HOW IT HAPPENED.

I got to thinkin' of her—both her parents dead and gone—
And all her sisters married off, and none but her and John
A-livin' all alone there in that lonesome sort o' way,
And him a blame old bachelor, confirmder ev'ry day!
I'd knowed 'em all from childern, and their daddy from the time
He settled in the neighborhood, and hadn't ary a dime
Er dollar, when he married, fer to start housekeepin' on!—
So I got to thinkin' of her—both her parents dead and gone!

I got to thinkin' of her, and a-wundern what she done
That all her sisters kep' a-gittin' married, one by one,
And her without no chances—and the best girl of the pack—
An old maid, with her hands, you might say, tied behind her back!
And mother, too, afore she died, she ust to jes' take on,
When none of 'em was left, you know, but Evaline and John,
And jes' declare to goodness 'at the young men must be blind
To not see what a wife they'd git, if they got Evaline!

I got to thinkin' of her; in my great affliction she
Was sich a comfort to us, and so kind and neighborly.—
She'd come, and leave her housework, fer to he'p out little Jane,
And talk of her own mother 'at she'd never see again—
Maybe sometimes cry together—though, fer the most part, she
Would have the child so riconciled and happy-like, 'at we
Felt lonesomer'n ever when she'd put her bonnet on
And say she'd railly haf to be a-gittin back to John!

I got to thinkin' of her, as I say—and more and more
I'd think of her dependence, and the burdens 'at she bore,—
Her parents both a-bein' dead, and all her sisters gone
And married off, and her a-livin' there alone with John—
You might say jes' a-toilin' and a-slavin' out her life
Fer a man 'at hadn't pride enough to git hisse'f a wife—
'Less some one married Evaline and packed her off some day!—
So I got to thinkin' of her—and it happened thataway.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

"SAVED!"

BY THE COUNTESS OF MUNSTER.

"Ahi! La bella signorina! e pallidetta! e stanca! poverina!"

These words were addressed to me years ago by the padrona of a hotel, which my mother and I had just reached, after a long and fatiguing night journey; and trivial as they may appear, I remember them distinctly, as well as every other circumstance that occurred during the eventful four-and-twenty hours which succeeded our arrival at the Hotel d'Oro, in Florence, on the 17th September, 184—.

My lately widowed mother and myself (a girl of seventeen) had been travelling in Italy for months, after an aimless, erratic fashion; for she, poor soul, was endeavoring, through change of scene and fatigue of body, to deaden the memory of her grief; and we had started the night before from A——, to avoid the heat of a day journey, arriving in the early morning at the Hotel d'Oro, an imposing building, situated on the banks of the Arno, and formerly a palace of the Este and Borgia families, whose quaint monograms and devices ornamented its walls, both within and without.

We were conducted to our apartments by the pretty padrona, and as we wearily passed through the magnificent vestibule and ascended the broad marble staircase, I was curiously reminded (my nerves being probably in an irritated condition) of a picture I had seen in a child's story book, of a pretty little girl with long hair, who is mounting a stair leading to a hanging gallery, so exactly like the one before us that as we came to an abrupt turn, I positively stopped and shuddered, expecting to be met (as in the picture) by a cruel-faced, velvet-footed panther, which was waiting round the corner, with open mouth and glaring eye, to spring upon its unsuspecting victim! A silly childish story, no doubt, but just one of those which would cling to one's memory.

The visitors' apartments on the first piano of the Hotel d'Oro opened upon the hanging gallery, and we were conducted to ours through a doorway concealed by a heavy piece of tapestry.

"Is the signora satisfied?" asked the padrona, as with pardonable pride she threw open the door of a spacious and beautiful salone, which owned French windows, opening upon a delightfully roomy balcony.

"Oh, yes," answered my mother wearily; "but pray take us at once to our sleeping rooms, for we are very tired."

The padrona took the hint, and led us to two rooms (leading out of the salone and into each other), which were beautifully furnished, but one was so small that I indignantly exclaimed, "Mamma! I really can't sleep in a box!—and in this heat too!"

"Have you any other room you could give Lady Muriel?" my mother asked the padrona, who reflected for a moment and then said:

"I have, signora. It belongs to a suite of rooms prepared for the Russian Princess Lipetska and her sick son and attendants, whom we expect in a few hours; but the doctor, who engaged them, desired us to shut up three or four of the bedrooms, as there were too many; so Lady Muriel's maid could sleep there also—close to her—just across the gallery."

My mother said, "If you are sure you have a right to give her these rooms, that will do perfectly." So all being satisfactorily arranged, I betook myself to my apartment, accompanied by the padrona; but when first I entered it, my spirits (generally daring to a fault) went down to zero. The room was so large! So gloomy! The walls were hung with dingy tapestry, which trembled and flapped each time a door was shut, or that one walked across the room; making the grotesque and hideous figures represented upon it seemingly instinct with life and with an agony of eagerness to leap from the walls, and proffer me a dreadful welcome! The bed, too, was far from reassuring in its ghost-like grandeur. It was a carved oak "four-poster"; an ivory and ebony crucifix was nailed at its head, the curtains were dark green velvet, and plumes of feathers waved at each corner of the canopy, being constantly stirred by mysterious gusts of air, and emitting a rustling sound suggestive of dead leaves—melancholy in the extreme. Added to all this I counted five doors in the room, and the padrona noticing my uneasy glances toward them, assured me they were locked, proving her words by pushing and pulling them violently while turning the handles, at the same time talking volubly in Italian. I was, of course, obliged, after the good lady's exertions, to profess myself satisfied, and she was just leaving the room, when the bell which hung in the court-yard began to ring, and the padrona, running with apologies to my balcony, which overhung the grand entrance, called out hastily:

"Lady Muriella! Vede! Ecco la principessa ed il principe! guarda!" and then hurried downstairs. I ran and looked out, and true enough, the Russians had arrived, hours before they were expected, and with much curiosity I watched them as they alighted. There were several clumsy vehicles, each drawn by three horses; the princess and her lady occupying the first. The princess was helped out of her carriage by two footmen (the exact counterpart of each other), having greasy Kalmuc faces, flat noses, and eyes a la chinoise, and she seemed tall and finely formed, with a clear, pale complexion, tawny-colored hair and eyelashes (the latter being unusually thick and long), and she walked with singular dignity as she entered the hotel.

The occupants of the second vehicle (a sort of invalid carriage) greatly interested me. First a priest, with lowering face and shovel hat, and who had seemingly descended from one of the carriages at the rear, entered the bed-carriage and proceeded to hand out a bag, some pillows, and a fur rug; then giving a sign to the footmen, they scrambled up the carriage steps like performing monkeys, and slowly and carefully drew forth the long, lanky legs of a boy about sixteen, whose shoulders and head were supported by a serious-looking young man, who I subsequently learned was an English doctor. The young prince seemed very ill, for he neither spoke nor moved, and took no notice of any one. I was eager to see his face, but both doctor and priest were determined he should not be exposed to the vulgar gaze, for his cap was pulled over his eyes, and his figure was enveloped in a large shawl; but as he was being disengaged from the carriage, his head fell backward, and his cap slipped off, and in his anxiety to catch it, one of the servants entangled his foot in the shawl, dragging it completely off; and although the priest hastily replaced it and the cap (casting meanwhile a withering look at the terrified menial), he did not prevent my having a momentary view of the thin face and emaciated figure of the sick boy. He was deadly pale, his eyes were closed, and he appeared unconscious of all around; till, strangely, and for an instant, (during the excitement caused by the loss of his cap), I fancied he slightly opened his eyes—and looked at me! but he was carried so quickly into the hotel that I could not be certain of the fact.

I felt no further interest in the occupants of the other carriages, but I longed to see all I could of the prince and his strange entourage; so I crept into the gallery overlooking the marble hall, and waited; knowing that as his apartments were next to mine, the prince must pass that way.

As I leant over the gallery balustrade, watching, I fancied there seemed some delay, some consternation in the hall, amongst the attendants, but I was too far off to make out the cause; at last, however, I saw them coming, carrying the prince up the stair, upon a stretcher. As soon as they had nearly reached the landing, I ran back and hid myself behind my own door, to see them go by.

It was quite a procession. First came the princess (how beautiful she was, and how arrogant she looked!), and by her side was the priest, talking in low, agitated whispers, while she appeared to listen in proud, sullen silence. Then the seemingly inanimate body was carried by, by the doctor (whose face was deathly pale) and some servants. As the prince and his bearers passed, I involuntarily moved out of my hiding place, and the doctor, perceiving me, started slightly, and again I thought the sick boy's heavy eyelids quivered and slightly unclosed! He was followed by a troop of dirty, savage-looking servants, who chattered noisily in some guttural tongue as they walked, until the priest turned and frowned them into silence.

All excitement being now over, I lag down and endeavored to sleep, but my mind would not rest; so after tossing about uneasily for an hour or two, I rose and ran in to my mother, and as I was relating to her all I had seen, the padrona knocked and anxiously craved an interview; and began a long story, speaking so rapidly in Italian that I could not understand her, but my mother, being a good linguist, did, and was evidently deeply interested in what she heard; gradually, however, a look of horror overspread her face, and finally pointing at me, she put her finger upon her lip, a gesture which apprised me, of course, that something was going forward which I was not to know, and which, equally of course, decided me upon discovering what that "something" was; so losing no time, I ran to my maid, Susette, who was arranging my room, and asked what had happened. At first she refused to tell me, increasing my curiosity a hundred-fold by adding "the padrona had begged her to be silent." Eventually the French woman's love of gossip got the upper hand, and with many nods and winks and "hushes," she confided to me that the young prince was—dead!

"Dead!" I gasped.

"Yes, dead!" reiterated Susette. She then proceeded to say that the young man had been so ill during the journey that the doctor doubted his arriving alive, but the prince had such a longing to get to Florence that they hurried on. The doctor insisted upon travelling alone with his patient (great care and quiet being indispensable); but when they arrived within a few miles of Florence the prince was taken so suddenly worse that the carriage was stopped and the doctor called in the priest, considering death imminent; the invalid lived, however, to be lifted into the hotel, but as he was being carried through the marble hall, the doctor called out to the bearers to stop, and before the poor fellow could be placed upon a couch—he expired.

I was too awe-stricken to speak; but when my astonishment had in a measure subsided, I began to reason, and I said to Susette:

"Who told you this?"

"The padrona," answered the maid.

"Did she see it happen?"

"No," said Susette, "for the princess begged the padrona and his wife to stay behind and superintend the unloading of the carriages, so that the prince's luggage might be brought up at once. The dame de compagnie told the padrona how it all occurred, and she told me."

"Well!" I exclaimed excitedly, "it is a very odd story, for I saw the young prince's face twice, and he looked exactly the same both times, very pale and quiet, but not dead."

"Hush! Lady Muriel," whispered Susette, "do not speak so loud, for the padrona, in the hurry and distress of the arrival, did not mention to the princess that you were in this room; she told the doctor——"

"And what did he say?" I asked quickly.

"He seemed put out at first, and said he feared the princess would be displeased, but when the padrona told him that you were 'only a signorina,' he seemed satisfied."

"And you allowed me to stay all this time in a room to which I had no right," I exclaimed hotly (my dignity being hurt also, at being considered a nonentity). "How could you do so? I shall go at once to mamma and——"

"Wait, Lady Muriel," interrupted Susette; "I will see the padrona, when she can attend to us; at present they are all in such trouble about the prince's death."

"I don't believe he is dead, for as he passed me I am almost sure he opened his eyes and looked at me!"

"People's eyes are often half open when they are dead," said Susette.

"May be," I argued; "but people don't open their eyes after they are dead."

"Ah! bah!" said Susette, irritably, annoyed at her story being doubted, "the prince is dead now, at all events, for I stood by while you were lying down, and I saw crosses, tapers, pictures and all kinds of things being carried into his room; and the doctor saw me and came up hastily to me and said he had not yet told the princess that you slept in that room, and that I had better keep it quiet at present. Then he asked who you were? How old? Whether you slept alone? and then he asked me to do him a favor, for he could not, he said, leave the room for a moment himself, so would I fetch one of the footmen, Ivan by name, as he must tell him to go out and buy flowers for the death chamber; so I fetched him, and on my return the doctor put a gold piece in my hand and said, as he could not speak Italian, he might want my help again." I would not answer Susette, and I told her to leave me, for I was annoyed at getting mixed up with the Russians, angry, too, with the doctor for offering money to my maid, and still more angry with her for taking it; then—what could he mean, saying he might want Susette's help again? Surely there were Russians enough to do their own behests.

"There is something strange about it all," I soliloquized, "and I hate these Russians—I don't know why—and I will not remain amongst them; I will move into 'the box' at once." Having thus lashed myself into a state of high wrath, I burst out of my room into the passage, and to my unspeakable annoyance, I ran up against the priest, who, with the princess, was standing at my door. I murmured "Pardon!" and would have passed on, but the princess, looking amazed at my appearance, came forward and said civilly, "Ah! pretty Lady Muriel, I heard you were in the hotel; have you lost your way? the galleries are all so alike. Shall I conduct you back to your room? Where do you sleep?"

"Here, madame," I said rather defiantly, pointing to my room, determined to show that I had nothing to hide.

The lady looked surprised, but quickly recovering herself, replied:

"Ah! so near us! You are in the midst of much sorrow."

"The young prince," I said, awkwardly, "how is he?"

"Ah! you do not know; he is dead, alas!"

I had not time to reply, for the priest, who had been watching me intently, came forward and whispered in the princess's ear, upon which she said to me:

"Would you like to see my poor son—yourself?"

I hesitated—for I had never seen death—but I was curious, very curious, and the princess, seeing my hesitation, took me firmly by the hand, and opening the door of her apartments, led me in.

For a moment I was perfectly amazed at what met my sight! The room was large, and in utter darkness, except immediately round the couch upon which the dead prince lay, and there, innumerable candles of all sizes were blazing like a fiery barrier defending him from the outer world. The doctor was standing close to the body, burning some condiment, which he held in a dish; he looked steadily at me, and gently drew down the white coverlet (which shrouded the whole figure) from off the head and upper portion of the body, so that I might see the sad but beautiful face, which was as white as the roses and camellias which surrounded it. The hair, eyebrows and eyelashes were very black, and the pale, slender fingers were lightly crossed over a crucifix which rested on the breast. I gazed tearfully at the pathetic young face, which seemed hardly, if at all, changed.

"How exquisite!" I sighed, "and how quickly everything has been arranged! May I go nearer?"

"Yes," answered the princess, "but not within the lights; but—how pale you are! You had better stay no longer."

"There is such a strange, sweet smell, which rather overcomes me."

"Ah! from the violets and Cape jessamine; we can none of us stay in the room; but you are so pale! You must come away." Then putting her handkerchief up to her eyes, she added: "He will be buried to-morrow; they bury so quickly here."

"Poor boy!" I ejaculated, and burst into tears.

"You will tell Madame la Comtesse," said the princess, "how calm, how happy he looks, and that we have had a devoted English doctor all through; he is here now, you see; and he will not leave Michael's room, even to eat."

I looked at the doctor as she spoke, and fancied I saw the ghost of a smile flit over his face, and not feeling kindly disposed toward him, I said to myself, "Heartless, like all the rest," then turning to the princess, I said coldly:

"I will tell my mother that I have seen you, madame, and your poor son, but," I added, hesitatingly, ""does he look calm and happy? Is there not—rather—a look of fear upon his face?"

The princess answered shortly, "Perhaps you have never seen death before?"

"No, madame," I returned; "but if all dead faces look as beautiful, as full of pathos, as this one, why should people ever dread seeing them?" With this I courtesied ceremoniously to the princess and left her, and after hastily dressing for a drive, I joined my mother and related to her all I had seen and heard. My mother was rather startled when she heard my account; but seeing I had sustained no nerve shock, she only said:

"I hope, darling, the young man died of nothing infectious?"

"Oh, no, mamma; he has been ill for a long time; the princess told me so."

"I wish she had not spoken to you, Muriel; I begged the padrona to tell you nothing about it, for fear of alarming you. I hope the room you sleep in is not next the prince's, or you will be frightened."

"It takes a great deal to alarm me, mamma," I said, evasively and with a contemptuous laugh; so, after this conversation, I resolved to say nothing about my wish to move, for I was foolishly vain of my reputation for coolness and courage, and I felt sure, were I now to express a wish to change my room, it would be endangered; so setting aside my dignity, I deemed it best to leave the distribution of the rooms as it was.

A short time afterward we started on a sight-seeing expedition, and after a cosey little dinner and a short rest on the balcony, we retired for the night. I was quickly undressed, and after Susette had left me, as I thought, for good, she returned, saying her room was so small, might she hang her bonnet and cloak, etc., in the recess within mine, which had been devoted to the carriage boxes? I was still too put out with her either to object or agree to anything she might propose; in fact, I felt that as long as she left me personally in peace, she might hang herself up there on a peg till the morning, without any let or hindrance from me! So she did as she wished, and after replacing the portiere over the recess, she once more left me, this time locking my door on the outside and carrying off the key, as my mother (rather against my will) had desired her to do, for fear I should forget to lock my door myself. Susette had also received orders to come to me once or twice during the night, in case I should require anything. So I now settled myself in bed, and tried to sleep, but in vain, for either from over-fatigue, or excitement, or both, I was restless, uneasy, and tossed wearily from side to side. After a while, however, I gradually calmed down, becoming drowsy and confused; and all the sights and sounds I had passed through during the day revisited me, but in a misty, indistinct way, as though I saw and heard them through a veil; half-waking, and half-dreaming, strange fancies, interwoven with the impressions of the last few hours, haunted my pillow.

These pictures, distinct at first, but gradually becoming more and more shadowy, were all in a moment rudely dispersed, dispelled, exactly like a mirror which had suddenly been cracked, sparred by some unseen hand! I started violently, and sat up in bed, for I thought—nay, I was convinced—I heard one of the many doors in the room shake gently, but decidedly, as though some one were endeavoring to enter. I listened attentively, and for a while all seemed quiet; but—again! the same sound! and this time from another door, which, like the former one, opened into the Russian apartments. I watched, and distinctly saw the handle turn and the door shake! I was now thoroughly alarmed, and would have rushed in to Susette, but, in my distress, I remembered that my door was locked on the outside!

"Oh!" I gasped, "if Susette would only come! What can it be? What shall I do?" I waited, listening painfully, but for a few minutes (which seemed ages to me) I heard nothing more, and almost persuaded myself that it must have been my imagination, or perhaps, "Some one may have mistaken the door." I thought I began to be ashamed of my cowardice; I determined to be brave, and ignore the whole thing,—to lie down again,—but I had hardly done so before I distinctly heard footsteps creeping along the balcony and stopping at my window,—which was only lightly hooked together, for it was warm, and it had never struck me, till now, that as my room belonged to the Russian suite, so did the balcony, and was therefore not divided from theirs. Breathlessly I listened, and, tremblingly leaping out of bed, I threw on my dressing-gown,—stole to the window,—and, gently pushing aside the blind, looked out,—and never, to my dying day, shall I forget my horror when I became aware of a man's face, within an inch of my own, peering in at me!

Terror nearly paralyzed me, but did not prevent my recognizing in the coarse Kalmuc type of the intruder, the face of one of the Russian menservants!

I could not move or scream,—but at a signal from the Russian, to my utter amaze and bewilderment, who should appear at his side but the "dead" prince! He was making imploring signs to me to be silent—not to be afraid, and, above all things, to let him in! The poor young face was so livid,—the eyes so strained with terror; the tears, too, were coursing so visibly down the thin haggard cheeks, and the attitude was so touchingly humble and imploring, that my fright turned into pity, and I felt intuitively that in some mysterious way I held the life or death of this trembling creature in my hands. Impelled, therefore, by the power of mercy, and hurriedly eager to save I knew not who, from I knew not what, I unhooked the window, and the Prince crept noiselessly in! To my unspeakable relief the footman fell back, evidently on the watch, and the poor boy sank at my feet, gasping out in a mixture of languages, "Oh, Lady Muriella, pour l'amour de Dieu, save me! Let me out at your door!"

"Good Heavens!" I cried, "it is locked on the outside!"

"Hide me, then, hide me!" he sobbed,—as, in an agony of supplication, he clasped my gown. "Your white robe and your tete doree make you look like an an angiol di Dio! Be one to me, Muriella, an angiol protettore! Ecoutez, the good doctor and poor Ivan have risked much. The doctor made me feign death, and he has drugged the padre, and watches him, but he will soon wake! Ah! save me from him, from ma belle mere."

"I will do anything," I said excitedly; "but what can I do? You cannot stay here. What are you afraid of?"

"Ah! get me out of the hotel, for—" looking round in a terror-struck way, and whispering in my ear, "they are—poisoning me!"

"Rouse the house!" was my natural suggestion.

"No, no, lady! Ecoutez! I have no time to explain, but flight is my only chance—to the English Embassy—Lord Queensland will help me, and——" At this moment the key turned slowly in my door, and I just had time to push the prince into the recess (while he implored me in a whisper to confide in "no one—no one"), when Susette appeared, sleepy, cross and with a light.

"I come, miladi, according to orders. Do you want anything?"

"Oh, Susette! I am so glad you are come. I really will not be locked in like this! it alarms me! for if anything were to happen I couldn't get out. I must have the key."

"Lady Muriel," (with sleepy dignity) "madame said I was to lock you in. But why" (with curiosity)—"why are you alarmed? Why are you up?"

"Because, I tell you, I don't like being locked in! If mamma knew how it frightens me, she would of course let it be as I say. What is that?" I added nervously; "I am sure I heard a step outside my door!"

"It is only the guardia, miladi; he walks about all night and watches the galleries."

"Did he see you?" I asked nervously.

"Yes; and he asked where I was going."

"Poor prince!" I mentally ejaculated, "there is little chance, then, of your getting out unseen." Then aloud I said to Susette, "Give me the key." Susette was too sleepy to argue further upon the matter, so she delivered up the key and I let her out and locked the door. I waited to hear her departing footsteps, then I flew to the recess and drew back the portiere to liberate the prisoner; when, to my astonishment, the young man issued forth clad from head to foot in Susette's clothes! No one could possibly have recognized him, for he had tied a thick veil over his face, and the metamorphosis was perfect. In spite of the awkward, nay, dangerous circumstances, I felt a strong inclination to laugh, but I said seriously:

"Why do you not make a confidant of the guardia? Tell him your story and get him to let you out at the front door."

"No, no! the doctor told me solemnly to trust to no one but you—no servants, for the padre always bribes the servants. Ah, Muriella, que faire? how shall I get out?"

"I know," I said joyfully, and dashing into the recess I dragged forth a strong rope used to cord boxes. "You must get out by the balcony—it is not high; my brothers could almost let themselves drop without a rope, and I am sure I could."

"Ah! but I am ill, weak—faint."

"Well, well," I said rather impatiently, with a touch of British arrogance and contempt for foreign chickenheartedness; "you stay in here while I make preparations." So I stepped out on the balcony. Ivan was standing a few yards off, watching the windows of the Russian apartments; and with a horrid shrinking I saw the moonbeams play upon a naked knife he held in his hand; and then for the first time I fully realized how dearly he had resolved to sell his young master's liberty, and what a dangerous matter I was engaged in!

The Russian comprehended at a glance what was my design, for as I was tying the rope to the balcony, I suppose my hand trembled, for he came hurriedly forward and helped me, at the same time making signs that we had no time to lose. After fastening the rope firmly he returned to his post of observation, and I softly called the young prince; then carefully looking into the road to see there were no inconvenient passers-by, I whispered to him in true schoolboy phraseology, "Now's your time!"

Taking the rope very gently from my hand, the young man seemed to pause—looking meanwhile wistfully at me; then raising the veil which concealed his features, before I could prevent it, he threw his arms passionately round me, straining me tightly to his breast, and while murmuring the word "Muriella!" he pressed his trembling lips once, twice, and yet again, fervently, almost painfully to mine, and with a great sob threw himself over the ironwork, slid down and disappeared! The faithful Ivan now approached, and I was slightly nervous as to whether he might not deem it necessary to express his gratitude after the same fashion! but I need not have been alarmed, for after making an eager sign to me to lock my window, with a gesture of deep respect, he kissed the hem of my garment, slid down the rope and was gone, and I was left standing there alone, with a half inclination to slide down the rope and run away also! However, I listened to the sound of the fugitives' retreating footsteps, and as they died in the distance I remembered Ivan's warning, and unknotting the rope, I re-entered my room with it in my hand, then shutting, locking, and even barricading my window, I sat down for a moment to collect my thoughts.

My eyes wandered round the room, and ere my bewilderment had quite subsided, I perceived that a bunch of forget-me-nots which I had placed in water by my bedside was gone! and blushingly I told myself that, while waiting, the young prince must have stolen it. With this discovery tears, all unbidden, rushed to my eyes (for I was, after all, a very young girl) and a tender feeling sprang up in my heart for the individual for whom I had undoubtedly gone through a great deal; and on my knees I thanked God for His help, and begged Him to raise up a stronger protector than myself to rid the prince of his enimies. This outburst of feeling (hysterical, no doubt) relieved me, and once more I became practical, and I decided that courageous as I might be (and had undoubtedly proved myself) I dared no longer stay alone in that room; for I feared the possibility (on the discovery of the prince's flight) of another visit from some of the Russians; so opening the door softly, I let myself out, and, with a creeping sensation, as though all the Russians in the hotel were pursuing me, I fled toward Susette's room, and to my unspeakable relief met her coming toward me! She was petrified at the rencontre, and drawing me into her room, asked anxiously what was the matter? I told her breathlessly all that had happened, and she said she had been struck by my pale, frightened face when she had seen me an hour ago; and it had so haunted her, that she was now on her way to my room. She looked rather rueful when she heard of the loss of her clothes, but her womanly sympathy went out heartily to the poor boy when I described his terror and distress, and she forthwith began to consider how best to conceal the scene of his flight. I did not then understand that this was more for my sake than for that of the fugitive's. (The "bliss" of ignorance was mine at that moment, the "folly" of wisdom came later).

Susette returned at once with me to my bedroom, for the watchman, she said, had luckily seen her as she entered it an hour before, and he would think she had remained there all night, so we locked the door and lay down together. Not long after we had done so, we again heard footsteps on the balcony, and as the moon was shining brightly, we saw the shadow of a man pass quickly across the blind, and as it returned it lingered long enough at my window for me to recognize the spare form of the priest! but finding, I suppose, that everything was unsuspiciously quiet, and the window closed, the figure vanished as cautiously as it had appeared; and although we listened long and attentively, we heard nothing more. After a while my nervousness calmed down, and Susette's propinquity giving me a sense of security, I fell asleep. The sun was shining brightly into the room as I awoke, and I overheard the fille de chambre tell Susette that the Russians had all left the hotel quite two hours before!

As soon as I was dressed I hurried to my mother and related the whole adventure. She was much excited, and proposed going at once to the British Embassy (to relate the story), which we did, and were admitted directly into Lord Queensland's presence. I was terribly disappointed when the great man assured us nothing whatever had been heard of the fugitives, and equally indignant when I discovered that both he and his attache discredited my story! The ambassador was barely civil, and "thought" I had been "hoaxed," that my "imagination" had "exaggerated the facts," etc. He asked whether any person beside myself had witnessed "the alleged flight," and I fancied he seemed relieved when I replied in the negative; and my suspicions of his sincerity were stil more aroused by his evident anxiety that we should keep the story to ourselves, impressing upon my mother (who turned very pale) that we had better do so "for her pretty young daughter's sake." Being young and inexperienced, I missed the innuendo, but as the minister had early let out that he was "personally acquainted" with the Princess Lipetska, that she was "nearly related to the Imperial Family," and that such an "unlikely story" as mine might give great offence, I shrewdly suspected his anxiety for secrecy arose from some secret motive.

In a few minutes Lord Queensland rose, thus, as he thought, ending the discussion; but feeling my veracity was unfairly impugned, I was not to be so summarily dismissed; besides the ambassador's parting words did not tend to soothe my irritation. "I advise you, madam," he said to my mother, "not to allow pretty Lady Muriel to sleep alone in a hotel again. Keep her to her dolls, dear lady; there are really no children nowadays."

This was unbearable, so losing all self-control I said angrily, "It is a pity, my lord, that some old men should be chosen to fill high positions who are little better than 'dolls' themselves, especially when called upon to act in an emergency! And oh!" I cried, bursting into childish tears, "they are not so nice as dolls, for although their heads may be equally empty, dolls have hair, whereas, old men very often—have not!" Need I say Lord Queensland was bald?

My mother was horrified at my words, but the ambassador seemed tickled, and patting me on the shoulder, called me "a gold-headed little spitfire." I was not, however, to be mollified, and as I marched from the room, I said maliciously, "If you, my lord, will not take the story up, I shall spread it abroad, as an instance of the incompetency of our officials to defend the friendless!" To my surprise, I perceived that my words "at random sent, had found a mark they never meant;" for Lord Queensland, motioning to his attache to close the door, said to my mother: "May I ask you a favor? I frankly (!) confess I know something of the story and I wished, for certain reasons, to keep it quiet. So will you—will your daughter—for the young prince's sake—keep the secret until you hear from me?" My mother was shocked at the ambassador's want of candor, and so alarmed at the superabundance of that quality in me, that she would have promised anything to get away; but I said coldly, "It is a pity you should not have placed confidence in us from the first, instead of doing so only as a paliative; but if" (with great dignity, I said it) "you can assure me, on the honor of an Englishman," ("not of a diplomat," I said cuttingly) "that silence will serve the poor boy, I am ready to pass my word also."

"Any other course of action will injure him, Lady Muriel."

"So be it," I said loftily, delighted to feel that a signorina had proved herself no nonentity after all!

We took leave of the minister and his scared attache and returned to the hotel, and it is needless to say we never heard again from His Excellency; but in ten days' time the papers informed us that his lordship had quitted Florence for some months.

The whole story seemed to have passed away like an uneasy dream. The Russians had vanished, and their rooms were now occupied by a common-place, middle-class English family, who I heard conversing about the "Pitty Pally" (meaning, I presumed, the Pitti Palais), and the padrone and his wife avoided mentioning the princess or any of her suite; indeed the subject seemed so distasteful to them that we forbore alluding to it, and after a short uneventful period had elapsed, we directed our footsteps homeward to London.

One morning my mother put "The Morning Post" into my hands, eagerly desiring me to read a paragraph aloud. It was a quotation from a St. Petersburg journal, and it ran thus: "Great excitement has been caused lately in St. Petersburg in consequence of a mysterious event which has taken place in the family of the Prince Lipetska. His highness lost his first wife sixteen years ago, at the birth of the Prince Michael, who, although a delicate child, survived his mother, and was the object of his father's tenderest affections. Four years ago the Prince Lipetska married again, choosing the Princess Myrza de Zeschaw, a lady of great beauty, and for whom, it was well known, a certain Exalted Personage avowed a distinctly paternal interest. The Princess Myrza bore two sons, and was a devoted mother, not only to her own offspring, but also to her step-son, who was much attached to her, and whose recent uncertain health seemed the only cloud in the princely pair's domestic horizon.

"A few months ago the young prince became so seriously ill that the best medical advice was sought, when change of air and a warm climate were suggested. The Prince Lipetska being unable just then to lay aside his court duties (he was one of the Czar's highest functionaries), the princess offered to leave her own young family, and proceed with her step-son to Italy, purposing (at the prince's wish) to visit a famous but very old doctor resident at Pisa, who had known the young Michael from his birth.

"Accordingly the princess started, accompanied by a priest, a dame de compagnie and a large suite; and they had not been long absent before it was remarked that the Prince Lipetska became greatly depressed, and that he was constantly closeted with a certain Doctor d'Obreskoff, who had attended the family for years, but who, in consequence of increasing age, and a strong dislike conceived against him by the princess, had given up his position as family physician. The accounts from Italy getting worse, the anxious father would have started at once to join his son, but (to the surprise of all parties) he yielded to Doctor d'Obreskoff's entreaties, and instead of going himself dispatched a young English doctor, who received instructions to travel with the utmost speed.

"Dr. Granville's arrival at Pisa (bringing his credentials from the prince) took the princess entirely by surprise, and he installed himself without delay as medical companion to the sick boy, who took to him with a complete infatuation, refusing to eat, drink or sleep save in his presence. One day, to the amazement of the St. Petersburg world, the young Michael arrived at his father's house, restored to health, and accompanied by a single servant! His father received him tearfully, but without surprise, and a few days later the whole family left St Petersburg for an indefinite period. Nothing has been heard of the princess, and mystery shrouds the whole affair."

"There, mamma," I said, "you see I could tell them more than they know."

"What an awful thing," said my mother gravely. "I wonder what has become of that wretched woman, and whether we shall hear any more about it."

This question was answered a short time afterward; for on the anniversary of the memorable night of the 17th September, I was sitting at my window, thinking over it all, when my mother called me, and to my surprise I discovered a travel-stained stranger in the room with her, and upon his turning toward me I exclaimed, "The young prince's English doctor!" He carried a parcel, and seemed overjoyed at seeing me, grasped my hand, calling me the angiol protettore and a host of pretty things, and when claimed, "How is the poor boy? Do—do tell me everything from the very beginning."

The young man smiled, and said, "I have little to tell, or rather little that I may tell; and ere I begin may I beg of you both to keep all you know sacred? For although to some degree the story has become public, the whole truth is not known, and for the prince's sake I beg this favor of you."

We, of course, gave the required promise, and Dr. Granville proceeded with much feeling to tell us everything.

"The poor boy," he said, "nearly fell a victim to the jealousy of the princess for her own children. She was administering small doses of poison to him, which were slowly but surely taking effect. I arrived just in time to save his life. The old Dr. d'Obreskoff had been haunted for some time by a horrid suspicion of foul play, and after the princess's hurried departure to Italy he determined to search her apartments privately, and he discovered such tangible proofs of her guilt—proofs, however, which a knowledge of medicine alone could recognize—that he broke the awful truth to the prince, who could scarcely be restrained from starting at once to Italy to save his son. The doctor, however, advised differently, for his medical mind gathered from the most recent accounts that nothing imminent was to be feared, and he knew that unless everything was arranged most diplomatically, the prince would have to contend against troubles and even dangers at court, in consequence of the princess's high relationships. Luckily, I was paying a visit to St. Petersburg at the time, and the old doctor knew all about me; how I had been brought up in the medical profession, but that, developing a strong taste for adventure, I had been engaged in detective cases, and that thus I claimed an intimate personal acquaintance with the two most active agents in this case—medicine and murder. The prince sent me to Italy with full powers, only impressing upon me the absolute necessity of saving the princess's reputation; and directly I arrived I warned Prince Michael of his own danger, of his father's commands concerning the princess, that he was to eat, drink and sleep in my presence only, and to leave the rest to me. He was very ill when I arrived, but I soon inspired him with confidence, and during the dreadful journey to Florence I taught him to feign death. We had a rehearsal before arriving, and I found that, like most Russians, his powers of acting were "first-class." I knew if I could only reach Florence I should be safe, as I was acquainted with Lord Queensland and had warned him of my coming; but the journey was perilous, as I could not tell whether the princess had discovered who and what I was; besides, I feared the priest, and how much he guessed of the truth. However, thank God, all went well. All would have been easy could I have taken the padrone into my confidence, but the prince had solemnly bound me to trust no one—no servants, except Ivan, and I kept my word. In England every one would have helped me, but with Russians and Italians there are wheels within wheels. One of my greatest difficulties was to keep the princess and the priest out of the 'death chamber,' for I feared the prince betraying himself. So I burnt a concoction, ostensibly for sanitary purposes, which had the effect of causing those unused to it to feel faint (as you did, Lady Muriel, and as he did, poor boy, at times, but we had to risk that").

"But," interrupted I, "after he and Ivan escaped, where did they go? He told me they should go to the English Embassy, but they did not do so."

"Forgive me, but they did, and were in the house when your mother and you called. Lord Queensland knew they were coming, and an hour had not elapsed after their flight before a man came and whistled 'God Save the Queen' beneath the balcony (a preconcerted sign), whereby I knew the fugitives were safe under the British flag. The Ambassador, knowing about the princess's birth, acted with great caution."

"Eminently so," I said dryly, "and how about the princess?"

"Ah, there I am tongue-tied. Suffice it to say that after the prince's disappearance my personal dangers began, for I never lost sight of her, poor soul, till—— Ah, well, Russian laws and English laws are different, and grateful I am to have returned from so ugly a business."

Dr. Granville now rose to depart, and turning kindly to me, he said: "Lady Muriel, I parted from Prince Michael not many hours ago, and he said I was not to rest till I had seen you, till I had reminded you that this is the anniversary of his flight, and that all through life the 18th September will be a night sacred to the thought of you."

As the doctor said these words a curious sort of feeling came over me. His voice sounded strange, far off, and I seemed to see the gloomy bed-chamber, the moonlit window, the boy in agonized supplication at my feet—the——

The doctor went on: "He sends an offering of humble gratitude; his words were, 'Put it into her own dear hands, but tell her to open it alone; tell her as she opens it my voice will greet her, and tell her, oh, tell her, we must meet again.'"

Without a word I took the parcel. I knew the doctor raised my hand and kissed it, and that, bowing to my mother, he left the room. I went slowly, dreamily, upstairs, hearing as I did so the front door open and shut and the prince's messenger pass out and away! Sitting by my bed, I passively recalled the words, "We must meet again," and eagerly tearing off the paper covering of the parcel, I discovered a velvet casket, upon which "Muriella" was stamped in letters of gold. I took the pretty gold key and opened the casket, and I beheld a necklace of eighteen pearls (a pearl, I understood, for each day), and attached to it was a heart, pierced through by a diamond arrow. At the back of the arrow these words were engraved:

"Firenze,
Il 18 Settembre, 184—.
Gratitudine, Fede, Amore."

The heart opened, and within it I found—a shred of twisted rope—and a few withered forget-me-nots. I shed a few tears, I knew not why, and ran down and showed it to my mother.—(London Society.

GRANT.

By Melville W. Fuller.

Read at the Grant memorial meeting held in Chicago. August 10, 1885.

Let drum to trumpet speak—
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannon to the heavens from each redoubt,
Each lowly valley and each lofty peak,
As to his rest the great commander goes
In the pleasant land of earned repose.

The great commander, when
Is heard no more the sound of war's alarms,
The bugle's stirring note, the clang of arms,
Depreciation's tongue would whisper then—
Only good fortune gave to him success.
When was there greatness fortune did not bless?

Not in his battles won,
Though long the well-fought fields may keep their name,
But in the wide world's sense of duty done,
The gallant soldier fin