

THE AVANT COURIER.

SO NEAR, AND YET SO FAR.

Some think of heaven as far above, Beyond this viewless air, I think not so. God is in heaven, Then heaven is everywhere.

The mortal is a wall that keeps Us where and what we see, Until the gates shall outward swing, And death shall set us free.

Sometimes there sweet melodies, Inward, and deep, and clear, A fleeting strain that never falls Upon the outward ear.

A voice of more than mortal song, The soul's deep silence fills Departing like the morning mists Above the eastern hills:

It comes in visions of the night, When deep sleep falls on men; The soul wakes when the mortal sleeps, And heaven is near us then.

We wake. Life's outward joy returns, The music steals away— A Jacob's wrestling angel fled With shepherds turn of day.

A YOUNG HEROINE.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

Away out in the edge—or it used to be the edge—of West Philadelphia, more than a mile from Schuyler hill, stands the hospitable mansion of Samuel Lippincott, the chieftain, coist, most home-like house, wherever any one made a visit.

So when I. Kate Newhouse, tried music teacher, in a Philadelphia seminary, was warmly urged by sweet Alice Lippincott to spend my summer vacation with her, you may be sure I gladly accepted of the invitation. The more so, as—but never mind John Lippincott (though I do not see him every day, for that matter), he hasn't anything to do with this part of the story, anyhow.

West Philadelphia is built up away beyond the Lippincott's now, but at the time I write of, there was no dwelling-house very near, excepting two or three Dutch lager beer saloons and breweries which did not add to the desirability of the spot. But it was a lovely home, and a pleasant ride to the main city, so we spent happy, happy days that golden-bright summer.

Uncle Sammie and Aunt Sally Lippincott, as everybody called them, were the dearest and kindest of good old friends, and did their best to make everybody happy under their roof. Alice was a darling girl and my dearest friend—George was a noble, generous fellow, and as for John,—well, he is peeping over my shoulder this minute to see what I am going to write about him, so I won't write a word.

Alice was a slender creature, with fair hair and blue eyes, modest and retiring in her disposition, and rather inclined to be cowardly. I was a brunette, having no speciality of beauty or brains, but as John says, "I'll do well enough," so that much will answer for me.

The sweet summer passed rapidly, and the first of September came, bringing my vacation very near to its close. One evening after supper word was brought to Uncle Sammie that his brother, who lived in the city, away up Wallace street, was severely hurt by a fall from his buggy, and wanted Aunt Sally and himself to come over.

They prepared to set out at once, the only objection being that Alice and I would be left alone, the two servants having received permission to go to a wedding, while the boys—George and John—were over in Jersey for two or three days shooting.

But I declared I was not at all afraid to stay alone, and Alice said if they would promise not to stay all night she was not afraid either. They promised to be back by ten o'clock, possible, and any way not to remain all night.

"Now, Ally," said Uncle Sammie, as they got in the buggy, "these and Kate just lock up the doors and be good girls till we get back. Nothing will hurt the boys." "We're not afraid, we'll guard the castle safely, and capture the invaders!" said Alice, laughingly, and drawing her little form up valiantly. And then we bade them good-by, and went back into the lonely house.

We locked up the doors, lit the lamps and bolted the inevitable—Philadelphia—white window shutters, and then sat down to amuse ourselves with some wonderful croquet work. It was very still and lonely, but we did not feel at all afraid, and by and by, lulled by the unwanted quiet, we both grew sleepy.

It happened that the first ripe grapes of the season had been brought in, and put in the cellar to keep fresh and cool, that very day. To keep ourselves awake, Alice proposed that we should go down into the cellar and get a few bunches to eat. I agreed, so we went into the dining room, took a small lamp from the table, and went into the cellar through the door leading down directly from the dining room.

The grapes were in a basket on the further side of the cellar. We crossed over to them, and Alice, stooping with the lamp in her hand, began to select the richest clusters. "Kate," said she presently, "these are so fine! Let us go up stairs and get a big glass fruit dish and take some up for the rest of the folks."

It struck me then that there was an odd tone in her voice, and I wondered what "folks" she meant, but supposing her to mean her father and mother, I only said: "Very well, give me the lamp, and I'll wait here till you get the dish." "No," she said, "let us take the lamp up. If I try to come blundering down in the dark, I'll be sure to break the dish. You go before and I'll carry the lamp."

We went up stairs, I in front, and Alice carrying the lamp. As I turned at the head of the stairs, I saw Alice was a white death, her blue eyes dimming. I was about to speak in alarm, but before I could utter a word, she seized me, and drew me into the cellar close. "Why, Alice, what in the name of the people is the matter with you?" I cried. "Kate!" she said solemnly, dropping to a seat on a box, "we are alone in this house, and there is a MAN in that cellar."

W. C. Oh, you must be mistaken!

"I am not mistaken—I saw him plainly when I stooped to get the grapes. He is crouched under the cellar window, he intends to rob us, Kate."

"Oh, what can we do?" I cried in terror. "We must take him prisoner!" said Alice, firmly.

"Oh, we can't," I cried, "let us get out of the house instantly, and run for help, Alice!"

"Where? I am afraid of the Dutchman at the saloon as much as of him, and there is no one else near. Besides he may have confederates outside, would not let us escape. We can't lock him in the cellar because mother has the keys in her pocket. We must take him, Kate, and quick, too, before he suspects."

I was terribly frightened, but in general Alice was much more a coward than I was. So, when I saw her courage rise to meet the occasion, I resolved not to be behind her, so I asked her what we should do, and followed her with a heart beating painfully hard.

Alice told her plan, and taking a strong linen napkin, she caught up a bottle of chloroform from the closet shelf, and saturated the napkin with it. Giving me a slender, stout rope, which hung behind the closet door, and bidding me hide it under my overskirt, she gave me the lamp and taking the wet napkin herself, we went down cellar.

"Now talk merrily, so he won't suspect," she whispered, as we reached the stairs, and then she said something in a laughing tone, but I am sure I do not know what she said, and I don't believe she did. We descended the stairs turned to cross the cellar, passed the angle of the stairs and then—Alice sprang upon the crouching form, flung her arms about his and held the napkin with all her slender strength over his mouth and nostrils.

"Quick! Kate, quick! with your rope," she said. I flew to her aid, and so sudden and unexpected was the attack, that before the fellow's struggles could free him I had drawn the rope half a dozen times around him, and pulled it as tight as I could, tying it with all the force I could command; and as the chloroform began to effect him he rolled over before us like an inanimate log.

Alice, bruised, panting, almost fainting, dropped on the ground beside him. "O! Kate! Kate! I am some one was only here!" she gasped. "I don't know how long he will stay under the influence of this, and if he comes to, I am afraid he will break the rope."

"They will surely be here soon!" said I. "Oh, Alice, I have a buggy! The Lord, some one is coming!" An as the sound of wheels and voices came to the side porch, I flew up stairs, flung open the side door of the dining room, and, oh joy! threw myself straight into John Lippincott's arms! Don't be horrified, reader, for John and I were betrothed, and his arms held me before.

As quick as I could explain to the astonished boys the situation we were in, we went down together to poor Alice. She was still sitting on the ground beside her prisoner, white with pain as well as with fright, for one of her wrists was tightly sprained by the man's struggles.

"And you took this fellow prisoner, you girl! Well!" was John's comment as he bent over our captive. Then he raised Alice tenderly in his strong arms, carried her up and laid her on a tonage in the dining room. Both he and George then into the cellar, and with a strong effort carried up the insensible ruffian and laid him on the porch, to await Uncle Sammie's return.

They tightened the rope so he could not possibly free himself if he came to, and bestowed their care upon us poor, frightened and exhausted girls. Very soon Uncle Sammie and Aunt Sally arrived, and great was their consternation upon the ring what had just happened. George immediately rode in to the city after the proper officers to take the burglar, who came to his senses before they arrived.

He cursed and swore terribly as soon as he could have use of his tongue, and said to Alice, with an awful oath, that if he had dreamed she saw him before she went up stairs, neither she nor I would have left the cellar alive.

We were glad when the officers came and took him away, and then what a pet and a baby we made of Alice, and how tenderly we cared for her poor little slender sprained wrist.

"They would have made a great fuss over me too, John especially, declaring that I was a brave girl, a little soldier, etc. But I disclaimed their honors, telling them that for Alice I should have taken an ignominious flight, leaving the burglar to work his will and that Alice was the rightful and only heroine of our adventure.—[Indiana Farmer.]

It is probable that the coming National Democratic Convention will be held as early as May or June. The Convention at New York in 1902, and that at Baltimore in 1875, were held in the month of July, a later season in the year than is usually chosen, and later than is thought to be desirable for the coming campaign.

St. Louis bid fair to have it held in the new hall of the Chamber of Commerce which was dedicated on the 21 ult., and which is the most beautiful hall in the United States and one of the largest in the world, being 255 feet long, 92 feet wide, and 69 feet high from floor to ceiling.

A good story is attributed to Sheridan's son Tom, who, being told by his father that he had made his will and cut him off with but a shilling, said he was very sorry and lame in reply: "You don't happen to have the shilling about you now, sir, do you?"

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