them the phenomenon of the lessening land was not particularly interesting. The novices were endeavouring to look as if they had been used to knock about the sea all their lives; they carried their telescopes under their arms quite jauntily, and gave critical glances aloft every now and again, consulting their pocket compasses gravely at regular intervals to convince themselves that they were not being trifled with in the navigation of the vessel.

Then there were, of course, those who had come aboard with the determination of learning in three weeks as much seamanship as should enable them to accept any post of marine responsibility that they might be called upon to fill in after life. They handled the loose tackle with a view of determining its exact utility, and endeavoured to trace stray lines to their source. They placed the captain entirely at his ease with them by asking him a number of questions regarding the dangers of boiler-bursting, and the perils of storms; they begged that he would let them know if there was any truth in the report which had reached them to the effect that the Atlantic was a very stormy place; and they left him with the entreaty that in case of any danger arising suddenly he would at once communicate with them; they then went down to put a few casual questions to the quartermaster who was at the wheel, and doubtless felt that they were making most of the people about them cheerful with their converse.

Then there were the young ladies who had just completed their education in England and were now on their way to join their relations abroad. Having read in the course of their studies of English literature the poems of the late Samuel Rogers, they were much amazed to find that the mariners were not leaning over the ship's bulwarks sighing to behold the sinking of their native land, and that not an individual had climbed the mast to partake of the ocular banquet with indulging in which the poet has accredited the sailor. Towards this section the glances of several male eyes were turned, for most of the young men had roved sufficiently far to become aware of the fact that the relief of the monotony of a lengthened voyage is principally dependent on—well, on the relieving capacities of the young ladies, lately sundered from school and just commencing their education in the world.

But far away from the groups that hung about the stern stood a girl looking over the side of the ship towards the west—towards the sun that was almost touching the horizon. She heard the laughter of the groups of girls and the silly questions of the uninformed, but all sounded to her like the strange voices of a dream; for as she gazed towards the west she seemed to see a fair landscape of purple slopes and green woods; the dash of the ripples against the ship's side came to her as the rustle of the breaking ripples amongst the shells of a blue lough upon whose surface a number of green islets raised their heads. She saw them all—every islet, with its moveless I shadow beneath it, and the light touching the edges of the leaves with red. Daireen Gerald it was who stood there looking out to the sunset, but seeing in the golden lands of the west the Irish land she knew so well.

She remained motionless, with her eyes far away and her heart still farther, until the red sun had disappeared, and the delicate twilight change was slipping over the bright gray water. With every change she seemed to see the shifting of the hues over the heather of Slieve Docas and the pulsating of the tremulous red light through the foliage of the deer ground. It was only now that the tears forced themselves into her eyes, for she had not wept at parting from her grandfather, who had gone with her from Ireland and had left her aboard the steamer a few hours before; and while her tears made everything misty to her, the light laughter of the groups scattered about the quarter-deck sounded in her ears. It did not come harshly to her, for it seemed to come from a world in which she had no part. The things about her were as the things of a dream. The reality in which she was living was that which she saw out in the west.

"Come, my dear," said a voice behind her—"Come and walk with me on the deck. I fancied I had lost you, and you may guess what a state I was in, after all the promises I made to Mr. Gerald."

"I was just looking out there, and wondering what they were all doing at home—at the foot of the dear old mountain," said Daireen, allowing herself to be led away.

"That is what most people would call moping, dear," said the lady who had come up. She was a middle-aged lady with a pleasant face, though her figure was hardly what a scrupulous painter would choose as a model

for a Nausicaa.

"Perhaps I was moping, Mrs. Crawford," Daireen replied; "but I feel the better for it now."

"My dear, I don't disapprove of moping now and again, though as a habit it should not be encouraged. I was down in my cabin, and when I came on deck I couldn't understand where you had disappeared to. I asked the major, but of course, you know, he was quite oblivious to everything but the mutiny at Cawnpore, through being beside Doctor Campion."

"But you have found me, you see, Mrs. Crawford."

"Yes, thanks to Mr. Glaston; he knew where you had gone; he had been watching you." Daireen felt her face turning red as she thought of this Mr. Glaston, whoever he was, with his eyes fixed upon her movements. "You don't know Mr. Glaston, Daireen?—I shall call you 'Daireen' of course, though we have only known each other a couple of hours," continued the lady. "No, of course you don't. Never mind, I'll show him to you." For the promise of this treat Daireen did not express her gratitude. She had come to think the most unfavourable things regarding this Mr. Glaston. Mrs. Crawford, however, did not seem to expect an acknowledgment. Her chat ran on as briskly as ever. "I shall point him out to you, but on no account look near him for some time—young men are so conceited, you know."

Daireen had heard this peculiarity ascribed to the race before, and so when her guide, as they walked towards the stern of the vessel, indicated to her that a young man sitting in a deck-chair smoking a cigar was Mr. Glaston, she certainly did not do anything that might possibly increase in Mr. Glaston this dangerous tendency which Mrs. Crawford had assigned to young men generally.

"What do you think of him, my dear?" asked Mrs. Crawford, when they had strolled up the deck once more.

"Of whom?" inquired Daireen.

"Good gracious," cried the lady, "are your thoughts still straying? Why, I mean Mr. Glaston, to be sure. What do you think of him?"

"I didn't look at him," the girl answered.

Mrs. Crawford searched the fair face beside her to find out if its expression agreed with her words, and the scrutiny being satisfactory she gave a little laugh. "How do you ever mean to know what he is like if you don't look at him?" she asked.

Daireen did not stop to explain how she thought it possible that contentment might exist aboard the steamer even though she remained in ignorance for ever of Mr. Glaston's qualities; but presently she glanced along the deck, and saw sitting at graceful ease upon the chair Mrs. Crawford had indicated, a tall man of apparently a year or two under thirty. He had black hair which he had allowed to grow long behind, and a black moustache which gave every indication of having been subjected to the most careful youthful training. His face would not have been thought expressive but for his eyes, and the expression that these organs gave out could hardly be called anything except a neutral one: they indicated nothing except that nothing was meant to be indicated by them. No suggestion of passion, feeling, or even thoughtfulness, did they give; and in fact the only possible result of looking at this face which some people called expressive, was a feeling that the man himself was calmly conscious of the fact that some people were in the habit of calling his face expressive.

"And what *do* you think of him now, my dear?" asked Mrs. Crawford, after Daireen had gratified her by taking that look.

"I really don't think that I think anything," she answered with a little laugh.

"That is the beauty of his face," cried Mrs. Crawford. "It sets one thinking."

"But that is not what I said, Mrs. Crawford."

"You said you did not think you were thinking anything, Daireen; and that meant, I know, that there was more in his face than you could read at a first glance. Never mind; every one is set thinking when one sees Mr. Glaston."

Daireen had almost become interested in this Mr. Glaston, even though she could not forget that he had watched her when she did not want to be watched. She gave another glance towards him, but with no more profitable conclusion than her previous look had attained.

"I will tell you all about him, my child," said Mrs. Crawford confidentially; "but first let us make ourselves comfortable. Dear old England, there is the last of it for us for some time. Adieu, adieu, dear old country!" There was not much sentimentality in the stout little lady's tone, as she looked towards the faint line of mist far astern that marked the English coast. She sat down with Daireen to the leeward of the deck-house where she had laid her rugs, and until the tea-bell rang Daireen had certainly no opportunity for moping.

Mrs. Crawford told her that this Mr. Glaston was a young man of such immense capacities that nothing lay outside his grasp either in art or science. He had not thought it necessary to devote his attention to any subject in particular; but that, Mrs. Crawford thought, was rather because there existed no single subject that he considered worthy of an expenditure of all his energies. As things unfortunately existed, there was nothing left for him but to get rid of the unbounded resources of his mind by applying them to a variety of subjects. He had, in fact, written poetry—never an entire volume of course, but exceedingly clever pieces that had been published in his college magazine. He was capable of painting a great picture if he chose, though he had contented himself with giving ideas to other men who had worked them out through the medium of pictures. He was one of the most accomplished of musicians; and if he had not yet produced an opera or composed even a song, instances were on record of his having performed impromptu that would undoubtedly have made the fame of a professor. He was the son of a Colonial Bishop, Mrs. Crawford told Daireen, and though he lived in England he was still dutiful enough to go out to pay a month's visit to his father every year.

"But we must not make him conceited, Daireen," said Mrs. Crawford, ending her discourse; "we must not, dear; and if he should look over and see us together this way, he would conclude that we were talking of him."

Daireen rose with her instructive companion with an uneasy sense of feeling that all they could by their combined efforts contribute to the conceit of a young man who would, upon grounds so slight, come to such a conclusion as Mrs. Crawford feared he might, would be but trifling.

Then the tea-bell rang, and all the novices who had enjoyed the roast pork and dumplings at dinner, descended to make a hearty meal of buttered toast and banana jelly. The sea air had given them an appetite, they declared with much merriment. The chief steward, however, being an experienced man, and knowing that in a few hours the Bay of Biscay would be entered, did not, from observing the hearty manner in which the novices were eating, feel uneasy on the matter of the endurance of the ship's stores. He knew it would be their last meal for some days at least, and he smiled grimly as he laid down another plate of buttered toast, and hastened off to send up some more brandy and biscuits to Major Crawford and Doctor Campion, whose hoarse chuckles called forth by pleasing reminiscences of Cawnpore were dimly heard from the deck through the cabin skylight.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;  
Till then in patience our proceeding be.

We'll put on those shall praise your excellence  
And set a double varnish on the fame  
The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together.  
... I know love is begun by time.

I know him well: he is the brooch indeed  
And gem of all the nation.

He made confession of you,  
And gave you such a masterly report  
For art... 'twould be a sight indeed  
If one could match you.

—Hamlet.

**M**RS. Crawford absolutely clung to Daireen all this evening. When the whist parties were formed in the cabin she brought the girl on deck and instructed her in some of the matters worth knowing aboard a passenger ship.

"On no account bind yourself to any whist set before you look about you: nothing could be more dangerous," she said confidentially. "Just think how terrible it would be if you were to join a set now, and afterwards to find out that it was not the best set. You would simply be ruined. Besides that, it is better to stay on deck as much as possible during the first day or two at sea. Now let us go over to the major and Campion."

So Daireen found herself borne onward with Mrs. Crawford's arm in her own to where Major Crawford and Doctor Campion were sitting on their battered deck-chairs lighting fresh cheroots from the ashes of the expiring ends.

"Don't tread on the tumblers, my dear," said the major as his wife advanced. "And how is Miss Gerald now that we have got under weigh? You didn't take any of that liquid they insult the Chinese Empire by calling tea, aboard ship, I hope?"

"Just a single cup, and very weak," said Mrs. Crawford apologetically.

"My dear, I thought you were wiser."

"You will take this chair, Mrs. Crawford?" said Doctor Campion, without making the least pretence of moving, however.

"Don't think of such a thing," cried the lady's husband; and to do Doctor Campion justice, he did not think of such a thing. "Why, you don't fancy these are our Junkapore days, do you, when Kate came out to our bungalow, and the boys called her the Sylph? It's a fact, Miss Gerald; my wife, as your father will tell you, was as slim as a lily. Ah, dear, dear! Time, they say, takes a lot away from us, but by Jingo, he's liberal enough in some ways. By Jingo, yes," and the gallant old man kept shaking his head and chuckling towards his comrade, whose features could be seen puckered into a grin though he uttered no sound.

"And stranger still, Miss Gerald," said the lady, "the major was once looked upon as a polite man, and politer to his wife than to anybody else. Go and fetch some chairs here, Campion, like a good fellow," she added to the doctor, who rose slowly and obeyed.

"That's how my wife takes command of the entire battalion, Miss Gerald," remarked the major. "Oh, your father will tell you all about her."

The constant reference to her father by one who was an old friend, came with a cheering influence to the

girl. A terrible question as to what might be the result of her arrival at the Cape had suggested itself to her more than once since she had left Ireland; but now the major did not seem to fancy that there could be any question in the matter.

When the chairs were brought, and enveloped in karosses, as the old campaigners called the furs, there arose a chatter of bungalows, and punkahs, and puggarees, and calapashes, and curries, that was quite delightful to the girl's ears, especially as from time to time her father's name would be mentioned in connection with some elephant-trapping expedition, or, perhaps, a mess joke.

When at last Daireen found herself alone in the cabin which her grandfather had managed to secure for her, she did not feel that loneliness which she thought she should have felt aboard this ship full of strangers without sympathy for her.

She stood for a short time in the darkness, looking out of her cabin port over the long waters, and listening to the sound of the waves hurrying away from the ship and flapping against its sides, and once more she thought of the purple mountain and the green Irish Lough. Then as she moved away from the port her thoughts stretched in another direction—southward. Her heart was full of hope as she turned in to her bunk and went quietly asleep just as the first waves of the Bay of Biscay were making the good steamer a little uneasy, and bringing about a bitter remorse to those who had made merry over the dumplings and buttered toast.

Major Crawford was an officer who had served for a good many years in India, and had there become acquainted with Daireen's father and mother. When Mr. Gerald was holding his grandchild in his arms aboard the steamer saying good-bye, he was surprised by a strange lady coming up to him and begging to be informed if it was possible that Daireen was the daughter of Colonel Gerald. In another instant Mr. Gerald was overjoyed to know that Daireen would be during the entire voyage in the company of an officer and his wife who were old friends of her father, and had recognised her from her likeness to her mother, whom they had also known when she was little older than Daireen. Mr. Gerald left the vessel with a mind at rest; and that his belief that the girl would be looked after was well-founded is already known. Daireen was, indeed, in the hands of a lady who was noted in many parts of the world for her capacities for taking charge of young ladies. When she was in India her position at the station was very similar to that of immigration-agent-general. Fond matrons in England, who had brought their daughters year after year to Homburg, Kissingen, and Nice, in the "open" season, and had yet brought them back in safety—matrons who had even sunk to the low level of hydropathic hunting-grounds without success, were accustomed to write pathetic letters to Junkapore and Arradambad conveying to Mrs. Crawford intelligence of the strange fancy that some of the dear girls had conceived to visit those parts of the Indian Empire, and begging Mrs. Crawford to give her valuable advice with regard to the carrying out of such remarkable freaks. Never in any of these cases had the major's wife failed. These forlorn hopes took passage to India and found in her a real friend, with tact, perseverance, and experience. The subalterns of the station were never allowed to mope in a wretched, companionless condition; and thus Mrs. Crawford had achieved for herself a certain fame, which it was her study to maintain. Having herself had men-children only, she had no personal interests to look after. Her boys had been swaddled in puggarees, spoon-fed with curry, and nurtured upon chutney, and had so developed into full-grown Indians ready for the choicest appointments, and they had succeeded very well indeed. Her husband had now received a command from the War Office to proceed to the Cape for the purpose of obtaining evidence on the subject of the regulation boots to be supplied to troops on active foreign service; a commission upon this most important subject having been ordered by a Parliamentary vote. Other officers of experience had been sent to various of the colonies, and much was expected to result from the prosecution of their inquiries, the opponents of the Government being confident that gussets would eventually be allowed to non-commissioned officers, and back straps to privates.

Of course Major Crawford could not set out on a mission so important without the companionship of his wife. Though just at the instant of Daireen's turning in, the major fancied he might have managed to get along pretty well even if his partner had been left behind him in England. He was inclined to snarl in his cabin at nights when his wife unfolded her plans to him and kept him awake to give his opinion as to the possibility of the tastes of various young persons becoming assimilated. To-night the major expressed his indifference as to whether every single man in the ship's company got married to every single woman before the end of the voyage, or whether they all went to perdition singly. He concluded by wishing fervently that they would disappear, married and single, by a supernatural agency.

"But think, how gratified poor Gerald would be if the dear girl could think as I do on this subject," said Mrs. Crawford persistently, alluding to the matter of certain amalgamation of tastes. At this point, however, the major expressed himself in words still more vigorous than he had brought to his aid before, and his wife thought it prudent to get into her bunk without pursuing any further the question of the possible gratification of Colonel Gerald at the unanimity of thought existing between his daughter and Mrs. Crawford.

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## CHAPTER IX.

How dangerous is it that this man goes loose...  
He's loved of the distracted multitude,  
Who like not in their judgment but their eyes:  
And where 'tis so the offender's scourge is weigh'd,



But never the offence.

Look here upon this picture, and on this.

Thus has he—and many more of the same breed that I know the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time... a kind of yesty collection which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.—*Hamlet*.

THE uneasy bosom of the Bay of Biscay was throbbing with its customary emotion beneath the good vessel, when Daireen awoke the next morning to the sound of creaking timbers and rioting glasses. Above her on the deck the tramp of a healthy passenger, who wore a pedometer and walked three miles every morning before breakfast, was heard, now dilating and now decreasing, as he passed over the cabins. He had almost completed his second mile, and was putting on a spurt in order to keep himself up to time; his spurt at the end of the first mile had effectually awakened all the passengers beneath, who had yet remained undisturbed through the earlier part of his tramp.

Mrs. Crawford, looking bright and fresh and good-natured, entered Daireen's cabin before the girl was ready to leave it. She certainly seemed determined that the confidence Mr. Gerald had reposed in her with regard to the care of his granddaughter should not prove to have been misplaced.

"I am not going in, my dear," she said as she entered the cabin. "I only stepped round to see that you were all right this morning. I knew you would be so, though Robinson the steward tells me that even the little sea there is on in the bay has been quite sufficient to make about a dozen vacancies at the breakfast-table. People are such fools when they come aboard a ship—eating boiled paste and all sorts of things, and so the sea is grossly misrepresented. Did that dreadfully healthy Mr. Thompson awake you with his tramping on deck? Of course he did; he's a dreadful man. If he goes on like this we'll have to petition the captain to lay down bark on the deck. Now I'll leave you. Come aloft when you are ready; and, by the way, you must take care what dress you put on—very great care."

"Why, I thought that aboard ship one might wear anything," said the girl.

"Never was there a greater mistake, my child. People say the same about going to the seaside: anything will do; but you know how one requires to be doubly particular there; and it's just the same in our little world aboard ship."

"You quite frighten me, Mrs. Crawford," said Daireen. "What advice can you give me on the subject?"

Mrs. Crawford was thoughtful. "If you had only had time to prepare for the voyage, and I had been beside you, everything might have been different. You must not wear anything pronounced—any distinct colour: you must find out something undecided—you understand?"

Daireen looked puzzled. "I'm sorry to say I don't."

"Oh, you have surely something of pale sage—no, that is a bad tone for the first days aboard—too like the complexions of most of the passengers—but, chocolate-gray? ah, that should do: have you anything in that to do for a morning dress?"

Daireen was so extremely fortunate as to be possessed of a garment of the required tone, and her kind friend left her arraying herself in its folds.

On going aloft Daireen found the deck occupied by a select few of the passengers. The healthy gentleman was just increasing his pace for the final hundred yards of his morning's walk, and Doctor Campion had got very near the end of his second cheroot, while he sat talking to a fair-haired and bronze-visaged man with clear gray eyes that had such a way of looking at things as caused people to fancy he was making a mental calculation of the cubic measure of everything; and it was probably the recollection of their peculiarity that made people fancy, when these eyes looked into a human face, that the mind of the man was going through a similar calculation with reference to the human object: one could not avoid feeling that he had a number of formulas for calculating the intellectual value of people, and that when he looked at a person he was thinking which formula should be employed for arriving at a conclusion regarding that person's mental capacity.

Mrs. Crawford was chatting with the doctor and his companion, but on Daireen's appearing, she went over to her.

"Perfect, my child," she said in a whisper—"the tone of the dress, I mean; it will work wonders."

While Daireen was reflecting upon the possibility of a suspension of the laws of nature being the result of the appearance of the chocolate-toned dress, she was led towards the doctor, who immediately went through a fiction of rising from his seat as she approached; and one would really have fancied that he intended getting upon his feet, and was only restrained at the last moment by a remonstrance of the girl's. Daireen acknowledged his courtesy, though it was only imaginary, and she was conscious that his companion had really risen.

"You haven't made the acquaintance of Miss Gerald, Mr. Harwood?" said Mrs. Crawford.

"I have not had the honour," said the man.

"Let me present you, Daireen. Mr. Harwood—Miss Gerald. Now take great care what you say to this gentleman, Daireen; he is a dangerous man—the most dangerous that any one could meet. He is a detective, dear, and the worst of all—a literary detective; the 'special' of the *Domnant Trumpeter*."

Daireen had looked into the man's face while she was being presented to him, and she knew it was the face of a man who had seen the people of more than one nation.

"This is not your first voyage, Miss Gerald, or you would not be on deck so early?" he said.

"It certainly is not," she replied. "I was born in India, so that my first voyage was to England; then I have crossed the Irish Channel frequently, going to school and returning for the holidays; and I have also had some

long voyages on Lough Suangorm," she added with a little smile, for she did not think that her companion would be likely to have heard of the existence of the Irish fjord.

"Suangorm? then you have had some of the most picturesque voyages one can make in the course of a day in this world," he said. "Lough Suangorm is the most wonderful fjord in the world, let me tell you."

"Then you know it," she cried with a good deal of surprise. "You must know the dear old lough or you would not talk so." She did not seem to think that his assertion should imply that he had seen a good many other fjords also.

"I think I may say I know it. Yes, from those fine headlands that the Atlantic beats against, to where the purple slope of that great hill meets the little road."

"You know the hill—old Slieve Docas? How strange! I live just at the foot."

"I have a sketch of a mansion, taken just there," he said, laughing. "It is of a dark brown exterior."

"Exactly."

"It looks towards the sea."

"It does indeed."

"It is exceedingly picturesque."

"Picturesque?"

"Well, yes; the house I allude to is very much so. If I recollect aright, the one window of the wall was not glazed, and the smoke certainly found its way out through a hole in the roof."

"Oh, that is too bad," said Daireen. "I had no idea that the peculiarities of my country people would be known so far away. Please don't say anything about that sketch to the passengers aboard."

"I shall never be tempted to allude, even by the 'pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,' to the—the—peculiarities of your country people, Miss Gerald," he answered. "It is a lovely country, and contains the most hospitable people in the world; but their talent does not develop itself architecturally. Ah! there is the second bell. I hope you have an appetite."

"Have you been guarded enough in your conversation, Daireen?" said Mrs. Crawford, coming up with the doctor, whose rising at the summons of the breakfast-bell was by no means a fiction.

"The secrets of the Home Rule Confederation are safe in the keeping of Miss Gerald," said Mr. Harwood, with a smile which any one could see was simply the result of his satisfaction at having produced a well-turned sentence.

The breakfast-table was very thinly attended, more so even than Robinson the steward had anticipated when on the previous evening he had laid down that second plate of buttered toast before the novices.

Of the young ladies only three appeared at the table, and their complexions were of the softest amber shade that was ever worked in satin in the upholstery of mock-medixæval furniture. Major Crawford had just come out of the steward's pantry, and he greeted Daireen with all courtesy, as indeed he did the other young ladies at the table, for the major was gallant and gay aboard ship.

After every one had been seated for about ten minutes, the curtain that screened off one of the cabin entrances from the saloon was moved aside, and the figure of the young man to whom Mrs. Crawford had alluded as Mr. Glaston appeared. He came slowly forward, nodding to the captain and saying good-morning to Mrs. Crawford, while he elevated his eyebrows in recognition of Mr. Harwood, taking his seat at the table.

"You can't have an appetite coming directly out of your bunk," said the doctor.

"Indeed?" said Mr. Glaston, without the least expression.

"Quite impossible," said the doctor. "You should have been up an hour ago at least. Here is Mr. Thompson, who has walked more than three miles in the open air."

"Ah," said the other, never moving his eyes to see the modest smile that spread itself over the features of the exemplary Mr. Thompson. "Ah, I heard some one who seemed to be going in for that irrepressible thousand miles in a thousand hours. Yes, bring me a pear and a grape." The last sentence he addressed to the waiter, who, having been drilled by the steward on the subject of Mr. Glaston's tastes, did not show any astonishment at being asked for fruit instead of fish, but hastened off to procure the grape and the pear.

While Mr. Glaston was waiting he glanced across the table, and gave a visible start as his eyes rested upon one of the young ladies—a pleasant-looking girl wearing a pink dress and having a blue ribbon in her hair. Mr. Glaston gave a little shudder, and then turned away.

"That face—ah, where have I beheld it?" muttered Mr. Harwood to the doctor.

"Dam puppy!" said the doctor.

Then the plate and fruit were laid before Mr. Glaston, who said quickly, "Take them away." The bewildered waiter looked towards his chief and obeyed, so that Mr. Glaston remained with an empty plate. Robinson became uneasy.

"Can I get you anything, sir?—we have three peaches aboard and a pine-apple," he murmured.

"Can't touch anything now, Robinson," Mr. Glaston answered.

"The doctor is right," said Mrs. Crawford. "You have no appetite, Mr. Glaston."

"No," he replied; "not *now*," and he gave the least glance towards the girl in pink, who began to feel that all her school dreams of going forth into the world of men to conquer and overcome were being realised beyond her wildest anticipations.

Then there was a pause at the table, which the good major broke by suddenly inquiring something of the captain. Mr. Glaston, however, sat silent, and somewhat sad apparently, until the breakfast was over.

Daireen went into her cabin for a book, and remained arranging some volumes on the little shelf for a few minutes. Mr. Glaston was on deck when she ascended, and he was engaged in a very serious conversation with Mrs. Crawford.

"Something must be done. Surely she has a guardian aboard who is not so utterly lost to everything of truth

and right as to allow that to go on unchecked."

These words Daireen could make out as she passed the young man and the major's wife, and the girl began to fear that something terrible was about to happen. But Mr. Harwood, who was standing above the major's chair, hastened forward as she appeared.

"Why, Major Crawford has been telling me that your father is Colonel Gerald," he said. "Mrs. Crawford never mentioned that fact, thinking that I should be able to guess it for myself."

"Did you know papa?" Daireen asked.

"I met him several times when I was out about the Baroda affair," said the "special."

"And as you are his daughter, I suppose it will interest you to know that he has been selected as the first governor of the Castaways."

Daireen looked puzzled. "The Castaways?" she said.

"Yes, Miss Gerald; the lovely Castaway Islands which, you know, have just been annexed by England. Colonel Gerald has been chosen by the Colonial Secretary as the first governor."

"But I heard nothing of this," said Daireen, a little astonished to receive such information in the Bay of Biscay.

"How could you hear anything of it? No one outside the Cabinet has the least idea of it."

"And you——" said the girl doubtfully.

"Ah, my dear Miss Gerald, the resources of information possessed by the *Dominant Trumpeter* are as unlimited as they are trustworthy. You may depend upon what I tell you. It is not generally known that I am now bound for the Castaway group, to make the British public aware of the extent of the treasure they have acquired in these sunny isles. But I understood that Colonel Gerald was on his way from Madras?"

Daireen explained how her father came to be at the Cape, and Mr. Harwood gave her a few cheering words regarding his sickness. She was greatly disappointed when their conversation was interrupted by Mrs. Crawford.

"The poor fellow!" she said—"Mr. Glaston, I mean. I have induced him to go down and eat some grapes and a pear."

"Why couldn't he take them at breakfast and not betray his idiocy?" said Mr. Harwood.

"Mr. Harwood, you have no sympathy for sufferers from sensitiveness," replied the lady. "Poor Mr. Glaston! he had an excellent appetite, but he found it impossible to touch anything the instant he saw that fearful pink dress with the blue ribbon hanging over it."

"Poor fellow!" said Mr. Harwood.

"Dam puppy!" said the doctor.

"Campion!" cried Mrs. Crawford severely.

"A thousand pardons! my dear Miss Gerald," said the transgressor. "But what can a man say when he hears of such puppyism? This is my third voyage with that young man, and he has been developing into the full-grown puppy with the greatest rapidity."

"You have no fine feeling, Campion," said Mrs. Crawford. "You have got no sympathy for those who are artistically sensitive. But hush! here is the offending person herself, and with such a hat! Now admit that to look at her sends a cold shudder through you."

"I think her a devilish pretty little thing, by gad," said the doctor.

The young lady with the pink dress and the blue ribbon appeared, wearing the additional horror of a hat lined with yellow and encircled with mighty flowers.

"Something must be done to suppress her," said Mrs. Crawford decisively. "Surely such people must have a better side to their natures that one may appeal to."

"I doubt it, Mrs. Crawford," said Mr. Harwood, with only the least tinge of sarcasm in his voice. "I admit that one might not have been in utter despair though the dress was rather aggressive, but I cannot see anything but depravity in that hat with those floral splendours."

"But what is to be done?" said the lady. "Mr. Glaston would, no doubt, advocate making a Jonah of that young person for the sake of saving the rest of the ship's company. But, however just that might be, I do not suppose it would be considered strictly legal."

"Many acts of justice are done that are not legal," replied Harwood gravely. "From a legal standpoint, Cain was no murderer—his accuser being witness and also judge. He would leave the court without a stain on his character nowadays. Meantime, major, suppose we have a smoke on the bridge."

"He fancies he has said something clever," remarked Mrs. Crawford when he had walked away; and it must be confessed that Mr. Harwood had a suspicion to that effect.

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## CHAPTER X.

His will is not his own;  
For he himself is subject to his birth:  
He may not, as unvalued persons do,

Carve for himself; for on his choice depends  
The safety and the health of this whole state,  
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed  
Unto the voice and yielding of that body,  
Whereof he is the head.

*Osrlic...* Believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing; indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card... of gentry.

*Hamlet...* His definement suffers no perdition in you... But, in the verity of extolment I take him to be a soul of great article.—*Hamlet*.

THE information which Daireen had received on the unimpeachable authority of the special correspondent of the *Dominant Trumpeter* was somewhat puzzling to her at first; but as she reflected upon the fact that the position of governor of the newly-acquired Castaway group must be one of importance, she could not help feeling some happiness; only in the midmost heart of her joy her recollection clasped a single grief—a doubt about her father was still clinging to her heart. The letter her grandfather had received which caused her to make up her mind to set out for the Cape, merely stated that Colonel Gerald had been found too weak to continue the homeward voyage in the vessel that had brought him from India. He had a bad attack of fever, and was not allowed to be moved from where he lay at the Cape. The girl thought over all of this as she reflected upon what Mr. Harwood had told her, and looking over the long restless waters of the Bay of Biscay from her seat far astern, her eyes became very misty; the unhappy author represented by the yellow-covered book which she had been reading lay neglected upon her knee. But soon her brave, hopeful heart took courage, and she began to paint in her imagination the fairest pictures of the future—a future beneath the rich blue sky that was alleged by the Ministers who had brought about the annexation, evermore to overshadow the Castaway group—a future beneath the purple shadow of the giant Slieve Docas when her father would have discharged his duties at the Castaways.

She could not even pretend to herself to be reading the book she had brought up, so that Mrs. Crawford could not have been accused of an interruption when she drew her chair alongside the girl's, saying:

"We must have a little chat together, now that there is a chance for it. It is really terrible how much time one can fritter away aboard ship. I have known people take long voyages for the sake of study, and yet never open a single book but a novel. By the way, what is this the major has been telling me Harwood says about your father?"

Daireen repeated all that Harwood had said regarding the new island colony, and begged Mrs. Crawford to give an opinion as to the trustworthiness of the information.

"My dear child," said Mrs. Crawford, "you may depend upon its truth if Harwood told it to you. The *Dominant Trumpeter* sends out as many arms as an octopus, for news, and, like the octopus too, it has the instinct of only making use of what is worth anything. The Government have been very good to George—I mean Colonel Gerald—he was always 'George' with us when he was lieutenant. The Castaway governorship is one of the nice things they sometimes have to dispose of to the deserving. It was thought, you know, that George would sell out and get his brevet long ago, but what he often said to us after your poor mother died convinced me that he would not accept a quiet life. And so it was Mr. Harwood that gave you this welcome news," she continued, adding in a thoughtful tone, "By the way, what do you think of Mr. Harwood?"

"I really have not thought anything about him," Daireen replied, wondering if it was indeed a necessity of life aboard ship to be able at a moment's notice to give a summary of her opinion as to the nature of every person she might chance to meet.

"He is a very nice man," said Mrs. Crawford; "only just inclined to be conceited, don't you think? This is our third voyage with him, so that we know something of him. One knows more of a person at the end of a week at sea than after a month ashore. What can be keeping Mr. Glaston over his pears, I wonder? I meant to have presented him to you before. Ah, here he comes out of the companion. I asked him to return to me."

But again Mrs. Crawford's expectations were dashed to the ground. Mr. Glaston certainly did appear on deck, and showed some sign in a languid way of walking over to where Mrs. Crawford was sitting, but unfortunately before he had taken half a dozen steps he caught sight of that terrible pink dress and the hat with the jaundiced interior. He stopped short, and a look of martyrdom passed over his face as he turned and made his way to the bridge in the opposite direction to where that horror of pronounced tones sat quite unconscious of the agony her appearance was creating in the aesthetic soul of the young man.

Daireen having glanced up and seen the look of dismay upon his face, and the flight of Mr. Glaston, could not avoid laughing outright so soon as he had disappeared. But Mrs. Crawford did not laugh. On the contrary she looked very grave.

"This is terrible—terrible, Daireen," she said. "That vile hat has driven him away. I knew it must."

"Matters are getting serious indeed," said the girl, with only the least touch of mockery in her voice. "If he is not allowed to eat anything at breakfast in sight of the dress, and he is driven up to the bridge by a glimpse of the hat, I am afraid that his life will not be quite happy here."

"Happy! my dear, you cannot conceive the agonies he endures through his sensitiveness. I must make the acquaintance of that young person and try to bring her to see the error of her ways. Oh, how fortunate you had this chocolate-gray!"

"I must have thought of it in a moment of inspiration," said Daireen.

"Come, you really mustn't laugh," said the elder lady reprovingly. "It was a happy thought, at any rate, and I only hope that you will be able to sustain its effect by something good at dinner. I must look over your trunks and tell you what tone is most artistic."

Daireen began to feel rebellious.

"My dear Mrs. Crawford, it is very kind of you to offer to take so much trouble; but, you see, I do not feel it to be a necessity to choose the shade of my dress solely to please the taste of a gentleman who may not be absolutely perfect in his ideas."

Mrs. Crawford laughed. "Do not get angry, my dear," she said. "I admire your spirit, and I will not attempt to control your own good taste; you will never, I am sure, sink to such a depth of depravity as is manifested by that hat."

"Well, I think you may depend on me so far," said Daireen.

Shortly afterwards Mrs. Crawford descended to arrange some matters in her cabin, and Daireen had consequently an opportunity of returning to her neglected author.

But before she had made much progress in her study she was again interrupted, and this time by Doctor Campion, who had been smoking with Mr. Harwood on the ship's bridge. Doctor Campion was a small man, with a reddish face upon which a perpetual frown was resting. He had a jerky way of turning his head as if it was set upon a ratchet wheel only capable of shifting a tooth at a time. He had been in the army for a good many years, and had only accepted the post aboard the *Cardwell Castle* for the sake of his health.

"Young cub!" he muttered, as he came up to Daireen. "Infernal young cub!—I beg your pardon, Miss Gerald, but I really must say it. That fellow Glaston is getting out of all bounds. Ah, it's his father's fault—his father's fault. Keeps him dawdling about England without any employment. Why, it would have been better for him to have taken to the Church, as they call it, at once, idle though the business is."

"Surely you have not been wearing an inartistic tie, Doctor Campion?"

"Inartistic indeed! The puppy has got so much cant on his finger-ends that weak-minded people think him a genius. Don't you believe it, my dear; he's a dam puppy—excuse me, but there's really no drawing it mild here."

Daireen was amused at the doctor's vehemence, however shocked she may have been at his manner of getting rid of it.

"What on earth has happened with Mr. Glaston now?" she asked. "It is impossible that there could be another obnoxious dress aboard."

"He hasn't given himself any airs in that direction since," said the doctor. "But he came up to the bridge where we were smoking, and after he had talked for a minute with Harwood, he started when he saw a boy who had been sent up to clean out one of the hencoops—asked if we didn't think his head marvellously like Carlyle's—was amazed at our want of judgment—went up to the boy and cross-questioned him—found out that his father sells vegetables to the Victoria Docks—asked if it had ever been remarked before that his head was like Carlyle's—boy says quickly that if the man he means is the tailor in Wapping, anybody that says his head is like that man's is a liar, and then boy goes quietly down. 'Wonderful!' says our genius, as he comes over to us; 'wonderful head—exactly the same as Carlyle's, and language marvellously similar—brief—earnest—emphatic—full of powah!' Then he goes on to say he'll take notes of the boy's peculiarities and send them to a magazine. I couldn't stand any more of that sort of thing, so I left him with Harwood. Harwood can sift him."

Daireen laughed at this new story of the young man whose movements seemed to be regarded as of so much importance by every one aboard the steamer. She began really to feel interested in this Mr. Glaston; and she thought that perhaps she might as well be particular about the tone of the dress she would select for appearing in before the judicial eyes of this Mr. Glaston. She relinquished the design she had formed in her mind while Mrs. Crawford was urging on her the necessity for discrimination in this respect: she had resolved to show a recklessness in her choice of a dress, but now she felt that she had better take Mrs. Crawford's advice, and give some care to the artistic combinations of her toilette.

The result of her decision was that she appeared in such studious carelessness of attire that Mr. Glaston, sitting opposite to her, was enabled to eat a hearty dinner utterly regardless of the aggressive splendour of the imperial blue dress worn by the other young lady, with a pink ribbon flowing over it from her hair. This young lady's imagination was unequal to suggesting a more diversified arrangement than she had already shown. She thought it gave evidence of considerable strategical resources to wear that pink ribbon over the blue dress: it was very nearly as effective as the blue ribbon over the pink, of the morning. The appreciation of contrast as an important element of effect in art was very strongly developed in this young lady.

Mrs. Crawford did not conceal the satisfaction she felt observing the appetite of Mr. Glaston; and after dinner she took his arm as he went towards the bridge.

"I am so glad you were not offended with that dreadful young person's hideous colours," she said, as they strolled along.

"I could hardly have believed it possible that such wickedness could survive nowadays," he replied. "But I was, after the first few minutes, quite unconscious of its enormity. My dear Mrs. Crawford, your young protégée appeared as a spirit of light to charm away that fiend of evil. She sat before me—a poem of tones—a delicate symphony of Schumann's played at twilight on the brink of a mere of long reeds and water-flags, with a single star shining through the well-defined twigs of a solitary alder. That was her idea, don't you think?"

"I have no doubt of it," the lady replied after a little pause. "But if you allow me to present you to her you will have an opportunity of finding out. Now do let me."

"Not this evening, Mrs. Crawford; I do not feel equal to it," he answered. "She has given me too much to think about—too many ideas to work out. That was the most thoughtful and pure-souled toilette I ever recollect; but there are a few points about it I do not fully grasp, though I have an instinct of their meaning. No, I want a quiet hour alone. But you will do me the favour to thank the child for me."

"I wish you would come and do it yourself," said the lady. "But I suppose there is no use attempting to force you. If you change your mind, remember that we shall be here."

She left the young man preparing a cigarette, and joined Daireen and the major, who were sitting far

astern: the girl with that fiction of a fiction still in her hand; her companion with a cheroot that was anything but insubstantial in his fingers.

"My dear child," whispered Mrs. Crawford, "I am so glad you took your own way and would not allow me to choose your dress for you. I could never have dreamt of anything so perfect and—yes, it is far beyond what I could have composed."

Mrs. Crawford thought it better on the whole not to transfer to Daireen the expression of gratitude Mr. Glaston had begged to be conveyed to her. She had an uneasy consciousness that such a message coming to one who was as yet unacquainted with Mr. Glaston might give her the impression that he was inclined to have some of that unhappy conceit, with the possession of which Mrs. Crawford herself had accredited the race generally.

"Miss Gerald is an angel in whatever dress she may wear," said the major gallantly. "What is dress, after all?" he asked. "By gad, my dear, the finest women I ever recollect seeing were in Burmah, and all the dress they wore was the merest—"

"Major, you forget yourself," cried his wife severely.

The major pulled vigorously at the end of his moustache, grinning and bobbing his head towards the doctor.

"By gad, my dear, the recollection of those beauties would make any fellow forget not only himself but his own wife, even if she was as fine a woman as yourself."

The doctor's face relapsed into its accustomed frown after he had given a responsive grin and a baritone chuckle to the delicate pleasantry of his old comrade.

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## CHAPTER XI.

Look, with what courteous action  
It waves you to a more removed ground:  
But do not go with it.

The very place puts toys of desperation,  
Without more motive, into every brain.

*Horatio.* What are they that would speak with me?

*Servant.* Sea-faring men, sir.—*Hamlet.*

**W**HO does not know the delightful monotony of a voyage southward, broken only at the intervals of anchoring beneath the brilliant green slopes of Madeira or under the grim shadow of the cliffs of St. Helena?

The first week of the voyage for those who are not sensitive of the uneasy motion of the ship through the waves of the Bay of Biscay is perhaps the most delightful, for then every one is courteous with every one else. The passengers have not become friendly enough to be able to quarrel satisfactorily. The young ladies have got a great deal of white about them, and they have not begun to show that jealousy of each other which the next fortnight so powerfully develops. The men, too, are prodigal in their distribution of cigars; and one feels in one's own heart nothing but the most generous emotions, as one sits filling a meerschaum with Latakia in the delicate twilight of time and of thought that succeeds the curried lobster and pilau chickens as prepared in the galley of such ships as the *Cardwell Castle*. Certainly for a week of Sabbaths a September voyage to Madeira must be looked to.

Things had begun to arrange themselves aboard the *Cardwell Castle*. The whist sets and the deck sets had been formed. The far-stretching arm of society had at least one finger in the construction of the laws of life in this Atlantic ship-town.

The young woman with the pronounced tastes in colour and the large resources of imagination in the arrangement of blue and pink had become less aggressive, as she was compelled to fall back upon the minor glories of her trunk, so that there was no likelihood of Mr. Glaston's perishing of starvation. Though very fond of taking-up young ladies, Mrs. Crawford had no great struggle with her propensity so far as this young lady was concerned. But as Mr. Glaston had towards the evening of the third day of the voyage found himself in a fit state of mind to be presented to Miss Gerald, Mrs. Crawford had nothing to complain of. She knew that the young man was invariably fascinating to all of her sex, and she could see no reason why Miss Gerald should not have at least the monotony of the voyage relieved for her through the improving nature of his conversation. To be sure, Mr. Harwood also possessed in his conversation many elements of improvement, but then they were of a more commonplace type in Mrs. Crawford's eyes, and she thought it as well, now and again when he was sitting beside Daireen, to make a third to their party and assist in the solution of any question they might be discussing. She rather wished that it had not been in Mr. Harwood's power to give Daireen that information about her father's appointment; it was a sort of link of friendship between him and

the girl; but Mrs. Crawford recollected her own responsibility with regard to Daireen too well to allow such a frail link to become a bond to bind with any degree of force.

She was just making a mental resolution to this effect upon the day preceding their expected arrival at Madeira, when Mr. Harwood, who had before tiffin been showing the girl how to adjust a binocular glass, strolled up to where the major's wife sat resolving many things, reflecting upon her victories in quarter-deck campaigns of the past and laying out her tactics for the future.

"This is our third voyage together, is it not, Mrs. Crawford?" he asked.

"Let me see," said the lady. "Yes, it is our third. Dear, dear, how time runs past us!"

"I wish it did run past us; unfortunately it seems to remain to work some of its vengeance upon each of us. But do you think we ever had a more charming voyage so far as this has run, Mrs. Crawford?"

The lady became thoughtful. "That was a very nice trip in the P. & O.'s *Turcoman*, when Mr. Carpingham of the Gunners proposed to Clara Walton before he landed at Aden," she said. "Curiously enough, I was thinking about that very voyage just before you came up now. General Walton had placed Clara in my care, and it was I who presented her to young Carpingham." There was a slight tone of triumph in her voice as she recalled this victory of the past.

"I remember well," said Mr. Harwood. "How pleased every one was, and also how—well, the weather was extremely warm in the Red Sea just before he proposed. But I certainly think that this voyage is likely to be quite as pleasant. By the way, what a charming protégée you have got this time, Mrs. Crawford."

"She is a dear girl indeed, and I hope that she may find her father all right at the Cape. Think of what she must suffer."

Mr. Harwood glanced round and saw that Mr. Glaston had strolled up to Daireen's chair. "Yes, I have no doubt that she suffers," he said. "But she is so gentle, so natural in her thoughts and in her manner, I should indeed be sorry that any trouble would come to her." He was himself speaking gently now—so gently, in fact, that Mrs. Crawford drew her lips together with a slight pressure. "Perhaps it is because I am so much older than she that she talks to me naturally as she would to her father. I am old enough to be her father, I suppose," he added almost mournfully. But this only made the lady's lips become more compressed. She had heard men talk before now of being old enough to be young ladies' fathers, and she could also recollect instances of men who were actually old enough to be young ladies' grandfathers marrying those very young ladies.

"Yes," said Mrs. Crawford, "Daireen is a dear natural little thing." Into the paternal potentialities of Mr. Harwood's position towards this dear natural little thing Mrs. Crawford did not think it judicious to go just then.

"She is a dear child," he repeated. "By the way, we shall be at Funchal at noon to-morrow, and we do not leave until the evening. You will land, I suppose?"

"I don't think I shall, I know every spot so well, and those bullock sleighs are so tiresome. I am not so young as I was when I first made their acquaintance."

"Oh, really, if that is your only plea, my dear Mrs. Crawford, we may count on your being in our party."

"Our party!" said the lady.

"I should not say that until I get your consent," said Harwood quickly. "Miss Gerald has never been at the island, you see, and she is girlishly eager to go ashore. Miss Butler and her mother are also landing"—these were other passengers—"and in a weak moment I volunteered my services as guide. Don't you think you can trust me so far as to agree to be one of us?"

"Of course I can," she said. "If Daireen wishes to go ashore you may depend upon my keeping her company. But you will have to provide a sleigh for myself."

"You may depend upon the sleigh, Mrs. Crawford; and many thanks for your trusting to my guidance. Though I sleigh you yet you will trust me."

"Mr. Harwood, that is dreadful. I am afraid that Mrs. Butler will need one of them also."

"The entire sleigh service shall be impressed if necessary," said the "special," as he walked away.

Mrs. Crawford felt that she had not done anything rash. Daireen would, no doubt, be delighted with the day among the lovely heights of Madeira, and if by some little thoughtfulness it would be possible to hit upon a plan that should give over the guidance of some of the walking members of the party to Mr. Glaston, surely the matter was worth pursuing.

Mr. Glaston was just at this instant looking into, Daireen's face as he talked to her. He invariably kept his eyes fixed upon the faces of the young women to whom he was fond of talking. It did not argue any earnestness on his part, Mrs. Crawford knew. He seemed now, however, to be a little in earnest in what he was saying. But then Mrs. Crawford reflected that the subjects upon which his discourse was most impassioned were mostly those that other people would call trivial, such as the effect produced upon the mind of man by seeing a grape-green ribbon lying upon a pale amber cushion. "Every colour has got its soul," she once heard him say; "and though any one can appreciate its meaning and the work it has to perform in the world, the subtle thoughts breathed by the tones are too delicate to be understood except by a few. Colour is language of the subtlest nature, and one can praise God through that medium just as one can blaspheme through it." He had said this very earnestly at one time, she recollected, and as she now saw Daireen laugh she thought it was not impossible that it might be at some phrase of the same nature, the meaning of which her uncultured ear did not at once catch, that Daireen had laughed. Daireen, at any rate, did laugh in spite of his earnestness of visage.

In a few moments Mr. Glaston came over to Mrs. Crawford, and now his face wore an expression of sadness rather than of any other emotion.

"My dear Mrs. Crawford, you surely cannot intend to give your consent to that child's going ashore tomorrow. She tells me that that newspaper fellow has drawn her into a promise to land with a party—actually a party—and go round the place like a Cook's excursion."

"Oh, I hope we shall not be like that, Mr. Glaston," said Mrs. Crawford.

"But you have not given your consent?"

"If Daireen would enjoy it I do not see how I could avoid. Mr. Harwood was talking to me just now. He seems to think she will enjoy herself, as she has never seen the island before. Will you not be one of our party?"

"Oh, Mrs. Crawford, if you have got the least regard for me, do not say that word party; it means everything that is popular; it suggests unutterable horrors to me. No subsequent pleasure could balance the agony I should endure going ashore. Will you not try and induce that child to give up the idea? Tell her what dreadful taste it would be to join a party—that it would most certainly destroy her perceptions of beauty for months to come."

"I am very sorry I promised Mr. Harwood," said the lady; "if going ashore would do all of this it would certainly be better for Daireen to remain aboard. But they will be taking in coals here," she added, as the sudden thought struck her.

"She can shut herself in her cabin and neither see nor hear anything offensive. Who but a newspaper man would think of suggesting to cultured people the possibility of enjoyment in a party?"

But the newspaper man had strolled up to the place beside Daireen, which the aesthetic man had vacated. He knew something of the art of strategical defence, this newspaper man, and he was well aware that as he had got the promise of the major's wife, all the arguments that might be advanced by any one else would not cause him to be defrauded of the happiness of being by this girl's side in one of the loveliest spots of the world.

"I will find out what Daireen thinks," said Mrs. Crawford, in reply to Mr. Glaston; and just then she turned and saw the newspaper man beside the girl.

"Never mind him," said Mr. Glaston; "tell the poor child that it is impossible for her to go."

"I really cannot break my promise," replied the lady. "We must be resigned, it will only be for a few hours."

"This is the saddest thing I ever knew," said Mr. Glaston. "She will lose all the ideas she was getting—all through being of a party. Good heavens, a party!"

Mrs. Crawford could see that Mr. Glaston was annoyed at the presence of Harwood by the side of the girl, and she smiled, for she was too old a tactician not to be well aware of the value of a skeleton enemy.

"How kind of you to say you would not mind my going ashore," said Daireen, walking up to her. "We shall enjoy ourselves I am sure, and Mr. Harwood knows every spot to take us to. I was afraid that Mr. Glaston might be talking to you as he was to me."

"Yes, he spoke to me, but of course, my dear, if you think you would like to go ashore I shall not say anything but that I will be happy to take care of you."

"You are all that is good," said Mr. Harwood. This was very pretty, the lady thought—very pretty indeed; but at the same time she was making up her mind that if the gentleman before her had conceived it probable that he should be left to exhibit any of the wonders of the island scenery to the girl, separate from the companionship of the girl's temporary guardian, he would certainly find out that he had reckoned without due regard to other contingencies.

Sadness was the only expression visible upon the face of Mr. Glaston for the remainder of this day; but upon the following morning this aspect had changed to one of contempt as he heard nearly all the cabin's company talking with expectancy of the joys of a few hours ashore. It was a great disappointment to him to observe the brightening of the face of Daireen Gerald, as Mr. Harwood came to tell her that the land was in sight.

Daireen's face, however, did brighten. She went up to the ship's bridge, and Mr. Harwood, laying one hand upon her shoulder, pointed out with the other where upon the horizon lay a long, low, gray cloud. Mrs. Crawford observing his action, and being well aware that the girl's range of vision was not increased in the smallest degree by the touch of his fingers upon her shoulder, made a resolution that she herself would be the first to show Daireen the earliest view of St. Helena when they should be approaching that island.

But there lay that group of cloud, and onward the good steamer sped. In the course of an hour the formless mass had assumed a well-defined outline against the soft blue sky. Then a lovely white bird came about the ship from the distance like a spirit from those Fortunate Islands. In a short time a gleam of sunshine was seen reflected from the flat surface of a cliff, and then the dark chasms upon the face of each of the island-rocks of the Dezertas could be seen. But when these were passed the long island of Madeira appeared gray and massive, and with a white cloud clinging about its highest ridges. Onward still, and the thin white thread of foam encircling the rocks was perceived. Then the outline of the cliffs stood defined against the fainter background of the island; but still all was gray and colourless. Not for long, however, for the sunlight smote the clouds and broke their gray masses, and then fell around the ridges, showing the green heights of vines and slopes of sugar-canes. But it was not until the roll of the waves against the cliff-faces was heard that the cloud-veil was lifted and all the glad green beauty of the slope flashed up to the blue sky, and thrilled all those who stood on the deck of the vessel.

Along this lovely coast the vessel moved through the sparkling green ripples. Not the faintest white fleck of cloud was now in the sky, and the sunlight falling downwards upon the island, brought out every brown rock of the coast in bold relief against the brilliant green of the slope. So close to the shore the vessel passed, the nearer cliffs appeared to glide away as the land in their shade was disclosed, and this effect of soft motion was entrancing to all who experienced it. Then the low headland with the island-rock crowned with a small pillared building was reached and passed, and the lovely bay of Funchal came in view.

Daireen, who had lived among the sombre magnificence of the Irish scenery, felt this soft dazzling green as something marvellously strange and unexpected. Had not Mr. Glaston descended to his cabin at the earliest expression of delight that was forced from the lips of some young lady on the deck, he, would have been still more disappointed with Daireen, for her face was shining with happiness. But Mr. Harwood found more pleasure in watching her face than he did in gazing at the long crescent slope of the bay, and at the white



houses that peeped from amongst the vines, or at the high convent of the hill. He did not speak a word to the girl, but only watched her as she drank in everything of beauty that passed before her.

Then the Loo rock at the farther point of the bay was neared, and as the engine slowed, the head of the steamer was brought round towards the white town of Funchal, spread all about the beach where the huge rollers were breaking. The tinkle of the engine-room telegraph brought a wonderful silence over everything as the propeller ceased. The voice of the captain giving orders about the lead line was heard distinctly, and the passengers felt inclined to speak in whispers. Suddenly with a harsh roar the great chain cable rushes out and the anchor drops into the water.

"This is the first stage of our voyage," said Mr. Harwood. "Now, while I select a boat, will you kindly get ready for landing? Oh, Mrs. Crawford, you will be with us at once, I suppose?"

"Without the loss of a moment," said the lady, going down to the cabins with Daireen.

The various island authorities pushed off from the shore in their boats, sitting under canvas awnings and looking unpleasantly like banditti. Doctor Campion answered their kind inquiries regarding the health of the passengers, for nothing could exceed the attentive courtesy shown by the government in this respect.

Then a young Scotchman, who had resolved to emulate Mr. Harwood's example in taking a party ashore, began making a bargain by signs with one of the boatmen, while his friends stood around. The major and the doctor having plotted together to go up to pay a visit to an hotel, pushed off in a government boat without acquainting any one with their movements. But long before the Scotchman had succeeded in reducing the prohibitory sum named by the man with whom he was treating for the transit of the party ashore, Mr. Harwood had a boat waiting at the rail for his friends, and Mrs. Butler and her daughter were in act to descend, chatting with the "special" who was to be their guide. Another party had already left for the shore, the young lady who had worn the blue and pink appearing in a bonnet surrounded with resplendent flowers and beads. But before the smiles of Mrs. Butler and Harwood had passed away, Mrs. Crawford and Daireen had come on deck again, the former with many apologies for her delay.

Mr. Harwood ran down the sloping rail to assist the ladies into the boat that rose and fell with every throb of the waves against the ship's side. Mrs. Crawford followed him and was safely stowed in a place in the stern. Then came Mrs. Butler and her daughter, and while Mr. Harwood was handing them off the last step Daireen began to descend. But she had not got farther down than to where a young sailor was kneeling to shift the line of one of the fruit boats, when she stopped suddenly with a great start that almost forced a cry from her.

"For God's sake go on—give no sign if you don't wish to make me wretched," said the sailor in a whisper.

"Come, Miss Gerald, we are waiting," cried Harwood up the long rail.

Daireen remained irresolute for a moment, then walked slowly down, and allowed herself to be handed into the boat.

"Surely you are not timid, Miss Gerald," said Harwood as the boat pushed off.

"Timid?" said Daireen mechanically.

"Yes, your hand was really trembling as I helped you down."

"No, no, I am not—not timid, only—I fear I shall not be very good company to-day; I feel——" she looked back to the steamer and did not finish her sentence.

Mr. Harwood glanced at her for a moment, thinking if it really could be possible that she was regretting the absence of Mr. Glaston. Mrs. Crawford also looked at her and came to the conclusion that, at the last moment, the girl was recalling the aesthetic instructions of the young man who was doubtless sitting lonely in his cabin while she was bent on enjoying herself with a "party."

But Daireen was only thinking how it was she had refrained from crying out when she saw the face of that sailor on the rail, and when she heard his voice; and it must be confessed that it was rather singular, taking into account the fact that she had recognised in the features and voice of that sailor the features and voice of Standish Macnamara.

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## CHAPTER XII.

Your visitation shall receive such thanks  
As fits... remembrance.

... Thus do we of wisdom and of reach,  
With windlasses and with assays of bias,  
By indirections find directions out.

More matter with less art.—*Hamlet*.

THE thin white silk thread of a moon was hanging in the blue twilight over the darkened western slope of the island, and almost within the horns of its crescent a planet was burning without the least tremulous motion. The lights of the town were glimmering over the waters, and the strange, wildly musical cries of the bullock-drivers were borne faintly out to the steamer, mingling with the sound of the bell of St. Mary's on the Mount.

The vessel had just begun to move away from its anchorage, and Daireen Gerald was standing on the deck far astern leaning over the bulwarks looking back upon the island slope whose bright green had changed to twilight purple. Not of the enjoyment of the day she had spent up among the vines was the girl thinking; her memory fled back to the past days spent beneath the shadow of a slope that was always purple, with a robe of heather clinging to it from base to summit.

"I hope you don't regret having taken my advice about going on shore, Miss Gerald," said Mr. Harwood, who had come beside her.

"Oh, no," she said; "it was all so lovely—so unlike what I ever saw or imagined."

"It has always seemed lovely to me," he said, "but to-day it was very lovely. I had got some pleasant recollections of the island before, but now the memories I shall retain will be the happiest of my life."

"Was to-day really so much pleasanter?" asked the girl quickly. "Then I am indeed fortunate in my first visit. But you were not at any part of the island that you had not seen before," she added, after a moment's pause.

"No," he said quietly. "But I saw all to-day under a new aspect."

"You had not visited it in September? Ah, I recollect now having heard that this was the best month for Madeira. You see I am fortunate."

"Yes, you are—fortunate," he said slowly. "You are fortunate; you are a child; I am—a man."

Daireen was quite puzzled by his tone; it was one of sadness, and she knew that he was not accustomed to be sad. He had not been so at any time through the day when they were up among the vineyards looking down upon the tiny ships in the harbour beneath them, or wandering through the gardens surrounding the villa at which they had lunched after being presented by their guide—no, he had certainly not displayed any sign of sadness then. But here he was now beside her watching the lights of the shore twinkling into dimness, and speaking in this way that puzzled her.

"I don't know why, if you say you will have only pleasant recollections of to-day, you should speak in a tone like that," she said.

"No, no, you would not understand it," he replied. If she had kept silence after he had spoken his previous sentence, he would have been tempted to say to her what he had on his heart, but her question made him hold back his words, for it proved to him what he told her—she would not understand him.

It is probable, however, that Mrs. Crawford, who by the merest accident, of course, chanced to come from the cabin at this moment, would have understood even the most enigmatical utterance that might pass from his lips on the subject of his future memories of the day they had spent on the island; she felt quite equal to the solution of any question of psychological analysis that might arise. But she contented herself now by calling Daireen's attention to the flashing of the phosphorescent water at the base of the cliffs round which the vessel was moving, and the observance of this phenomenon drew the girl's thoughts away from the possibility of discovering the meaning of the man's words. The major and his old comrade Doctor Campion then came near and expressed the greatest anxiety to learn how their friends had passed the day. Both major and doctor were in the happiest of moods. They had visited the hotel they agreed in stating, and no one on the deck undertook to prove anything to the contrary—no one, in fact, seemed to doubt in the least the truth of what they said.

In a short time Mrs. Crawford and Daireen were left alone; not for long, however, for Mr. Glaston strolled languidly up.

"I cannot say I hope you enjoyed yourself," he said. "I know very well you did not. I hope you could not."

Daireen laughed. "Your hopes are misplaced, I fear, Mr. Glaston," she answered. "We had a very happy day—had we not, Mrs. Crawford?"

"I am afraid we had, dear."

"Why, Mr. Harwood said distinctly to me just now," continued Daireen, "that it was the pleasantest day he had ever passed upon the island."

"Ah, he said so? well, you see, he is a newspaper man, and they all look at things from a popular standpoint; whatever is popular is right, is their motto; while ours is, whatever is popular is wrong."

He felt himself speaking as the representative of a class, no doubt, when he made use of the plural.

"Yes; Mr. Harwood seemed even more pleased than we were," continued the girl. "He told me that the recollection of our exploration to-day would be the—the—yes, the happiest of his life. He did indeed," she added almost triumphantly.

"Did he?" said Mr. Glaston slowly.

"My dear child," cried Mrs. Crawford, quickly interposing, "he has got that way of talking. He has, no doubt, said those very words to every person he took ashore on his previous visits. He has, I know, said them every evening for a fortnight in the Mediterranean."

"Then you don't think he means anything beyond a stupid compliment to us? What a wretched thing it is to be a girl, after all. Never mind, I enjoyed myself beyond any doubt."

"It is impossible—quite impossible, child," said the young man. "Enjoyment with a refined organisation such as yours can never be anything that is not reflective—it is something that cannot be shared with a number of persons. It is quite impossible that you could have any feeling in common with such a mind as this Mr. Harwood's or with the other people who went ashore. I heard nothing but expressions of enjoyment, and I felt really sad to think that there was not a refined soul among them all. They enjoyed themselves, therefore you

did not."

"I think I can understand you," said Mrs. Crawford at once, for she feared that Daireen might attempt to question the point he insisted on. Of course when the superior intellect of Mr. Glaston demonstrated that they could not have enjoyed themselves, it was evident that it was their own sensations which were deceiving them. Mrs. Crawford trusted to the decision of the young man's intellect more implicitly than she did her own senses: just as Christopher Sly, old Sly's son of Burton Heath, came to believe the practical jesters.

"Should you enjoy the society and scenery of a desert island better than an inhabited one?" asked the girl, somewhat rebellious at the concessions of Mrs. Crawford.

"Undoubtedly, if everything was in good taste," he answered quietly.

"That is, if everything was in accordance with your own taste," came the voice of Mr. Harwood, who, unseen, had rejoined the party.

Mr. Glaston made no reply. He had previously become aware of the unsatisfactory results of making any answers to such men as wrote for newspapers. As he had always considered such men outside the world of art in which he lived and to the inhabitants of which he addressed himself, it was hardly to be expected that he would put himself on a level of argument with them. In fact, Mr. Glaston rarely consented to hold an argument with any one. If people maintained opinions different from his own, it was so much the worse for those people—that was all he felt. It was to a certain circle of young women in good society that he preferred addressing himself, for he knew that to each individual in that circle he appeared as the prophet and high priest of art. His tone-poems in the college magazine, his impromptus—musical *aquarellen* he called them—performed in secret and out of hearing of any earthly audience, his colour-harmonies, his statuesque idealisms—all these were his priestly ministrations; while the interpretation, not of his own works—this he never attempted—but of the works of three poets belonging to what he called his school, of one painter, and of one musical composer, was his prophetic service.

It was obviously impossible that such a man could put himself on that mental level which would be implied by his action should he consent to make any answer to a person like Mr. Harwood. But apart from these general grounds, Mr. Glaston had got concrete reasons for declining to discuss any subject with this newspaper man. He knew that it was Mr. Harwood who had called the tone-poems of the college magazine alliterative conundrums for young ladies; that it was Mr. Harwood who had termed one of the colour-harmonies a study in virulent jaundice; that it was Mr. Harwood who had, after smiling on being told of the *aquarellen* impromptus, expressed a desire to hear one of these compositions—all this Mr. Glaston knew well, and so when Mr. Harwood made that remark about taste Mr. Glaston did not reply.

Daireen, however, did not feel the silence oppressive. She kept her eyes fixed upon that thin thread of moon that was now almost touching the dark ridge of the island.

Harwood looked at her for a few moments, and then he too leaned over the side of the ship and gazed at that lovely moon and its burning star.

"How curious," he said gently—"how very curious, is it not, that the sight of that hill and that moon should bring back to me memories of Lough Suangorm and Slieve Docas?"

The girl gave a start. "You are thinking of them too? I am so glad. It makes me so happy to know that I am not the only one here who knows all about Suangorm." Suddenly another thought seemed to come to her. She turned her eyes away from the island and glanced down the deck anxiously.

"No," said Mr. Harwood very gently indeed; "you are not alone in your memories of the loveliest spot of the world."

Mrs. Crawford thought it well to interpose. "My dear Daireen, you must be careful not to take a chill now after all the unusual exercise you have had during the day. Don't you think you had better go below?"

"Yes, I had much better," said the girl quickly and in a startled tone; and she had actually gone to the door of the companion before she recollected that she had not said good-night either to Glaston or Harwood. She turned back and redeemed her negligence, and then went down with her good guardian.

"Poor child," thought Mr. Glaston, "she fears that I am hurt by her disregard of my advice about going ashore with those people. Poor child! perhaps I was hard upon her!"

"Poor little thing," thought Mr. Harwood. "She begins to understand."

"It would never do to let that sort of thing go on," thought Mrs. Crawford, as she saw that Daireen got a cup of tea before retiring. Mrs. Crawford fully appreciated Mr. Harwood's cleverness in reading the girl's thought and so quickly adapting his speech to the requirements of the moment; but she felt her own superiority of cleverness.

Each of the three was a careful and experienced observer, but there are certain conditional influences to be taken into account in arriving at a correct conclusion as to the motives of speech or action of every human subject under observation; and the reason that these careful analysts of motives were so utterly astray in tracing to its source the remisness of Miss Gerald, was probably because none of the three was aware of the existence of an important factor necessary for the solution of the interesting problem they had worked out so airily; this factor being the sudden appearance of Standish Macnamara beside the girl in the morning, and her consequent reflections upon the circumstance in the evening.

But as she sat alone in her cabin, seeing through the port the effect of the silver moonlight upon the ridge of the hill behind which the moon itself had now sunk, she was wondering, as she had often wondered during the day, if indeed it was Standish whom she had seen and whose voice she had heard. All had been so sudden—so impossible, she thought, that the sight of him and the hearing of his voice seemed to her but as the memories of a dream of her home.

But now that she was alone and capable of reflecting upon the matter, she felt that she had not been deceived. By some means the young man to whom she had written her last letter in Ireland was aboard the steamer. It was very wonderful to the girl to reflect upon this; but then she thought if he was aboard, why should she not be able to find him and ask him all about himself?

## CHAPTER XIII.

Providence

Should have kept short, restrained, and out of haunt  
This mad young man...

His very madness, like some ore  
Among a mineral of metals base,  
Shows itself pure.

Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing  
To what I shall unfold.

It is common for the younger sort  
To lack discretion.

*Queen*.... Whereon do you look?

*Hamlet*. On him, on him! look you, how pale he glares.  
... It is not madness

That I have uttered: bring me to the test.—*Hamlet*

THE question which suggested itself to Daireen as to the possibility of seeing Standish aboard the steamer, was not the only one that occupied her thoughts. How had he come aboard, and why had he come aboard, were further questions whose solution puzzled her. She recollected how he had told her on that last day she had seen him, while they walked in the garden after leaving The Macnamara in that side room with the excellent specimen of ancient furniture ranged with glass vessels, that he was heartily tired of living among the ruins of the castle, and that he had made up his mind to go out into the world of work. She had then begged of him to take no action of so much importance until her father should have returned to give him the advice he needed; and in that brief postscript which she had added to the farewell letter given into the care of the bard O'Brian, she had expressed her regret that this counsel of hers had been rendered impracticable. Was it possible, however, that Standish placed so much confidence in the likelihood of valuable advice being given to him by her father that he had resolved to go out to the Cape and speak with him on the subject face to face, she thought; but it struck her that there would be something like an inconsistency in the young man's travelling six thousand miles to take an opinion as to the propriety of his leaving his home.

What was she to do? She felt that she must see Standish and have from his own lips an explanation of how he had come aboard the ship; but in that sentence he had spoken to her he had entreated of her to keep silence, so that she dared not seek for him under the guidance of Mrs. Crawford or any of her friends aboard the vessel. It would be necessary for her to find him alone, and she knew that this would be a difficult thing to do, situated as she was. But let the worst come, she reflected that it could only result in the true position of Standish being-known. This was really all that the girl believed could possibly be the result if a secret interview between herself and a sailor aboard the steamer should be discovered; and, thinking of the worst consequences so lightly, made her all the more anxious to hasten on such an interview if she could contrive it.

She seated herself upon her little sofa and tried to think by what means she could meet with Standish, and yet fulfil his entreaty for secrecy. Her imagination, so far as inventing plans was concerned, did not seem to be inexhaustible. After half an hour's pondering over the matter, no more subtle device was suggested to her than going on deck and walking alone towards the fore-part of the ship between the deck-house and the bulwarks, where it might possibly chance that Standish would be found. This was her plan, and she did not presume to think to herself that its intricacy was the chief element of its possible success. Had she been aware of the fact that Standish was at that instant standing in the shadow of that deck-house looking anxiously astern in the hope of catching a glimpse of her—had she known that since the steamer had left the English port he had every evening stood with the same object in the same place, she would have been more hopeful of her simple plan succeeding.

At any rate she stole out of her cabin and went up the companion and out upon the deck, with all the caution that a novice in the art of dissembling could bring to her aid.

The night was full of softness—softness of gray reflected light from the waters that were rippling along before the vessel—softness of air that seemed saturated with the balm of odorous trees growing upon the slopes of those Fortunate Islands. The deck was deserted by passengers; only Major Crawford, the doctor, and the special correspondent were sitting in a group in their cane chairs, smoking their cheroots and discussing some action of a certain colonel that had not yet been fully explained, though it had taken place fifteen years previously. The group could not see her, she knew; but even if they had espied her and

demanded an explanation, she felt that she had progressed sufficiently far in the crooked ways of deception to be able to lull their suspicions by her answers. She could tell them that she had a headache, or put them off with some equally artful excuse.

She walked gently along until she was at the rear of the deck-house where the stock of the mainmast was standing with all its gear. She looked down the dark tunnel passage between the side of the house and the bulwarks, but she felt her courage fail her: she dared do all that might become a woman, but the gloom of that covered place, and the consciousness that beyond it lay the mysterious fore-cabin space, caused her to pause. What was she to do?

Suddenly there came the sound of a low voice at her ear.

"Daireen, Daireen, why did you come here?" She started and looked around trembling, for it was the voice of Standish, though she could not see the form of the speaker. It was some moments before she found that he was under the broad rail leading to the ship's bridge.

"Then it is you, Standish, indeed?" she said. "How on earth did you come aboard?—Why have you come?—Are you really a sailor?—Where is your father?—Does he know?—Why don't you shake hands with me, Standish?"

These few questions she put to him in a breath, looking between the steps of the rail.

"Daireen, hush, for Heaven's sake!" he said anxiously. "You don't know what you are doing in coming to speak with me here—I am only a sailor, and if you were seen near me it would be terrible. Do go back to your cabin and leave me to my wretchedness."

"I shall not go back," she said resolutely. "I am your friend, Standish, and why should I not speak to you for an hour if I wish? You are not the quartermaster at the wheel. What a start you gave me this morning! Why did you not tell me you were coming in this steamer?"

"I did not leave Suangorm until the next morning after I heard you had gone," he answered in a whisper. "I should have died—I should indeed, Daireen, if I had remained at home while you were gone away without any one to take care of you."

"Oh, Standish, Standish, what will your father say?—What will he think?"

"I don't care," said Standish. "I told him on that day when we returned from Suanmara that I would go away. I was a fool that I did not make up my mind long ago. It was, indeed, only when you left that I carried out my resolution. I learned what ship you were going in; I had as much money as brought me to England—I had heard of people working their passage abroad; so I found out the captain of the steamer, and telling him all about myself that I could—not of course breathing your name, Daireen—I begged him to allow me to work my way as a sailor, and he agreed to give me the passage. He wanted me to become a waiter in the cabin, but I couldn't do that; I didn't mind facing all the hardships that might come, so long as I was near you—and—able to get your father's advice. Now do go back, Daireen."

"No one will see us," said the girl, after a pause, in which she reflected on the story he had told her. "But all is so strange, Standish," she continued—"all is so unlike anything I ever imagined possible. Oh, Standish, it is too dreadful to think of your being a sailor—just a sailor—aboard the ship."

"There's nothing so very bad in it," he replied. "I can work, thank God; and I mean to work. The thought of being near you—that is, near the time when I can get the advice I want from your father—makes all my labour seem light."

"But if I ask the captain, he will, I am sure, let you become a passenger," said the girl suddenly. "Do let me ask him, Standish. It is so—so hard for you to have to work as a sailor."

"It is no harder than I expected it would be," he said; "I am not afraid to work hard: and I feel that I am doing something—I feel it. I should be more wretched in the cabin. Now do not think of speaking to me for the rest of the voyage, Daireen; only, do not forget that you have a friend aboard the ship—a friend who will be willing to die for you."

His voice was very tremulous, and she could see his tearful eyes glistening in the gray light as he put out one of his hands to her. She put her own hand into it and felt his strong earnest grasp as he whispered, "God bless you, Daireen! God bless you!"

"Make it six bells, quartermaster," came the voice of the officer on watch from the bridge. In fear and trembling Daireen waited until the man came aft and gave the six strokes upon the ship's bell that hung quite near where she was standing—Standish thinking it prudent to remain close in the shade of the rail. The quartermaster saw her, but did not, of course, conceive it to be within the range of his duties to give any thought to the circumstance of a passenger being on deck at that hour. When the girl turned round after the bell had been struck, she found that Standish had disappeared. All she could do was to hasten back to her cabin with as much caution as it was possible for her to preserve, for she could still hear the hoarse tones of the major's voice coming from the centre of the group far astern, who were regaled with a very pointed chronicle of a certain station in the empire of Hindustan.

Daireen reached her cabin and sat once more upon her sofa, breathing a sigh of relief, for she had never in her life had such a call upon her courage as this to which she had just responded.

Her face was flushed and hot, and her hands were trembling, so she threw open the pane of the cabin port-hole and let the soft breeze enter. It moved about her hair as she stood there, and she seemed to feel the fingers of a dear friend caressing her forehead. Then she sat down once more and thought over all that had happened since the morning when she had gone on deck to see that gray cloud-land brighten into the lovely green slope of Madeira.

She thought of all that Standish had told her about himself, and she felt her heart overflowing, as were her eyes, with sympathy for him who had cast aside his old life and was endeavouring to enter upon the new.

As she sat there in her dreaming mood all the days of the past came back to her, with a clearness she had never before known. All the pleasant hours returned to her with even a more intense happiness than she had felt at first. For out of the distance of these Fortunate Islands the ghosts of the blessed departed hours came

and moved before her, looking into her face with their own sweet pale faces; thus she passed from a waking dream into a dream of sleep as she lay upon her sofa, and the ghost shapes continued to float before her. The fatigue of the day, the darkness of the cabin, and the monotonous washing of the ripples against the side of the ship, had brought on her sleep before she had got into her berth.

With a sudden start she awoke and sprang to her feet in instantaneous consciousness, for the monotony of the washing waves was broken by a sound that was strange and startling to her ears—the sound of something hard tapping at irregular intervals upon the side of the ship just at her ear.

She ran over to the cabin port and looked out fearfully—looked out and gave a cry of terror, for beneath her—out from those gray waters there glanced up to her in speechless agony the white face of a man; she saw it but for a moment, then it seemed to be swept away from her and swallowed up in the darkness of the deep waters.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

... Rashly,  
And praised be rashness for it....  
Up from my cabin,  
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark  
Groped I to find out them... making so bold,  
My fears forgetting manners.

Give me leave: here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good.  
Let us know  
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well  
... and that should learn us  
There's a divinity that shapes our ends  
Rough-hew them how we will.—*Hamlet*.

A SINGLE cry of terror was all that Daireen uttered as she fell back upon her berth. An instant more and she was standing with white lips, and hands that were untrembling as the rigid hand of a dead person. She knew what was to be done as plainly as if she saw everything in a picture. She rushed into the saloon and mounted the companion to the deck. There sat the little group astern just as she had seen them an hour before, only that the doctor had fallen asleep under the influence of one of the less pointed of the major's stories.

"God bless my soul!" cried the major, as the girl clutched the back of his chair.

"Good heavens, Miss Gerald, what is the matter?" said Harwood, leaping to his feet.

She pointed to the white wake of the ship.

"There—there," she whispered—"a man—drowning—clinging to something—a wreck—I saw him!"

"Dear me! dear me!" said the major, in a tone of relief, and with a breath of a smile.

But the special correspondent had looked into the girl's face. It was his business to understand the difference between dreaming and waking. He was by the side of the officer on watch in a moment. A few words were enough to startle the officer into acquiescence with the demands of the "special." The unwonted sound of the engine-room telegraph was heard, its tinkle shaking the slumbers of the chief engineer as effectively as if it had been the thunder of an alarm peal.

The stopping of the engine, the blowing off of the steam, and the arrival of the captain upon the deck, were simultaneous occurrences. The officer's reply to his chief as he hurried aft did not seem to be very satisfactory, judging from the manner in which it was received.

But Harwood had left the officer to explain the stoppage of the vessel, and was now kneeling by the side of the chair, back upon which lay the unconscious form of Daireen, while the doctor was forcing some brandy—all that remained in the major's tumbler—between her lips, and a young sailor—the one who had been at the rail in the morning—chafed her pallid hand. The major was scanning the expanse of water by aid of his pilot glass, and the quartermaster who had been steering went to the line of the patent log to haul it in—his first duty at any time on the stopping of the vessel, to prevent the line—the strain being taken off it—fouling with the propeller.

When the steamer is under weigh it is the work of two sailors to take in the eighty fathoms of log-line, otherwise, however, the line is of course quite slack; it was thus rather inexplicable to the quartermaster to find much more resistance to his first haul than if the vessel were going full speed ahead.

"The darned thing's fouled already," he murmured for his own satisfaction. He could not take in a fathom, so great was the resistance.

"Hang it all, major," said the captain, "isn't this too bad? Bringing the ship to like this, and—ah, here they

come! All the ship's company will be aft in a minute."

"Rum, my boy, very rum," muttered the sympathetic major.

"What's the matter, captain?" said one voice.

"Is there any danger?" asked a tremulous second.

"If it's a collision or a leak, don't keep it from us, sir," came a stern contralto. For in various stages of toilet incompleteness the passengers were crowding out of the cabin.

But before the "unhappy master" could utter a word of reply, the sailor had touched his cap and reported to the third mate:

"Log-line fouled on wreck, sir."

"By gad!" shouted the major, who was twisting the log-line about, and peering into the water. "By gad, the girl was right! The line has fouled on some wreck, and there is a body made fast to it."

The captain gave just a single glance in the direction indicated. .

"Stand by gig davits and lower away," he shouted to the watch, who had of course come aft.

The men ran to where the boat was hanging, and loosened the lines.

"Oh, Heaven preserve us! they are taking to the boats!" cried a female passenger.

"Don't be a fool, my good woman," said Mrs. Crawford tartly. The major's wife had come on deck in a most marvellous costume, and she was already holding a sal-volatile bottle to Daireen's nose, having made a number of inquiries of Mr. Harwood and the doctor.

All the other passengers had crowded to the ship's side, and were watching the men in the boat cutting at something which had been reached at the end of the log-line. They could see the broken stump of a mast and the cross-trees, but nothing further.

"They have got it into the boat," said the major, giving the result of his observation through the binocular.

"For Heaven's sake, ladies, go below!" cried the captain. But no one moved.

"If you don't want to see the ghastly corpse of a drowned man gnawed by fishes for weeks maybe, you had better go down, ladies," said the chief officer. Still no one stirred.

The major, who was an observer of nature, smiled and winked sagaciously at the exasperated captain before he said:

"Why should the ladies go down at all? it's a pleasant night, and begad, sir, a group of nightcaps like this isn't to be got together more than once in a lifetime." Before the gallant officer had finished his sentence the deck was cleared of women; but, of course, the luxury of seeing a dead body lifted from the boat being too great to be missed, the starboard cabin ports had many faces opposite them.

The doctor left Daireen to the care of Mrs. Crawford, saying that she would recover consciousness in a few minutes, and he hastened with a kaross to the top of the boiler, where he had shouted to the men in the boat to carry the body.

The companion-rail having been lowered, it was an easy matter for the four men to take the body on deck and to lay it upon the tiger-skin before the doctor, who rubbed his hands—an expression which the seamen interpreted as meaning satisfaction.

"Gently, my men, raise his head—so—throw the light on his face. By George, he doesn't seem to have suffered from the oysters; there's hope for him yet."

And the compassionate surgeon began cutting the clothing from the limbs of the body.

"No, don't take the pieces away," he said to one of the men; "let them remain here. Now dry his arms carefully, and we'll try and get some air into his lungs, if they're not already past work."

But before the doctor had commenced his operations the ship's gig had been hauled up once more to the davits, and the steamer was going ahead at slow speed.

"Keep her at slow until the dawn," said the captain to the officer on watch. "And let there be a good lookout; there may be others floating upon the wreck. Call me if the doctor brings the body to life."

The captain did not think it necessary to view the body that had been snatched from the deep. The captain was a compassionate man and full of tender feeling; he was exceedingly glad that he had had it in his power to pick up that body, even with the small probability there was of being able to restore life to its frozen blood; but he would have been much more grateful to Providence had it been so willed that it should have been picked up without the necessity of stopping the engines of the steamer for nearly a quarter of an hour. It was explained to him that Miss Gerald had been the first to see the face of the man upon the wreck, but he could scarcely understand how it was possible for her to have seen it from her cabin. He was also puzzled to know how it was that the log-line had not been carried away so soon as it was entangled in such a large mass of wreck when the steamer was going at full speed. He, however, thought it as well to resume his broken slumbers without waiting to solve either of these puzzling questions.

But the chief officer who was now on watch, when the deck was once more deserted—Daireen having been taken down to her cabin—made the attempt to account for both of these occurrences. He found that the girl's cabin was not far astern of the companion-rail that had been lowered during the day, and he saw that, in the confusion of weighing anchor in the dimness, a large block with its gear which was used in the hauling of the vegetable baskets aboard, had been allowed to hang down the side of the ship between the steps of the rail; and upon the hook of the block, almost touching the water, he found some broken cordage. He knew then that the hook had caught fast in the cordage of the wreck as the steamer went past, and the wreck had swung round until it was just opposite the girl's cabin, when the cordage had given way; not, however, until some of the motion of the ship had been communicated to the wreck so that there was no abrupt strain put on the log-line when it had become entangled. It was all plain to the chief officer, as no doubt it would have been to the captain had he waited to search out the matter.

So soon as the body had been brought aboard the ship all the interest of the passengers seemed to subside, and the doctor was allowed to pursue his experiments of resuscitation without inquiry. The chief officer being

engaged at his own business of working out the question of the endurance of the log-line, and keeping a careful lookout for any other portions of wreck, had almost forgotten that the doctor and two of the sailors were applying a series of restoratives to the body of the man who had been detached from the wreck. It was nearly two hours after he had come on watch that one of the sailors—the one who had been kneeling by the side of Daireen—came up to the chief officer presenting Doctor Campion's compliments, with the information that the man was breathing.

In accordance with the captain's instructions, the chief officer knocked at the cabin door and repeated the message.

"Breathing is he?" said the captain rather sleepily. "Very good, Mr. Holden; I'm glad to hear it. Just call me again in case he should relapse."

The captain had hitherto, in alluding to the man, made use of the neuter pronoun, but now that breath was restored he acknowledged his right to a gender.

"Very good, sir," replied the officer, closing the door.

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## CHAPTER XV.

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,  
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,  
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,  
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape.

What may this mean  
That thou, dead corse, again...  
Revisit'st thus...?

I hope your virtues  
Will bring him to his wonted way again.—*Hamlet.*

**I**T was the general opinion in the cabin that Miss Gerald—the young lady who was in such an exclusive set—had shown very doubtful taste in being the first to discover the man upon the wreck. Every one had, of course, heard the particulars of the matter from the steward's assistants, who had in turn been in communication with the watch on deck. At any rate, it was felt by the ladies that it showed exceedingly bad taste in Miss Gerald to take such steps as eventually led to the ladies appearing on deck in incomplete toilettes. There was, indeed, a very pronounced feeling against Miss Gerald; several representatives of the other sections of the cabin society declaring that they could not conscientiously admit Miss Gerald into their intimacy. That dreadful designing old woman, the major's wife, might do as she pleased, they declared, and so might Mrs. Butler and her daughter, who were only the near relatives of some Colonial Governor, but such precedents should be by no means followed, the ladies of this section announced to each other. But as Daireen had never hitherto found it necessary to fall back upon any of the passengers outside her own set, the resolution of the others, even if it had come to her ears, would not have caused her any great despondency.

The captain made some inquiries of the doctor in the morning, and learned that the rescued man was breathing, though still unconscious. Mr. Harwood showed even a greater anxiety to hear from Mrs. Crawford about Daireen, after the terrible night she had gone through, and he felt no doubt proportionately happy when he was told that she was now sleeping, having passed some hours in feverish excitement. Daireen had described to Mrs. Crawford how she had seen the face looking up to her from the water, and Mr. Harwood, hearing this, and making a careful examination of the outside of the ship in the neighbourhood of Daireen's cabin, came to the same conclusion as that at which the chief officer had arrived.

Mrs. Crawford tried to make Mr. Glaston equally interested in her protégée, but she was scarcely successful.

"How brave it was in the dear child, was it not, Mr. Glaston?" she asked. "Just imagine her glancing casually out of the port—thinking, it maybe, of her father, who is perhaps dying at the Cape"—the good lady felt that this bit of poetical pathos might work wonders with Mr. Glaston—"and then," she continued, "fancy her seeing that terrible, ghastly thing in the water beneath her! What must her feelings have been as she rushed on deck and gave the alarm that caused that poor wretch to be saved! Wonderful, is it not?"

But Mr. Glaston's face was quite devoid of expression on hearing this powerful narrative. The introduction of the pathos even did not make him wince; and there was a considerable pause before he said the few words that he did.

"Poor child," he murmured. "Poor child. It was very melodramatic—terribly melodramatic; but she is still young, her taste is—ah—plastic. At least I hope so."

Mrs. Crawford began to feel that, after all, it was something to have gained this expression of hope from



Mr. Glaston, though her warmth of feeling did undoubtedly receive a chill from his manner. She did not reflect that there is a certain etiquette to be observed in the saving of the bodies as well as the souls of people, and that the aesthetic element, in the opinion of some people, should enter largely into every scheme of salvation, corporeal as well as spiritual.

The doctor was sitting with Major Crawford when the lady joined them a few minutes after her conversation with Mr. Glaston, and never had Mrs. Crawford fancied that her husband's old friend could talk in such an affectionate way as he now did about the rescued man. She could almost bring herself to believe that she saw the tears of emotion in his eyes as he detailed the circumstances of the man's resuscitation. The doctor felt personally obliged to him for his handsome behaviour in bearing such testimony to the skill of his resuscitator.

When the lady spoke of the possibilities of a relapse, the doctor's eyes glistened at first, but under the influence of maturer thought, he sighed and shook his head. No, he knew that there are limits to the generosity of even a half-strangled man—a relapse was too much to hope for; but the doctor felt at that instant that if this "case" should see its way to a relapse, and subsequently to submit to be restored, it would place itself under a lasting obligation to its physician.

Surely, thought Mrs. Crawford, when the doctor talks of the stranger with such enthusiasm he will go into raptures about Daireen; so she quietly alluded to the girl's achievement. But the doctor could see no reason for becoming ecstatic about Miss Gerald. Five minutes with the smelling-bottle had restored her to consciousness.

"Quite a trifle—overstrung nerves, you know," he said, as he lit another cheroot.

"But think of her bravery in keeping strong until she had told you all that she had seen!" said the lady. "I never heard of anything so brave! Just fancy her looking out of the port—thinking of her father perhaps"—the lady went on to the end of that pathetic sentence of hers, but it had no effect upon the doctor.

"True, very true!" he muttered, looking at his watch.

But the major was secretly convulsed for some moments after his wife had spoken her choice piece of pathos, and though he did not betray himself, she knew well all that was in his mind, and so turned away without a further word. So soon as she was out of hearing, the major exchanged confidential chuckles with his old comrade.

"He is not what you'd call a handsome man as he lies at present, Campion," remarked Mr. Harwood, strolling up later in the day. "But you did well not to send him to the forecabin, I think; he has not been a sailor."

"I know it, my boy," said the doctor. "He is not a handsome man, you say, and I agree with you that he is not seen to advantage just now; but I made up my mind an hour after I saw him that he was not for the forecabin, or even the forecabin."

"I dare say you are right," said Harwood. "Yes; there is a something in his look that half drowning could not kill. That was the sort of thing you felt, eh?"

"Nothing like it," said the mild physician. "It was this," he took out of his pocket an envelope, from which he extracted a document that he handed to Harwood.

It was an order for four hundred pounds, payable by a certain bank in England, and granted by the Sydney branch of the Australasian Banking Company to one Mr. Oswin Markham.

"Ah, I see; he is a gentleman," said Harwood, returning the order. It had evidently suffered a sea-change, but it had been carefully dried by the doctor.

"Yes, he is a gentleman," said the doctor. "That is what I remarked when I found this in a flask in one of his pockets. Sharp thing to do, to keep a paper free from damp and yet to have it in a buoyant case. Devilish sharp thing!"

"And the man's name is this—Oswin Markham?" said the major.

"No doubt about it," said the doctor.

"None whatever; unless he stole the order from the rightful owner, and meant to get it cashed at his leisure," remarked Harwood.

"Then he must have stolen the shirt, the collar, and the socks of Oswin Markham," snarled the doctor. "All these things of his are marked as plain as red silk can do it."

"Any man who would steal an order for four hundred pounds would not hesitate about a few toilet necessaries."

"Maybe you'll suggest to the skipper the need to put him in irons as soon as he is sufficiently recovered to be conscious of an insult," cried the doctor in an acrid way that received a sympathetic chuckle from the major. "Young man, you've got your brain too full of fancies—a devilish deal, sir; they do well enough retailed for the readers of the *Dominant Trumpeter*, but sensible people don't want to hear them."

"Then I won't force them upon you and Crawford, my dear Campion," said Harwood, walking away, for he knew that upon some occasions the doctor should be conciliated, and in the matter of a patient every allowance should be made for his warmth of feeling. So long as one of his "cases" paid his skill the compliment of surviving any danger, he spoke well of the patient; but when one behaved so unhandsomely as to die, it was with the doctor *De mortuis nil nisi malum*. Harwood knew this, and so he walked away.

And now that he found himself—or rather made himself—alone, he thought over all the events of the previous eventful day; but somehow there did not seem to be any event worth remembering that was not associated with Daireen Gerald. He recollected how he had watched her when they had been together among the lovely gardens of the island slope. As she turned her eyes seaward with an earnest, sad, *questioning* gaze, he felt that he had never seen a picture so full of beauty.

The words he had spoken to her, telling her that the day he had spent on the island was the happiest of his life, were true indeed; he had never felt so happy; and now as he reflected upon his after-words his conscience smote him for having pretended to her that he was thinking of the place where he knew her

thoughts had carried her: he had seen from her face that she was dreaming about her Irish home, and he had made her feel that the recollection of the lough and the mountains was upon his mind also. He felt now how coarse had been his deception.

He then recalled the final scene of the night, when, as he was trying to pursue his own course of thought, and at the same time pretend to be listening to the major's thrice-told tale of a certain colonel's conduct at the Arradambad station, the girl had appeared before them like a vision. Yes, it was altogether a remarkable day even for a special correspondent. The reflection upon its events made him very thoughtful during the entire of this afternoon. Nor was he at all disturbed by the information Doctor Campion brought to him just when he was going for his usual smoke upon the bridge, while the shore of Palma was yet in view not far astern.

"Good fellow he is," murmured the doctor. "Capital fellow! opened his eyes just now when I was in his cabin—recovered consciousness in a moment."

"Ah, in a moment?" said Harwood dubiously. "I thought it always needed the existence of some link of consciousness between the past and the present to bring about a restoration like this—some familiar sight—some well-known sound."

"And, by George, you are right, my boy, this time, though you are a 'special,'" said the doctor, grinning. "Yes, I was standing by the fellow's bunk when I heard Crawford call for another bottle of soda. Robinson got it for him, and bang went the cork, of course; a faint smile stole over the haggard features, my boy, the glassy eyes opened full of intelligence and with a mine of pleasant recollections. That familiar sound of the popping of the cork acted as the link you talk of. He saw all in a moment, and tried to put out his hand to me. 'My boy,' I said, 'you've behaved most handsomely, and I'll get you a glass of brandy out of another bottle, but don't you try to speak for another day.' And I got him a glass from Crawford, though, by George, sir, Crawford grudged it; he didn't see the sentiment of the thing, sir, and when I tried to explain it, he said I was welcome to the cork."

"Capital tale for an advertisement of the brandy," said Harwood.

Then the doctor with many smiles hastened to spread abroad the story of the considerate behaviour of his patient, and Harwood was left to continue his twilight meditations alone once more. He was sitting in his deck-chair on the ship's bridge, and he could but dimly hear the laughter and the chat of the passengers far astern. He did not remain for long in this dreamy mood of his, for Mrs. Crawford and Daireen Gerald were seen coming up the rail, and he hastened to meet them. The girl was very pale but smiling, and in the soft twilight she seemed very lovely.

"I am so glad to see you," he said, as he settled a chair for her. "I feared a great many things when you did not appear to-day."

"We must not talk too much," said Mrs. Crawford, who had not expected to find Mr. Harwood alone in this place. "I brought Miss Gerard up here in order that she might not be subjected to the gaze of those colonists on the deck; a little quiet is what she needs to restore her completely from her shock."

"It was very foolish, I am afraid you think—very foolish of me to behave as I did," said Daireen, with a faint little smile. "But I had been asleep in my cabin, and I—I was not so strong as I should have been. The next time I hope I shall not be so very stupid."

"My dear Miss Gerald," said Harwood, "you behaved as a heroine. There is no woman aboard the ship—Mrs. Crawford of course excepted—who would have had courage to do what you did."

"And he," said the girl somewhat eagerly—"he—is he really safe?—has he recovered? Tell me all, Mr. Harwood."

"No, no!" cried Mrs. Crawford, interposing. "You must not speak a word about him. Do you want to be thrown into a fresh state of excitement, my dear, now that you are getting on so nicely?"

"But I am more excited remaining as I am in doubt about that poor man. Was he a sailor, Mr. Harwood?"

"It appears-not," said Harwood. "The doctor, however, is returning; he will tell all that is safe to be told."

"I really must protest," said Mrs. Crawford. "Well, I will be a good girl and not ask for any information whatever," said Daireen.

But she was not destined to remain in complete ignorance on the subject which might reasonably be expected to interest her, for the doctor on seeing her hastened up, and, of course, Mrs. Crawford's protest was weak against his judgment.

"My dear young lady," he cried, shaking Daireen warmly by the hand. "You are anxious to know the sequel of the romance of last night, I am sure?"

"No, no, Doctor Campion," said Daireen almost mischievously; "Mrs. Crawford says I must hear nothing, and think about nothing, all this evening. Did you not say so, Mrs. Crawford?"

"My dear child, Doctor Campion is supposed to know much better than myself how you should be treated in your present nervous condition. If he chooses to talk to you for an hour or two hours about drowning wretches, he may do so on his own responsibility."

"Drowning wretches!" said the doctor. "My dear madam, you have not been told all, or you would not talk in this way. He is no drowning wretch, but a gentleman; look at this—ah, I forgot it's not light enough for you to see the document, but Harwood there will tell you all that it contains."

"And what does that wonderful document contain, Mr. Harwood?" asked Mrs. Crawford. "Tell us, please, and we shall drop the subject."

"That document," said Harwood, with affected solemnity; "it is a guarantee of the respectability of the possessor; it is a bank order for four hundred pounds, payable to one Oswin Markham, and it was, I understand, found upon the person of the man who has just been resuscitated through the skill of our good friend Doctor Campion."

"Now you will not call him a poor wretch, I am sure," said the doctor. "He has now fully recovered consciousness, and, you see, he is a gentleman."

"You see that, no doubt, Mrs. Crawford," said Harwood, in a tone that made the good physician long to have him for a few weeks on the sick list—the way the doctor had of paying off old scores.

"Don't be sarcastic, Mr. Harwood," said Daireen. Then she added, "What did you say the name was?—Oswin Markham? I like it—I like it very much."

"Hush," said Mrs. Crawford. "Here is Mr. Glaston." And it was indeed Mr. Glaston who ascended the rail with a languor of motion in keeping with the hour of twilight. With a few muttered words the doctor walked away.

"I hear," said Mr. Glaston, after he had shaken hands with Daireen—"I hear that there was some wreck or other picked up last night with a man clinging to it—a dreadfully vulgar fellow he must be to carry about with him a lot of money—a man with a name like what one would find attached to the hero of an East End melodrama."

There was a rather lengthened silence in that little group before Harwood spoke.

"Yes," he said; "it struck me that it showed very questionable taste in the man to go about flaunting his money in the face of every one he met. As for his name—well, perhaps we had better not say anything about his name. You recollect what Tennyson makes Sir Tristram say to his Isolt—I don't mean you, Glaston, I know you only read the pre-Raphaelites—

"Let be thy Mark, seeing he is not thine."

But no one seemed to remember the quotation, or, at any rate, to see the happiness of its present application.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

It beckons you to go away with it,  
As if it some impartment did desire  
To you alone.

... Weigh what loss  
If with too credent ear you list his songs  
Or lose your heart...  
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it.—*Hamlet*.

IT could hardly be expected that there should be in the mind of Daireen Gerald a total absence of interest in the man who by her aid had been rescued from the deep. To be sure, her friend Mrs. Crawford had given her to understand that people of taste might pronounce the episode melodramatic, and as this word sounded very terrible to Daireen, as, indeed, it did to Mrs. Crawford herself, whose apprehension of its meaning was about as vague as the girl's, she never betrayed the anxiety she felt for the recovery of this man, who was, she thought, equally accountable for the dubious taste displayed in the circumstances of his rescue. She began to feel, as Mr. Glaston in his delicacy carefully refrained from alluding to this night of terror, and as Mrs. Crawford assumed a solemn expression of countenance upon the least reference to the girl's participation in the recovery of the man with the melodramatic name, that there was a certain bond of sympathy between herself and this Oswin Markham; and now and again when she found the doctor alone, she ventured to make some inquiries regarding him. In the course of a few days she learned a good deal.

"He is behaving handsomely—most handsomely, my dear," said the doctor, one afternoon about a week after the occurrence. "He eats everything that is given to him and drinks in a like proportion."

The girl felt that this was truly noble on the part of the man, but it was scarcely the exact type of information she would have liked.

"And he—is he able to speak yet?" she asked.

"Speak? yes, to be sure. He asked me how he came to be picked up, and I told him," continued the doctor, with a smile of gallantry of which Daireen did not believe him capable, "that he was seen by the most charming young lady in the world,—yes, yes, I told him that, though I ran a chance of retarding his recovery by doing so." This was, of course, quite delightful to hear, but Daireen wanted to know even more about the stranger than the doctor's speech had conveyed to her.

"The poor fellow was a long time in the water, I suppose?" she said artfully, trying to find out all that the doctor had learned.

"He was four days upon that piece of wreck," said the doctor.

The girl gave a start that seemed very like a shudder, as she repeated the words, "Four days."

"Yes; he was on his way home from Australia, where he had been living for some years, and the vessel he was in was commanded by some incompetent and drunken idiot who allowed it to be struck by a tornado of no extraordinary violence, and to founder in mid-ocean. As our friend was a passenger, he says, the crew did not think it necessary to invite him to have a seat in one of the boats, a fact that accounts for his being alive

to-day, for both boats were swamped and every soul sent to the bottom in his view. He tells me he managed to lash a broken topmast to the stump of the mainmast that had gone by the board, and to cut the rigging so that he was left drifting when the hull went down. That's all the story, my dear, only we know what a hard time of it he must have had during the four days."

"A hard time—a hard time," Daireen repeated musingly, and without a further word she turned away.

Mr. Glaston, who had been pleased to take a merciful view of her recent action of so pronounced a type, found that his gracious attempts to reform her plastic taste did not, during this evening, meet with that appreciation of which they were undoubtedly deserving. Had he been aware that all the time his eloquent speech was flowing on the subject of the consciousness of hues—a theme attractive on account of its delicacy—the girl had before her eyes only a vision of heavy blue skies overhanging dark green seas terrible in loneliness—the monotony of endless waves broken only by the appearance in the centre of the waste of a broken mast and a ghastly face and clinging lean hands upon it, he would probably have withdrawn the concession he had made to Mrs. Crawford regarding the taste of her protégée.

And indeed, Daireen was not during any of these days thinking about much besides this Oswin Markham, though she never mentioned his name even to the doctor. At nights when she would look out over the flashing phosphorescent waters, she would evermore seem to see that white face looking up at her; but now she neither started nor shuddered as she was used to do for a few nights after she had seen the real face there. It seemed to her now as a face that she knew—the face of a friend looking into her face from the dim uncertain surface of the sea of a dream.

One morning a few days after her most interesting chat with Doctor Campion, she got up even earlier than usual—before, in fact, the healthy pedestrian gentleman had completed his first mile, and went on deck. She had, however, just stepped out of the companion when she heard voices and a laugh or two coming from the stern. She glanced in the direction of the sounds and remained motionless at the cabin door. A group consisting of the major, the doctor, and the captain of the steamer were standing in the neighbourhood of the wheel; but upon a deck-chair, amongst a heap of cushions, a stranger was lying back—a man with a thin brown face and large, somewhat sunken eyes, and a short brown beard and moustache; he was holding a cigar in the fingers of his left hand that drooped over the arm of the chair—a long, white hand—and he was looking up to the face of the major, who was telling one of his usual stories with his accustomed power. None of the other passengers were on deck, with the exception of the pedestrian, who came into view every few minutes as he reached the after part of the ship.

She stood there at the door of the companion without any motion, looking at that haggard face of the stranger. She saw a faint smile light up his deep eyes and pass over his features as the major brought out the full piquancy of his little anecdote, which was certainly not *virginibus puerisque*. Then she turned and went down again to her cabin without seeing how a young sailor was standing gazing at her from the passage of the ship's bridge. She sat down in her cabin and waited until the ringing of the second bell for breakfast.

"You are getting dreadfully lazy, my dear," said Mrs. Crawford, as she took her seat by the girl's side. "Why were you not up as usual to get an appetite for breakfast?" Then without waiting for an answer, she whispered, "Do you see the stranger at the other side of the table? That is our friend Mr. Oswin Markham; his name does not sound so queer when you come to know him. The doctor was right, Daireen: he is a gentleman."

"Then you have——"

"Yes, I have made his acquaintance this morning already. I hope Mr. Glaston may not think that it was my fault."

"Mr. Glaston?" said Daireen. .

"Yes; you know he is so sensitive in matters like this; he might fancy that it would be better to leave this stranger by himself; but considering that he will be parting from the ship in a week, I don't think I was wrong to let my husband present me. At any rate he is a gentleman—that is one satisfaction."

Daireen felt that there was every reason to be glad that she was not placed in the unhappy position of having taken steps for the rescue of a person not accustomed to mix in good society. But she did not even once glance down towards the man whose standing had been by a competent judge pronounced satisfactory. She herself talked so little, however, that she could hear him speak in answer to the questions some good-natured people at the bottom of the table put to him, regarding the name of his ship and the circumstances of the catastrophe that had come upon it. She also heard the young lady who had the peculiar fancy for blue and pink beg of him to do her the favour of writing his name in her birthday book.

During the hours that elapsed before tiffin Daireen sat with a novel in her hand, and she knew that the stranger was on the ship's bridge with Major Crawford. The major found his company exceedingly agreeable, for the old officer had unfortunately been prodigal of his stories through the first week of the voyage, and lately he had been reminded that he was repeating himself when he had begun a really choice anecdote. This Mr. Markham, however, had never been in India, so that the major found in him an appreciative audience, and for the satisfactory narration of a chronicle of Hindustan an appreciative audience is an important consideration. The major, however, appeared alone at tiffin, for Mr. Markham, he said, preferred lying in the sun on the bridge to eating salad in the cabin. The young lady with the birthday book seemed a little disappointed, for she had just taken the bold step of adding to her personal decorations a large artificial moss-rose with glass beads sewed all about it in marvellous similitude to early dew, and it would not bear being trifled with in the matter of detaching from her dress.

Whether or not Mrs. Crawford had conferred with Mr. Glaston on the subject of the isolation of Mr. Markham, Daireen, on coming to sit down to the dinner-table, found Mrs. Crawford and Mr. Markham standing in the saloon just at the entrance to her cabin. She could feel herself flushing as she looked up to the man's haggard face while Mrs. Crawford pronounced their names, and she knew that the hand she put in his thin fingers was trembling. Neither spoke a single word: they only looked at each other. Then the doctor came forward with some remark that Daireen did not seem to hear, and soon the table was surrounded with the passengers.

"He says he feels nearly as strong as he ever did," whispered Mrs. Crawford to the girl as they sat down together. "He will be able to leave us at St. Helena next week without doubt."

On the same evening Daireen was sitting in her usual place far astern. The sun had set some time, and the latitude being only a few degrees south of the equator, the darkness had already almost come down upon the waters. It was dimmer than twilight, but not the solid darkness of a tropical night. The groups of passengers had all dispersed or gone forward, and the only sounds were the whisperings of the water in the wake of the steamer, and the splashing of the flying fish.

Suddenly from the cabin there came the music of the piano, and a low voice singing to its accompaniment—so faint it came that Daireen knew no one on deck except herself could hear the voice, for she was sitting just beside the open fanlight of the saloon; but she heard every word that was sung:

## I.

When the vesper gold has waned:  
When the passion-hues of eve  
Breathe themselves away and leave  
Blue the heaven their crimson stained,  
But one hour the world doth grieve,  
For the shadowy skies receive  
Stars so gracious-sweet that they  
Make night more beloved than day.

## II

From my life the light has waned:  
Every golden gleam that shone  
Through the dimness now has gone.  
Of all joys has one remained?  
Stays one gladness I have known?  
Day is past; I stand, alone,  
Here beneath these darkened skies,  
Asking—"Doth a star arise?"

**I**T ended so faintly that Daireen Gerald could not tell when the last note had come. She felt that she was in a dream and the sounds she had heard were but a part of her dream—sounds? were these sounds, or merely the effect of breathing the lovely shadowy light that swathed the waters? The sounds seemed to her the twilight expressed in music.

Then in the silence she heard a voice speaking her name. She turned and saw Oswin Markham standing beside her.

"Miss Gerald," he said, "I owe my life to you. I thank you for it."

He could hardly have expressed himself more simply if he had been thanking her for passing him a fig at dinner, and yet his words thrilled her.

"No, no; do not say that," she said, in a startled voice. "I did nothing—nothing that any one else might not have done. Oh, do not talk of it, please."

"I will not," he said slowly, after a pause. "I will never talk of it again. I was a fool to speak of it to you. I know now that you understand—that there is no need for me to open my lips to you."

"I do indeed," she said, turning her eyes upon his face. "I do understand." She put out her hand, and he took it in his own—not fervently, not with the least expression of emotion, his fingers closed over it. A long time passed before she saw his face in front of her own, and felt his eyes looking into her eyes as his words came in a whisper, "Child—child, there is a bond between us—a bond whose token is silence."

She kept her eyes fixed upon his as he spoke, and long after his words had come. She knew he had spoken the truth: there was a bond between them. She understood it.

She saw the gaunt face with its large eyes close to her own; her own eyes filled with tears, and then came the first token of their bond—silence. She felt his grasp unloosed, she heard him moving away, and she knew that she was alone in the silence.

Give him heedful note;  
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,  
And after we will both our judgments join.

Thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

You must needs have heard, how I am punish'd  
With sore distraction. What I have done  
I here proclaim was madness.—*Hamlet*.

**I**T was very generally thought that it was a fortunate circumstance for Mr. Oswin Markham that there chanced to be in the fore-cabin of the steamer an enterprising American speculator who was taking out some hundred dozens of ready-made garments for disposal to the diamond miners—and an equal quantity of less durable clothing, in which he had been induced to invest some money with a view to the ultimate adoption of clothing by the Kafir nation. He explained how he had secured the services of a hard-working missionary whom he had sent as agent in advance to endeavour to convince the natives that if they ever wished to gain a footing among great nations, the auxiliary of clothing towards the effecting of their object was worth taking into consideration. When the market for these garments would thus be created, the speculator hoped to arrive on the scene and make a tolerable sum of money. In rear of his missionary, he had scoured most of the islands of the Pacific with very satisfactory results; and he said he felt that, if he could but prevail upon his missionary in advance to keep steady, a large work of evangelisation could be done in South Africa.

By the aid of this enterprising person, Mr. Markham was able to clothe himself without borrowing from any of the passengers. But about the payment for his purchases there seemed likely to be some difficulty. The bank order for four hundred pounds was once again in the possession of Mr. Markham, but it was payable in England, and how then could he effect the transfer of the few pounds he owed the American speculator, when he was to leave the vessel at St. Helena? There was no agency of the bank at this island, though there was one at the Cape, and thus the question of payment became somewhat difficult to solve.

"Do you want to leave the craft at St. Helena, mister?" asked the American, stroking his chin thoughtfully.

"I do," said Mr. Markham. "I must leave at the island and take the first ship to England."

"It's the awkwardest place on God's footstool, this St. Helena, isn't it?" said the American.

"I don't see that it is; why do you say so?"

"Only that I don't see why you want so partickler to land thar, mister. Maybe you'll change yer mind, eh?"

"I have said that I must part from this ship there," exclaimed Mr. Markham almost impatiently. "I must get this order reduced to money somehow."

"Wal, I reckon that's about the point, mister," said the speculator. "But you see if you want to fly it as you say, you'll not breeze about that it's needful for you to cut the craft before you come to the Cape. I'd half a mind to try and trade with you for that bit of paper ten minutes ago, but I reckon that's not what's the matter with me now. No, *sir*; if you want to get rid of that paper without much trouble, just you give out that you don't care if you do go on to the Cape; maybe a nibble will come from that."

"I don't know what you mean, my good fellow," said Markham; "but I can only repeat that I will not go on to the Cape. I shall get the money somehow and pay you before I leave, for surely the order is as good as money to any one living in the midst of civilisation. I don't suppose a savage would understand it, but I can't see what objection any one in business could make to receiving it at its full value."

The American screwed up his mouth in a peculiar fashion, and smiled in a still more peculiar fashion. He rather fancied he had a small piece of tobacco in his waistcoat pocket, nor did the result of a search show that he was mistaken; he extracted the succulent morsel and put it into his mouth. Then he winked at Mr. Markham, put his hands in his pockets, and walked slowly away without a word.

Markham looked after him with a puzzled expression. He did not know what the man meant to convey by his nods and his becks and his wreathed smiles. But just at this moment Mr. Harwood came up; he had of course previously made the acquaintance of Markham.

"I suppose we shall soon be losing you?" said Harwood, offering him a cigar. "You said, I think, that you would be leaving us at St. Helena?"

"Yes, I leave at St. Helena, and we shall be there in a few days. You see, I am now nearly as strong as ever, thanks to Campion, and it is important for me to get to England at once."

"No doubt," said Harwood; "your relatives will be very anxious if they hear of the loss of the vessel you were in."

Markham gave a little laugh, as he said, "I have no relatives; and as for friends—well, I suppose I shall have a number now."

"Now?"

"Yes; the fact is I was on my way home from Australia to take up a certain property which my father left to me in England. He died six months ago, and the solicitors for the estate sent me out a considerable sum of money in case I should need it in Australia—this order for four hundred pounds is what remains of it."

"I can now easily understand your desire to be at home and settled down," said Harwood.

"I don't mean to settle down," replied Markham. "There are a good many places to be seen in the world, small as it is."

"A man who has knocked about in the Colonies is generally glad to settle down at home," remarked Harwood.

"No doubt that is the rule, but I fear I am all awry so far as rules are concerned. I haven't allowed my life to be subject to many rules, hitherto. Would to God I had! It is not a pleasant recollection for a son to go through life with, Harwood, that his father has died without becoming reconciled to him—especially when he knows that his father has died leaving him a couple of thousands a year."

"And you——"

"I am such a son," said Markham, turning round suddenly. "I did all that I could to make my father's life miserable till—a climax came, and I found myself in Australia three years ago with an allowance sufficient to keep me from ever being in want. But I forget, I'm not a modern Ancient Mariner, wandering about boring people with my sad story."

"No," said Harwood, "you are not, I should hope. Nor am I so pressed for time just now as the wedding guest. You did not go in for a sheep-run in Australia?"

"Nothing of the sort," laughed the other. "The only thing I went in for was getting through my allowance, until that letter came that sobered me—that letter telling me that my father was dead, and that every penny he had possessed was mine. Harwood, you have heard of people's hair turning white in a few hours, but you have not often heard of natures changing from black to white in a short space; believe me it was so with me. The idea that theologians used to have long ago about souls passing from earth to heaven in a moment might well be believed by me, knowing as I do how my soul was transformed by that letter. I cast my old life behind me, though I did not tell any one about me what had happened. I left my companions and said to them that I was going up country. I did go up country, but I returned in a few days and got aboard the first ship that was sailing for England, and—here I am."

"And you mean to renew your life of wandering when you reach England?" said Harwood, after a pause.

"It is all that there is left for me," said the man bitterly, though a change in his tone would have made his words seem very pitiful. "I am not such a fool as to fancy that a man can sow tares and reap wheat. The spring of my life is over, and also the summer, the seed-time and the ripening; shall the harvest be delayed then? No, I am not such a fool."

"I cannot see that you might not rest at home," said Harwood. "Surely you have some associations in England."

"Not one that is not wretched."

"But a man of good family with some money is always certain to make new associations for himself, no matter what his life has been. Marriage, for instance; it is, I think, an exceedingly sure way of squaring a fellow up in life."

"A very sure way indeed," laughed Markham. "Never mind; in another week I shall be away from this society which has already become so pleasant to me. Perhaps I shall knock up against you in some of the strange places of the earth, Harwood."

"I heartily hope so," said the other. "But I still cannot see why you should not come on with us to the Cape. The voyage will completely restore you, you can get your money changed there, and a steamer of this company's will take you away two days after you land."

"I cannot remain aboard this steamer," said Markham quickly. "I must leave at St. Helena." Then he walked away with that shortness of ceremony which steamer voyagers get into a habit of showing to each other without giving offence.

"Poor beggar!" muttered Harwood. "Wrecked in sight of the haven—a pleasant haven—yes, if he is not an uncommonly good actor." He turned round from where he was leaning over the ship's side smoking, and saw the man with whom he had been talking seated in his chair by the side of Daireen Gerald. He watched them for some time—for a long time—until his cigar was smoked to the very end. He looked over the side thoughtfully as he dropped the remnant and heard its little hiss in the water; then he repeated his words, "a wreck." Once more he glanced astern, and then he added thoughtfully, "Yes, he is right; he had much better part at St. Helena—very much better."

Mr. Markham seemed quite naturally to have found his place in Mrs. Crawford's set, exclusive though it was; for somehow aboard ship a man amalgamates only with that society for which he is suited; a man is seldom to be found out of place on account of certain considerations such as one meets on shore. Not even Mr. Glaston could raise any protest against Mr. Markham's right to take a place in the midst of the elect of the cabin. But the young lady in whose birthday book Mr. Markham had inscribed his name upon the first day of his appearance at the table, thought it very unkind of him to join the band who had failed to appreciate her toilet splendours.

During the day on which he gave Harwood his brief autobiographical outline, Mr. Oswin Markham was frequently by the side of Miss Gerald and Mrs. Crawford. But towards night the major felt that it would be unjust to allow him to be defrauded of the due amount of narratory entertainment so necessary for his comfort; and with these excellent intentions drew him away from the others of the set, and, sitting on the secluded bridge, brought forth from the abundant resources of his memory a few well-defined anecdotes of that lively Arradambad station. But all the while the major was narrating the stories he could see that Markham's soul was elsewhere, and he began to be disappointed in Mr. Markham.

"I mustn't bore you, Markham, my boy," he said as he rose, after having whiled away about two hours of the night in this agreeable occupation. "No, I mustn't bore you, and you look, upon my soul, as if you had been suffering."

"No, no, I assure you, I never enjoyed anything more than that story of—of—the Surgeon-General and the wife of—of—the Commissary."

"The Adjutant-General, you mean," interrupted the major.

"Of course, yes, the Adjutant; a deucedly good story!"

"Ah, not bad, is it? But there goes six bells; I must think about turning in. Come and join me in a glass of brandy-and-water."

"No, no; not to-night—not to-night. The fact is I feel—I feel queer."

"You're not quite set on your feet yet, my boy," said the major critically. "Take care of yourself." And he walked away, wondering if it was possible that he had been deceived in his estimate of the nature of Mr. Markham.

But Mr. Markham continued sitting alone in the silence of the deserted deck. His thoughts were truly elsewhere. He lay back upon his seat and kept his eyes fixed upon the sky—the sky of stars towards which he had looked in agony for those four nights when nothing ever broke in upon the dread loneliness of the barren sea but those starlights. The terrible recollection of every moment he had passed returned to him.

Then he thought how he had heard of men becoming, through sufferings such as his, oblivious of everything of their past life—men who were thus enabled to begin life anew without being racked by any dread memories, the agony that they had endured being acknowledged by Heaven as expiation of their past deeds. That was justice, he felt, and if this justice had been done to these men, why had it been withheld from him?

"Could God Himself have added to what I endured?" he said, in passionate bitterness. "God! did I not suffer until my agony had overshot its mark by destroying in me the power of feeling agony—my agony consumed itself; I was dead—dead; and yet I am denied the power of beginning my new life under the conditions which are my due. What more can God want of man than his life? have I not paid that debt daily for four days?" He rose from his chair and stood upright upon the deck with clenched hands and lips. "It is past," he said, after a long pause. "From this hour I throw the past beneath my feet. It is my right to forget all, and—I have forgotten all—all."

Mr. Harwood had truly reason to feel surprised when, on the following day, Oswin Markham came up to him, and said quietly:

"I believe you are right, Harwood: after all, it would be foolish for me to part from the ship at St. Helena. I have decided to take your advice and run on to the Cape."

Harwood looked at him for a few moments before he answered slowly:

"Ah, you have decided."

"Yes; you see I am amenable to reason: I acknowledge the wisdom of my counsellors." But Harwood made no answer, only continued with his eyes fixed upon his face. "Hang it all," exclaimed Markham, "can't you congratulate me upon my return to the side of reason? Can't you acknowledge that you have been mistaken in me—that you find I am not so pig-headed as you supposed?"

"Yes," said Harwood; "you are not pig-headed." And, taking all things into consideration, it can hardly be denied that Mr. Oswin Markham's claim to be exempted from the class of persons called pig-headed was well founded.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

'Tis told me he hath very oft of late  
Given private time to you: and you yourself  
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?—*Hamlet.*

MRS. Crawford felt that she was being unkindly dealt with by Fate in many matters. She had formed certain plans on coming aboard the steamer and on taking in at a glance the position of every one about her—it was her habit to do so on the occasion of her arrival at any new station in the Indian Empire—and hitherto she had generally had the satisfaction of witnessing the success of her plans; but now she began to fear that if things continued to diverge so widely from the paths which it was natural to expect them to have kept, her skilful devices would be completely overthrown.

Mrs. Crawford had within the first few hours of the voyage communicated to her husband her intention of surprising Colonel Gerald on the arrival of his daughter at the Cape; for he could scarcely fail to be surprised and, of course, gratified, if he were made aware of the fact that his daughter had conceived an attachment for a young man so distinguished in many ways as the son of the Bishop of the Calapash Islands and Metropolitan of the Salamander Archipelago—the style and titles of the father of Mr. Glaston.

But Daireen, instead of showing herself a docile subject and ready to act according to the least suggestion of one who was so much wiser and more experienced than herself, had begun to think and to act most waywardly. Though she had gone ashore at Madeira contrary to Mr. Glaston's advice, and had even ventured to assert, in the face of Mr. Glaston's demonstration to the contrary, that she had spent a pleasant day, yet Mrs. Crawford saw that it would be quite possible, by care and thoughtfulness in the future, to overcome all the unhappy influences her childishness would have upon the mind of Mr. Glaston.

Being well aware of this, she had for some days great hope of her protégée; but then Daireen had apparently cast to the winds all her sense of duty to those who were qualified to instruct her, for she had not



only disagreed from Mr. Glaston upon a theory he had expressed regarding the symbolism of a certain design having for its chief elements sections of pomegranates and conventionalised daisies—Innocence allured by Ungovernable Passion was the parable preached through the union of some tones of sage green and saffron, Mr. Glaston assured the circle whom he had favoured with his views on this subject—but she had also laughed when Mr. Harwood made some whispered remark about the distressing diffusion of jaundice through the floral creation.

This was very sad to Mrs. Crawford. She was nearly angry with Daireen, and if she could have afforded it, she would have been angry with Mr. Harwood; she was, however, mindful of the influence of the letters she hoped the special correspondent of the *Dominant Trumpeter* would be writing regarding the general satisfaction that was felt throughout the colonies of South Africa that the Home Government had selected so efficient and trustworthy an officer to discharge the duties in connection with the Army Boot Commission, so she could not be anything but most friendly towards Mr. Harwood.

Then it was a great grief to Mrs. Crawford to see the man who, though undoubtedly well educated and even cultured, was still a sort of adventurer, seating himself more than once by the side of Daireen on the deck, and to notice that the girl talked with him even when Mr. Glaston was near—Mr. Glaston, who had referred to his sudden arrival aboard the ship as being melodramatic. But on the day preceding the expected arrival of the steamer at St. Helena, the well-meaning lady began to feel almost happy once more, for she recollected how fixed had been Mr. Markham's determination to leave the steamer at the island. Being almost happy, she thought she might go so far as to express to the man the grief which reflecting upon his departure excited.

"We shall miss you from our little circle, I can assure you, Mr. Markham," she said. "Your coming was so—so"—she thought of a substitute for melodramatic—"so unexpected, and so—well, almost romantic, that indeed it has left an impression upon all of us. Try and get into a room in the hotel at James Town that the white ants haven't devoured; I really envy you the delicious water-cress you will have every day."

"You will be spared the chance of committing that sin, Mrs. Crawford, though I fear the penance which will be imposed upon you for having even imagined it will be unjustly great. The fact is, I have been so weak as to allow myself to be persuaded by Doctor Campion and Harwood to go on to the Cape."

"To go on to the Cape!" exclaimed the lady.

"To go on to the Cape, Mrs. Crawford; so you see you will be bored with me for another week."

Mrs. Crawford looked utterly bewildered, as, indeed, she was. Her smile was very faint as she said:

"Ah, how nice; you have been persuaded. Ah, very pleasant it will be; but how one may be deceived in judging of another's character! I really formed the impression that you were firmness itself, Mr. Markham!"

"So I am, Mrs. Crawford, except when my inclination tends in the opposite direction to my resolution; then, I assure you, I can be led with a strand of floss."

This was, of course, very pleasant chat, and with the clink of compliment about it, but it was anything but satisfactory to the lady to whom it was addressed. She by no means felt in the mood for listening to mere colloquialisms, even though they might be of the most brilliant nature, which Mr. Markham's certainly were not.

"Yes, I fancied that you were firmness itself," she repeated. "But you allowed your mind to be changed by—the doctor and Mr. Harwood."

"Well, not wholly, to say the truth, Mrs. Crawford," he interposed. "It is pitiful to have to confess that I am capable of being influenced by a monetary matter; but so it is: the fact is, if I were to land now at St. Helena, I should be not only penniless myself, but I should be obliged also to run in debt for these garments that my friend Phineas F. Fulton of Denver City supplied me with, not to speak of what I feel I owe to the steamer itself; so I think it is better for me to get my paper money turned into cash at the Cape, and then hurry homewards."

"No doubt you understand your own business," said the lady, smiling faintly as she walked away.

Mr. Oswin Markham watched her for some moments in a thoughtful way. He had known for a considerable time that the major's wife understood her business, at any rate, and that she was also quite capable of comprehending—nay, of directing as well—the business of every member of her social circle. But how was it possible, he asked himself, that she should have come to look upon his remaining for another week aboard the steamer as a matter of concern? He was a close enough observer to be able to see from her manner that she did so; but he could not understand how she should regard him as of any importance in the arrangement of her plans for the next week, whatever they might be.

But Mrs. Crawford, so soon as she found herself by the side of Daireen in the evening, resolved to satisfy herself upon the subject of the influences which had been brought to bear upon Mr. Oswin Markham, causing his character for determination to be lost for ever.

Daireen was sitting alone far astern, and had just finished directing some envelopes for letters to be sent home the next day from St. Helena.

"What a capital habit to get into of writing on that little case on your knee!" said Mrs. Crawford. "You have been on deck all day, you see, while the other correspondents are shut down in the saloon. You have had a good deal to tell the old people at that wonderful Irish lake of yours since you wrote at Madeira."

Daireen thought of all she had written regarding Standish, to prevent his father becoming uneasy about him.

"Oh, yes, I have had a good deal of news that will interest them," she said. "I have told them that the Atlantic is not such a terrible place after all. Why, we have not had even a breeze yet."

"No, we have not, but you should not forget, Daireen, the tornado that at least one ship perished in." She looked gravely at the girl, though she felt very pleased indeed to know that her protégée had not remembered this particular storm. "You have mentioned in your letters, I hope, how Mr. Markham was saved?"

"I believe I devoted an entire page to Mr. Markham," Daireen replied with a smile.

"That is right, my dear. You have also said, I am sure, how we all hope he is—a—a gentleman."

"Hope?" said Daireen quickly. Then she added after a pause, "No, Mrs. Crawford, I don't think I said that. I only said that he would be leaving us to-morrow."

Mrs. Crawford's nicely sensitive ear detected, she fancied, a tinge of regret in the girl's last tone.

"Ah, he told you that he had made up his mind to leave the ship at St. Helena, did he not?" she asked.

"Of course he is to leave us there, Mrs. Crawford. Did you not understand so?"

"I did indeed; but I am disappointed in Mr. Markham. I thought that he was everything that is firm. Yes, I am disappointed in him."

"How?" said Daireen, with a little flush and an anxious movement of her eyes. "How do you mean he has disappointed you?"

"He is not going to leave us at St. Helena, Daireen; he is coming on with us to the Cape."

With sorrow and dismay Mrs. Crawford noticed Daireen's face undergo a change from anxiety to pleasure; nor did she allow the little flush that came to the girl's forehead to escape her observation. These changes of countenance were almost terrifying to the lady. "It is the first time I have had my confidence in him shaken," she added. "In spite of what Mr. Harwood said of him I had not the least suspicion of this Mr. Markham, but now——"

"What did! Mr. Harwood say of him?" asked Daireen, with a touch of scorn in her voice.

"You need not get angry, Daireen, my child," replied Mrs. Crawford.

"Angry, Mrs. Crawford? How could you fancy I was angry? Only what right had this Mr. Harwood to say anything about Mr. Markham? Perhaps Mr. Glaston was saying something too. I thought that as Mr. Markham was a stranger every one here would treat him with consideration, and yet, you see——"

"Good gracious, Daireen, what can you possibly mean?" cried Mrs. Crawford. "Not a soul has ever treated Mr. Markham except in good taste from the day he came aboard this vessel. Of course young men will talk, especially young newspaper men, and more especially young *Dominant. Trumpeter* men. For myself, you saw how readily I admitted Mr. Markham into our set, though you will allow that, all things considered, I need not have done so at all."

"He was a stranger," said Daireen.

"But he is not therefore an angel unawares, my dear," said Mrs. Crawford, smiling as she patted the girl's hand in token of amity. "So long as he meant, to be a stranger of course we were justified in making him as pleasant as possible; but now, you see, he is not going to be a stranger. But why should we talk upon so unprofitable a subject? Tell me all the rest that you have been writing about."

Daireen made an attempt to recollect what were the topics of her letters, but she was not very successful in recalling them.

"I told them about the—the albatross, how it has followed us so faithfully," she said; "and how the Cape pigeons came to us yesterday."

"Ah, indeed. Very nice it will be for the dear old people at home. Ah, Daireen, how happy you are to have some place you can look back upon and think of as your home. Here am I in my old age still a vagabond upon the face of the earth. I have no home, dear." The lady felt that this piece of pathos should touch the girl deeply.

"No, no, don't say that, my dear Mrs. Crawford," Daireen said gently. "Say that your dear kind goodnature makes you feel at home in every part of the world."

This was very nice Mrs. Crawford felt, as she kissed the face beside her, but she did not therefore come to the conclusion that it would be well to forget that little expression of pleasure which had flashed over this same face a few minutes before.

At this very hour upon the evening following the anchors were being weighed, and the good steamer was already backing slowly out from the place it had occupied in the midst of the little fleet of whale-ships and East Indiamen beneath the grim shadow of that black ocean rock, St. Helena. The church spire of James Town was just coming into view as the motion of the ship disclosed a larger space of the gorge where the little town is built. The flag was being hauled down from the spar at the top of Ladder Hill, and the man was standing by the sunset gun aboard H.M.S. *Cobra*. The last of the shore-boats was cast off from the rail, and then, the anchor being reported in sight, the steamer put on full speed ahead, the helm was made hard-a-starboard, and the vessel swept round out of the harbour.

Mr. Harwood and Major Crawford were in anxious conversation with an engineer officer who had been summoned to the Cape to assist in a certain council which was to be held regarding the attitude of a Kafir chief who was inclined to be defiant of the lawful possessors of the country. But Daireen was standing at the ship's side looking at that wonderful line of mountain-wall connecting the batteries round the island. Her thoughts were not, however, wholly of the days when there was a reason why this little island should be the most strongly fortified in the ocean. As the steamer moved gently round the dark cliffs she was not reflecting upon what must have been the feelings of the great emperor-general who had been accustomed to stand upon these cliffs and to look seaward. Her thoughts were indeed undefined in their course, and she knew this when she heard the voice of Oswin Markham beside her.

"Can you fancy what would be my thoughts at this time if I had kept to my resolution—and if I were now up there among those big rocks?" he asked.

She shook her head, but did not utter a word in answer.

"I wonder what would yours have been now if I had kept to my resolution," he then said.

"I cannot tell you, indeed," she answered. "I cannot fancy what I should be thinking."

"Nor can I tell you what my thought would be," he said after a pause. He was leaning with one arm upon the moulding of the bulwarks, and she had her eyes still fixed upon the ridges of the island. He touched her and pointed out over the water. The sun like a shield of sparkling gold had already buried half its disc beneath the horizon. They watched the remainder become gradually less and less until only a thread of gold

was on the water; in another instant this had dwindled away. "I know now how I should have felt," he said, with his eyes fixed upon the blank horizon.

The girl looked out to that blank horizon also.

Then from each fort on the cliffs there leaped a little flash of light, and the roar of the sunset guns made thunder all along the hollow shore; before the echoes had given back the sound, faint bugle-calls were borne out to the ocean as fort answered fort all along that line of mountain-wall. The girl listened until the faintest farthest thin sound dwindled away just as the last touch of sunlight had waned into blankness upon the horizon.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

*Polonius.* What treasure had he, my lord?

*Hamlet.* Why,

"One fair daughter and no more,

The which he loved passing well."

O my old friend, thy face is valanced since I saw thee last.... What, my young lady and mistress! By'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last.... You are all welcome.—*Hamlet.*

**H**OWEVER varying, indefinite, and objectless the thoughts of Daireen Gerald may have been—and they certainly were—during the earlier days of the voyage, they were undoubtedly fixed and steadfast during the last week. She knew that she could not hear anything of her father until she would arrive at the Cape, and so she had allowed herself to be buoyed up by the hopeful conversation of the major and Mrs. Crawford, who seemed to think of her meeting with her father as a matter of certainty, and by the various little excitements of every day. But now when she knew that upon what the next few days would bring forth all the happiness of her future life depended, what thought—what prayer but one, could she have?

She was certainly not good company during these final days. Mr. Harwood never got a word from her. Mr. Glaston did not make the attempt, though he attributed her silence to remorse at having neglected his artistic instructions. Major Crawford's gallantries received no smiling recognition from her; and Mrs. Crawford's most motherly pieces of pathos went by unheeded so far as Daireen was concerned.

What on earth was the matter, Mrs. Crawford thought; could it be possible that her worst fears were realised? she asked herself; and she made a vow that even if Mr. Harwood had spoken a single word on the subject of affection to Daireen, he should forfeit her own friendship for ever.

"My dear Daireen," she said, two days after leaving St. Helena, "you know I love you as a daughter, and I have come to feel for you as a mother might. I know something is the matter—what is it? you may confide in me; indeed you may."

"How good you are!" said the child of this adoption; "how very good! You know all that is the matter, though you have in your kindness prevented me from feeling it hitherto."

"Good gracious, Daireen, you frighten me! No one can have been speaking to you surely, while I am your guardian—"

"You know what a wretched doubt there is in my mind now that I know a few days will tell me all that can be told—you know the terrible question that comes to me every day—every hour—shall I see him?—shall he be—alive?"

Even the young men, with no touches of motherly pathos about them, had appreciated the girl's feelings in those days more readily than Mrs. Crawford.

"My poor dear little thing," she now said, fondling her in a way whose soothing effect the combined efforts of all the young men could never have approached. "Don't let the doubt enter your mind for an instant—it positively must not. Your father is as well as I am to-day, I can assure you. Can you disbelieve me? I know him a great deal better than you do; and I know the Cape climate better than you do. Nonsense, my dear, no one ever dies at the Cape—at least not when they go there to recover. Now make your mind easy for the next three days."

But for just this interval poor Daireen's mind was in a state of anything but repose.

During the last night the steamer would be on the voyage she found it utterly impossible to go to sleep. She heard all of the bells struck from watch to watch. Her cabin became stifling to her though a cool breeze was passing through the opened port. She rose, dressed herself, and went on deck though it was about two o'clock in the morning. It was a terrible thing for a girl to do, but nothing could have prevented Daireen's taking that step. She stood just outside the door of the companion, and in the moonlight and soft air of the sea more ease of mind came to her than she had yet felt on this voyage.

While she stood there in the moonlight listening to the even whisperings of the water as it parted away before the ship, and to the fitful flights of the winged fish, she seemed to hear some order as she thought, given from the forward part of the vessel. In another minute the officer on watch hastened past her. She heard him knock at the captain's cabin which was just aft of the deck-house, and make the report.

"Fixed light right ahead, sir."

She knew then that the first glimpse of the land which they were approaching had been obtained, and her anxiety gave place to peace. That message of the light seemed to be ominous of good to her. She returned to her cabin, and found it cool and tranquil, so that she fell asleep at once; and when she next opened her eyes she saw a tall man standing with folded arms beside her, gazing at her. She gave but one little cry, and then that long drooping moustache of his was down upon her face and her bare arms were about his neck.

"Thank you, thank you, Dolly; that is a sufficiently close escape from strangulation to make me respect your powers," said the man; and at the sound of his voice Daireen turned her face to her pillow, while the man shook out with spasmodic fingers his handkerchief from its folds and endeavoured to repair the injury done to his moustache by the girl's embrace.

"Now, now, my Dolly," he said, after some convulsive mutterings which Daireen could, of course, not hear; "now, now, don't you think it might be as well to think of making some apology for your laziness instead of trying to go asleep again?"

Then she looked up with wondering eyes.

"I don't understand anything at all," she cried. "How could I go asleep when we were within four hours of the Cape? How could any one be so cruel as to let me sleep so dreadfully? It was wicked of me: it was quite wicked."

"There's not the least question about the enormity of the crime, I'm afraid," he answered; "only I think that Mrs. Crawford may be responsible for a good deal of it, if her confession to me is to be depended upon. She told me how you were—but never mind, I am the ill-treated one in the matter, and I forgive you all."

"And we have actually been brought into the dock?"

"For the past half-hour, my love; and I have been waiting for much longer. I got the telegram you sent to me, by the last mail from Madeira, so that I have been on the lookout for the *Cardwell Castle* for a week. Now don't be too hard on an old boy, Dolly, with all of those questions I see on your lips. Here, I'll take them in the lump, and think over them as I get through a glass of brandy-and-water with Jack Crawford and the Sylph—by George, to think of your meeting with the poor old hearty Sylph—ah, I forgot you never heard that we used to call Mrs. Crawford the Sylph at our station before you were born. There, now I have got all your questions, my darling—my own darling little Dolly."

She only gave him a little hug this time, and he hastened up to the deck, where Mrs. Crawford and her husband were waiting for him.

"Now, did I say anything more of her than was the truth, George?" cried Mrs. Crawford, so soon as Colonel Gerald got on deck.

But Colonel Gerald smiled at her abstractedly and pulled fiercely at the ends of his moustache. Then seeing Mr. Harwood at the other side of the skylight, he ran and shook hands with him warmly; and Harwood, who fancied he understood something of the theory of the expression of emotion in mankind, refrained from hinting to the colonel that they had already had a chat together since the steamer had come into dock.

Mrs. Crawford, however, was not particularly well pleased to find that her old friend George Gerald had only answered her with that vague smile, which implied nothing; she knew that he had been speaking for half an hour before with Harwood, from whom he had heard the first intelligence of his appointment to the Castaway group. When Colonel Gerald, however, went the length of rushing up to Doctor Campion and violently shaking hands with him also, though they had been in conversation together before, the lady began to fear that the attack of fever from which it was reported Daireen's father had been suffering had left its traces upon him still.

"Rather rum, by gad," said the major, when his attention was called to his old comrade's behaviour. "Just like the way a boy would behave visiting his grandmother, isn't it? Looks as if he were working off his feelings, doesn't it? By gad, he's going back to Harwood!"

"I thought he would," said Mrs. Crawford. "Harwood can tell him all about his appointment. That's what George, like all the rest of them nowadays, is anxious about. He forgets his child—he has no interest in her, I see."

"That's devilish bad, Kate, devilish bad! by Jingo! But upon my soul, I was under the impression that his wildness just now was the effect of having been below with the kid."

"If he had the least concern about her, would he not come to me, when he knows very well that I could tell him all about the voyage? But no, he prefers to remain by the side of the special correspondent."

"No, he doesn't; here he comes, and hang me if he isn't going to shake hands with both of us!" cried the major, as Colonel Gerald, recognising him, apparently for the first time, left Harwood's side and hastened across the deck with extended hand.

"George, dear old George," said Mrs. Crawford, reflecting upon the advantages usually attributed to the conciliatory method of treatment. "Isn't it like the old time come back again? Here we stand together—Jack, Campion, yourself and myself, just as we used to be in—ah, it cannot have been '58!—yes, it was, good gracious, '58! It seems like a dream."

"Exactly like a dream, by Jingo, my dear," said the major pensively, for he was thinking what an auxiliary to the realistic effect of the scene a glass of brandy-and-water, or some other Indian cooling drink, would be. "Just like a vision, you know, George, isn't it? So if you'll come to the smoking-room, we'll have that light breakfast we were talking about."

"He won't go, major," said the lady severely.

"He wishes to have a talk with me about the dear child. Don't you, George?"

"And about your dear self, Kate," replied Colonel Gerald, in the Irish way that brought back to the lady still more vividly all the old memories of the happy station on the Himalayas.

"Ah, how like George that, isn't it?" she whispered to her husband.

"My dear girl, don't be a fool," was the parting request of the major as he strolled off to where the doctor

was, he knew, waiting for some sign that the brandy and water were amalgamating.

"I'm glad that we are alone, George," said Mrs. Crawford, taking Colonel Gerald's arm. "We can talk together freely about the child—about Daireen."

"And what have we to say about her, Kate? Can you give me any hints about her temper, eh? How she needs to be managed, and that sort of thing? You used to be capital at that long ago."

"And I flatter myself that I can still tell all about a girl after a single glance; but, my dear George, I never indeed knew what a truly perfect nature was until I came to understand Daireen. She is an angel, George."

"No," said the colonel gently; "not Daireen—she is not the angel; but her face, when I saw it just now upon its pillow, sent back all my soul in thought of one—one who is—who always was an angel—my good angel."

"That was my first thought too," said Mrs. Crawford. "And her nature is the same. Only poor Daireen errs on the side of good nature. She is a child in her simplicity of thought about every one she meets. She wants some one near her who will be able to guide her tastes in—in—well, in different matters. By the way, you remember Austin Glaston, who was chaplain for a while on the *Telemachus*, and who got made Bishop of the Salamanders; well, that is his son, that tall handsome youngman—I must present you. He is one of the most distinguished men I ever met."

"Ah, indeed? Does he write for a newspaper?"

"Oh, George, I am ashamed of you. No, Mr. Glaston is a—a—an artist and a poet, and—well, he does nearly everything much better than any one else, and if you take my advice you will give him an invitation to dinner, and then you will find out all."

Before Colonel Gerald could utter a word he was brought face to face with Mr. Glaston, and felt his grasp responded to by a gentle pressure.

"I'm very glad to meet you, Mr. Glaston; your father and I were old friends. If you are staying at Cape Town, I hope you will not neglect to call upon my daughter and myself," said the colonel.

"You are extremely kind," returned the young man: "I shall be delighted."

Thus Daireen on coming on deck found her father in conversation with Mr. Glaston, and already acquainted with every member of Mrs. Crawford's circle.

"Mr. Glaston has just promised to pay you a visit on shore, my dear," said the major's wife, as she came up.

"How very kind," said Daireen. "But can he tell me where I live ashore, for no one has thought fit to let me know anything about myself. I will never forgive you, Mrs. Crawford, for ordering that I was not to be awakened this morning. It was too cruel."

"Only to be kind, dear; I knew what a state of nervousness you were in."

"And now of course," continued the girl, "when I come on deck all the news will have been told—even that secret about the Castaway Islands."

"Heavens!:" said the colonel, "what about the Castaway Islands? Have they been submerged, or have they thrown off the British yoke already?"

"I see you know all," she said mournfully, "and I had treasured up all that Mr. Harwood said no one in the world but himself knew, to be the first to tell you. And now, too, you know every one aboard except—ah, I have my secret to tell at last. There he stands, and even you don't remember him, papa. Come here, Standish, and let me present you. This, papa, is Standish Macnamara, and he is coming out with us now to wherever we are to live."

"Good gracious, Daireen!" cried Mrs. Crawford.

"What, Standish, Prince of Innishdermot!" said the colonel. "My dear boy, I am delighted to welcome you to this strange place. I remember you when your curls were a good deal longer, my boy."

Poor Standish, who was no longer in his sailor's jacket, but in the best attire his Dublin tailor could provide, blushed most painfully as every one gazed at him—every one with the exception of Daireen, who was gazing anxiously around the deck as though she expected to see some one still.

"This is certainly a secret," murmured Mrs. Crawford.

"Now, Daireen, to the shore," said Colonel Gerald. "You need not say good-bye to any one here. Mrs. Crawford will be out to dine with us to-morrow. She will bring the major and Doctor Campion, and Mr. Harwood says he will ride one of my horses till he gets his own. So there need be no tears. My man will look after the luggage while I drive you out."

"I must get my bag from my cabin," Daireen said, going slowly towards the companion. In a few moments she reappeared with her dressing-bag, and gave another searching glance around the deck.

"Now," she said, "I am ready."

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## CHAPTER XX.

(Transcriber's Note: The following four chapters were taken from a print copy of a different edition as these chapters were missing from the 1889 print edition from which the rest of the Project Gutenberg edition was taken. In the inserted four chapters it will be noted that the normal double quotation marks were printed as single quote marks.)

Something have you heard

Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it—  
... What it should be...  
I cannot dream or  
... gather  
So much as from occasion you may glean  
Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him.

At night we'll feast together:  
Most welcome home!  
Most fair return of greetings.*Hamlet.*

**W**HAT an extraordinary affair!' said Mrs. Crawford, turning from where she had been watching the departure of the colonel and his daughter and that tall handsome young friend of theirs whom they had called Standish MacDermot.

'I would not have believed it of Daireen. Standish MacDermot—what a dreadful Irish name! But where can he have been aboard the ship? He cannot have been one of those terrible fore-cabin passengers. Ah, I would not have believed her capable of such disingenuousness. Who is this young man, Jack?'

'My dear girl, never mind the young man or the young woman just now. We must look after the traps and get them through the Custom-house.' replied the major.

'Mr. Harwood, who is this young man with the terrible Irish name?' she asked in desperation of the special correspondent. She felt indeed in an extremity when she sought Harwood for an ally.

'I never was so much astonished in all my life,' he whispered in answer. 'I never heard of him. She never breathed a word about him to me.'

Mrs. Crawford did not think this at all improbable, seeing that Daireen had never breathed a word about him to herself.

'My dear Mr. Harwood, these Irish are too romantic for us. It is impossible for us ever to understand them.' And she hastened away to look after her luggage. It was not until she was quite alone that she raised her hands, exclaiming devoutly, 'Thank goodness Mr. Glaston had gone before this second piece of romance was disclosed! What on earth would he have thought!'

The reflection made the lady shudder. Mr. Glaston's thoughts, if he had been present while Daireen was bringing forward this child of mystery, Standish MacDermot, would, she knew, have been too terrible to be contemplated.

As for Mr. Harwood, though he professed to be affected by nothing that occurred about him, still he felt himself uncomfortably surprised by the sudden appearance of the young Irishman with whom Miss Gerald and her father appeared to be on such familiar terms; and as he stood looking up to that marvellous hill in whose shadow Cape Town lies, he came to the conclusion that it would be as well for him to find out all that could be known about this Standish MacDermot. He had promised Daireen's father to make use of one of his horses so long as he would remain at the Cape, and it appeared from all he could gather that the affairs in the colony were becoming sufficiently complicated to compel his remaining here instead of hastening out to make his report of the Castaway group. The British nation were of course burning to hear all that could be told about the new island colony, but Mr. Harwood knew very well that the heading which would be given in the columns of the '*Dominant Trumpeter*' to any information regarding the attitude of the defiant Kafir chief would be in very much larger type than that of the most flowery paragraph descriptive of the charms of the Castaway group; and so he had almost made up his mind that it would be to the advantage of the newspaper that he should stay at the Cape. Of course he felt that he had at heart no further interests, and so long as it was not conflicting with those interests he would ride Colonel Gerald's horse, and, perhaps, walk with Colonel Gerald's daughter.

But all the time that he was reflecting in this consistent manner the colonel and his daughter and Standish were driving along the base of Table Mountain, while on the other side the blue waters of the lovely bay were sparkling between the low shores of pure white sand, and far away the dim mountain ridges were seen.

'Shall I ever come to know that mountain and all about it as well as I know our own dear Slieve Ducas?' cried the girl, looking around her. 'Will you, do you think, Standish?'

'Nothing here can compare with our Irish land,' cried Standish.

'You are right my boy,' said Daireen's father. 'I have knocked about a good deal, and I have seen a good many places, and, after all, I have come to the conclusion that our own Suangorm is worth all that I have seen for beauty.'

'We can all sympathise with each other here,' said the girl laughing. 'We will join hands and say that there is no place in the world like our Ireland, and then, maybe, the strangers here will believe us.'

'Yes,' said her father, 'we will think of ourselves in the midst of a strange country as three representatives of the greatest nation in, the world. Eh, Standish, that would please your father.'

But Standish could not make any answer to this allusion to his father. He was in fact just now wondering what Colonel Gerald would say when he would hear that Standish had travelled six thousand miles for the sake of obtaining his advice as to the prudence of entertaining the thought of leaving home. Standish was beginning to fear that there was a flaw somewhere in the consistency of the step he had taken, complimentary though it undoubtedly was to the judgment of Colonel Gerald. He could hardly define the inconsistency of which he was conscious, but as the phaeton drove rapidly along the red road beside the high peak of the mountain he became more deeply impressed with the fact that it existed somewhere.

Passing along great hedges of cactus and prickly-pear, and by the side of some well-wooded grounds with acres of trim green vineyards, the phaeton proceeded for a few miles. The scene was strange to Daireen and Standish; only for the consciousness of that towering peak they were grateful. Even though its slope was not swathed in heather, it still resembled in its outline the great Slieve Docas, and this was enough to make them feel while passing beneath it that it was a landmark breathing of other days. Half way up the ascent they could see in a ravine a large grove of the silver-leaf fir, and the sun-glints among the exquisite white foliage were very lovely. Further down the mighty aloes threw forth their thick green branches in graceful divergence, and then along the road were numerous bullock waggons with Malay drivers—eighteen or twenty animals running in a team. Nothing could have added to the strangeness of the scene to the girl and her companion, and yet the shadow of that great hill made the land seem no longer weary.

At last, just at the foot of the hill, Colonel Gerald turned his horses to where there was a broad rough avenue made through a grove of pines, and after following its curves for some distance, a broad cleared space was reached, beyond which stood a number of magnificent Australian oaks and fruit trees surrounding a long low Dutch-built house with an overhanging roof and the usual stoëp—the raised stone border—in front.

'This is our house, my darling,' said the girl's father as he pulled up at the door. 'I had only a week to get it in order for you, but I hope you will like it.'

'Like it?' she cried; 'it is lovelier than any we had in India, and then the hill—the hill—oh, papa, this is home indeed.'

'And for me, my own little Dolly, don't you think it is home too?' he said when he had his arms about her in the hall. 'With this face in my hands at last I feel all the joy of home that has been denied to me for years. How often have I seen your face, Dolly, as I sat with my coffee in the evening in my lonely bungalow under the palms? The sight of it used to cheer me night after night, darling,' but now that I have it here—here—'

'Keep it there,' she cried. 'Oh, papa, papa, why should we be miserable apart ever again? I will stay with you now wherever you go for ever.'

Colonel Gerald looked at her for a minute, he kissed her once again upon the face, and then burst into a laugh.

'And this is the only result of a voyage made under the protection of Mrs. Crawford!' he said. 'My dear, you must have used some charm to have resisted her power; or has she lost her ancient cunning? Why, after a voyage with Mrs. Crawford I have seen the most devoted daughters desert their parents. When I heard that you were coming out with her I feared you would allow yourself to be schooled by her into a sense of your duty, but it seems you have been stubborn.'

'She was everything that is kind to me, and I don't know what I should have done without her,' said the girl. 'Only, I'll never forgive her for not having awakened me to meet you this morning. But last night I suppose she thought I was too nervous. I was afraid, you know, lest—lest—but never mind, here we are together at home—for there is the hill—yes, at home.'

But when Daireen found herself in the room to which she had been shown by the neat little handmaiden provided by Colonel Gerald, and had seated herself in sight of a bright green cactus that occupied the centre of the garden outside, she had much to think about. She just at this moment realised that all her pleasant life aboard the steamer was at an end. More than a touch of sadness was in her reflection, for she had come to think of the good steamer as something more than a mere machine; it had been a home to her for twenty-five days, and it had contained her happiness and sorrow during that time as a home would have done. Then how could she have parted from it an hour before with so little concern? she asked herself. How could she have left it without shaking hands with—with all those who had been by her side for many days on the good old ship? Some she had said goodbye to, others she would see again on the following day, but still there were some whom she had left the ship without seeing—some who had been associated with her happiness during part of the voyage, at any rate, and she might never see them again. The reflection made her very sad, nor did the feeling pass off during the rest of the day spent by her father's side.

The day was very warm, and, as Daireen's father was still weak, he did not stray away from the house beyond the avenue of shady oaks leading down to a little stream that moved sluggishly on its way a couple of hundred yards from the garden. They had, of course, plenty to talk about; for Colonel Gerald was somewhat anxious to hear how his friend Standish had come out. He had expressed the happiness he felt on meeting with the young man as soon as his daughter had said that he would go out to wherever they were to live, but he thought it would increase his satisfaction if his daughter would tell him how it came to pass that this young man was unacquainted with any of the passengers.

Daireen now gave him the entire history of Standish's quarrel with his father, and declared that it was solely to obtain the advice of Colonel Gerald he had made the voyage from Ireland.

The girl's father laughed when he heard of this characteristic action on the part of the young man; but he declared that it proved he meant to work for himself in the world, and not be content to live upon the traditions of The Mac-Dermots; and then he promised the girl that something should be done for the son of the hereditary prince.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

The nights are wholesome;  
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,

So hallowed and so gracious is the time.

What, has this thing appeared again to-night?—Hamlet.

WHEN evening came Daireen and her father sat out upon their chairs on the stoëp in front of the house. The sun had for long been hidden by the great peak, though to the rest of the world not under its shadow he had only just sunk. The twilight was very different from the last she had seen on land, when the mighty Slieve Docas had appeared in his purple robe. Here the twilight was brief and darkly blue as it overhung the arched aloes and those large palm plants whose broad leaves waved not in the least breeze. Far in the mellow distance a large star was glittering, and the only sound in the air was the shrill whistle of one of the Cape field crickets.

Then began the struggle between moonlight and darkness. The leaves of the boughs that were clasped above the little river began to be softly silvered as the influence of the rising light made itself apparent, and then the highest ridges of the hill gave back a flash as the beams shot through the air.

These changes were felt by the girl sitting silently beside her father—the changes of the twilight and of the moonlight, before the full round shield of the orb appeared above the trees, and the white beams fell around the broad floating leaves beneath her feet.

'Are you tired, Dolly?' asked her father.

'Not in the least, papa; it seems months since I was at sea.'

'Then you will ride with me for my usual hour? I find it suits me better to take an hour's exercise in the cool of the evening.'

'Nothing could be lovelier on such an evening,' she cried. 'It will complete our day's happiness.'

She hastened to put on her habit while her father went round to the stables to give directions to the groom regarding the saddling of a certain little Arab which had been bought within the week. In a short time Standish was left to gaze in admiration at the fine seat of the old officer in his saddle, and in rapture at the delicately shaped figure of the girl, as they trotted down the avenue between those strange trees.

They disappeared among the great leaves; and when the sound of their horses' hoofs had died away, Standish, sitting there upon the raised ground in front of the house, had his own hour of thought. He felt that he had hitherto not accomplished much in his career of labour. He had had an idea that there were a good many of the elements of heroism in joining as he did the vessel in which the girl was going abroad. Visions of wrecks, of fires, of fallings overboard, nay of pirates even, had floated before his mind, with himself as the only one near to save the girl from each threatening calamity. He had heard of such things taking place daily, and he was prepared to risk himself for her sake, and to account himself happy if the chance of protecting her should occur.

But so soon as he had been a few days at sea, and had found that such a thing as danger was not even hinted at any more than it would be in a drawing-room on shore—when in fact he saw how like a drawing-room on shore was the quarter-deck of the steamer, he began to be disappointed. Daireen was surrounded by friends who would, if there might chance to be the least appearance of danger, resent his undertaking to save the girl whom he loved with every thought of his soul. He would not, in fact, be permitted to play the part of the hero that his imagination had marked out for himself.

Yes, he felt that the heroic elements in his position aboard the steamer had somehow dwindled down to a minimum; and now here he had been so weak as to allow himself to be induced to come out to live, even though only for a short time, at this house. He felt that his acceptance of the sisterly friendship of the girl was making it daily more impossible for him to kneel at her feet, as he meant one day to do, and beg of her to accept of some heroic work done on her behalf.

'She is worthy of all that a man could do with all his soul,' Standish cried as he stood there in the moonlight. But what can I do for her? What can I do for her? Oh, I am the most miserable wretch in the whole world!'

This was not a very satisfactory conclusion for him to come to; but on the whole it did not cause him much despondency. In his Irish nature there were almost unlimited resources of hope, and it would have required a large number of reverses of fortune to cast him down utterly.

While he was trying in vain to make himself feel as miserable as he knew his situation demanded him to be, Daireen and her father were riding along the road that leads from Cape Town to the districts of Wynberg and Constantia. They went along through the moonlight beneath the splendid avenue of Australian oaks at the old Dutch district of Bondebosch, and then they turned aside into a narrow lane of cactus and prickly pear which brought them to that great sandy plain densely overgrown with blossoming heath and gorse called The Mats, along which they galloped for some miles. Turning their horses into the road once more, they then walked them back towards their house at Mowbray.

Daireen felt that she had never before so enjoyed a ride. All was so strange. That hill whose peak was once again towering above them; that long dark avenue with the myriads of fire-flies sparkling amongst the branches; the moonlight that was flooding the world outside; and then her companion, her father, whose face she had been dreaming over daily and nightly. She had never before so enjoyed a ride.

They had gone some distance through the oak avenue when they turned their horses aside at the entrance to one of the large vineyards that are planted in such neat lines up the sloping ground.

'Well, Dolly, are you satisfied at last?' said Colonel Gerald, looking into the girl's face that the moonlight was glorifying, though here and there the shadow of a leaf fell upon her.

'Satisfied! Oh, it is all like a dream,' she said. 'A strange dream of a strange place. When I think that a month ago I was so different, I feel inclined to—to—ask you to kiss me again, to make sure I am not dreaming.'



'If you are under the impression that you are a sleeping beauty, dear, and that you can only be roused by that means, I have no objection.'

'Now I am sure it is all reality,' she said with a little laugh. 'Oh, papa, I am so happy. Could anything disturb our happiness?'

Suddenly upon the dark avenue behind them there came the faint sound of a horse's hoof, and then of a song sung carelessly through the darkness—one she had heard before.

The singer was evidently approaching on horseback, for the last notes were uttered just opposite where the girl and her father were standing their horses behind the trees at the entrance to the vineyard. The singer too seemed to have reined in at this point, though of course he could not see either of the others, the branches were so close. Daireen was mute while that air was being sung, and in another instant she became aware of a horse being pushed between the trees a few yards from her. There was only a small space to pass, so she and her father backed their horses round and the motion made the stranger start, for he had not perceived them before.

'I beg you will not move on my account. I did not know there was anyone here, or I should not have——'

The light fell upon the girl's face, and her father saw the stranger give another little start.

'You need not make an apology to us, Mr. Markham,' said Daireen. 'We had hidden ourselves, I know. Papa, this is Mr. Oswin Markham. How odd it is that we should meet here upon the first evening of landing! The Cape is a good deal larger than the quarterdeck of the "Cardwell Castle."' "

'You were a passenger, no doubt, aboard the steamer my daughter came out in, Mr. Markham?' said Colonel Gerald.

Mr. Markham laughed.

'Upon my word I hardly know that I am entitled to call myself a passenger,' he said. 'Can you define my position, Miss Gerald? it was something very uncertain. I am a castaway—a waif that was picked up in a half-drowned condition from a broken mast in the Atlantic, and sheltered aboard the hospitable vessel.'

'It is very rarely that a steamer is so fortunate as to save a life in that way,' said Colonel Gerald. 'Sailing vessels have a much better chance.'

'To me it seems almost a miracle—a long chain of coincidences was necessary for my rescue, and yet every link was perfect to the end.'

'It is upon threads our lives are constantly hanging,' said the colonel, backing his horse upon the avenue. 'Do you remain long in the colony, Mr. Markham?' he asked when they were standing in a group at a place where the moonlight broke through the branches.

'I think I shall have to remain for some weeks,' he answered. 'Campion tells me I must not think of going to England until the violence of the winter there is past.'

'Then we shall doubtless have the pleasure of meeting you frequently. We have a cottage at Mowbray, where we would be delighted to see you. By the way, Mrs. Crawford and a few of my other old friends are coming out to dine with us to-morrow, my daughter and myself would be greatly pleased if you could join us.'

'You are exceedingly kind,' said Mr. Markham. 'I need scarcely say how happy I will be.'

'Our little circle on board the good old ship is not yet to be dispersed, you see, Mr. Markham,' said Daireen with a laugh. 'For once again, at any rate, we will be all together.'

'For once again,' he repeated as he raised his hat, the girl's horse and her father's having turned. 'For once again, till when goodbye, Miss Gerald.'

'Goodbye, Mr. Markham,' said the colonel. 'By the way, we dine early I should have told you—half past six.'

Markham watched them ride along the avenue and reappear in the moonlight space beyond. Then he dropped the bridle on his horse's neck and listlessly let the animal nibble at the leaves on the side of the road for a long time. At last he seemed to start into consciousness of everything. He gathered up the bridle and brought the horse back to the avenue.

'It is Fate or Providence or God this time,' he muttered as if for his own satisfaction. 'I have had no part in the matter; I have not so much as raised my hand for this, and yet it has come.'

He walked his horse back to Cape Town in the moonlight.

'I don't think you mentioned this Mr. Markham's name to me, Dolly,' said Colonel Gerald as they returned to Mowbray.

'I don't think I did, papa; but you see he had gone ashore when I came on deck to you this morning, and I did not suppose we should ever meet again.'

'I hope you do not object to my asking him to dinner, dear?'

'I object, papa? Oh, no, no; I never felt so glad at anything. He does not talk affectedly like Mr. Glaston, nor cleverly like Mr. Harwood, so I prefer him to either of them. And then, think of his being for a week tossing about the Atlantic upon that wreck.'

'All very good reasons for asking him to dine to-morrow,' said her father. 'Now suppose we try a trot.'

'I would rather walk if it is the same to you, papa,' she said. 'I don't feel equal to another trot now.'

'Why, surely, you have not allowed yourself to become tired, Daireen? Yes, my dear, you look it. I should have remembered that you are just off the sea. We will go gently home, and you will get a good sleep.'

They did go very gently, and silently too, and in a short time Daireen was lying on her bed, thinking not of the strange moonlight wonders of her ride, but of that five minutes spent upon the avenue of Australian oaks down which had echoed that song.

It seemed that poor Mrs. Crawford was destined to have enigmas of the most various sorts thrust upon her for her solution; at any rate she regarded the presence of Mr. Oswin Markham at Colonel Crawford's little dinner the next evening as a question as puzzling as the mysterious appearance of the young man called Standish MacDermot. She, however, chatted with Mr. Markham as usual, and learned that he also was going

to a certain garden party which was to be held at Government House in a few days.

'And you will come too, Daireen?' she said. 'You must come, for Mr. Glaston has been so good as to promise to exhibit in one of the rooms a few of his pictures he spoke to us about. How kind of him, isn't it, to try and educate the taste of the colony?' The bishop has not yet arrived at the Cape, but Mr. Glaston says he will wait for him for a fortnight.'

'For a fortnight? Such filial devotion will no doubt bring its own reward,' said Mr. Harwood.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

Being remiss,

Most generous and free from all contriving.

A heart unfortified,

An understanding simple and unschooled.

A violet in the youth of primy nature.

O'tis most sweet

When in one line two crafts directly meet.

Soft,—let me see:—

We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings.—*Hamlet.*

THE band of the gallant Bayonetteers was making the calm air of Government House gardens melodious with the strains of an entrancing German valse not more than a year old, which had convulsed society at Cape Town when introduced a few weeks previously; for society at Cape Town, like society everywhere else, professes to understand everything artistic, even to the delicacies of German dance music. The evening was soft and sunny, while the effect of a very warm day drawing near its close was to be seen everywhere around. The broad leaves of the feathery plants were hanging dry and languid across the walks, and the grass was becoming tawny as that on the Lion's Head—that strangely curved hill beside Table Mountain. The giant aloes and plantains were, however, defiant of the heat and spread their leaves out mightily as ever.

The gardens are always charming in the southern spring, but never so charming as when their avenues are crowded with coolly dressed girls of moderate degrees of prettiness whose voices are dancing to the melody of a German valse not more than a year old. How charming it is to discuss all the absorbing colonial questions—such as how the beautiful Van der Veldt is looking this evening; and if Miss Van Schmidt, whose papa belongs to the Legislative Council and is consequently a voice in the British Empire, has really carried out his threat of writing home to the War Office to demand the dismissal of that young Mr. Westbury from the corps of Royal Engineers on account of his conduct towards Miss Van Schmidt; or perhaps a question of art, such as how the general's daughters contrive to have Paris bonnets several days previous to the arrival of the mail with the patterns; or a question of diplomacy, such as whether His Excellency's private secretary will see his way to making that proposal to the second eldest daughter of one of the Supreme Court judges. There is no colony in the world so devoted to discussions of this nature as the Cape, and in no part of the colony may a discussion be carried out with more spirit than in the gardens around Government House.

But upon the afternoon of this garden party there was an unusual display of colonial beauty and colonial young men—the two are never found in conjunction—and English delicacy and Dutch *gaucherie*, for the spring had been unusually damp, and this was the first garden party day that was declared perfect. There were, of course, numbers of officers, the military with their wives—such as had wives, and the naval with other people's wives, each branch of the service grumbling at the other's luck in this respect. And then there were sundry civil servants of exalted rank—commissioners of newly founded districts, their wives and daughters, and a brace of good colonial bishops also, with their partners in their mission labours, none of whom objected to Waldteufel or Gung'l.

On the large lawn in front of the balcony at the Residence there was a good deal of tennis being played, and upon the tables laid out on the balcony there were a good many transactions in the way of brandy and soda carried on by special commissioners and field officers, whose prerogative it was to discuss the attitude of the belligerent Kafir chief who, it was supposed, intended to give as much trouble as he could without inconvenience to himself. And then from shady places all around the avenues came the sounds of girlish laughter and the glimmer of muslin. Behind this scene the great flat-faced, flat-roofed mountain stood dark and bold, and through it all the band of the Bayonetteers brayed out that inspiring valse.

Major Crawford was, in consequence of the importance of his mission to the colony, pointed out to the semi-Dutch legislators, each of whom had much to tell him on the burning boot question; and Mr. Harwood was naturally enough, regarded with interest, for the sounds of the 'Dominant Trumpeter' go forth into all the ends of the earth. Mr. Glaston, too, as son of the Metropolitan of the Salamander Archipelago, was entitled to

every token of respectful admiration, even if he had not in the fulness of his heart allowed a few of his pictures to be hung in one of the reception rooms. But perhaps Daireen Gerald had more eyes fixed upon her than anyone in the gardens.

Everyone knew that she was the daughter of Colonel Gerald who had just been gazetted Governor-General of the new colony of the Castaway Islands, but why she had come out to the Cape no one seemed to know exactly. Many romances were related to account for her appearance, the Cape Town people possessing almost unlimited resources in the way of romance making; but as no pains were taken to bring about a coincidence of stories, it was impossible to say who was in the right.

She was dressed so perfectly according to Mr. Glaston's theories of harmony that he could not refrain from congratulating her—or rather commending her—upon her good taste, though it struck Daireen that there was not much good taste in his commendation. He remained by her side for some time lamenting the degradation of the colony in being shut out from Art—the only world worth living in, as he said; then Daireen found herself with some other people to whom she had been presented, and who were anxious to present her to some relations.

The girl's dress was looked at by most of the colonial young ladies, and her figure was gazed at by all of the men, until it was generally understood that to have made the acquaintance of Miss Gerald was a happiness gained.

'My dear George,' said Mrs. Crawford to Colonel Gerald when she had contrived to draw him to her side at a secluded part of the gardens,—'My dear George, she is far more of a success than even I myself anticipated. Why, the darling child is the centre of all attraction.'

'Poor little Dolly! that is not a very dizzy point to reach at the Cape, is it, Kate?'

'Now don't be provoking, George. We all know well enough, of course, that it is here the same as at any place else: the latest arrival has the charm of novelty. But it is not so in Daireen's case. I can see at once—and I am sure you will give me credit for some power of perception in these things—that she has created a genuine impression. George, you may depend on her receiving particular attention on all sides.' The lady's voice lowered confidentially until her last sentence had in it something of the tone of a revelation.

'That will make the time pass in a rather lively way for Dolly,' said George, pulling his long iron-grey moustache as he smiled thoughtfully, looking into Mrs. Crawford's face.

'Now, George, you must fully recognise the great responsibility resting with you—I certainly feel how much devolves upon myself, being as I am, her father's oldest friend in the colony, and having had the dear child in my care during the voyage.'

'Nothing could be stronger than your claims.'

'Then is it not natural that I should feel anxious about her, George? This is not India, you must remember.'

'No, no,' said the colonel thoughtfully; 'it's not India.' He was trying to grasp the exact thread of reasoning his old friend was using in her argument. He could not at once see why the fact of Cape Town not being situated in the Empire of Hindustan should cause one's responsible duties to increase in severity.

'You know what I mean, George. In India marriage is marriage, and a certain good, no matter who is concerned in it. It is one's duty there to get a girl married, and there is no blame to be attached to one if everything doesn't turn out exactly as one could have wished.'

'Ah, yes, exactly,' said the colonel, beginning to comprehend. 'But I think you have not much to reproach yourself with, Kate; almost every mail brought you out an instalment of the youth and beauty of home, and I don't think that one ever missed fire—failed to go off, you know.'

'Well, yes, I may say I was fortunate, George,' she replied, with a smile of reflective satisfaction. 'But this is not India, George; we must be very careful. I observed Daireen carefully on the voyage, and I can safely say that the dear child has yet formed no attachment.'

'Formed an attachment? You mean—oh Kate, the idea is too absurd,' said Colonel Gerald. 'Why, she is a child—a baby.'

'Of course all fathers think such things about their girls,' said the lady with a pitying smile. 'They understand their boys well enough, and take good care to make them begin to work not a day too late, but their girls are all babies. Why, George, Daireen must be nearly twenty.'

Colonel Gerald was thoughtful for some moments. 'So she is,' he said; 'but she is still quite a baby.'

'Even so,' said the lady, 'a baby's tastes should be turned in the right direction. By the way, I have been asked frequently who is this young Mr. MacDermot who came out to you in such a peculiar fashion. People are beginning to talk curiously about him.'

'As people at the Cape do about everyone,' said the colonel. 'Poor Standish might at least have escaped criticism.'

'I scarcely think so, George, considering how he came out.'

'Well, it was rather what people who do not understand us call an Irish idea. Poor boy!'

'Who is he, George?' 'The son of one of our oldest friends. The friendship has existed between his family and mine for some hundreds of years.'

'Why did he come out to the Cape in that way?'

'My dear Kate, how can I tell you everything?' said the puzzled colonel. 'You would not understand if I were to try and explain to you how this Standish MacDermot's father is a genuine king, whose civil list unfortunately does not provide for the travelling expenses of the members of his family, so that the young man thought it well to set out as he did.' 'I hope you are not imposing on me, George. Well, I must be satisfied, I suppose. By the way, you have not yet been to the room where Mr. Glaston's pictures are hung; we must not neglect to see them. Mr. Glaston told me just now he thought Daireen's taste perfect.'

'That was very kind of Mr. Glaston.'

'If you knew him as I do, George—in fact as he is known in the most exclusive drawing-rooms in London—

you would understand how much his commendation is worth,' said Mrs. Crawford.

'I have no doubt of it. He must come out to us some evening to dinner. For his father's sake I owe him some attention, if not for his remark to you just now.'

'I hope you may not forget to ask him,' said Mrs. Crawford. 'He is a most remarkable young man. Of course he is envied by the less accomplished, and you may hear contradictory reports about him. But, believe me, he is looked upon in London as the leader of the most fashionable—that is—the most—not most learned—no, the most artistic set in town. Very exclusive they are, but they have done ever so much good—designing dados, you know, and writing up the new pomegranate cottage wall-paper.'

'I am afraid that Mr. Glaston will find my Hutch cottage deficient in these elements of decoration,' remarked the colonel.

'I wanted to talk to you about him for a long time,' said Mrs. Crawford. 'Not knowing how you might regard the subject, I did not think it well to give him too much encouragement on the voyage, George, so that perhaps he may have thought me inclined to repel him, Daireen being in my care; but I am sure that all may yet be well. Hush! who is it that is laughing so loud? they are coming this way. Ah, Mr. Markham and that little Lottie Vincent. Good gracious, how long that girl is in the field, and how well she wears her age! Doesn't she look quite juvenile?'

Colonel Gerald could not venture an answer before the young lady, who was the eldest daughter of the deputy surgeon-general, tripped up to Mrs. Crawford, and cried, clasping her four-button strawberry-ice-coloured gloves over the elder lady's plump arm, 'Dear good Mrs. Crawford, I have come to you in despair to beg your assistance. Promise me that you will do all you can to help me.' 'If your case is so bad, Lottie, I suppose I must. But what am I to do?'

'You are to make Mr. Markham promise that he will take part in our theatricals next month. He can act—I know he can act like Irving or Salvini or Terry or Mr. Bancroft or some of the others, and yet he will not promise to take any part. Could anything be more cruel?'

'Nothing, unless I were to take some part,' said Mr. Markham, laughing.

'Hush, sir,' cried the young lady, stamping her Pinet shoe upon the ground, and taking care in the action to show what a remarkably well-formed foot she possessed.

'It is cruel of you to refuse a request so offered, Mr. Markham,' said Mrs. Crawford. 'Pray allow yourself to be made amenable to reason, and make Miss Vincent happy for one evening.'

'Since you put it as a matter of reason, Mrs. Crawford, there is, I fear, no escape for me,' said Mr. Markham.

'Didn't I talk to you about reason, sir?' cried the young lady in very pretty mock anger.

'You talked *about* it,' said Markham, 'just as we walked about that centre bed of cactus, we didn't once touch upon it, you know. You talk very well about a subject, Miss Vincent.'

'Was there ever such impertinence? Mrs. Crawford, isn't it dreadful? But we have secured him for our cast, and that is enough. You will take a dozen tickets of course, Colonel Gerald?'

'I can confidently say the object is most worthy,' said Markham.

'And he doesn't know what it is yet,' said Lottie.

'That's why I can confidently recommend it.'

'Now do give me five minutes with Colonel Gerald, like a good dear,' cried the young lady to Mrs. Crawford! 'I must persuade him.'

'We are going to see Mr. Glaston's pictures,' replied Mrs. Crawford.

'How delightful! That is what I have been so anxious to do all the afternoon: one feels so delightfully artistic, you know, talking about pictures; and people think one knows all about them. Do let us go with you, Mrs. Crawford. I can talk to Colonel Gerald while you go on with Mr. Markham.'

'You are a sad little puss,' said Mrs. Crawford, shaking her finger at the artless and ingenuous maiden; and as she walked on with Mr. Markham she could not help remembering how this little puss had caused herself to be pretty hardly spoken about some ten years before at the Arradambad station in the Himalayahs.

How well she was wearing her age to be sure, Mrs. Crawford thought. It is not many young ladies who, after ten years' campaigning, can be called sad little pusses; but Miss Vincent still looked quite juvenile—in fact, *plus Arabe qu'en Arabie*—more juvenile than a juvenile. Everyone knew her and talked of her in various degrees of familiarity; it was generally understood that an acquaintanceship of twenty-four hours' duration was sufficient to entitle any field officer to call her by the abbreviated form of her first name, while a week was the space allowed to subalterns.

## END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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