FOR HER—A LOVE STORY.

WRITTEN BY MARY ANGELA DICKENS, GRANDDAUGHTER OF THE NOVELIST.

"KATHERINE, you really are a terrible person! Do you know that you've nearly walked me to death?"

It was late in the afternoon of a dull November day, not a pleasant time for walking, certainly in London or anywhere else for that matter. Nor are those London streets which consist of "good houses" particularly cheerful spots to walk after dark, since passers-by are few and far between, and the lighting arrangements of the most feeble description. On this particular evening the pavements were muddy, the air raw and disagreeable, and altogether the two ladies who were walking along at a brisk pace would have seemed more in their proper place in a hansom cab. They were both of them well and handsomely dressed, and had a general air about them of belonging to that class which does go about in hansom cabs on the smallest provocation.

The lady who was addressed as Katherine, who was walking with a curious air of satisfaction in the sense of movement and of oblivion of her surroundings, started as her companion spoke. "Nonsense, Eleanor," she said, "you can't be really tired. We have not done so very much."

It was a strange voice, rather deep than most women's, with a ring about it that seemed to indicate an unusual strength of character, accustomed, unconsciously perhaps, to dominate wherever it touched. But it was not a hard voice—very far from that. It was wonderfully musical and sympathetic, and the impulsive way in which she spoke deprived her words of any touch of harshness.

"Not done much," echoed her companion, "not done much! My dear Katherine, are you absolutely untirable? We've only been out since 1 o'clock, and we've not sat down at all except in shops. I never knew any one so restless."

They were curiously restless eyes into which the speaker was looking, though the rest of the face was steady enough, and Miss Grahame's voice as she answered was very gentle.

"I am sorry, Eleanor. Have I really used you up? Well, there we are, and some tea will do you good, won't it? We'll have it—"

She stopped abruptly. They were just going up the steps of a well-kept house, and as she spoke the door was opened suddenly and a man came out—a tall man, with a sensitive, haggard face and deep black eyes, which might have been very fine if it had not been for a certain strange expression of desperate craving which seemed to lurk in them. As he saw the two ladies he, too, started violently, and his lips whitened and contracted suddenly and very curiously. He came quickly down the steps toward them.

"Miss Grahame," he began, in a voice which was at once eager and restrained, "I was afraid I should miss you altogether. I called about an hour ago, and I—I thought I might wait. How do you do, Mrs. Adderley?" this to the other lady, whose manner and countenance had changed, apparently at the sight of him, from its expression of plaintive amiability to one of uneasy and indefinite dislike.

"How do you do, Mr. Leigh?" she said coldly, and he turned again to Miss Grahame.

"May I—may I come back later on," he said, "in about an hour?"

"Wont you come in now?" The deep voice was low and very sweet, and Mrs. Adderley's face as she heard it grew colder and more vindictive.

"Mrs. Adderley and I have been shopping together, and now she has come back with me to have some tea; wont you come in again and have some, too?"

"Not now, thank you," he said, always with that strange undertone in his voice. "I have an appointment, but if I may come back—?"

"I shall be very glad," she answered, and a second and then gave him her hand and passed on into the house. It was not a large house; as Miss Grahame had no near relatives and lived there alone there was no reason why it should be. But it was beautifully furnished, and the drawing-room in which tea was waiting for the two ladies presented a picture of dainty comfort, at the sight of which Mrs. Adderley gave a little sigh of relief. It was delightfully lighted by several softly shaded lamps, and a sweet, faint of flowers filled the warm air.

But a strange shadow seemed to have fallen between Miss Grahame and her visitor. For some minutes neither of them spoke. Miss Grahame had given her hat and cloak to her maid and was standing with the tea-table, pouring out the tea, with a curiously preoccupied expression in those restless eyes of hers. Wonderful eyes they were—large and deep and changing, not only in expression, but absolutely in color, almost with each thought that passed through her mind. For the rest her face could hardly be called beautiful, the features were too sharply cut. But no one who looked at it once could fail to look again and again. It was always very pale, not with the pallor of ill-health, but with a natural whiteness, against which the dark, delicately pencilled eyebrows, and long curling eyelashes, showed even darker than they really were. The lips were full and firm, and about the whole face, even in repose, there was a curious suggestion of latent passion and power. She was a woman of about two or three and thirty. She roused herself at last and turning suddenly to Mrs. Adderley, almost as though she had forgotten her presence, made some trivial remark about their afternoon's work. But Mrs. Adderley did not answer her. She was sipping her tea, with a serious and rather doubtful expression of countenance.

"Katherine," she began tentatively—"Katherine, I want to say something to you."

Then Miss Grahame's eyes there flashed a quick look of anticipation, but she did not turn away her head as she answered apparently carelessly enough.

"Why not say it then, Eleanor?"

Mrs. Adderley hesitated. "I—I—am rather—Katherine, I don't know how it is, when we're such old friends, and I am married and you are not, but—I'm afraid of you. Will you promise not to be—annoyed?"

Miss Grahame laughed. "Poor Eleanor," she said, "I did not know I was so alarming. Suppose we talk of something that isn't likely to cause my evil passions?"

There was an undercurrent of meaning in the voice, and Mrs. Adderley paused. Then she went on with, for her, quite unusual determination.

"I must say it, Katherine; I can't help it—I'm sure you know what I mean. I cannot bear to see you encourage Calton Leigh."

There was a silence. One of those beautiful lithe white hands of Miss Grahame's tightened round the carved arms of her chair until the pressure must have been absolute pain.

"Do I—encourage—Calton Leigh?"

"Katherine! You know you do! And I cannot bear to see it."

"Why not?"

Mrs. Adderley apparently did not find it particularly easy to answer this question. She flushed faintly, and stole a glance at the face—but there was no word was spoken—of the woman beside her. The low, deep voice, strained as if the effort was a painful one, rather went on:

"Do you mean—because he was the husband of my dearest friend?" There was a little relaxing in her voice as she uttered the last words, and it seemed to encourage the other woman, for she broke suddenly into rapid speech.

"Katherine," she said, "Katherine, you loved her so. How has it come about that you of all her friends should be the one to stand by him? When—when—it happened, when people began to say that—that he must have given her cause, it was only because you remained his friend that people went on receiving him at all. Katherine, if it had not been for you he would have had to go abroad. I'm sure of it."

"Yes, he would have had to go away."

"I wondered at you then and I have wondered more and more as time has passed. There is nothing against him now; you have tided him over the worst, and now when that is mentioned he is pitied and Millie is ——, but I can never forget it. I never see the man without wondering what—he did to her."

Mrs. Adderley paused abruptly. She had spoken very quickly with a flushed, agitated face and nervous manner—a strange contrast to the motionless figure near her. After a moment she went on again, and there was a curious ring of excitement in her voice, as if difficult and apparently painful as the subject was, it was not altogether unpleasant to discuss it.

"There must have been some reason for it, Katherine. How can you believe she would have done that dreadful thing if she had not been driven to it? I didn't know her as you did, I didn't love her as you did, but even I—even I can't bear the sight of the man who must have brought her to such misery. Millie, little Millie, commit suicide? Katherine, Katherine, can't you see what it means? Can't you see how bad a man he must be? You who were her friend!"

"I was her friend." The words seemed to come through the clenched teeth, almost without Miss Grahame's consciousness. There was something stiff and rigid about her figure as she sat there, still with her grip tightening on the arms of her chair.

"And—and—if so soon, Katherine," went on Mrs. Adderley, weakly. "It's—it's not much more than a year since it happened. If there were nothing else against it, if poor Millie had recovered—I don't see how you could. I don't, indeed. And it is—oh, Katherine, think how he must have made her suffer before it came to that." No answer for a moment. The rigid figure seemed to grow more rigid yet, and there was a strange gray look of unutterable agony on Miss Grahame's face. At last she said in a low hoarse voice, with long pauses between the words:

"They—said—she—was—mad!"

"Do you believe that, Katherine?"

"I know it was not true!"

"Then—"

But Miss Grahame stopped her. Moving very slowly, as if with a great effort, she turned her white face slowly toward her and spoke in a voice which Mrs. Adderley felt at once must be obeyed, though it was so very quiet.

"Eleanor," she said, "don't say any more. It is quite useless. I know you have felt for some time that you ought to say this to me. It was very good of you, for I know it has been unpleasant, but—it is useless. I—I know Calton Leigh."

There was a short silence, and then Miss Grahame, with a self-control at which Mrs. Adderley could only scarcely marvel, began to talk quietly of other matters. But Mrs. Adderley was not so strong—or as she privately put it, "not so hard as Katherine Grahame," and before very long she rose to say good-bye. They parted with a rather constrained kiss.

Miss Grahame closed her drawing-room door as her visitor disappeared round the bend of the stairs and at the same instant she seemed to relax the rigid hold she had been keeping on the muscles of her face, and as she turned back into the room she looked an entirely different woman. Her lovely eyes were large and soft with unutterable love and grief; her whole face quivered and trembled. Very slowly she moved across the room to a table on which there stood a large photograph frame, with a curtain over the glass. She paused a moment, then drew back the curtain and, kneeling on her knees as though to get nearer the pictured face, she kissed it passionately. "My darling," she whispered. "Oh, my darling, my darling, forgive me. I know, I know. But what can I do? What can I say? Oh, my darling!"

It was the picture of a girl of about five and twenty, a little fair girl, with a sweet, gentle face and innocent, trusting blue eyes. There was something inexpressibly strange and pathetic in the attitude of that strong, passionate woman, in her mourning dress, kneeling there before that unresponsive, girlish face in such an agony of passionate love.

Mildred West and Katherine Grahame had been dear friends. It does not, perhaps, often happen that girlish friendships outlast girlhood, that youthful enthusiasms deepen into woman's love, but when it does occur that love is founded on a rock and must endure. And this had been the case with Miss Grahame and her dead friend. Each had known the other as one human being very seldom can know another, and their love had grown with their knowledge. They were curiously dissimilar, and to outsiders it seemed a strangely one-sided friendship. Katherine Grahame was so far the stronger of the two, stronger in her love, in her mental power, in social position, in everything, that it was easy to see what she must be to Mildred West. But nobody but their two selves—perhaps not even Mildred herself thoroughly realized what the steady tender love of that little gentle girl was to the strong, self-reliant woman, and Katherine Grahame returned the love she received with interest. A reserved woman with few ties and fewer affections, the whole intensity of her nature seemed to concentrate itself in her devotion to Mildred West. It was the passion of her life.

Mildred had been on a long visit to some friends when she first met Calton Leigh, and it had so happened that during her two months' engagement she had only routine letters from her that her friend was abroad with an invalid aunt and could only become acquainted with her fiance through her own glowing descriptions. Miss Grahame did not return to London until the night before the wedding, and when Mildred proudly introduced to one another the two people she loved best on earth, Calton Leigh was her husband. Mildred's marriage seemed to make little difference in their friendship. If Miss Grahame felt any jealousy of Calton Leigh, if it gave her any pain to know that she had no longer the first place in her darling's heart, she was too strong a woman to let her feelings prejudice her against the man who had superseded her. She accepted him frankly as Millie's husband—consequently as her friend.

Then, two years after her marriage, Mildred Leigh was found one morning dead in her bed, and in her own hand was an empty glass which had contained the prussic acid which had killed her.

Mildred Leigh had obviously committed suicide! An awful thing—an incredible thing—her friends and acquaintances said. But facts must be credited whether we will or not. Mildred Leigh had committed suicide, and the kindest thing that could be said of her—said in a whisper, pitying whisper—was that she was mad. Nobody blamed Miss Grahame—no one, not even the grief-stricken husband, might touch her terrible anguish, and when the sad story was discussed, as it was whenever two or more of their mutual acquaintances chanced to meet, these two were spoken of with the same deep pity. "Poor Calton Leigh!" people said, "poor Katherine Grahame!"

But when the first shock of sympathy began to pass off, when people had brought themselves to accept the bare facts, the inevitable question arose, "Why did she do it?"

Perhaps there is nothing in social life more incongruous, more terribly significant, than the gossip which grows up round a great tragedy, until the original horror is lost in a mist of sensationalism and excitement. The contrast between the aspect presented by the same thing to the few who are agonized by it is one which should make us think twice before we indignantly repudiate as we are apt to do the suggestion of the possible existence of a fellow-feeling between ourselves and the cruel old Romans who filled the Colliseum in bygone days. We do not enjoy our fellow-creatures' physical pain nowadays—we are more refined—but we find the mental sufferings which go to make up a tragedy "so exciting."

Mildred Leigh's acquaintances found the discussion of the motives which must have inspired her ghastly action quite inexhaustible, and gradually out of much talk it came to be generally understood, to be indeed an accepted fact, that Mildred's married life had been far from happy. Nobody had any reason for saying so; nobody had thought of such a thing before her terrible death; but it was obvious that if she had been happy she would not have committed suicide. And through this uncontrovertible statement it was easy to reach the conclusion that when such a woman as Mildred Leigh is unhappy in her married life her husband is certainly to blame. That the steps to this conclusion were not so clear as might have been wished by a strictly judicial mind made no difference to any one. There was nothing against Calton Leigh, only no one wanted to meet him, no one cared to ask him to his or her house, and he was gradually being quietly and completely ostracized wherever his hateful presence glutted every one by coming suddenly and firmly to his side, and quietly making it very clearly understood that she at least was his friend. It was utterly unexpected move and people found themselves pausing. Even those who had somehow produced the most detailed and authentic histories of Calton Leigh's misconduct felt themselves shaken. Miss Grahame had been there so much—Miss Grahame had been Mildred Leigh's dear friend—surely Miss Grahame must have known if anything had been amiss. Perhaps, after all they had been misinformed. If his wife's most intimate friend was friendly with him still, certainly no one else had any right to be critical. He was asked to dinner—just a quiet little dinner—without delay.

And gradually it came to be a usual thing that when Calton Leigh was asked to dinner Miss Grahame would be asked to meet him. A sensation is a very short-lived article and leaves no perceptible marks on those who have enjoyed it, except perhaps an increased appetite for the next, and people's interest in Calton Leigh and Miss Grahame was beginning to flag, when it was suddenly revived by certain very interesting reports—reports which were confirmed by individual observers to the satisfaction of the most suitable and delightful, people said. They had sympathized with and consoled one another until they had fallen in love! Very natural! A little soon perhaps for Calton Leigh to have forgotten his wife—a little soon for Katherine Grahame to have forgotten her friend, but—very natural!

There was no sound in the perfect drawing-room but the occasional crackling of the fire. Miss Grahame's face was hidden in her arms now, and the calm, sweet eyes in the picture looked serenely down on her bowed, motionless head. She did not speak again, but in every line of her kneeling figure was love and sorrow unutterable.

She knelt on until the sound of the front door bell startled her painfully into life. She seemed to stand for a moment listening intently with her breath coming quick and short and her eyes glowing with a strange deep light. Then she drew the curtain back from over the picture, and crossing to the fireplace seated herself just as Calton Leigh entered the room.

He gave a quick glance round as he came in and said eagerly, "This is very nice. I was afraid I might be too soon."

She looked up at him with a smile, which made her face wonderfully fascinating. She did not look out her best, but as they had met so recently that perhaps was unnecessary.

"Too soon?" she said.

"Yes. I mean I was afraid you might not be alone."

She laughed a low, musical laugh, still with her beautiful shining eyes fixed upon him, and as he looked upon her his own eyes seemed to grow deep and wild with a feeling he could hardly control. He whitened slightly, and turning away his face with an obvious effort, sat down near her.

For a few moments there was silence. She sat watching him with a strangely expectant expression on her face, and he, though he seemed to be always conscious of her gaze, never looked round at her. At last she said, with another low laugh:

"Have you nothing to say, Mr. Leigh, now you are here?"

He started as though he had been shot, and turned to her sharply, rising to his feet as he did so.

"To say!" he began vaguely. "To say—" Then he broke off and stood looking at her, as if could never turn his eyes away again. She did not turn her head from him, only her face was deadly white, and her eyes unnaturally dark and bright, as she smiled that wonderful smile right into his eyes again. Then, suddenly, with a low moan he sank down on his knees beside her, and caught her hands in both his own.

"To say!" he cried again. "Katherine! Katherine! you know what it is I must say. I love you. My life is nothing to me without you! I think of you day and night; I long for you; I hunger and starve for you, with every breath I draw. Katherine, come to me; come into my life and satisfy me, my life, my love. I cannot live without you—come!"

As he touched her she turned as cold as death, and a strange light clouded her eyes, but she never turned her face to his, but even 1—even 1—eyes at eyes. She had made no effort to resist him, to release herself from his touch, and as he ended—

"Yes, I will come," she said.

CHAPTER II.

Two months had passed away and Miss Grahame was alone in her drawing-room evidently expecting something or some one. It had been one of those strange and terrible days when London is enshrouded in a weird and inexplicable darkness. There had been no fog to speak of and yet it had been dark—dark as night almost. Over Miss Grahame's beautiful house all day the heavy shadow had brooded, the pretty cheery room had lost its glossy and glittering, and the servants had gone about with that depressed, almost awe-struck manner, which is the nearly inevitable result of so unnatural a state of things. No one had called, of course; Miss Grahame had hardly left the drawing-room, had spoken scarcely a word all day. Over all the house a deadly quiet had rested.

But now at half-past eight the lamps were lighted and the natural darkness which all of us know and which to all of us comes sometimes as a longed-for friend had succeeded the unnatural darkness, which all vaguely dread as the new known and unnatural is always more or less dreaded. And Miss Grahame had apparently passed after the quiet of the day into a state of strange excitement. She was walking up and down the long drawing-room, up and down, up and down, and her pale cheeks burned with the crimson flush and her eyes were bright and glittering. The past two months had wrought several slight changes in her appearance. Her face was thinner as though that flush had burned there often of late and worn the cheeks away with its hot fire. Her eyes looked larger and slightly hollow, as with some long continued strain, and there was a strange, never-changing expression of incessant watchfulness and expectation. She was dressed in a loud velvet gown, slightly open at the throat—black—always black.

At last there came a ring at the front door bell. She did not start at the sound, only she stopped suddenly in her walk and a curious thrill seemed to run through all her frame, to leap from her eyes at last in a flash of burning light that seemed for the moment absolutely to transfigure her. Then it died suddenly away, and her face and manner were very still and quiet as she stood there waiting with her watchful eyes fixed on the door until it was opened by Calton Leigh.

There are some faces—and they belong to men quite as often as to women—on which every passing struggle, mental or physical, every passion, good or evil, leaves its record in lines which no time may ever wear out. Calton Leigh's was such a face and the two months that had left those sleepless traces on Miss Grahame had made such terrible marks on him as many times the number of years should not have done. His dark, clear-cut features were worn and haggard, the cheeks hollow, the forehead lined as though with terrible suffering. Round the rather unpleasant mouth—the least refined feature in a face which was too emotional and expressive, too incontrovertibly for a man—were deep lines, which gave it a strangely drawn expression, and the deep black eyes were sunken and wild with a fierce, angry light, which he seemed to struggle always to repress.

He came into the room very quietly and his face was a little set and white, as if he were holding himself together with great effort. He crossed slowly to where Miss Grahame stood and made a movement as if to take her in his arms, but she moved a step back and gave him her hand; a strange spasm seemed to pass across his face, and he waited a moment, as if to make sure of his voice, before he said, very quietly, "You have had my letter?"

"Yes," she answered, coldly and deliberately. "Shall we sit down?"

She seated herself as she spoke, and after an instant's pause he dropped into a chair near and, putting his head back with a long sigh, he closed his eyes. There was no repose on his haggard, sensitive face though; it was full of keen sensation. Miss Grahame did not speak, and at last he roused himself, and, opening his eyes, said: "If you knew, if you only knew what these last three days have done to me—what it is to be with you again! Is it possible that it is only three days since I saw you—since I was here?"

He sat upright, and looked around the room as though a great length of time had passed since he had seen it, and as he did so, suddenly something seemed to catch his eye; he turned white to the lips, and half rose to his feet with a hoarse inarticulate exclamation. He was looking at the uncovered picture of his dead wife.

"What is the matter?" asked Miss Grahame. She did not follow the direction of his eyes. She had seated herself so that her own face was in shadow, and her watchful eyes were resting on his working, quivering features, with something curiously patient and untiring in their steady look.

"What—why—I never seen that picture before."

"It stands there always," she answered very low, with a strange thrill in her deep voice. "There is a certain place for it in a room."

He paused a moment, still staring at the picture, and then said:

"May I—may I—cover it—now?"

"Why?"

"Because—because—" He seemed literally to tear his eyes away from it with a fierce effort of will, and turned to Miss Grahame. "It's this confounded weather I suppose, it always affects me. It's so horrible, somehow, it's so—so awfully unnatural. I'm—I'm not myself."

"Cover it yourself then."

For a moment he hesitated. Then he rose, and walking across the room stood for a moment looking down into the gentle, pictured face. As he looked a strange horror crept into his eyes, to be dominated quite suddenly by a wild, fierce expression of reckless resolution. He pulled the curtain roughly over the picture and strode back to Miss Grahame's side. As she saw his face she stirred a little, and a quite new expression stirred into life in her still and watchful eyes—an expression of almost sickening, incredulous hope. She had never before seen that look on Calton Leigh's face.

"You know why I have come here to-night?" he said, and his voice was as his face—strong and determined.

"I did not ask you."

"No, you did not ask me. It is weeks since you have asked me! Asked me—great heavens! Katherine, there are limits to every man's endurance and mine has given out." He whitened a moment as if determined not to lose hold on himself and Miss Grahame sat motionless. Her face was quite white now, but perfectly unmoved, only her eyes glittered with a burning light until they never left his face.

"I thought, when I spoke to you two months ago, that I had suffered all a man could suffer. If you had told me then that you could never love me I should have killed myself—yes, I should have killed myself and never have known what a hell upon earth a man's life may become." He caught his breath sharply and went on, seeming to lose his self-control a little with the force of his own words. "I have suffered since then, I will not give you up. You have been mine; you gave me your love; you let me taste happiness. By heaven, I will not let it go!"

He made a step or two toward her and stood right over her, not touching her, but looking down at her with a fierce, restrained intensity of passion awful to see. Still she did not move, only her eyes grew bright under his strange gaze until her rings cut into the white fingers and her breath was heavy and labored.

"What right have you—I say what right have you to raise a man to heaven and then to plunge him to hell: to torture him as you have tortured me during these awful weeks? You led me on—can you deny it?—until my very soul was yours, and now, for three days you will not even see me. Katherine, Katherine, what does it mean?"

As he spoke the last words she slowly lifted her hand and held it out to him for a moment, without speaking. Then she said in a low, clear voice: "It means—that I do not love you."

As if the words had turned him into stone he stood before her speechless, motionless, almost breathless. At last he repeated in a hollow, mechanical voice: "You do not—love me."

Still there was no touch of pity in the hard white face that watched him with such terrible intentness.

"I do not love you, and I will never be your wife," she said.

He heard, in a terrible cry, he seemed to realize the meaning of her words, and he flung himself down on his knees in a frenzy of wild despair.

"Katherine," he cried, "my love, my love, what do you say? Look at me; look at my face. You are my life—my love—I cannot let you go now. Katherine, Katherine, Katherine, speak to me; tell me that it is not true."

No answer, no relaxing on her part, only her whole personality seemed to be quivering and vibrating, with a breathless, almost unendurable agony of suspense, an intense burning eagerness, so repressed he felt she would be driven to madness by quiescence of every limb and feature that it would have made her almost terrible to see had not the man before her been blinded by his passion and madness.

Her silence seemed to madden him and he sprang to his feet with a desperate cry. "By heaven!" he cried. "By heaven, you are too late! Not be my wife? You cannot help yourself. You are mine, mine, mine forever, for I have given my soul for you. Listen to me," and he seized her hands in his in a grip of iron, while the spirit words seemed to burst from him in a reckless frenzy of mad despair. "Listen to me, I say. My love for you is not what you think it is—a new thing, the growth of months. I loved you from the first moment I saw you. I loved you then as I love you now—above all things in heaven and earth. I tried to crush my love, but it grew and grew stronger and stronger, until it destroyed everything, every thought, every feeling but one—my deathless determination to possess you."

He paused a moment, mastered by the overwhelming force of his unreasoning passion. He had drawn her up from her chair and was holding her close to him, closer and closer as he poured forth his words like a resistless torrent of fire. She was quite passive in his hands, white and cold as stone, and all her life seemed to be concentrated in those burning eyes, which seemed to draw the words from him against his tenacity of devouring light. Still holding her in that mad, agonized clutch he went on in a low, hoarse whisper:

"Silures stood in your place, my love, my love. I gave my soul for you. Your place is empty."

Then with an awful cry—a cry in which triumph, hatred and revenge were strangely blended—the woman tore herself away from his despairing hands.

"At last," she cried, and her deep voice rang through the big room. "Oh, God! at last! at last!"

He fell back a step, and for an instant they faced each other in silence; then she went on, still in that wonderful voice, ringing voice, while her whole figure seemed to dilate with the force of her terrible triumph.

"I have waited for this moment—waited and watched until I thought it was madness. I have tried everything. I have watched and worked, and at last—at last I have it. Murderer, murderer! I have known this all the time. Did you think—were you fool enough to think that I, who knew her and loved her so, oh God, who loved her so, could ever believe my darling capable of such a crime? That she, my little girl, my little Millie, should have taken her own life innocent life! Fool, fool, I knew my darling."

The man before her had turned an awful ashen gray, and he stood there, the frenzy dead within him, self-convicted, utterly contemptible.

"Suicide," they said," she went on, "as you knew they must say 'suicide!' You did not count on the friend that loved her! I knew—I knew it was a murder, and from the first I have suspected you. I stood your friend—your friend—when all her other friends who could believe that she had committed this sin, on his knees beside her, and caught her hands in both his own.

"To say!" he cried again. "Katherine! Kathrine! you know what it is I must say. I love you. My life is nothing to me without you! I think of you day and night; I long for you; I hunger and starve for you, with every breath I draw. Katherine, come to me; come into my life and satisfy me, my life, my love. I cannot live without you—come!"

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CHAPTER II.

Two months had passed away and Miss Grahame was alone in her drawing-room evidently expecting something or some one. It had been one of those strange and terrible days when London is enshrouded in a weird and inexplicable darkness. There had been no fog to speak of and yet it had been dark—dark as night almost. Over Miss Grahame's beautiful house all day the heavy shadow had brooded, the pretty cheery room had lost its glossy and glittering, and the servants had gone about with that depressed, almost awe-struck manner, which is the nearly inevitable result of so unnatural a state of things. No one had called, of course; Miss Grahame had hardly left the drawing-room, had spoken scarcely a word all day. Over all the house a deadly quiet had rested.

But now at half-past eight the lamps were lighted and the natural darkness which all of us know and which to all of us comes sometimes as a longed-for friend had succeeded the unnatural darkness, which all vaguely dread as the new known and unnatural is always more or less dreaded. And Miss Grahame had apparently passed after the quiet of the day into a state of strange excitement. She was walking up and down the long drawing-room, up and down, up and down, and her pale cheeks burned with the crimson flush and her eyes were bright and glittering. The past two months had wrought several slight changes in her appearance. Her face was thinner as though that flush had burned there often of late and worn the cheeks away with its hot fire. Her eyes looked larger and slightly hollow, as with some long continued strain, and there was a strange, never-changing expression of incessant watchfulness and expectation. She was dressed in a loud velvet gown, slightly open at the throat—black—always black.

At last there came a ring at the front door bell. She did not start at the sound, only she stopped suddenly in her walk and a curious thrill seemed to run through all her frame, to leap from her eyes at last in a flash of burning light that seemed for the moment absolutely to transfigure her. Then it died suddenly away, and her face and manner were very still and quiet as she stood there waiting with her watchful eyes fixed on the door until it was opened by Calton Leigh.

There are some faces—and they belong to men quite as often as to women—on which every passing struggle, mental or physical, every passion, good or evil, leaves its record in lines which no time may ever wear out. Calton Leigh's was such a face and the two months that had left those sleepless traces on Miss Grahame had made such terrible marks on him as many times the number of years should not have done. His dark, clear-cut features were worn and haggard, the cheeks hollow, the forehead lined as though with terrible suffering. Round the rather unpleasant mouth—the least refined feature in a face which was too emotional and expressive, too incontrovertibly for a man—were deep lines, which gave it a strangely drawn expression, and

SOME LEGENDS OF THE DEAD.

The Spot Which Many Arabs Honor as the Tomb of Eve.

Where the Wife of Explorer Livingstone was Laid at Rest—A Visit to the Distant Grave of Paul and Virginia.

IT is not very often that an American traveler visits the little town of Jeddah, on the Arabian coast of the Red Sea, yet every year as the sacred season of the Hedjaz comes around, hundreds of thousands of devout Musselmans are disembarked at its little harbor, intent on making a pilgrimage to the Mecca, which insures the happiness and honor of paradise.

It was not with any intention of attempting to visit the tomb of Mohammed and to gaze on the mysterious "Kaaba" that I took sail one moonlight night from Suakim and crossed the turbulent Red Sea to Jeddah, writes Laurance C. Goodrich to the Boston Globe. My object was to visit the shrine of one venerated by Christian and Ishmaelite alike—the tomb of Eve, the mother of mankind.

Leaving Suakim just after sundown, when the land breeze had sprung up, in a small dhow with a prodigious sail, I arrived off Jeddah about 9 o'clock the next morning. As seen from the sea the town is very imposing. The tall white houses, built entirely of coral rag, are, many of them, several stories high, and adorned with beautiful hanging windows of carved woodwork. The town is entirely surrounded, except on the sea front, by a massive wall from fifteen to twenty feet high, through which three gates give egress to the country beyond. At sundown all of these gates are closed, and at all times they are guarded by Turkish soldiers.

The channel by which the harbor is reached is very intricate, as coral reefs crop up in every direction, and are constantly growing. There are, however, plenty of native pilots, always waiting outside to pilot dhows in, and, taking one on board, we were soon safely anchored off the main landing.

As I was obliged to leave Jeddah again that night, I lost no time in getting ashore, and after breakfast and a tub, the latter of which was necessary after a night in a dhow, I set off with one of the British consulate's cavasses to visit Eve's grave. This is situated about a mile and a half outside of the city on the north.

Passing out by the northern gate the land raises gradually to the grassy plain, which is in full view from the time you leave the city wall. The country presents a very stern appearance, there being but little vegetation. A few date palms are dotted about, and away to the west in the direction of Mecca groups of stunted acacia trees render the prospect less barren. The approach to the tomb from the sandy slope, rising about 200 feet above the town.

The grave itself is 160 feet long and five feet wide, and is surrounded by a stone wall four feet high, covered with chunam. In the center of it rises a small domecrowned mosque, wherein pilgrims assemble to say their prayers. The mosque is in charge of some dervishes who have plenty to do in keeping it clear of the crowds of beggars who assemble and clamor for backsheesh.

Inside the mosque is perfectly plain, except that in the center is erected an altar. This stands about three feet high, and is covered with chunam. The curtains being drawn aside disclose a black stone let into the floor. This stone is supposed to lie directly over the

TOMB OF EVE,

And is polished like marble by the kisses of the faithful. It is by no means permitted to every pilgrim to place his lips on this sacred spot, but by a liberal amount of backsheesh and by the presence of the consular cavasses I was permitted the honor, and accordingly the curtain was drawn and on hands and knees I paid homage to our legendary mother. The stone which is treated with so much honor is a very curious one, evidently meteoric, and is supposed, like the Kaaba of the Mecca, to have been specially sent down from heaven for its present use.

I had a long chat with the chief custodian of the tomb, who told me that the office had been in the family for generations. He said that the most regular visitors to the shrine were the Bedouins, who in their yearly wanderings through the Arabian desert rarely fail to visit the tomb. I asked him if there was any legend as to why Eve was supposed to be buried there, but he knew none, and asked, "Where else would she be buried except on this sacred soil?"

It is for many pilgrims a pious duty ere they should assign to spots so distant from each other for the graves of our first parents. While Eve rests on the shores of the Red Sea, Adam is popularly supposed to lie buried under the forest-clad slopes of Adams Peak in Ceylon.

On my way back to Jeddah I asked my companions if they supposed the grave represented the stature of Eve and they said "surely." A stroll through the bazaar brought a pleasant day to a close, and soon after sundown I was again on the sea, bound for the African coast.

It is far away from the Red Sea to the Isle of France, and probably no greater contrast could be imagined than that which exists between the arid shores of Arabia and the tropic luxuriance of Mauritius. Yet just as the tomb of Eve has imbued the desert with an interest it would not otherwise possess, so has Bernardin St. Pierre's romance of Paul and Virginia spread a halo round Mauritius.

No one would think of visiting the island and without paying a visit to the graves of the hero and heroine on whose sad fate St. Pierre founded his romance. For Paul and Virginia in the flesh and their true story is as much less known as the fable.

In the year 1744 a terrible famine raged over the Isle of France, and on the receipt of the news in Europe a ship called the St. Gerau was dispatched with stores to the relief of the Governor, Matie de Labourdonais. The ship, after a prosperous voyage, arrived one summer evening off the island.

The captain knowing the straits the inhabitants were in was anxious to communicate with the shore as soon as possible, and endeavored to take his ship in by night. Although they were but a mile from land only three escaped, those who could swim being seized by the sharks which infest those waters.

On board the St. Gerau were two lovers, Mlle. Malett and M. de Peramon, who were to be married when they reached the island. Their grief at the idea of being separated when the ship struck was terrible, and clasping each other in their arms they awaited their fate. At length a wave swept them from the deck, and the next morning their bodies were found still locked in final embrace, where they had washed ashore on a little beach of what has since been known as Tombeau Bay.

Such is the true story of Paul and Virginia, and in a grove of

MAJESTIC RUFFIA PALMS

Hard by the little beach stands their grave to this day. The drive from Port Louis to Pamplemousses, where the grave is situated, is a lovely one and harmonizes well with the romance attached to the spot. Palms of all sorts, including the beautiful talipot (Corypha umbraculifera) line the road, and at the time I visited it the beautiful flamboyant was in full bloom and threw its scarlet spikes in every direction across the pathway.

The grave itself is situated a little to the left of the road, about seven miles from Port Louis. It is a simple structure of stone, about three feet high above the ground. No inscription tells who lies beneath, but the inevitable guide is at hand to point it out and demand a "pour boire" for his pains.

The stones have been sadly mutilated by relic-hunting tourists, who have chipped and disfigured them in a barbarous manner. A magnificent bougainvillea spreads its purple mantle overhead, and I collected some of the brilliant petals as a memento of the spot. Clumps of scarlet poncea and a monster passion flower added more beauty to a scene thoroughly in harmony with the memories of the spot.

There has lately been a scheme to put up a more suitable monument to the lovers, and a considerable sum of money has been collected on the island for that purpose. Whatever form it may take it is to be hoped that it will be erected on the spot where they now rest, which nature would seem to have designed for a poetic shrine.

Many people who are well acquainted with the travels and adventures of Dr. Livingstone are unaware that the treacherous climate of Africa claimed his wife, as well as himself, as its victim, yet such is the case, and while Westminster Abbey holds the bones of the great explorer those of his wife find a quiet resting-place by the side of the Zambesi.

Passing down this beautiful river on my way from Lake Nyassa to the coast I turned aside at the little village of Thupanga for the purpose of visiting Mrs. Livingstone's grave.

The head man of the village readily undertook to guide me to the spot, but he warned me that the undergrowth of the forest was very dense, and that it would be necessary to take a party of men with us to cut the way through the jungle. The fact of an "insungi" being buried there had rendered

THE SPOT UNCANNY

In the eyes of the superstitious natives, and the pathway which led by the tree under which Mrs. Livingstone was laid had become entirely obliterated.

Starting from the village with my guides and ten men, we at once plunged into the forest, which is here very dense, and, owing to the thick "lianes" which hung from every tree, difficult of passage. After three-quarters of an hour's hard work, during which we progressed, at the outside, half a mile, we arrived at the foot of a gigantic baobab tree.

Here, my guide informed me, was the site of the grave, but it took another hour's hard work clearing away the brush before we could reach it. At last, however, my search was rewarded, and the grave brought to light. A wooden cross placed at the head had fallen down, and, wreathed in creepers, lay on the ground.

The grave itself is a simple mound of earth, like so many of those seen in English church-yards, and, considering that it had not been banked up in a score of years, was in fair condition. Considering the heavy tropical rains of the Zambesi Valley, it is wonderful that it had not been entirely effaced.

I had the jungle around the grave carefully cleared away, and put a stout bamboo fence around it and replaced the cross at the head. On my return to the village I arranged with the head man to have the grass or jungle cut periodically.

Some day I hope a more enduring monument may be erected to the daughter of Moffat and wife of Livingstone. Certainly no more appropriate resting-place could be found for her than under the gnarled and twisted branches of the old tree at Thupanga.

Here, amidst the scenes and people she loved and within sound of the waters that will ever be associated with her husband's name, she was laid to rest in the early spring of 1862. Since that time many of her countrymen have passed up and down the Zambesi, and it is to be regretted that none of them ever stopped to repair her grave.

ERICSSON HAD MANY TITLES.

Knight Commander Five Times Over and an "Excellency" Besides.

John Ericsson, by virtue of his appointment as Knight Commander of the Royal Order of Isabella, was a Spanish nobleman, and his position as Knight Commander, first class, Danish Order of Dannenbrog, gave him the title of "Excellency," with rank next to that of Field Marshal and Admiral, and entitled him to the military honors due to a Lieutenant-General.

The army regulations provide (paragraphs 427, 449) that officers of foreign service shall be received and saluted according to their rank, says the Army and Navy Journal. It says nothing concerning funeral honors to be paid them, but the regulations provide that on the occasion of the burial of a Lieutenant-General a salute of fifteen guns shall be fired and a funeral escort be provided, under the command of a Lieutenant-General or an officer nearest to that grade in rank, to consist of a regiment of infantry, a battalion of cavalry and a battery of artillery (paragraphs 465, 467, 474, 475). As Ericsson ranked next after Sherman, or with a Vice-admiral, under the Danish law, this fixes his status under the navy regulations governing the matter of funeral ceremonies.

Aside altogether from the question of merit the honors bestowed upon Ericsson while living will serve to guide those in charge of some obsequies that may take place. If a funeral should come, it would look up my quarters at the only tavern in the place. It was a wretched dwelling and kept by an old man and woman, the surliest couple I