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UPON A TOWER.

M. D'HERBLE awoke just at the time he had planned. A gray light colored dimly the flowers of his chamber curtains. He opened the window. The beautiful Norman country beneath it was still sleeping. The trees and the dark-green fields looked almost as though they were cast in marble. Toward the east a light rose-color was just beginning to thread the sky. M. d'Herble recalled, with a sweet thrill of remembrance, that he was to meet one dear to him, at an early rendezvous.

In five minutes he was dressed. He descended to the garden, where his great Russian greyhound welcomed him with loud barking and joyful bounds.

"Be quiet, Tiger!" he began, but at last failing to quiet him, he said, "Come then!" and the hound shot like an arrow through the half-opened gate along the familiar road, leaping across the vines till he reached the last cottage of the hamlet, where dwelt Mr. and Mrs. Simons, rich New Yorkers, and their daughter, Miss Edel.

"Will she have awakened?" asked M. d'Herble of himself. "Is not this an engagement of her own seeking? Yet can it be true that she will come down from her chamber and confide herself to my care, in order that she may assist the sun to rise from the top of the Alaspret Tower?"

For three months he had been flirting with Miss Edel, first in Paris, afterward in the country, where he had persuaded the Simons family to pass the summer, in the hope that there he should have fewer rivals than in the city. No one knew how desperately he loved her, but he was insanely jealous. Rich, noble, and full of fine qualities, he felt sure of pleasing her parents. But would she consent?

There was so much coquetry in her manner, and so much reserve in her sudden silence that he knew not what to think of her. Sometimes by her peals of laughter and her beautiful and tender looks, she would make him feel as though she favored him; then she would dismiss him with a cold hand-shake, and send him disconcerted back to his place.

One day she had said, pointing with her umbrella-tip toward the Alaspret Tower, which, standing at the top of a mass of rocks, commanded all the country of Oaux for ten leagues around, "Is the legend true that the old women of the village tell, that those who are affianced are accustomed to climb together once, to the top of that tower, to watch the sun rise?"

He responded: "It is a local superstition. Engaged couples never fail to observe it. They pretend that, if the sun remains veiled in clouds, the union of the young people will be unhappy; but if the sun shines full and strong, it betokens their future happiness."

She said laughing, "Then, in refusing to shine, the sun has blighted more than one marriage?" "That occurs but rarely. The promised love continues nine times out of ten. The unbelieving young people deny the augury if it is contrary to their hopes, and accept it only if it propitiates."

"It must be a beautiful spectacle to see the sun rising upon the country. I should love to climb to the top of the tower—truly."

He looked at her with all his soul in his eyes. "Undoubtedly it will be very beautiful tomorrow, mademoiselle."

"Do you believe so? In that case, I will go."

"And will you permit me to accompany you?" stammered he in a trembling voice.

She gave him a steady look full in the face—one of her most proud and inscrutable looks—and answered, "You are free to do so."

It was to that early morning rendezvous that he was going. M. d'Herble nevertheless doubted her. "She must be mocking me," thought he. "If by accident she has awakened, she will be laughing

behind her rich Persian curtains at my waiting and my air of discomfort. Ah! if she were not so pretty!"

But a sudden hope made his heart beat violently. He perceived Tiger before the gate of the cottage, his thin body quivering with joy as if he recognized a friend; and almost immediately appeared Miss Edel. She was irreproachably dressed, her golden hair floating on the breeze, beneath her light gray hat, her hands neatly gloved; her feet shod with yellow boots; her costume a delicate mauve suit.

"Good morning," said she. And a similar greeting, uttered in a dry, cold tone, was all that he could express, instead of the warm thanks he desired to offer.

Silently they entered upon the lonely pathway, which led through the woods to the tower—a damp pathway, exhaling the scent of leaves and grass. A profound silence, tinged with sadness, weighed upon them. It seemed to convey an impression of solitude and emptiness. That, and still more, the unusual hour, brought to the young people a sort of vague melancholy, not without its charm. After going through a grove of reddish pine-trees, scattering resinous needles, they came suddenly to birch-trees and hedges, and some lilac hedges flowered the mossy carpet. Then vast rocks appeared, like huge ruins, and they entered upon a steep and serpentine pathway, though the tower was still invisible.

At last, at a turn in the path, it rose before them, lifting high its gray flanks, which were clearly defined against the dull sky. It stood in the midst of ruins, gnawed with mosses, bristling with grasses—the last feudal remnant of Alaspret Castle.

Miss Edel, breathing hard after her climb, looked toward the East, where the light of Aurora emparpled the sky, and the clouds seemed piled in great flossy, rose-colored heaps.

"Have you arrived in time?" she asked.

Monsieur d'Herble nodded his head pensively.

"Ah!" she said indifferently. A rabbit started beneath their feet in the dew. Tiger, who was frisking about them, saw and gave chase to it. This diversion amused Miss Edel, most of all when she saw the hound return crestfallen, the rabbit having quickly hid itself in a hole in the heath.

A few more steps and they would find themselves at the base of the tower. Hesitating a little before the sinister blackness of the door which opened upon the shadows of the spiral stairway, the young girl looked with a little indecision upon her cavalier.

"Do you truly wish to go to the top? It seems to me that we can see well enough here!"

He gave her a look of reproach. "You are afraid, Miss Edel. Is it not so?"

His words roused her pride, and to show that she feared nothing, not even herself, or the future that the sun would signify to them, she bravely began to climb. D'Herble followed her respectfully. They climbed a long time in the darkness, exchanging only a word now and then; but at length a great light shone about them. They had reached the platform, where Miss Edel, warm and flushed with her exertions, uttered a cry of delight and wonder as she saw the grand prospect which lay beneath them. An immense circle of hills, of plains, and of woods surrounded them. That triangular pond which they perceived below through the clearing in the valley was the ocean. The forest of Alaspret at the foot of the tower stretched its round, blooming tops as far as the blue ether. The country reminded one of a patch of carpet. Those yellow spots here and there were barley; those gray stones, villages; the white specks in the spires were clock dials. A river fringed with willows unrolled its ribbon of silver, hemmed with green. Above all, hovered the gray morning mist. It bathed with a moving wave the

Alaspret Tower, as though it were a confining plumed beneath a sea of fog.

The east reddened more and more; the clouds flamed with purple lights, until they looked like gigantic armfuls of wool in the light of a forge. All was silence, mystery, poetry.

Miss Edel and Monsieur d'Herble thought of the infinite youth and vitality of the earth. How many millions of similar days had the sun lighted, and yet his beams lost no brightness from century to century! They thought of their own lives, now in their spring-time; the accident which had brought them together, and which no longer seemed accident, but destiny.

A mutual presentment that their happiness was joined from that moment, penetrated them with an agony of expectation, with an uncontrollable impatience, which was both painful and sweet, to see the burning sun appear.

Because, without daring to say so, in that consummate moment they were afraid—superstitious regarding those clouds, which would veil perhaps the celestial brazier or entirely extinguish her fiery face.

Immovable, leaning over the battlement, they watched, and the great dog stretched himself beside them.

"Ah!" said the young people suddenly and in perfect unison. The sun glimmered through a rent in the clouds. They scattered so rapidly that they seemed merely a whiff of wind sweeping clean the space below, that the radiant orb might rise in serene glory in a depth of vermilion ether.

"Edel!" sighed D'Herble, as he saw her more resplendently beautiful than ever in the vivid light.

Her proud expression softened with a touching grace—tears were in her pure eyes.

"See!" she cried, "the heavens are perfectly clear."

Not a cloud was in sight. Columns of smoke, almost invisible, rose from the village roofs. An Angelus tinkled, and was responded to by many bells, delicate and light, like the songs of larks. The birds began to awaken. Life was reviving everywhere. Then, in the golden light of those clear beams, Miss Edel extended her firm little hand toward D'Herble.

He approached her, and without the slightest resistance upon her part, they exchanged their pledged troth on the Tower—entered upon the solemn engagement to belong to each forever, with a chaste, first kiss.

WHY IT WILL WIN.—On the whole the chances for a Democratic victory appear good enough to infuse all needful courage and enthusiasm into the campaign for the Constitution against the trusts. Platform and candidates are of a character to inspire confidence. The party is more harmonious and united than it has been in years. Its opponent is less so than has been the case in a long time. Outwardly the iron discipline of Hanna secures the appearance of an unbroken front; but there is deep-seated trouble behind the scenes. The middle Western Republicans are still angry over Porto Rico, and Mr. McKinley's departure from "our plain duty," in violation of the Constitution. The harboring of escaped fugitives from justice under indictment for capital offenses, by Republican Governors, is resented by decent men in the organization, and there are other rifts within the Hanna machine late which, properly encouraged and wedged open, ought to make a triumph of the American people over their enemies at the polls in November a matter not of probability but of certainty.—Washington Times.

"Forgive me, my dear," said the gossip humbly, "but I thoughtlessly mentioned to Mrs. Brown the things that you told me in strict confidence."

"There is nothing to forgive," replied the wise woman pleasantly. "It was for that very purpose that I told them to you in strict confidence."

THE LITTLE THIEF.

"Ah, the scoundrel!" exclaimed the old guard, planting himself before a tomb.

He had never witnessed such destruction. For several days it had been going on, and it had confounded him, and filled him with indignation. And yet it was but a little while ago that he had made his official rounds through all the silent avenues.

This had been "Father John's" duty for thirty years. He had quit his regiment only because of severe wounds, but, thanks to his excellent constitution, he recovered from his injuries and had obtained the modest place of forester in the cemetery of Ivry.

An old man without family, he found himself alone after leaving his comrades, and without friends, save those who loved him for the military medal which he bore upon his breast; and so he grew to have a veritable love for the tombs which were confided to his care.

His tombs were his family, his friends, his regiment; and his days ran on in a happy calm. But his satisfaction was beginning to disappear. Suddenly his quiet life had been poisoned. Grief positively tortured him, filled his heart with indignation and made his blood boil. Some one was stealing from the tombs.

The shock was a heavy one. The artistically-carved Christs, the golden medallions, all the objects of value were disarranged. On one tomb, resplendent with bouquets of choice flowers, in which were put notes saying that "those who remained did not forget," some sacrilegious hand had profaned the pious souvenirs, tearing up the pretty flowers, and in a corner nothing but the note remained, seeming to say, "A thief! A thief!"

With hands wide spread, Father John stood before the tomb; he could not withdraw his eyes. The evening before, it was so beautiful, and surrounded by a real garden—as lovely a spot as was to be found in the whole place. A devastating hand had passed that way, dragging up the most beautiful roses, ruthlessly overturning the sacred dust, leaving behind havoc and devastation. His pent-up wrath mounted to the old man's head, and flushed his face with a deep red. But a single hope remained—"to surprise the malefactor and—"

He did not finish, but with his arms extended, and shaking his fists in the air, he menaced the unknown author of the mischief. Then he resumed his walk, saying at each step as if it were a refrain which contained all his wrath. "What can induce anybody to become such a rascal!"

Suddenly, on turning a corner, the old soldier saw a little girl trotting along, with uncertain steps. Her dress was a mere rag, through which could be seen her rosy skin. The scanty robe was covered with mud, and her arms, red with cold, sought to hide under her fringe of tatters. From afar the forester followed her.

"Probably," he thought, "she is one of those little beggars who hang about the grounds—poor little vagabonds sent by their parents to beg alms of the visitors."

But quickly his eyes burned with anger. He wished to shriek, but, suffocated with wrath, he could not. He saw the little girl stop beside a grave and seize with both hands a rose-bush, which she shook with violence, and by a final effort uprooted. She bore the shrub in her arms, and ran right before him, stumbling at each step, and bruising her naked feet without a note of complaint, seeing nothing, and not even hearing behind her the wheezing breath of the old soldier, who followed closely, saying between his clenched teeth: "Ah! little thief! I have got you! You are doing a good business."

When Father John overtook her at the foot of the garden in the pauper's corner, the child was on her knees before a grave which

formed a strong contrast to the simplicity of those which surrounded it. At the head of this grave was a little wooden cross—badly planted, for it was in the middle of the grave; but around it, as upon the tombs of the wealthy, superb flowers were scattered.

The guard, astonished, stopped short beside the little one who was kneeling upon the frost-hardened ground. She murmured aloud unintelligible words, while her body was convulsively shaken with sobs.

She uttered plaintive groans, and great tears rolled down her thin cheeks. She raised her head, clasped her hands, and her childlike voice uttered a prayer, in the silence. Then she took the rose-bush which had laid upon the ground beside her, gave a long kiss to one of the roses and began to dig a little hollow in the earth with her fingers. In this she planted the shrub.

Behind her, Father John had instinctively taken off his hat, but he soon put it on his head again, and out of patience with himself for his momentary forgetfulness, called himself an "old beast." He decided to finish the little drama before him by placing his hand upon the shoulder of the child. His rough touch made her turn with a quick motion, and at his cry, "At last I have got you, you little thief!" she gave a convulsive moan. Frightened, then bewildered, like one coming out of a dream, she raised her little face all blue with the cold, and saw the wrathful face of the forester, and in her ears she heard his rough voice menacingly calling her "a little thief."

Then she uttered a cry, and looked as though she would flee; but, paralyzed by fright, she remained nailed to the ground. Her teeth were chattering, a shiver ran through her whole frame, and her great, astonished eyes fixed themselves upon those of the gardener. He softened his voice.

"Now it seems impossible to me that this pretty head should belong to a miserable child-thief."

The little one remained mute. Then anger seized him once more, and he cried, "Speak then—tell me where—"

He did not finish, for, without making any effort to escape, the child drooped her head. Then she moved her lips as though she were going to speak, but sobs choked her. Beside herself with emotion, she fell heavily upon her knees. She pointed with a finger still black with earth at the newly-made mound.

Father John did not understand. His anger had completely faded away before the child's great grief. He forgot his indignation against her, raised her in his arms, pressed her gently against his breast, and warmed her face in his large hands, whispering into her ear, "See little one, I will do you no harm. Don't cry any more. Just tell me why you took the flowers from the other lots to bring them here?"

Then the child, in a broken voice told her story: "My mamma loved flowers so much, sir!" A sob almost interrupted her, but she summoned all her force and cried: "She is dead—my mamma! They brought her here. I came to get her flowers!"

But thy father?" asked the gardener. The child looked at him with an innocent, astonished air. "I do not know. I know only my mamma, my pretty mamma. Ah, sir, let me get her flowers!"

Roughly the old man fondled her and wept in his turn. Her head instinctively nestled in the warm shelter.

"Ah! thy mother loved flowers! Well, but thou must not steal them. Come with me. My garden is full of them. We will go and pick some, and we will bring them to your mamma."

"Truly? truly? Is it true?" cried the little one, quickly comforted. Her small arms clung more closely around the old man's neck, and, giving him a warm caress, she said with infantile tenderness, "Oh how I love you!" Then resuming a serious air, she slid to the ground and kneeling and looking upward she said aloud: "Our Father who art in Heaven—"

Then the gardener, standing near her, murmured, "Poor little thief! though I have caught you, your business is so good that you shall henceforth be my child."

Tom Young