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RIP VAN WINKLE.

OR, THE

SLEEP OF TWENTY YEARS.

A LEGEND OF THE KAATSKILLS.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF  
"THE SERF," "L'AFRICAIN," AND "THE TICKET-OF-LEAVE MAN."

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Wilbur Ford

WILBUR FORD

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## RIP VAN WINKLE.

### CHAPTER I.

THE INN. SLEEPY HOLLOW. THE PLOTTER. DAME VAN WINKLE.

And let not a man then be seen here,  
Who unarm'd will not drink;  
To the base from the brinks;  
A health, etc.

Herrick.

It was a lovely afternoon in June, 1645.

The air, exulting in its freshness and perfume, as if just loosed from Heaven's portals, played joyously around the hills of the Kaatskills entrancing all who felt its influence, from the fevered invalid in his pillowed chair, to the sunburnt cow-boy reclining on the heather, into a deeper love of nature than their physical compositions were apparently adapted to imbibe.

And *apropos* of imbibing, come with us, and you shall see it embodied in a way that shall reconcile you to "honest Iago" as far as his comments on the "swag-bellied Hollander" can contrive.

The fleecy clouds seemed loth to glide across the blue infinity above, and joyously did the sun illumine the little enclosure that lay before a white-washed house, of the regular neat, (T) excellent structure in the snug little vales.

The proprietor had not taken the trouble to put up any beast, bird, or fish as a token of the good entertainment for man he presented.

"Nick Vedder" was the lettering on a shingle of pine over the doorway, and that was all.

The warmth had led the half dozen drinkers and smokers to pull the benches out upon the grass before the entrance and under the window in the shade.

A table, like a wooden Atlas, held up the globes of fat earthen pitchers and round bottles of liquor.

We shall not describe the party separately, as the host, Nicholas Vedder by name, was as good a specimen of his class as was to be met with between the Rensselaerwy and Nieuw Amsterdam. He was a large, solid man, as thick as he was broad, with a wide face, hot complexion, round blue eyes, and very little hair on his head, on which he wore a black cloth cap that seemed to be as firm a fixture as the short sturdy brown pipe whose pale amber mouth-piece never quitted his lips.

Nature had not framed him in this substantial fashion without bestowing on him a mind in keeping with his physical appearance; his perceptions were to

the full as obtuse as the most ardent lover of "the existing order of things, could desire.

However, as he only had to keep score, and know when to send down the river when his stock was running low, he got along swimmingly, or rather with the tranquillity of a land-turtle.

His son, Hendrick, a boy of six years, was being taught by the pastor of the little church that one might see over the two or three cottages just this side of the western slope. He corrected the tallies when his sire grew confused in his reckoning.

Nick could also sing a trink-ied not so badly, and he was engaged in delivering the solo part of the original of "Mynheer Van Dunk who never got drunk," when the grating of a foot on the sand by the road took off his attention.

The new comer was a spare man, sharp of feature and with little piercing eyes that always looked at people when the latter were not looking at their owner.

He was in well-worn coat, vest and hose. The steel clasp in his tall black hat, from economy, held no feather, and the mock ornaments of his shoe-buckles had been miserly picked out.

He made his way through the drinkers, with a contemptuous turn of the nose.

"Good afternoon, Mynheer Derrick!" said they, pipe in mouth. "How zu beest, Mynheer Von Beeckman? Sit down und have a pint mit me, hein?"

"Good afternoon, Sylvester Bleecker!" returned the new-comer; "have you trimmed the apple-tree that you are lolling at ease so soon?"

To another:

"I am well, Mynheer Blokenschlager, but if I smoked that vile Indian's weed from morning to night, I would not stay so long."

And to a third:

"I thank you, Abram Brom, but I have neither time nor money to waste in guzzling."

And to round off these pretty and congenial sentiments, this joyous kill-feast, in the harshest of tones, addressed mine host.

"Have you got that three-quarters' rent ready yet, Mynheer Nicholas Vedder?"

The landlord waited five full seconds, took his pipe from his mouth with a slowness that consumed twenty more, and after an investigation of the question in all its bearings, came to the conclusion that:

"No, Mynheer Von Beeckman!" was the only North-West Passage out of the puzzle.

"Ha! I thought as much!" exclaimed the landlord, making a note in his book. "I will give you till this time to-morrow, and then, if you don't have it, out you go!"

Nick looked around placidly. It was clear that he had dwelt too long in the house to be able to imagine its existence without his occupancy.

"Out you will go," repeated Derrick, closing his book with a shark's jaws-like snap.

"Oh, come, Mynheer Derrick," said Vedder, pouring out a hornful, "come, sit down and let us talk it over, over a glass."

As Beeckman was hesitating, more through calculation than by any prompting to yield to the natural entreaty, Hendrick Vedder came running up to his father.

He was fresh from school.

"Oh, father!" cried he, his cheeks flushing, "good Master Keyser is going to put me into fractions to-morrow, 'cause I went through subtraction so good."

"Yes, my boy," said Vedder, "if dey hurt you when you are put in, tell me und I will speak mit der pastor."

Hendrick was, to the best of his ability, proceeding to explain the true nature of the arithmetical term, when Derrick interrupted.

"He is your brat, Vedder?"

"He is my dear son," corrected the other.

"Hum!"

"What do you mean, Mynheer Derrick?" asked Bleecker.

"Nothing. I hope he wont grow up into a drunken idler like his father," returned the pleasantly-spoken landlord.

Little Hendrick darted a fiery glance at him.

"Why don't you knock him down, father?" said he, unable to account for his father's inertia.

"I will tell you why!" broke in a voice.

None of the drinkers, quietly regarding the scene, had spoken.

It was a young, good-looking woman, in the many petticoats of a housewife of the day, with white cap and apron and thread-and-needle bag. She had approached unnoticed.

Her shrewish air caused Abram Brom, whose stool was in her path, to pull it back instantly.

"I'll tell you why, my boy," said the woman, eyeing Derrick with no agreeable glance. "Mynheer Von Beeckman has got your father in his power. And what's the good of having a man down unless you trample on him?"

This sentiment caused Sylvester and Blokenschlager to utter a sonorous "Yaw!" in unison.

"It's the way of the world, Gretchen," replied Derrick, fidgetting a little before the woman.

"It's the way of *your* world, your little, mean, miserly idea of a world!" returned the dame. "Hendrick, go to my house and play with my girl Meenie. I have something to say that your young ears may not know yet awhile."

Nick Vedder nodded permission to the boy, and he gladly started off.

"You are a pretty one, Mynheer Derrick," resumed the dame, "to make an outcry like an Indian attack over a small matter of house-rent. Why, ten years ago, half the land of this Village of Falling Water belonged to my husband Rip Van Winkle."

"Dat was so!" exclaimed Nick Vedder, venturing to drink.

"And it is mostly yours now, Derrick, by your leading him into guzzling and riot with these fellows, who care no more than he does for wife and child starving at home."

"I don't drink, dame, I never seduced him into it," said the landlord.

"Don't tell me, for I know you, Derrick;" cried Mistress Van Winkle, fastening her glittering eye upon him.

He was mute.

"You, I say, you have led him into wasting all his goods—all except the house over our heads. I own that, or it would have gone like the rest long ago! But that is mine, and you at least shall not add it to your store!"

"I wouldn't speak so of Mynheer Von Beeckman," said Vedder in a conciliatory tone.

"You wouldn't!" caught up the shrew, "you! And who are you! Nick Vedder! a man who keeps the trap where my good man and many another honest woman's husband has gone to ruin. You, indeed! I'll tell you what!"

She made a threatening gesture that so terrified Blokenschlager that he bit his pipe stem in two.

"The hand of every honest woman ought to be in the pulling down of your vile den!"

There was every likelihood of the vixen winning the day by the outburst.

Derrick chuckled to himself. Bleecker and his friends looked on from behind the pipes' smoke.

"But, Dame Van Winkle," said the host timidly, "my friends only come to my house to enjoy themselves—we are a set of Yolly Dogs together."

"Jolly Dogs!" echoed Gretchen. "Do you ever see the wife of a Jolly Dog? her home is the kennel! Did you ever look at the children of a Jolly Dog? their home is the road and the ditch!"

"Well," said Vedder, plucking up a little audacity, "I don't know what your home may be, Dame Van Winkle, but judging by the noise I hear you and your husband making some nights, I should say it was more like a black smith's than a kennel!"

The drinkers laughed.

"If it was ten times worse, Nick Vedder, it would still be preferable to your house, which has caused me so many tears!"

"What, Gretchen?" said Derrick insidiously. "Are you very wretched?"

"Ain't you glad to hear it? be merry on the misery of my heart!" retorted she bitterly. "Ten years ago, I might have had you, quite as easily as the honest man that I chose to take."

"Ahem! Well, we've shared him between us, Gretchen."

"How?"

"Why, you took his person, and I his property. I have improved my half," added the landlord dryly. "What have you done with yours?"

Gretchen shook her head.

"Not much!" answered she, but more as if she were speaking to herself.

"But I won't despair yet of getting him out of the evil one's power. And," here she set her teeth, "wait till I get him home to-night!"

"Where is he?" inquired Derrick.

"I thought he was here," replied Gretchen; "luckily for Mynheer Nicholas Vedder, he is not!"

"He's oop on der hergs mit his goon," said Sylvester. "I saw him there this morning, with his dog by his side."

"A cur worthless as himself," said Dame Van Winkle. "But he must come home in the end, and he won't gain anything by keeping off so long!"

So saying, she turned away, to the relief of the party, and retraced her steps towards her cottage.

To her surprise, Derrick was following her.

"Do you know, Gretchen," said he, in reply to her inquiring glance, "that the last ten years have only improved you! You are comely still, and thrifty, and just the woman I like. I think you made a mistake in rejecting me."

The woman laughed. She accepted the compliment, but did not take it too avidly.

The fish that know a trick or two often take the bait without touching the hook it more or less cunningly veiled.

"Ah, Derrick, you mustn't think that a woman will love a man merely for a roof and daily bread. Food and shelter is all any woman would ever get out of you! Oh, if Rip would only reform, I would show him how I could love him. But no woman could love you, Derrick!"

Derrick started.

"The time may come," muttered he.

Gretchen was just closing her cottage door behind her. She turned around.

"Not while Rip lives," returned she with a taunting laugh.

"Then, I will wait till you shall have killed him," said Derrick in a loud voice.

As he went slowly back to his house, he met at the doorway, just going in, a young man, with a letter in his hand.

There was some resemblance between him and the landlord. This fox-like

cast of the countenance in both was very natural as Cockles, the youth's name, was a nephew of Van Breeckman's.

Derrick, no great scholar himself, had placed his nephew with the lawyer of the village, a situation which the apprentice filled creditably to the profession, thanks to his sharpness.

"Well," said Derrick, pushing him into the house in front of him, "what do you want, now, you rascal?"

"It's something you want," returned Cockles, falling into a chair first thing. "Here—it's a letter from my master."

"My lawyer?" said Derrick. "What's wrong now, I wonder?"

"Open it, and you'll see."

"Why, it is open, you rascal!" cried Derrick, seeing both wax and string broken.

"Oh, yes," remarked Cockles, trying to look astonished. "So it is! Oh, I remember. I read it as I came along!"

"How dare you——"

"Th! save your breath, nunkey, save your breath! Read it, and say I am no prophet if it don't take you in the short wind."

Derrick spread out the note on the desk before him and saw these lines:

"MYNHEER VAN BREECKMAN:—

"Those papers you obtained from time to time from Rip Van Winkle, are mere mortgages on his property. As you have built extensively upon them, and as the ground has grown in value, he will derive considerable benefit when the deeds are fore-closed and the estates sold.

"If you wish to retain the lands, you had better procure a proper deed of sale from Van Winkle at once.

"Yours, etc.

"HOOPT VANDER MOSTYN."

Cockles' laugh drew his uncle out of the confusion into which the communication plunged him.

"Ha, ha!" chuckled that reprobate. "You see what you've been and gone and done! Do you want to make a beggar of me!"

"I have only worked to enrich that vagabond!" groaned Derrick, beating his forehead.

"Very true! I gave you credit for more art nunkey!"

"Ruined, ruined!" lamented the landlord. "All my houses are on another man's lands!"

"Pull 'em down, nunkey!" said Cockles, with a laugh.

"Fool, fool!" continued Derrick, walking up and down the room.

"There's another in the room besides yourself," said Cockles; "make a distinction, uncle!"

"Oh, what a fool I have been!"

"Oh, that's clear, now!" "But, I say, nunkey, calling names won't do any good!"

"You must hurry back to Vander Mostyn," said Derrick, "and get him to draw up a full deed of sale."

"All right," said Cockles, not rising, though.

"Rip must sign it," said Derrick in a hesitating voice.

"How, nunkey?"

"Oh, he won't do so, if he knows what it is. But he can neither read nor write!"

"Take care, uncle," said Cockles, rocking himself in the chair. "The man that's looking for a fool, and picks up Rip Van Winkle, will drop him pretty considerably quick, I caution you!"

"Pooh! he's poor! I'll give him a handful of money. He's a drunkard!"

he shall have a bellyful of drink. But no more loitering. Hurry to your master."

"I'm off!"

"And let this be a lesson to you, boy," said the landlord in a grave voice, "of the evils resulting from drink."

"And of putting out money on bad security," retorted Crockles, darting out of the door with a laugh.

"Young scoundrel!" said Derrick, locking up his desk. "Now to find Rip."

Hardly had he gone out upon the threshold than his eyes were attracted towards the farther end of the only street of the village.

A cloud of dust there betokened quite a scene.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE HUNTER'S WELCOME HOME. THE RENOWNED SCHNEIDER'S EXPLOIT. THE TEMPTER. GLIDING INTO THE PIT-FALL.

The clamor much of men, and boys, and dogs.--[THOMSON.]

*Scott.*--The mention of dogs twice was superfluous; it might have been easily avoided.

*Ritson.*--Very true--by mentioning them only once.

In the midst of a group composed of all the idlers of the village, was a tall wiry figure, whose large bones and well-knit joints gave promise of great strength and unusual activity. He was accoutred in a leather hunting-frock, the colour of which approached as nearly as possible to the faded tints of dead leaves. His legs were cased in long leggings of deerskin, which reached half way up the thigh and were fastened by a strap to his girdle; his head was covered by a felt hat, and an ammunition pouch of dressed bearskin was tightly buckled round his waist by a broad leathern belt, into which was also thrust a hunting-knife, with a buckhorn handle. His accoutrements altogether were those of a half-reclaimed savage; but the merry eye, the broad, good-humoured face, the continual smile of Rip Van Winkle told that he was not much of a terror to either man or beast.

As he approached Nick Vedder's, amid the shouts of the young and old, happy to see such a general favorite, his progress was interrupted abruptly.

Several of the boys, those comic Dutch children, who look so laughable in clothes of their own fathers' cut, had decoyed the hunter's dog to their side.

The unsuspecting pup, a young mongrel chiefly distinguished for a good nature akin to its master's, let himself be deceived by the "good dog! good Schneider!" and strokings of his ragged ears and burr-tangled head, while the rascals tied an old kettle to his stump-tail.

Rip, turning around and leaning on his long ducking-gun, whistled to the dog.

"Here, Schneider, come along!"

The poor animal, while springing forward to obey, jerked the appendage upon his legs. Frightened at the shock, at the metallic clatter and at the loud laughter, Schneider dashed wildly onward.

His master stood in the way.

The kettle flew one side of the gun, the cord twisted round the lock, the dog got between Rip's legs, and all four rolled on the dust together.

Man, cur, gun, and kettle.

The uproar was tremendous.

Nine men out of ten would have risen furious, and scattered the youngsters with boxed ears.

Rip scrambled to his feet laughing. He drew his knife and cut the dog loose from his ornament, still laughing.

"You young dufels," said he in a mirthful voice; "why you not bite 'em, Schneider!"

The escort dispersed after this, and let the hunter reach Vedder's tranquilly.

Derrick had quickened his pace, and was one of the first to greet Van Winkle at the tavern.

"How zu beest? how you was, all the whiles?" said Rip, shaking Derrick's hand with a powerful grip. "Down, Schneider! you've done enough for one day."

The dog, as was his nature, raced under the tables in a search for nothing, dashed into the house, made the circuit of several rooms, scaring the kitchen maid by thrusting his damp nose into her hand as she sat paring apples, and, after making a feint of going up stairs, came out on the porch again just in time to catch a fly staggering from a whiff of Blokenschlager's pipe.

"Well, Rip, how goes it?" said Derrick, following the hunter's example and taking a seat. "What do you say to a glass?"

"What do I say to a glass," repeated Van Winkle. "What do I always say to a glass? Und I say more to a glass when it be full dan I do when it was empty. Thank you, Nick Vedder, you was a troomp!" concluded he, as the host placed a pitcher, glasses and a bottle on his table.

Derrick gave Nick a wink.

"Take away this common tippel," said he, "and bring that out of the corner--you know."

Rip waited patiently, breaking up a salted cake for his dog meanwhile.

When the host had returned with a flask, dusty and cobwebbed, and uncorking with care poured out, Rip inhaled the pungent aroma with the gusto of an inveterate drinker.

He collected himself, on receiving the rich measure, swallowed a mouthful, and continued for a minute deliberately smacking his lips, with his head declined a little, and his eyes fixed in a profound, calculating, judicial stare; then another mouthful, with smacking as before, and another, and another,--till, tired of this dribbling and doubting, he determined to have a fair taste at once; and, with the help of both hands, began gulping down a horse-like draught, which lasted as long as his breath.

"Ha! Nick Vedder," said he, smacking his lips, "you never give me liquor like that before!"

"It's some I only just opened," said the host. "I had that up from Amsterdam ten years ago, when you were married. You remember?"

"The day I was married," repeated Rip. "Oh! I never forget that!"

All laughed.

"Another glass, Rip," said Derrick, only sipping his, though. "You are not afraid, are you?"

"Oh, nein! I was never afraid of good liquor--I always could put him down! No, no water, Nick! good liquor and water is like man and wife. They never agree together! I like my drink single," concluded he, tossing off the glass "neat."

"That's from the cask, Rip," interposed Sylvester, "that I found you and Nick asleep by."

"Oh, yes," replied the hunter. "When he went to the spigot, I put my mouth to the bung hole, and we both dropped together. Well, there is your good health, and your families, and may you live long und grow up!"

"I recollect the day well," said Derrick. "Ah, she was a beauty, Rip!"



"Oh, Gretchen? Yaw, she was the prettiest gal at Jansenstein."

"Aha!"

"Yaw! She moost got drowned that day in coming to me."

"How was that? I don't recollect."

"Oh, I tell you how it was. She was to cross the river in old Duysrael's ferryboat, and de wind upset the boat. So if she had gone in de boat dat time she would have been drowned sure, hein?"

"Well, it would seem so!" said Derrick. "But, you are with her now, she need not be afraid of drowning any more."

"I don't know about that," returned the hunter dubiously. "Of course, after a man's been married mit a woman for so long he gets attached to her all the more—"

"Yaw!" chorussed the rest.

"Und if the frau was to fall into the water when I was by, I would say to her, Mistress Van Winkle—"

"Yes!"

"Mistress Van Winkle, I will go home and think about it!"

They roared with laughter, and quite aroused Schneider, who had gone to sleep with one paw over his nose and one eye.

"She was here a little while ago looking for you," remarked Blotenschlager slowly.

"Ah! Oh, she's keeping it hot for me," said Rip, loading a pipe tranquilly.

"What! your dinner?"

"No. Ein broomstick," replied the hunter. "It's always the way. When I come from the mountains, and I have anything, I open the window softly and hang up my game bag inside. Then, if I don't hear anything nooch, I go in behind it!"

"Ha, ha!"

"What have you got this time?" inquired Derrick interested.

"Not a feather," rejoined the other, slapping his empty game-pouch, "not a tail!"

The landlord glanced around and saw that all the others were comparing notes with Nick Vedder on some abstruse problem, such as the anticipated price of a hundred years of the pasture that Sylvester Bleeker had bought for a pinch of snuff in the part of Manhattan Island "out in the coppices just beyond the creek that was proposed for a canal."

Derrick drew a purse from his pocket.

"Do you think, Rip, that if you were to hang this up inside the window, Gretchen would be very angry?"

Rip took the purse so thrust upon him with hesitation.

"You are joking?"

"Oh, no! You see," explained he with apparent candor, "I did so well with that tract purchase of real estate that I made with you, that I can afford to be generous, and loan you a little money on easy terms."

"Ah!" said Rip, dropping the net of coin into his bosom, "I will pay you some day!"

"Oh, yes. Take your time. Let's say, this day twenty years!"

He tapped the hunter merrily on the shoulder, and cracked in a kind of laugh.

"I wonder where we'll be then, Rip."

"I don't know where I'll be," replied the other.

He added in a lower voice, and glancing downwards:

"But I think I could guess where you would be."

The party had followed Nick Vedder into his house to see some curiosity, as a brick out of the Amsterdam "college of XIX," brought over by an ancestor of the Vedders.

Derrick with his stealthy walk, glided off towards the lawyer's. Rip remained seated, and examined the money which he took out of his breast again.

"I don't like this at all," murmured he. To his ears, the coin had not a legitimate clink, it rattled like a snake in a hole of the ground.

Suddenly, he dropped down upon his hands and knees, and crept behind the chestnut trees.

"That's my wife's clapper going," said he.

Indeed, quite a procession was advancing thitherward from the Van Winkle homestead.

In the van was Gretchen carrying a broomstick.

Behind her, bearing a basket of linen, were Hendrick Vedder, and a very pretty, round-faced, plump-cheeked girl, a year or so younger than he.

"Meenie," the hunter could hear his wife say. "Meenie, you and Hendrick take the clothes carefully to the pastor's house."

"Ah! it's the old woman and her washing again," muttered Rip, keeping well in ambush. "Somebody's got to do it, and she can scrub better as me—I know, for she scrub me sometimes!"

The children turned to one side and trotted along playfully.

Schneider, scenting the approach of the woman, who never had great affection for him, followed his master's example and cleverly unconcealed himself from all view behind the water-butt under the eaves.

Gretchen, a cloud on her face boding no good to the absentee, passed by him quite closely.

She was going to the pasture of a neighbor to drive their last head of cattle to the butcher's.

Rip looked after her long and steadily, and, from the direction she took, divined her errand.

He laughed at something that was in his thoughts.

"Schneider!"

The dog peeped out from behind the half-hogshead. He found it nice and cool there, and was determined to remain spread out on the damp ground.

"Schneider," said Rip in an earnest tone, as if the dog understood him.

"The old woman is going down to see the old bull I think. She had better be careful mit her broomstick, for bulls is not like husbands, and they will defend themselves mit their horns!"

In this meditation, he was surprised by the return of Derrick and his nephew. The latter carried an ink horn and had a quill behind his ear.

"What is that?" inquired Rip, as Derrick spread out a sheet of parchment on the table before him.

"Oh, only the acknowledgement that you owe me so much."

"Ah! I see!"

Rip studied the page attentively.

"It take so much room as that to say I owe you forty gulden?"

"Why, yes, certainly," replied Van Beeckman, a little confused.

"Shoost suppose you read the ting out aloud once to me," said Rip, leaning back in his chair and crossing his legs.

Schneider, who had been frightened by a wasp, had come to lie down by his master.

"Why," stammered the landlord, "this is the first time that ever you was so particular."

"Oh, I have nothing to do. Go on!"

The wasp hovered about the group and prepared for a swoop upon Schneider who had shut one eye.

"Oh! very well," said Derrick, holding the paper to his eyes. "I suppose you don't care about the formalities, of course?"

"Yaw," replied Rip, "I've got plenty of time. Give it all!"

Schneider opened his eye, and the wasp darted over him without making the attack.

In a slow tone so as not to trip up, Derrick, his eyes on the parchment, appeared to read off it:

June 9th, 1645.

Know all men by these presents, that I, Rip Van Winkle, in receipt this day of the sum of Forty Gulden from Derrick Van Beeckman, hereby agree to repay the same to the aforesaid Derrick Van Beeckman, twenty years after date."

Rip took the document quietly from the reader's hand, and let his eyes wander over it once more.

"And does it take all that pen and ink to say that?" inquired he.

"What a flat!" muttered Cockles.

"To be sure," said Derrick.

The wasp, lit on a clover top a few feet from Schneider, was concluding his preparations before launching himself against the apparently unsuspecting dog.

"Where does my cross go?" asked Rip.

Derrick breathed more easily.

"Oh, there!" said he, quickly as he pointed.

Cockles handed the quill to Rip.

"There, where I have left the nice clean spot for you," said Derrick.

Rip gripped the pen as he would have seized his knife, and lowered the point upon the paper.

"What a dommerich!" thought Cockles. "He's swallowed the bait, hook and all!"

The wasp darted straight at Schneider's nose.

### CHAPTER III.

"NOT SO SOFT," MASTER OR DOG. THE YOUNG COUPLE. "OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES," ETC. THE SONG. THE INTERRUPTED DANCE.

Of thy favours I may catch  
Some collateral sweets, and snatch  
Sidelong odours, that give life  
Like glances from a neighbor's wife. — Lamb.

In the silence, the only sounds were Rip's laying down the pen before he had made a mark. And the snap of Schneider's jaws.

The wasp, cut in two, fell from the dog's mouth; he put a paw on each portion, and then looked up into Rip's face with a twist of the long hair about his lips that approached a smile.

Rip returned him a sly wink that drove the canine almost frantic with joy.

"Then the hunter, calmly folding up the vellum, stuck it into his bosom, saying:

"Yaw, I will think about it!"

Derrick turned pale.

"What do you mean?" began he fiercely.

But a touch on his foot from his nephew's shoe, recalled him to himself.

"Wasn't the money right?"

"Oh, yaw," said Rip, jingling the purse. "Yaw, I got it! Der monisch was all richt. But," said he abruptly, "what day was yesterday?"

"Friday," replied Cockles.

"I thought so. You see, I never like to do anything the day after Friday," said Rip gravely.

There was a pause.

Derrick's face melted down into its ordinary cast, and he raked up a feeble smile.

"I suppose, Rip," said he, "that you'll stand treat on the strength of so much money."

Schneider took his paw off the head of the insect, which still moved on the sand.

"Yaw," said Rip. "I will give a good time. Tell Nick Vedder to spread der tables and clear his big room for a dance. Und your nephew, he may go invite everybody dat will bring his legs along with him!"

Cockles darted off up the street. Anything of this sort was to his mischievous taste.

In a more leisurely way, Derrick retired into the tavern.

Of a sudden, Schneider leaped up, gave a farewell push with the paw to the halved wasp, driving the pieces into the sand, and sprang away to jump up on Hendrick and the little girl.

The boy carried the empty basket.

"Oh, there's your father, Meenie!" cried he. "Behave yourself, Schneider!"

And he dropped the basket over the dog, after the volcanic treatment of Mars and Venus.

In the meantime, the little girl ran to the hunter, and let his moustache press her fresh face.

"I am so glad to see you, father!"

"You was glad to see your fader?"

"Oh, yes!"

The hunter took up the laughter on his knee, where she played with his shot belt.

"I don't deserve to have a thing like that belong to me," muttered Rip, as he kissed her again. "So you're sorry I was away, Meenie?"

"Oh, yes, because you are a good papa!"

"Oh, no, mein child! no good father would rob his child. All this village 'most belonged to mein fader und to me, und would have been Meenie's, but I went and drunk 'em all up! all through the drink!"

Then, in a different tone, he asked the boy, who had approached, while Schneider tugged at the other handle of the basket.

"Hendrick, is there anything left in that glass?"

Receiving the vessel, he drained it with a relish that bespoke the speedy uprooting of his regret.

"You are a good boy, Hendrick," remarked he, as he laid down the glass.

"He is a good boy," said Meenie, with childlike madness. "I'm going to let him marry me when I grow up."

Rip opened his eyes in amazement.

"You are going to marry Hendrick, eh?"

"Yes."

"Oh, it's all right. Only I thought you would have axed me first," said Rip, laughing. "Well, here is your good health, and your family's, and may you live long und grow up!"

"And then," said Meenie, "I won't live with you any more!"

"Was?"

"We're going to buy a new house close by, so we can come and see you every day!"

The intense belief of the little one, in her castle in the air was most amazing and delightful.

"And where is all the money to come from?" asked the hunter.

"I am going to hunt for whales at the North Pole," said Hendrick, looking up from playing with the dog.

"Oh! you was going to hunt whales mit der Nord Pole! ah!" said Rip.

"And I am going to give all my money to Meenie," went on the boy.

"And I will give it to you to keep," took up the girl.

"Oh, no, don't you do that!" said Rip.

"Not do that?"

"No! Your father cannot keep his own money. Better not trust him with more. But, Hendrick, you mosn't drink if you marry my Meenie."

"I'll never touch a drop," replied the boy firmly.

"We'll schwear off together!" exclaimed the hunter. "To be sure, I haf done so before, and never kep' my word."

"I only pledge myself once, and I will keep mine," said Hendrick.

"Good boy! Fine boy! Do you go to school yet?" asked the hunter, struck by a new idea.

"Oh, yes, to the pastor's, when my father can spare me."

"Ah! I suppose you study things there?"

"Oh, yes, reading, writing and arithmetic," replied the boy proudly. "I will be in fractions tomorrow."

"You will?" I don't know where that is," muttered Rip. "You said read-

ing—"

"Writing and arithmetic."

"What—metic?"

"Arithmetic!"

"Oh! I didn't quite understand him before. Meenie, get down, go home with the basket, and give Schnieder something to eat. Schnieder, go home! go home, dog!"

The dog rose leisurely, considered the question on all sides, and then sauntered behind Meenie and the basket towards the cottage.

"You can read?" said the hunter carelessly, as he drew the lad to his side.

"Can you read something like that?"

Hendrick looked at the sheet of parchment.

"Oh, yes," answered he, "that's writing!"

Rip looked perplexed.

"And not reading, then?"

"Oh, yes, it's reading and writing, too!"

The man pretended to scan the lines.

"Ah! so it is," said he, as if the light had broken in upon him. "Yaw, yaw! I didn't see that at first! I don't believe you can read that?"

"Oh, yes!"

Rip looked about him cautiously.

There was a sound of voices in the tavern, the bark of the dog jumping about Meenie at the cottage door, a buzz of insects in the warm air.

"Read away, but don't read too loud!"

The boy began in the sing-song way.

"June 9th, 1645.

Know all men by these presents that I, Rip Van Winkle—"

"Ah! you read just like Derrick," observed the man in an undertone.

"That I, Rip Van Winkle, in consideration of the sum of Forty Gulden, received from Derrick Van Beekman, do hereby—"

From this point, the hunter's eyes began to open more and more widely.

"Do hereby agree to sell, transfer and assign all my property real and personal already conveyed—"

"Mein Gott!" interrupted Rip. "What you do! where is dat?"

The boy pointed to the lines.

"Do hereby agree to sell, transfer—"

"Yaw, so it was! Go on, go on. You was right!"

"And assign all my property real and personal already conveyed to Derrick Van Beekman aforesaid by mortgage and other deeds, and do hereby sell, transfer and assign such property, etc., to the said Derrick Van Beekman and to his heirs and assigns," etc.

"You can read better as Derrick," remarked the hunter folding up the paper and stuffing it into his game-bag. "You make more of it than him! Now, run along, Hendrick, my boy, and play with Meenie. Her mother is out, and you see that Schneider eats enoof. He has had nothing but a squirrel for two days."

The boy ran away up the road.

"Aha!" thought Van Winkle, "I thought as, moech! I know you now, Mynheer Derrick! Keep sober, Rip, keep sober, old man."

He repeated this injunction none too soon, for Nick Vedder appeared to call him into the tavern.

The main room was pretty well filled with his cronies, the blacksmith, the cooper, the copper-smith, the shoemaker, the tailor, and what not.

To their utter amazement, Rip rejected the glass offered him.

"Your own treat, Rip, old cock!" cried they.

"I can't help that. I have sworn off!"

"Oh, oh, Rip!" cried they in disbelief.

Derrick felt deeply annoyed.

"Never mind him," said he to hide his vexation. "Never fear but he will come round."

So they drank and smoked profusely.

"I am going to give over drinking and roaming about," said Rip. "I will stop at home, and manage—"

"What! manage your wife?" queried Vedder.

"Manage mein frau? manage Gretchen! Nick Vedder, canst you joomp from der valley to der top mit der Dunderberg?"

"No!"

"Canst you drink oop der Hoodson mit one goolp?"

"No!" replied the host again.

"If you could, you might manage mein frau."

All laughed.

"Have a sip after that," said Derrick.

"No! don't you tempt me! don't you now!"

"Bravo, resolution!" said Van Beekman.

"Why canst you leave a man mit himself. Eh? what's that, Nick?"

"A fresh bottle of that old mellow drink that you had outside."

Rip had approached the counter gradually.

"I will take ine little glass of that," said he.

All laughed.

"That wasn't half a taste," said Derrick, filling up a huge beaker.

"Here, man—"

"Nein! no more! if a man was to put a glass in my hand, I would say to him—his fingers closed around the proffered goblet—I would say to him—"

"Here's your good health and your familie's und may you live long und prosper!"

Poor Rip—"

His resolve had had no longer life than its foregoing ephemera.

He refused no more drink, and louder than all was his voice to be heard,

taking the lead in this song, very suitable to him.



RECIPE AGAINST (s)COLDS.

I will tell of a hoonter,  
Dat none of you know,  
For he lived in der days  
What was passed long ago.  
He had a fine frau,  
But her tongue was too long,  
Un' when it went clapping,  
Dis here was his song:

Peace, peace! when will I have peace?  
Sure, nothing on earth will give me release.

One time when der hoonter  
Was asleep in his cap,  
Der Duyfel star-tailed him  
By him giving a rap:  
"For der usual price,"  
Said his voice like a gong,  
"I will gif you a new  
Chorus mit your song."

"Peace, peace! you yet may have peace."  
Der Duyfel's der Duyfel for giving real ease!"

Der sole condition was ver' hardt—  
—Dere's no doubt!  
But already der frau  
Had hunt' his spirit out  
Dat der schützen should sin  
Was a thing very wrong;  
But trooth moost be toldt  
To shame him-mit-der-prong:

"Peace, peace! you do as you please!"  
Said der hoonter, "while you gif me release."

"Done!", said Old Cloven, "you  
May dance und may sing;  
She never can scold while  
Your thumb's in this ring!"  
Der hoonter put on der  
Round coral mid bone,  
Then—"Handt from my mouth—  
—Bitter leave me alone!"  
Said his frau, who was almost  
Choke' mit his hand,  
Und dis wast der song  
What groan'dt out her husband:

"Peace, peace! I ne'er shall haf peace!  
Her holdt is too light for a Loose of her lease!"

By this time, the shades of night having come on, quite an assemblage had been gotten together by the exertions of Cockles. He had not neglected young or old, farmers, or such professionals as the little settlement possessed. They were all in holiday attire; the women in their mushroom-shaped straw-hats, short jackets, many-coloured bodices, short petticoats, and their hair braided in two long tails, and decorated with streamers of bright riband, which reached to the ground; the elderly in long blue coats, buckskin breeches, short scarlet waistcoats, enormous cocked hats, whips under their arms, and pipes in their mouths; and the younger ones in full shirt-sleeves, with gaily embroidered vests, broad braces of green or blue, attached to each other by a wide band

across the breast, black breeches, white cotton stockings, and shoes ornamented with large, square, silvered buckles, just such figures as are to be seen in our day in some out of the way places of Holland.

Rip, excited by the many draughts that Derrick had pressed upon him, danced with almost all the maidens. And far from sober as he was, he found a stout daughter of Blokenschlager to help him gain a prize of an Indian bead-worked pouch that Nick Vedder offered.

This game or feat was called, as it is obsolete now, "Der Tanz von de Wasser."

From one of the rafters in the middle of the barn, at a considerable height above the floor, was suspended a glass of water, round which the couples were whirling with all their might and main; suddenly the music ceased, and Blokenschlager's girl—a rosy-cheeked, strong-limbed daughter of the forest—disengaging herself from her partner, Rip, darted into the circle, and threw herself on her knees immediately beneath the glass of water.

She then crouched herself in the attitude of the *Venus accroupie*, though she was rather too robust to be a very classical type of Aphrodite, and raising the palms of her hands upwards, stretched them out on the floor of the barn. The hunter then stepped forward, and wiping off his shoes, set his feet on the maiden's palms.

Slowly, and with no evident exertion on the part of the damsel, save that the color in her cheeks was somewhat heightened, her muscular strength lifted Rip from the ground, and he gradually rose in the air, preserving his balance by extending his arms, advancing his chest, and throwing his head back till his forehead formed the apex of his body.

This latter movement was resorted to for the more ready accomplishment of the object of the game, which was to strike the glass of water with his forehead, and scatter the contents on the ground without swerving from the position in which he was placed. There had been several unsuccessful attempts already made. There seemed more likelihood of its being done this time, for motionless and erect, the hunter rose above the sturdy pair of arms which began to tremble as the distance from the ground increased. At one moment there was a pause, which had nearly proved fatal to the experiment, but collecting all her energies, the athletic maiden set her teeth hard, and bore Van Winkle upwards till his forehead struck against the suspended glass; the water flew in a shower over the heads of the delighted spectators; and the hunter, leaping lightly to the ground, embraced the fraulein, as was his right.

In the height of the mirth, no one noticed a newcomer, who looked in at the doorway.

It was Gretchen, who had been informed by the impish Cockles of the whereabouts of the truant.

With the eager footstep of an Atalanta, and the warlike spirit of an Amazon, she strode across the room to where her husband was standing, after having just led his fair partner to her seat. His back was turned to the entrance, and he was consequently ignorant of the new arrival.

He had glanced but a moment before over his shoulder, and seeing that all eyes were turned in a different direction, was in the act of stooping to imprint a kiss on the lips of Miss Blokenschlager, when a box on the ear, as vigorously applied as that which felled the goblin page of Lord Cranstoun, made him topple over the bench; and in striving to save himself, got entangled in the folds of her petticoats, and finally measured his length on the floor, dragging the affrighted girl along with him in the struggle.

Dire was the confusion and loud the clamour that instantly ensued. Blokenschlager's pride was snatched from the floor, and Rip rose as hastily as circumstances permitted, breathing hot anger against the insolent hand that had been

raised against him, when, to his infinite dismay—a dismay which no description can exaggerate—he saw before him his infuriated wife.

There she was, trembling with passion, with flushed features and disordered hair, and looking as closely like a fury as jealous women are permitted to appear.

Rip did not stay to gaze, he uttered not a word, but, catching up his gun knocked down Bleecker, the fiddler, and several others as he made for the door.

Gretchen followed him in full chase, amid roars of laughter.

#### CHAPTER IV.

DERRICK ON THE QUEST. HIS ALLY BRINGS NEWS OF THE FUGITIVE. THEFT TO BE ADDED TO FORGERY.

WANDERING all about the village at nightfall, Derrick Von Beeckman might have been seen.

He was seeking for Rip, who had disappeared from all eyes, those of his wife specially included.

The plotter could not help confessing to himself the acme of folly that he had reached by letting Rip maintain possession of the sheet of parchment, after having so unaccountably refused to sign it.

To be sure, the representative of the Van Winkles could not read.

Still, there was not much consolation in that.

For, if he should let the document fall into the hands of any "blockhead less ignorant than himself," as Derrick sapiently remarked, the latter would be ruined.

This was beyond question.

It was very easy to see how imperative a securing of this thorn in his side became.

"At all hazards, I must get it," muttered Derrick, pausing on the road.

As he looked all around him for the presence of him he so eagerly sought or some other person that might furnish information of him, he saw a cloud appearing on the horizon.

The peaks of the mountains, too, were beginning to put other night-caps on than the mere shades of night.

Derrick smiled feebly.

A consoling supposition had struck him.

The storm that appeared to be gathering, would be likely to drive Rip down from the uplands, where he may have been flying.

If it should come on to pour, he would in all likelihood return to take refuge in his house. Or, if not there, much more probably, in Nick Vedder's tavern.

So Derrick cast another glance at the sky, and retraced his steps towards the inn.

In no cheerful mood, however, you may depend.

Hence, some laughter that he heard, grated on his ear.

When he examined the person approaching him, and so mirthfully engaged, he saw it was his imp of a nephew.

He quickened his pace, and the two met, some rods from Vedder's.

"Ha, ha, ha!" chuckled Cockles.

"Have you seen him?" queried Derrick eagerly.

"Who? Rip?"

"To be sure!"

"Oh, yes, ha, ha!"

"Where is he?"

"Oh, ho!" laughed the prentice lawyer, not heeding the question, "what a good un!" Thousand Donner Wetters! such fun! it was up and down, his running as fast as his drunkenness would let, and she chasing, broomstick in hand!"

"I know all that, you rascal!" said Beekman in his harshest tone.

"But he was ahead all the time," went on Cockles, following up the picture so recently presented. "Ah! it's true that women and cows cannot run!"

Derrick frowned.

He took hold of the young man's arm, and gave him a pinch more in the style of a pair of nut-crackers or a nut-wrench than fingers.

Cockles changed his ha, ha, ha! into a prolonged "Ow!"

"Don't, nunkey! you hurt! Dummer jungen!"

"Will you stop laughing, dog!"

"Who is laughing?"

The speaker certainly was not at this moment.

"Has the woman caught Rip?" asked Derrick.

"Not a bit of it," rejoined the clerk, sheering off a few steps so as to be able to indulge in his mirth. "He's safe enough from her!"

"Where, I ask you?"

"He was in the cowshed there not a quarter of an hour since, laughing and singing: 'Gretchen, warm my feet!' and dancing with 'mooley' for all I could tell by the noise he made."

"Whose cowshed, stupid? There are half a dozen there, where you point."

"Why, Nick Vedder's own road."

"Humph!" muttered he. "It ought to be a lesson for my uncle, never to part with money before you get a receipt."

With this addendum to his kinsman's saying, he entered the house of his master, in the office of whom he slept.

He was not allowed to repose for long on the heap of old papers which served him as couch.

For, a couple of hours after dark, Derrick came to knock him up, in great tribulation.

He had not found the hunter in the stable. And the milkmaid had told him that Rip had staggered off some minutes before, for home, she supposed.

But when Beekman ventured to pursue his inquiries at the Van Winkle residence, its virago of a mistress gave him a deluge of vituperation which let him know what her husband would receive when he should appear there.

"No!" said Cockles, firmly. "I won't help you look for him on the mountains! I wouldn't go up on them after dark for even the new suit of clothes you promise—no, nor for double my year's salary in hand."

Thus abandoned, and afraid to go on such an enterprise alone, Derrick could only shut himself up in his lonely house, and curse his ill luck.

He divided his attention between two points.

One was Nick Vedder's illuminated tavern, which knew no "early closing" movement.

The other was the cottage of Van Winkle.

The light burning there through the long hours betokened the non-arrival of its master.

Luckily Derrick could not know what was going on in either place. We, more gifted, are cognizant of that, and are not miserly towards our readers.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE RIP'S STORY AND SONG. THE LEGEND OF MANHATTAN. THE SCHOOL-MASTER'S ON GRETCHEN.

This is a festal and no working day;  
 Bid each intruder hence; we will be gay  
 Together, and alone make joyous cheer.  
 I will with Love himself a brief truce keep;  
 I will with white chalk score this day for gladness;  
 I will to Bacchus only homage pay;  
 Yea, I will laugh and leap and dance away,  
 And drain at last the brimming bowl so deep,  
 I care not if it end in merry madness.

OLIVER DE MAGNY.

Just as a drunken man rambles in each step, so does he in the route altogether.

Rip, leaving the straw of the stables, as has been reported, by one of the queer impulses the intoxicated will have, roamed about in the dark in every direction.

Irritated, at last, by Schneider's barks about him, and by his playful leaps upon him (who was unsteady enough on his pins as it was) he cuffed the interesting cur so soundly that he rid himself of his company.

Soon after, continuing his perambulations, he found himself at Vedder's once again.

He was like Prior's hero, or that individual who made the circuit of the race-course passing the judge's stand so often, or a squirrel in his wheel, or, in a word, the iron to the magnet.

He had been somewhat sobered by a certain freshness that was in the air.

The little cloud espied by Derrick had approached and greatly enlarged its dimensions.

The traveller who sought accommodation at Nick's, had to mind which way he turned on entering, lest, in seeking the *salle-a-manger*, he stumbled upon the stable or the cow-house. If he took the door on the right hand, he would inevitably lose his way and break his shins, besides bringing up finally in some even less agreeable manner; for there was no light to guide him, and the sense of smell is not always the safest guide. If he ventures in at the left hand door, the dense atmosphere of tobacco smoke would equally impede his search, as much by the obscurity which it causes as by the sense of suffocation which it begets.

But Rip, was no stranger, and he was presently seated among his old cronies.

As he reeled into his usual seat by the fire, he muttered something explanatory about:

"It would frighten de old frau if he go home yet awhile so soon, hein?"

The assemblage received it very placidly.

Nick merely took his pipe from his mouth and utter the monosyllable "So!" an exclamation which consoles a German in every emergency. It was echoed by the rest—the only variation being that made by Abram Brom, rather livelier than the rest, who expanded his jaws wide enough to exclaim, "Mein Gott!"

"Yaw!" said Rip, who was staring rather rudely at a very grand personage.

This intruder on the sociable party was the company's courier. The man who carried the messages from down the river to up the river, that is, from Nieuw Amsterdam to the settlement about Fort Orange.

He was arrayed as became such an official, in a costume that befitted one with whom riding post was no child's play.

He wore a short-waisted and short-tailed riding coat—the color still green—on which shone numerous plated buttons, all of them, however, not for show,

for there were numerous pockets to guard;—his lower limbs were encased in leathern breeches, and high but not clumsy boots, armed with sharp spurs met them at the knee; two silken cords crossed his breast, one of which sustained a drinking flask, and the other a travelling purse which, for greater security, rested in the right-hand breeches-pocket; a broad leathern belt with a large buckle in front girt in his waist, and on his head he wore a close-fitting cap of dark green cloth with a horizontal viziere. He held in one hand a short riding whip with a thick thong and heavy handle.

He was busy in recounting some marvellous tale that made some of the auditors catch their breath, when Rip had interrupted him.

For the benefit of that individual, the despatch-bearer consented to "drink mit him" and again begin the thrilling incident of the Stake in the Wood.

## DER STOCK IN WALD.

"In Nieuw Amsterdam," said this early New Yorker, "by the church near Maiden Lane, there is a house where the *duyfel* killed Frinkel the locksmith that got ein thaler a day from the Governor Wilhelm Keift."

"Ein thaler!" muttered Nick Vedder.

"Yes, whether he worked or not, besides many presents. But I will tell you all. It was a good many years ago, and Frinkel lived in Old Amsterdam. There is a hunting castle there of my Lord Concéllor Hooghel."

"Well, Frinkel, when he was only a locksmith's apprentice stole from his master a nail of exceedingly curious workmanship, which was to have been used for the castle then building. The unfortunate pilferer lost his way in the wood, and, at last, falling exhausted by a tree, began to reflect on his stealing. He had a half-way sort of conscience, and while, on the one hand, he felt ashamed to confess his crime, he was, on the other hand, unwilling to keep the nail, and, therefore, drove it into the tree. When this operation had been effected, the *duyfel* appear to the apprentice, and say:—"

"Thou canst, indeed, drive in the stolen nail, but suppose thou couldst make such a nail, and a lock to boot, which would guard this tree against axe and saw, then wouldst thou have done something."

"Terror and curiosity vied with each other in the mind of the youth, who just plucked up courage enough to declare his willingness to learn the accomplishment hinted at by the awful speaker." "A bargain!" cried the devil. "And a compact was made between the two, according to which the youth was to become the best locksmith in the world! No other locksmith could open the locks fastened by his hand, and thus he became passing rich. By the side of the stolen nail, he knocked in another, to show that he was as good a man as his master, and sawing off the top of the tree, so as to leave a mere trunk, he surrounded this with a strong ring of iron, adding thereto one of his not-to-be-opened locks.

"Compacts of this sort are usually agreeable for a time, but very disagreeable in the end."

"Yaw, das is true," said Rip, thinking of his wife, "and compacts of another sort, too!"

"Yaw!" said all, removing their pipes for that one word.

"But Trinkel cheat the *duyfel*," said the courier, "he thought that the old goat's foot couldn't cross the water. Und he come over to this country und settle in Nieuw Amsterdam. He was an old man, and he goes to church every day."

"Das is so!"

"Yaw!"

"Mein Gott! what a man!"

"Yaw, and Trinkel thought to get off, because going to church protected him for more as four-un'twenty hours!"

"Ah!"

"Das is goot!" said Nick, taking a drink, so that his opinion could apply to the beverage as well as to anything in the narrative.

"Ah! but one day," said the courier solemnly, "he went into this house that I told you of that he might take a glass of bier before church, and was thus a little late. An old woman, who met him, told him that he was too late! But this was not true, and the old woman was only the duyfel in disguise. The trick had effect, for the locksmith, instead of going to church, returned to the cellar to take another glass. Scarcely had the beverage reached his lips, than the terrible old woman entered the cellar, twisted his neck, and hung him up on a hook against the wall. Und there I saw him," said the despatch-carrier, "when I went with all the people to the house."

There was a silence.

Rip was the first to break it.

"Your Mynheer Trinkel was no great man for to think that we have no duyfels and witches here, hein?"

"No!"

"My fader, Jan Van Winkle," said Rip, stretching out his legs to the fire, kept up on these summer nights even, "my fader was live down the river. He was the sergeant-keeper of the River Ward in Nieuw Amsterdam."

"Yes," said the Company's messenger. "I know the Van Winkle house—it is near Mynheer Conlear's Hook."

"Yaw. I own that house once. Ah! 'tis too bad—how I have sold all mein property," sighed Rip.

"But," said Nick Vedder in his bubbling style of talking, "tell Mynheer Kestrel of your father."

"Oh! it was about the Witch of the Bowerie, un' Jan Hirscke," continued Rip; "he always called the story:

#### THE DOUBLE-HANGED.

In the first days of the Dutch on Manhattan Island (begins Rip's story, which we shall recount—as regards the matter, simply as Rip told it, but, as regards the manner, after a fashion of our own.)

In those days, there lurked about the place a most daring and dangerous villain, who had, from his youth upwards, lived a lawless life of plunder and outrage.

His parents, poor but honest folk, perhaps unfortunately for him, but certainly most fortunately for them, died on ship-board coming over while he was yet a mere boy; but, young as he was, he had already discovered talents of no common order for that turn of life which alone his evil mind led him to look on with pleasure.

Learning of every description was his particular aversion, and the only evidences on record of his being aware that there was in the village such a building as a church were the many attempts which he made to pilfer from it the few valuables it contained. He was as ugly in his person as he was deformed in his mind; and his swarthy complexion, and dark, shaggy hair and eye-brows, had gained for him from his earliest years the nickname of 'der Scharz Hecht (Black Pike.)'

To a fair held by the fort, and to which Hecht had when about fifteen years old gone in the hope of there exercising to some profit his petty larceny propensities, there came an old woman not a little celebrated throughout the place for her skill in fortune-telling, and whose peculiar dwelling-place (a hut on the

North Road or "Bowerie") had obtained for her the familiar appellation of the *Witch of the Wood*.

Between this person and Hecht there existed, from what original cause is not known, a settled enmity and continued warfare. Two of a trade, they say, can seldom agree; and it may be supposed that on more than one occasion this pair of practitioners in the art of abstraction had interfered professionally one with the other.

With the true cunning of her art, she of whom we speak, on arriving at the present scene of action, of course promised more or less prosperity in the world to the youthful madchen accordingly as they varied in the amount of the retaining-fee offered at the shrine of her mystical knowledge.

Hecht, who had, unobserved, for some time stood by in sullen silence, at length caught her eye, and, seeing that she changed the expression of her features the moment they rested on his, he cried out, with a mixture of spite and banter:

"Now, mother, don't you know your favourite son?"

"Ay, that do I, and much better, too, than he thinks or likes," was the ready reply.

A titter, which ran through the surrounding crowd of half and full grown urchins, did not seem to increase Hecht's small stock of good humour, and, with his teeth set, and his fist clenched, he blustered up to the old woman; the juvenile bystanders, to whom his prowess in the fight was most fully known, making at the first movement most respectful way for him.

For an instant there seemed to be some doubt in the mind of the sybil as to whether her divine art might prove sufficient defence against this flesh and blood assault; but her confidence in it being suddenly restored by the appearance of Jan Van Winkle the sergeant keeper, she mustered up her forces, and, putting on her most imposing air, she exclaimed:

"Never swell nor swagger by here: I am not a chicken in farmer Dietrich's hen-roost to be fluttered at by you, stretching out your felon forepaw!"

This little allusion to one of Hecht's well-known "forepaws" was only making bad worse, and there is no saying to what extent of violence that, and the loud laugh which it caused, might have driven him, had he not just then caught sight of the great authority before alluded to; the only human being, indeed, for whom he had ever been known to be guilty of the smallest signs of respect.

In a moment, changing his scowl into a bitter smile, he said: "Well done, mother! I forgot that on my last visit to neighbour Dietrich you were my helpmate; and yet I might have remembered it too, for by the same token I well recollect who it was that eat the chicken-broth, wishbone and all! But, come, I bear you no grudge for it, and, if you will answer me one civil question, we'll part friends as usual."

The old woman looked at him a moment, and, then, as if impatient to hear what he evidently intended should be a poser, she exclaimed:

"Out with it then in a breath, and don't make as many mouthfuls of your words as you did of the bretzel you stole this morning out of captain Trackschuyt's wife's corner cupboard."

"What! peaching again?" said Hecht, with great coolness.

For he had, by this time, recovered himself sufficiently to be a match, as he thought, for all the chattering old women in the settlement; "now, I tell you what, mother, from this time you and I dissolve partnership. I am not going to run whole risks for half profits; at any rate, I won't again be such a fool for one who can't keep her tongue between her teeth; so answer my question, and then good bye."

"Out with it, I say again, himb of the duyfel!"

"So I will, hag of h—!"

The remainder of the compliment was lost in the loud cry which was at this



moment uttered on the sudden coming in contact of the sergeant's staff with the speaker's scone.

But this was caused more by surprise than by suffering, for to the latter he was tolerably hardened, and in a few moments, looking round at the burly functionary, who was, with all his wonted dignity of office, motioning him to withdraw from the scene of action, he muttered out:

"Well! let her answer my question and I will."

The gold-laced hat of Van Winkle was observed to move in token of compliance, and der Schuwarz Hecht, gathering up his scattered powers, darted on the object of his inquiry one of his most hideous scowls, and then said:

"Tell me this: when will you be ordered your first whipping at Roosevelt's Field?"

The look was returned with interest, and with cool and slow delivery this answer was given:

"The same day that you get your second hanging on the Governor's Gibbet."

This strange reply evidently had its effect, both on him to whom it was addressed, and on the bystanders, for it caused even the great staff-officer himself to open his eyes, and to raise his brows in wonderment.

Nay, he actually went so far as to break through the proud silence which he was wont to observe whenever he was clothed in his gilded robes of state; and something of "second hanging—umph!—first generally—umph!—quite sufficient—umph!" actually escaped Van Winkle's lips; but, perceiving, at this moment, that his unusual loquacity was causing his astonished hearers to approach his person with far too much familiarity, he gave a most awful clearing of the throat, struck his ponderous mace with violence against the ground, and was in a moment himself again.

Hecht had kept strictly to the articles of agreement, for, whether he liked not the old woman's reply, or from whatever other cause, he was by this time nearly clear of the crowd, and mingled no more with it that day.

But, although the actual scene was thus brief, the concluding words of it were long remembered by those present, who used, in after years, while sitting in their chimney-corners, to recur to them with the same wonder as to their fulfilment, as was excited as to their meaning when first they heard them.

One could go on for an hour detailing the various minor events of Black Pike's lawless life, but be content with a recital of the singular circumstances which put the final close to his criminal career, and which were of such a nature as to bear out, in many people's minds, the strange prophecy uttered concerning him ten years before by the Witch of the Bowerie.

A very extensive robbery took place in this immediate neighbourhood. It had been planned by old practitioners in the art of plunder, some of the adventurers who had been banished from Holland.

But, as they were in want of important local information for a due execution of the project, they naturally addressed themselves to Hecht, who, for the promise of a sufficient share in the booty, undertook to be their pilot-fish.

This proved an unlucky job for him; for one of the gang, being afterwards taken, and carried before the governor there, compromised for the sparing of his own life by denouncing the Pike, of whose part in the crime till then no suspicion had existed.

The evidence, however, was so clear, and the feeling so strong against him, that his trial was a mere ceremony; at the close of which, sentence of death was passed upon him, and he was condemned to be executed, and afterwards hanged in chains, the shortest time the law then allowed being given to him for preparation.

The gibbet was erected on Roosevelt's Field, on a spot long called Gallows

Corner; and to this the unfortunate malefactor was led, early on the day appointed for his execution.

Such a spectacle, being then of rare occurrence in the village, vast crowds were attracted to the spot by that strange curiosity common to common minds, which can find excitement alike in scenes of mourning or of merriment.

At the eleventh hour, however, a difficulty, as unexpected as it was unwelcome, arose.

For it was necessary that the iron hoops, which were to encircle the body immediately after death had taken place, should, for that purpose, be fitted on during life; and the smith (the only one, from his mate having died), proving but a bungler at his trade, had it seemed, wofully mistaken his measure, so that on the day of execution, when this tailor of death brought home his client's "last suit," merely basted, as it were, together, to be tried on, it was found to be, in some instances, as much too ample as in others it was too scanty.

The ceremony was, therefore, delayed while the knight of the iron goose endeavored to alter and adjust his work; but, so inexperienced was he in this new branch of his calling, and so completely were the few wits which he at cooler moments possessed now scattered by the novelty and responsibility of his situation, that hour after hour passed away, and still found and left the last work of the law unfinished.

Towards evening the spectators, who had long been murmuring at the inconvenient delay thus occasioned, began to vent their dissatisfaction more audibly and more palpably, both in word and in deed.

Hisses, and groans, and sticks, and stones, were heard and felt, and the rising storm was, for a short time, hushed only by the following occurrence:

Just as the evening sun was sinking behind the Jersey hills, there appeared suddenly upon the ground a lengthened shadow, which ran along it, stretching on to the fatal gallows-tree, and there terminating on the very face of the condemned, whose glazed eye that instant fell on the gaunt figure of the Witch of the Bowerie.

For the moment a cold tremor seized him as he recollected her last parting words to him; but, as if ashamed of quailing before her, of all people, he, almost in the same breath, called for a glass of strong-water, which, being supplied him, he tossed it off to her health, and then, with a bitter jocularity, he thus addressed her:

"Now, mother of darkness, what do you there, standing between Heaven's sun and your own, to make us believe we have seen each other for the last time?—and how is this? I thought you promised me a treat in this world before I left it. Keep you not your word, false hag? Where is the whipping you were to have the day that I got my hanging?"

All faces were directly turned toward the new comer, who, after remaining portentously silent for a few moments, thus slowly answered:

"The mother of darkness can cast nothing but shade; but that matters little to eyes like yours, that never yet could bear to look on the light of truth; and, for the whipping—if your sore fright at going out of the world can let you remember anything that took place in it, look back to my words of ten years since. I promised you then that this field should hear me ordered my first whipping the day that the Governor's Gibbet should see you get your second hanging; and, as sure as hemp shall make the cat that shall almost flourish over me, and the noose that shall quite strangle you, so sure shall my words come true."

With the conclusion of this mysterious sentence, she strode from the spot, and the impatience of the multitude, being only increased by this momentary check to its expression, now burst forth with more than renewed rigour, and soon, the violence swelling into open tumult, the civil authorities were attacked and dispersed, and Jack Ketch himself, with his friend the iron smith were glad



to compound for their personal safety by the abandonment of the latter's handiwork, and by the hurried and half complete performance of the former's.

The fast coming darkness of the night hid from the view of almost all the assembly the agonised face of the victim; as to the last he struggled for life itself, while the noise and confusion of many tongues drowned his single cry for mercy.

In a few moments all was over, or, at least, was thought to be so, for the cause and object of the affray having given what was believed to be his last convulsive movements, those to whom he had but just before been everything, now turning their thoughts to some more substantial excitement, as by universal consent, dispersed.

This was done with so much of haste, that where there had lately been but noise and life, there now remained but silence and death.

The first sound that broke upon the stillness of the scene, was that of a solitary pair of wheels, and there soon arrived upon the spot the cart of a gardener and his son. On their way home from the fort, they had fallen in with some of the retiring multitude, and, to the great regret of the younger of the two found they had arrived just in time to be too late.

Increasing their speed, however, they made for the gallows, and, driving straight to its foot, they sat some time looking up in a sort of stupid wonderment at that, which, as Macbeth says, 'might appal the devil.'

The night breeze was just then rising, and, as it sighed through the branches of the neighbouring trees, and slightly stirred their fading leaves, both sight and sound gave such solemnity to the scene, that by degrees, a natural awe came over the minds of these rude sons of the soil, who had at first regarded the breathless corpse only as they would have looked on a withered cabbage.

This new feeling once aroused, grew on them with a rapidity known only to those that have but impulse to guide them; and, when it is remembered how strong is the effect produced by the contemplation of the lifeless, soulless body upon all reflective minds, that ever pause in their maddest gaiety, to think that 'to this complexion they must come at last,' it cannot be matter of wonder that to these children of ignorance such a spectacle acted as a perfect bewilderment of all understanding.

Each turned his eyes ever and anon from the dreadful object to seek in the other some look of encouragement, some gesture of animation; but the mutual hope was, as a matter of course, a mutual failure.

In a very short space of time the unfortunate pair, were in such a state of highly wrought excitement, that to their sight the body actually moved.

It might now be truly said of them that their eyes were made the fools of the other senses, or else *were* worth them all, for the body *did* move; not as it had already done in one mass, slowly swinging in the breeze, but by parts and portions; now a hand, now a foot, and now both at once!

They nearly fell from their vehicle with horror and affright, when, at that moment, to crown all, a moan came upon their ears.

They stared and stood aghast—they looked and listened.

It might be the wind along the corn stubs, or through the stone fence.

No, it was neither, for a second came—a clear, distinct, and human moan—and this was immediately followed by a convulsive movement of the whole frame, so long and strong, as to remove any doubt that there was yet life in the supposed defunct.

"He is not dead!" they both cried out at once.

And, at that instant, a voice replied. "Not dead!"

"Who's that?" exclaimed the father, almost screaming with affright.

"Not I," replied the son, in a similar tone, and then, after a few moments, he added: "It must have been the echo! Come, father, see! How the poor wretch struggles!—Shall we not save him?"

"Save him!" cried the same voice which they before heard, and which this time seemed to come from behind the tree stump by which the gibbet was backed.

Again their alarm was, for a short space, at its height, but common compassion soon took the place of uncommon terror, and, setting to work, heart and hand, they quickly cut the rope, and divested the sufferer of the noose, which, in the hurry and fright of the unskilful practitioner, had been so put about the neck as to cause only half strangulation.

They then stripped the body, and, with their strong hands, well rubbed the vital regions to restore circulation, and, finally, opened the clenched teeth, and poured down the throat a good dose of that invigorating fluid schnapps of which they were themselves too fond even to stir any distance without it.

The effect of this treatment was soon apparent, for the dead-alive opened his eyes, and, after some small but homely expressions of doubt as to which world he was actually in, he was easily prevailed on to take another draught, in order to prove, beyond a doubt, that he was *not* in the land of other spirits than Scheidam.

By repeated administrations of this much-praised, much-condemned liquid, which the Black Pike thus at his second entrance into life, sucked in like the mother's milk, which it had always been to him, the work of restoration was completed, and in less than an hour he was by the side of his humane companions on his way to their hospitable fireside, where bed and board, and every care were lavished upon him.

Thus passed the night.

In the morning, when the dismayed and defeated authorities returned to Roosevelts, to complete their work, by enclosing the Black Pike in iron hoops, as ordered by law, what was their astonishment to find no vestige of the body!

Consternation was, for a time, the order of the day, which soon, however, settled itself down into a quiet belief, on the part of the better-informed, that the culprit's friends had been at hand, and ready and active to take advantage of the confusion, had carried him off in the hope of restoring animation, while the more ignorant were, as is their wont, not slow to attribute to mankind's arch enemy himself this peculiar care of his favourite offspring.

In the mean time the worthy gardener's compassion did not stop at this mere point of restoration: it had, indeed, been well for him if it had done so; for, if ever the gallows-tree grew to any real good purpose, it was to hang such a heartless, hopeless, unvaried, and unmitigated scoundrel as was he who had just escaped his well-merited doom there.

The honest, well-meaning pair who had saved him from death, and who afterwards concealed, sheltered, protected, and supported him, in the new life they might be said to have given him, too soon, and too severely, felt the sting, which this human serpent, warmed into existence by their kindness, first darted upon his preservers and benefactors.

He began by such petty pilfering and small outrages as were scarcely perceived, or speedily overlooked.

But it was not in his nature to stop at these; and not a twelvemonth had elapsed, when, after one particular occasion for which, in consequence of his misdoings, his host had ventured to call him to a severe account, he quitted the house, abstracting at the same time such articles as were most easy of removal.

The good folks were too glad to be rid of such an inmate at any price, to make any serious stir about his departure; besides that, for their own sakes, remembering what they had done in the face of the law, and that mighty Governor Wouter Von Twiller, they judged it more prudent as well as humane, to be silent. Fate, however, had willed that they should suffer still more for their misplaced compassion; and thus Black Pike having speedily associated himself

with others of a like spirit, recommenced his *quondam* trade of daily plunder and nightly marauding; and in the fullness of his gratitude, soon marked out his late protectors for his present prey.

Being so well aware, as he naturally was, of their habits and movements, he was of course enabled to shape his plan of attack to the best advantage.

There is no doubt that their property, and if necessary their lives, would have fallen the sacrifice, but for an act of his own, arising out of his revengeful nature.

Accident just then brought him in contact with his old enemy, the Witch of the Bowerie, and, suspicion having fallen on her of being by her spells the cause of a foul disease amongst the imported cattle, then prevalent in the neighbourhood, Black Pike, in order to secure her punishment, having first disguised himself, came voluntarily forward, and deposed to the midnight spells and sorceries on her part, to which, as he swore, he had by chance been witness.

His statement was so clear, and his interference seemed so completely the result only of a kindly feeling for the sufferers, that it was readily believed, and the reported witch was sentenced by the purblind old syndie who heard the case, to be severely whipped at Roosevelt's.

They were about to remove her for that purpose, when thrown off his guard by his extreme joy, her accuser stepped up to her, and whispered in her ear, in his own natural voice:

"So, mother! they've ordered you your whipping."

"Ha!" exclaimed the prisoner at once recognizing her inveterate foe, "'tis the Black Pike; I know him now, in spite of his sandy wig."

"Der Schwarz Hecht!" cried the feeble old magistrate.

"Black Pike!" echoed the burly Jan Van Winkle.

"Then," continued his worship, "the duyfel has not yet got his own; seize on the villain and hold him fast."

"I will," replied the functionary.

But before he could put his ponderous weight in movement, the Pike had burst through the door, that opened on the road, and throwing off as soon as he could the heavy cloak which formed his chief disguise, he darted with lightning speed over the country, and soon distanced all pursuit.

Intent upon the one desire of securing the flying criminal, no one heeded her who had so lately been the object of universal attention, and she had just the sense to profit by the turn things had taken, and to withdraw herself altogether from that by which she had nothing to gain and everything to lose.

Not to throw a chance away, she, however, very quietly took up the cloak which the Black Pike had abandoned, never disdaining to accept of what might be useful even from an enemy.

She found on a cursory inspection that its appearance without was not of a very promising nature, but, like Hamlet, it had that within which passeth show; for on a more careful examination of the pockets, to which indeed, her usual habits naturally led her, she found among some other papers of inferior import, one by which her attention was in a moment riveted.

This was the plan entered into between Hecht and two confederates whose names were not down, to rob that very night the house of his former protectors, situated some miles from the spot where she then was, and the plunder of which it was agreed should be shared equally among them.

This intention, however, having by these extraordinary means become known to the Witch of the Bowerie, she, with all speed, repaired to the dwelling of the devoted father and son, and in all haste, warned them that in a few hours it would be attacked by thieves.

They were instantly for seeking aid from the fort, or at least from their friends; but this their informant would not hear of.

"They are but three," said she.

"But three?" was the reply. "How know you that?"

"No matter," she rejoined. "What I know, and not how I know it, is all that you need mind; I tell you are but three."

And then drawing herself up to her full height, she added indignantly, "are not we the like number?"

Those she was addressing seemed somewhat astonished to find that the old woman thus included herself in the number of defenders.

But their wonder was much greater when she thus proceeded:

"Talk of calling soldiers and neighbours, indeed! What for, unless it may be, to listen to Hecht's story of who came between him and the just sentence of the law, last year?"

The father and son stared at each other in utter amazement, for this was the first time they had ever heard a suspicion breathed that they were suspected of having had any hand in the removal of the body from the gallows.

"Black Pike," said the father, "is he not dead?"

"Not dead!" exclaimed the visitor, with a tone and emphasis which it seemed to them they had heard before.

"And if he was 'cut down' on the night he was hanged, what had we to do with that?" asked the son.

And then, with an attempt at a searching glance as if to discover how much the reputed witch really knew, and how much she only pretended to know, he added: "We did not save him."

"Save him!" ejaculated the hag.

In an instant both father and son recognised the peculiar voice and the same words which they had heard with such terror on the night of the execution.

Their looks fell on the ground, while the hag regarding the pair for a few moments with the most contemptuous composure, thus spoke:

"I tell you no list'ner need have his ears stealed, For an echo there lives around Roosevelt's Field; And though what was done there to no one were known, Yet the Governor's Gibbet would soon have its own."

"What mean you, mother?" asked the young man anxiously.

"You shall know time enough," answered she quickly. "At present there is business to be done; put out your lights, bar your doors and windows, look to your firelocks, and above all, call up a manly courage in your hearts. Come, my warning's worth a dram at least, and we weak women need something to support us when we are to do the work of men. With schnapps you brought the dead culprit to life, and now 'tis schnapps shall help the live culprit to death;—there!" continued she, drinking off the full measure they gave her, "and now, I say once more—to business."

This female commander now disposed her small forces to the greatest advantage, and then all was silent, until the hour arrived at which she well knew the attempt was to be made.

It was a bright moonlight, and, as the first footsteps were heard treading the narrow footway that separated the dwellings from the high road, the besieged, from the concealed corner in which they had stationed themselves, took deliberate aim, and fired on their assailants.

A loud cry was heard, and one fell, the other two, without the delay of an instant, betaking themselves to flight.

The party within, immediately descending, approached the prostrate man, and quickly discovered it to be Hecht himself.

The wound had taken effect about the knee, but being only from duck-shot, was clearly not of a dangerous nature; and lifting him up with too little

caution, the father very nearly fell a sacrifice to his heedless haste, for the villain, who was armed with a knife of formidable dimensions, seized a favourable moment and struck at him with all his vengeance.

A loud cry, however, from the witch, who had followed them closely down, gave notice to the son, who, with a heavy blow, felled the miscreant to the earth.

Then, wresting the knife from him, he would in his rage have put an end at once to his crimes and his life; but his arm was at that moment stayed by the tone that had before urged it on.

"Hold! hold!" said she, "the Fates must be fulfilled. He is not to die by lead or steel, but by oaken board and twisted cord. Out at once with your cart, harness your horse, and bring your strongest rope; give me the knife in this hand, and let me get the other well about the calf's throat: nay, never writh and wriggle, man!" continued she, as her victim vainly endeavoured to release himself from her savage grasp. "Your neck must be grappled tighter than this before your breath is quite squeezed out."

She now seemed so completely the master-spirit of the whole scene, that the other parties appeared only as subordinate agents, to do her bidding.

Accordingly, the vehicle was quickly brought out, the prisoner fast bound and placed in it; then, all three mounting, they drove as she directed them, until, by a bye-way, known to few but herself, they suddenly came upon Roosevelt's Field.

Here they stopped; and in the shortest time in which it could be accomplished, the culprit was, in spite of his cries and struggles, once more fastened to the very beam from which, not a twelvemonth before he had been cut down; and the very same hands that then had rescued him, now themselves did the work of death upon him!

There was a long pause after this story of Rip's.

"Oh, them women," said Sylvester Bleecker.

All looked grave. The words opened a very extensive field for discourse.

"Show Rip what you wrote on his wife," said Nick to a man in black, the clerk to the pastor, but generally known as the schoolmaster.

Rip expressed his desire to hear it.

"It's an epitaph," said the schoolmaster, and he read:

"Here lies, thank God, a woman who  
Quarrell'd and storm'd her whole life through;  
Tread gently o'er her mouldering form,  
Or else you'll rouse another storm."

"Dat is worry, goot, Mynheer Weckherlin," said Rip gravely, "only, my wife never *lies*. If she say I catch it when I go home, I do catch it."

Another pause almost sent the party to sleep.

"It looks like a storm out," remarked the host, returning from a walk around the building.

"Yaw, it always storm on the ninth June," said Rip sententiously.

"Was?" said the message-bearer.

"Yaw," said all.

"It is der night when when Hendrick Hudson und his crew was wrecked in der spirit vessels."

"No!"

"Yaw."

"Tell him, Rip. You always know all about the mountains."

"I will," said the hunter. "But I moost be going home after that."

"Yaw."

"Here goes."

## THE LEGEND OF HENDRICK HUDSON.

First (said Rip, though we use our own words) you must know this.

A good many years ago, away up north amid the snow and ice, the merciless discontents of a great navigator's ship, came to a harsh determination.

They thrust half a dozen men, with their commander and his son, into a little boat.

Then up spoke the carpenter.

"By my name of Philip Staffe," said he; "good can never come of such evil, as on your captain you have wrought; had you taken Hendrick Hudson's gold and silver alone the sin had been but small, and a gray-headed repentance mend ed all. But the noble voyager! his voice has been heard to-day, and trembled all you that touched his noble body, for the heaven that protected him in the two great voyages that I shared with him already, will have its own peculiar vengeance to lower upon you!"

They seized him and flung him over into the boat.

The carpenter's mate attempted to interfere for Philip.

The shallop had been pushed off.

They ran the mate over the high gunnel.

"Follow your leader!" cried the mutineers.

A heavy splash in the water told that the unhappy man was indeed overboard. One long and piercing shriek, uttered as the stern of the vessel passed him when he rose to the surface, thrilled through every hearer. The ship was going fast through the water—his cries waxed fainter and fainter on the breeze—and at length ceased altogether.

Soaked by the icy foam, dragged down by his heavy clothing, the castaways in the boat had only seen him perish, without ability to aid him.

No one could say the certain fate of the grand-hearted sea-roamer, whose favor to the wave could yet let him declare "Man never saw a more lovely place than" New York harbor.

The rebels bore away in the ship.

They left half a score of lives to linger out on the broad waste of blue water and white ice-fields.

They cruised, fearful of a return to home, in latitudes, where the late ice-crusted shrouds smoked with tropical heat.

They disguised the vessel. They durst not land on any spot where was a fellow-man.

They grew no older, and soon deepest cruelty ceased to please their hardened hearts.

On Friday night, June the ninth, 1625, the fort at New Amsterdam awakened all the settlers by a long cannonade.

The guns were not, as was first feared, fired to repulse Indians, Yankees, or Swedes.

But a large three-master had been espied coming up the harbor, although a storm of thunder and lightning was raging.

She paid no attention to the summons.

The artillerists, old soldiers for the most part, swore that they had sent the culverin balls slap through her sails and hull.

Still, all could see, that she was sailing as placidly as a nautilus in a tropic calin, up the river against tide and wind.

Between Weehawken and the town side, she disappeared, still heading up stream till the last.

The bulghers returned to their couches in bewilderment.

And Governor Van Twiller, who had pulled his boots on crooked in the haste

of the alarm, vowed by the nose of Duke Alva that he'd "blow up der duyfel if he come down der Hoodson in der morning."

That same night, the solitary vessel was discovered off the head of Jansen's Creek, up the river just below Hudson City, as the point has now become.

Her broad, round, and elevated bows and stern, bespoke her plainly to be Dutch.

Dutch ships bear a reasonable resemblance to Dutch men. They sail slowly and heavily, but they are safe sea-boats. As they draw very little water, they drift away broadside to leeward when sailing near the wind; and for their headway, their bows are about as well formed for cutting through the water, as their broadsides.

Thus appointed, the Dutchman, in a fleet of all flags, will inevitably bring up the rear; but he bears this distinction in a spirit of quietism that keeps his ship quite in countenance; and replies to your ridicule by letting you know, that he can walk his fore-castle and quarter-deck in a gale with dry shoes, while you shall be plunging your fine clipper front bowsprit-under,—or can make a small harbour, or ground on the main and step ashore, while you must keep the sea, or strike in deep water and be drowned.

The craft in question was loitering on the waters, as these Dutch vessels are apt to do, while her general movements and conduct, in relation to the land under her lee, the state of the tide, and the coming night, indicated the doubts and embarrassments of a stranger. She was an object of deep interest to a little group of men, assembled at their ordinary evening council at the tavern, and the opinion among them was, that evil awaited her.

These were the settlers of Jansenstein, and a few from Matteawan.

The appearances of the weather were fearful: the sky was foul with vapour, and the moon, low in the west, stood staring through the mist with a pale, rayless, and portentous face, that told of approaching danger and disaster. There was little wind, but the river surf roared loudly, and came rolling in with an agitated swell, which, an old seaman remarked, denoted that the gale was already up to windward, and would soon be upon them.

Soon dark masses of clouds rolled from the westward, where the peaks of the Kaatskills towered, and a hoarse-sounding rush of the gale pressed down the tree-tops.

The river, something like a bay of the sea here, resembled the ocean itself, for the mist was banked under the cliff opposite and converted its outlines into the dim features of the clouds themselves.

Presently the gale attained its height.

Vast, lowering, bloated clouds, full of wrath and mischief, darkened the sky; and the river, swollen too, by a spring flood, was bordered to the distance of a mile along the shore with tiers of hurrying, foaming, crashing breakers, on the verge of which the devoted ship stood, like a criminal before his executioners. She had as yet suffered no material damage visibly, and looked altogether so sound and compact, that there were some hopes and more fears, that she might live through the battery of another flood, and, if more moderate weather should succeed before morning, be got afloat again, and even (who could tell?) show her old hull in Amsterdam once more.

It was not to be. At midnight, and at about high-water, the wind blowing dismally, and a monstrous sea on, she came ashore, running nearly into the bank.

No one asked now—where is she?—She was everywhere. Eye of mariner never saw a vessel in so short a time so completely broken up. To the extent of a mile and a half, the beach was strewn, without the clear space of a yard,

with her fragments and her cargo. A person not familiar with such sights would have supposed that here were materials for a dozen ships; and the pipes of wine, bundles of provisions, spare spars, pieces of rope and ragged canvas, bedding, coats, boxes, laying jumbled together with the splintered fragments of the ship, seemed cargo enough to have filled them. A little wreck, as they say of a little blood, makes a great show.

"What does old Jan say?"

"That, when her stern swung round, he saw her name flaming like gold."

"It was—"

"DE HALVER MOND!"

"Der Half Moon! who was she, jonge Nicolaas?"

"How should I know," replied young Nicholas. "Hagel und wetter, I never saw her mit der river before."

When the sun rose in the middle of the next morning, all the people were afoot to act the part of wreckers.

Of course, there had been no hopes of saving any of the crew of the victim of the tempest.

But when the seekers came down upon the wet sand, they were astounded.

A few hours before they had seen the bulky ship go to splinters, they had seen her cargo dispersed on the shore as far as eye could reach.

And now, a little yellow scum frothed up in the little bays, with leaves blown from the trees.

That was all.

Of the whole remains, not a bit of wood to make a match of, not a scrap of rope to bind a finger, not a rag of canvas to make a shroud for a goat, and as for mortality, not a fragment, was to be seen.

Nothing afloat, nothing stranded.

"It moost haf been der Duyfel sailing mit der storm ship," said an old sailor.

"I'll swear I saw more as fifty men on board," said another, "und deir faces was like ghosts! dey was!"

During the day, confirmation of the mystery being from a supernatural source, thus arrived.

A man who, trying to reach the village, had been belated in the Kaatskills, had this tale to narrate:

While peeping out of a cave to see how the storm was progressing, he saw a long train of some half a hundred men.

They were heavy, fat-faced, sailor-looking fellows, in jackets and trousers, pistols in belt and hanger by the side. Each carried something; some kegs of liquor, some boxes of biscuits, some bundles of unknown substances wrapped up in sailcloth hammock fashion.

At their head gravely marched a black-bearded man, in a black hat and mantle, lined with scarlet. A red feather was in his hat.

The present informant said that he imagined they were wanderers like himself, and, generously, cried out:

"Here's a good shelter; come in out of that devil's own storm."

Then, all looked at him as they passed, and laughed to one another in a low deep tone that curdled his blood.

The moment they disappeared, which they did with the same slow tramp, heedless of the rain, he left his cover, and ran away in the opposite direction as fast as he could.

They put "this and that together," very naturally, and (here Rip is let have his say again):

"The story goes that the vessel was only a ghostly craft, like a bubble, und der crew was demons."



"I thought Hendrick Hudson was a good man," said the courier.  
 "Yaw, das is so," returned Rip. "But, don't you see, dis was a duyfel what took his shape und go find his wicked men und bring dem to destruction."  
 "Ah!"

"Dey was say that dey come on der mountains every twenty years for a great jollity! and dat every night dey please dey have deir fun mit bowling at ten-pins!"

"And then it thunders!" said Nick Vedder gravely.

"Und when old Hendrick Hudson lights his pipe," continued Rip, "it is der blitzen!"

"There it goes now," said Sylvester Bleecker, pointing out of the window.

A flash of sheet lightning was visible on the distant highlands.

"I'm off for home," said Blokenschlager.

"And I," said Bleecker.

"I'm going, too," said Rip, "when I finish my glass."

"When was that shipwreck?" inquired the courier.

"In 1625——"

"Why, that's just the twenty years ago!"

"So it was," said Rip. "Mein Gott! und this was the same night of the same month! Why, I was oop on der berg dis day, und it was more of the same dan ever it was. But, good night all. I will see you, to-morrow, Nick. Good night. Come on, whoever goes my way."

In a few moments, Rip and three or four who went down the road, were proceeding very unsteadily along.

The hunter, by way of overcoming a deep dread of the welcome awaiting him, sang at a high pitch:

"Come, Gretchen, warm my feet,  
 More schnapps, my love, more logs,  
 'Tis raining cats and dogs,  
 Dost hear the hail and sleet?"

"Do, Gretchen, warm my feet.  
 The fire is waxing low,  
 Give it a heavy poke;  
 Burn chestnut, pine, and oak,  
 Do, Gretchen, warm my toe."

"Burn table, chair, and bench,  
 More logs, more drink, good wench,  
 The logs they must be dry,  
 The schnapps is better heat,  
 Come, Gretchen, warm my feet."

## CHAPTER VI.

IN THE COTTAGE. THE DISTRESSED WIFE. THE RETURN OF THE ROVER.  
 THE LAST DECEIT. THE BAN.

"Away! begone!"—NAT. LEE.

Rip's cottage, stripped of the usual conveniences of a Dutch homestead by the demands of his vice, was only tenanted by the little girl Meenie, when Gretchen came hastily into it.

She had been vainly seeking to capture the fugitive husband.

She was in extreme irritation because Rip had laughed all the while that he was eluding her.

Such good nature and temper when the man was helplessly dumb drove her almost frantic.

She sat down in a chair to recover herself, and let the stick drop from her hand.

Its double purpose of driving husband and the bull had failed.

The latter, when she entered his pasture, having been already charging the field wildly, made a fierce run at her. If she had not got over the rails, with great speed, some great injury if not a fatal one would have been the result.

"It's all the better for him, then," said she, rocking in the chair to nurse her anger. "Let him take care not to show his ugly face here again."

Little Meenie looked up from her knitting.

"Oh! don't be so hard upon poor father, mother!" said she.

"Hard on him!" echoed Gretchen. "You little jade, I am not hard! How dare you say that I am hard?"

Meenie snuffed the candle, and kept silent.

"One would have to have the temper of an angel to put up with it all," continued Gretchen.

A rent in her dress recalled her narrow escape from being tossed by the bull.

"I can't think whatever somebody has been doing to it."

A footstep outside the door made her rise, take up her cudgel and prepare for the truant's entry.

"Father! father!" cried the little girl, clasping her hands.

"I won't have him here!" exclaimed Gretchen, lifting her stick. "I won't have him here, I say!"

But he who lifted the latch and walked in, was only little Hendrick Vedder.

Gretchen let her arm fall.

"Have you seen him, Hendrick?" she asked.

"Meenie's father? Oh, no! isn't he here?"

"No! isn't he at your father's?"

"Oh, no! not when I left."

There were some drops of rain on the boy, and through the little window, the change in the weather could be fully remarked.

No longer a lovely view. Cheerless, dark, and dismally the wind now whistled past, rudely tearing aside the foliage—revealing beneath it the sides of the mountain.

Clouds—dense, lowering, and thunder-charged, were boiling up around the horizon, and in one short hour a melancholy desolation had usurped the place of all that just before was bright and beautiful.

Hendrick went to the fire, where sat Meenie.

The loving little creature was murmuring, at every roll of approaching thunder.

"Poor father, out in the lightning and rain!"

"It will do him good," said her mother, as she nursed her wrath.

The little Dutch clock gave a premonitory chirp and let two squads of four strokes each march out into the air.

Meenie rose from the fireside and pulling the cloth out of the table-drawer, began to spread it, asking as a matter of form:

"Shall I lay the table, mother?"

"Yes," responded Gretchen, who was standing undecided.

Meenie began to take dishes from the cupboard, with great care.

For dishes came from Holland, and were treasures in those days.

"Shall I set the table for two or three, mother?" she inquired.

Hendrick, if he stayed, as he often did, would eat with her.

"Two, two!" cried Gretchen. "He gets no supper here to-night!"



40 *Rip Van Winkle; Or, The Sleep of Twenty Years.*

She still continued her musing, but the good heart that really was hers was gradually overcoming the savage spirit.

The thunder broke louder in the distance.

"What a fool he is to stop out on such a night," she sighed.

Her home beggared, her resources gone, all that could add to her misery was to have her husband sick on her hands.

She also imagined that Rip's knowledge of what she was suffering by his absence, was the cause of his continuing it.

Meenie had returned to sit on her "cricket" beside Hendrick in the chimney corner.

The chilliness of the storm-laden air had caused Gretchen to have a fire.

The boy, feeling uneasy under the silence, ventured to address Gretchen.

"They said, at father's," he began, "that Mynheer Van Winkle had gone up to the mountains. I know his road. Shall I go and see if I can't find him and tell him you want him?"

Gretchen got up from the chair, and pulling her hood over her head again, moved towards the door.

"No, Hendrick!" said she. "You stay here with my Meenie. I will go again to seek him, Meenie," said she, her tone showing some relenting, "You may lay the table for three!"

The little one prepared to do so, but, in the act, observed with sharp simplicity of children:

"Oh, no, mother, don't you run after father! for when you do, it makes him run away all the faster!"

The truth in this made Gretchen bite her lip.

"Peace, child!" said she.

As she opened the door, a gust of damp wind flew into the cottage.

"No matter," said the woman, "I will feel the storm less when I know that I am sharing it with him."

For a long while after the door had closed behind her, the children continued to amuse themselves by the fire.

At last they exhausted all their sports, and even watching the sparks fly up the broad chimney, engrossing pastime as that is, grew somewhat dull.

"I hope," said the boy, at last, as he drew closer to his fair companion, "I hope your father has not gone up upon the mountains to-night, Meenie?"

"Oh, why, Hendrick, to-night more than another. My father often goes there."

"Yes, but don't you know?"

"Because it's cold there," asked she, rolling a billet upon the embers.

"Tisn't for that, Meenie. But people say that on this night every twenty years, the ghosts of Hendrick Hudson and his pirate crew appear on the Kaat-skills!"

"My!" exclaimed the little one. "How is that?"

Then, forming a pretty picture in the red and yellow fire-gleaming, nestling close to one another, like birds singing together, the two children let many minutes pass by as one told as the other listened, the legend that we have already detailed.

Only, we have not the gift to imbue it with the childish credulity that the boy put in his version of it.

The storm was in the Valley of Falling Waters now.

"And whenever the lightning flashes," said Hendrick.

A long zigzag raced over the warring clouds, and sent a vivid glare into the cottage.

"That's Hendrick Hudson lighting his pipe," went on the lad. "And when the thunder peals, that's the rolling of his sailors' ten-pin balls!"

A terrific crash made the building shake, substantially as it was made.

Meenie gave a scream and fell into the boy's arms.

He, with pale cheek, but bold as a lion cub for all that, stood up firmly.

"Don't be frightened, Meenie," said he.

She screamed again.

"Look!" said she.

Young Vedder was frightened now.

A face, looking extremely unearthly, was at the window.

Besides the downfall of the rain, the rattling of a hand trying to undo the catch of the casement indicated that the apparition sought entrance.

A second flash of lightning however, just as the open window let the face in, and still more deeply terrified the children, lit it up brightly.

"Oh, father, it is father!" said they both.

Rip's little kindnesses to Hendrick had almost earned him that title.

"Meenie?" said Rip's voice.

It was he who, holding his reeling form still by the window-sill, thus called.

"Yes, father!"

"Ish der wild cat here?" asked he drunkenly.

To the surprise of the children, they beheld Rip suddenly pulled back from the window, and heard his "Oh, oh! don't!" outside.

The wind blew the window to.

The cause of the drunkard's disappearance was simply Gretchen.

She had just missed catching him in Nick Vedder's, and, after only a brief delay to give that assemblage a piece of her mind, she was on her way home.

She arrived there precisely soon enough to hear her husband put his question (so uncomplimentary if it related to her) to the child.

She caught him by the ear and hair, pulled him out of the window, as we have seen, and in, by the door, as we now see.

As she shook him to and fro, the crying of both the children rang out. Each loved Rip too sincerely to see him harmed without a remonstrance.

As for the hunter, he had let his gun drop, and made no resistance to the vigorous treatment which he received.

"Don't you hear der shildren crying un' Schneider barking?" was all he said.

Indeed, the poor dog, shut out in the rain, and hearing the clamor within, had joined in the uproar.

Meenie opened the door.

Schneider, who had gone off after supper to find his master, peeping in cautiously, saw that the redoubtable dame was busy with her husband, and conjectured that the occupation was going to last long.

With this sagacious decision, he boldly trotted in, let Meenie shut off the means of retreat, and slunk past the couple to rub his nose in Hendrick's hand, preliminary to spreading himself before the fire.

The wife finally let go her hold, and, standing off a step or two, eyed her "worse half" reproachfully.

"She's pulled a hap'ful of hair out of my head!" muttered Rip. "Do you want to make me bald afore my time, Gretchen?"

She was the one to have all the questioning.

"Now, then," began she, planting her hands so that her arms were a-kinbo.

"Now, who did you call a wild cat?"

"Wild cat?" repeated Rip with sundry hiccups, and with a blank look that implied that, after the fashion of Napoleon's "impossible," he had expunged the words from his lexicon or had never known them.

"Yes. What did you mean by wild cat?"

"Oh!" cried Rip, as if he had discovered the puzzle, "what did you mean by wild cat, hein? I say, who did you call (hic!) wild cat? Oh! I know," added he, maintaining his balance by a miracle.

"Well, who?"

"Oh! it was Schneider, there!"

The dog wagged his tail. He could not do more, for Meenie was sitting on him, and Hendrick held his fore-paws, as they teased him.

"Yaw," resumed Rip, conceiving that his excuse was a valid one, "yaw, I often call the dog by dat name!"

Schneider gave a yelp of assent.

A cannon ball, striking the oaken ribs of a man of war, pierces straight through them, scattering destruction on all sides, until its force is expended; but if it impinge upon the waves, it swerves aside, and is conquered by their unresisting softness, and finally subsides without injury. So the first burst of passion, increased and rendered more dangerous by a stubborn opposition, will generally yield and fall harmless when it is met by softness and submission. The moral, old as the fable of the wind, the oak, and the reed, has been remembered long enough to be forgotten by many.

Gretchen was evidently affected by the other's placid reception of her attack.

Rip had got hold of the back of a chair now and emboldened by that support, smiled pleasantly at his helpmate.

"Well," said she, changing her battery; "now, for your conduct of this afternoon——"

"Oh, der dancing mit Katerina, hein! un' der kiss—oh, yaw!"

"You wretch! what have you to say?"

Rip dropped into the chair.

"I won't speak a word! I'll let you have all the talking to yourself!"

Gretchen laid her hand on his shoulder. To her surprise, he was but little wet.

"The man's as dry as if he had been aird," muttered she.

"Yaw, I was always dry," said Rip, complacently. "Der ground was uneven, und I dodged mit the rain-drops!"

"Ha!" cried Gretchen; "what's this?"

It was the bottle that Rip had stuck in his game-bag on the party breaking up at Vedder's.

"As usual full of liquor!" sighed Gretchen, holding it up to the light.

"Nein!" cried Rip quickly. "You do me injustice! I don't generally bring der bottle home full!"

His wife pushed the flask into the reticule that hung as a supplementary pocket by her apron-pouches.

The head of the Van Winkles watched the proceeding with interest.

"You have not been home for the last three days——" recommenced she sternly.

"Yaw, it was three days," said Rip, counting them on his fingers dreamily.

"Why have you been stopping out all night?"

"Yaw, I was stopping out all der nacht!" responded the hunter.

"I ask you why?"

"Oh! you know that! Dunder, you moos' be a witch, Gretchen!" hiccuped Rip in deep admiration at her extensive knowledge as revealed by this Archimedean discovery.

"But what was the reason?"

Her hearer saw that the question had to be faced.

"Oh, der reason?" reiterated he. "Yaw, I wanted to get up early (hic!) in der mornin'! dat was it!"

The speech might have failed to affect its hearer, but the grave look that accompanied it, made Gretchen smile.

"You did not try to rise early to do any work," said she.

"True for you," answered the hunter; "it was to go oop on der mountains!"

"To hunt?"

"Yaw?"

"Then you have got something to show for it?"

"Yes, I shot something," said Rip, repressing a laugh.

Gretchen sat down more quietly.

"Ah!" said she. "Something to eat—that is better than nothing. Well, what do bring home?"

"My gun un' bag——"

"Yes, of course."

"Un' Schneider!"

"Yes. Nothing more?"

"Yaw."

"What?"

"You see, my dear, the first thing what I see was ein rabbit!"

"Oh!" said Gretchen. Meenie clapped her hands together, and "der tog Schneider" pricked up his ears.

"Yaw!" said Rip. "Ein fat rabbit! Un I say to myself: mein frau like rabbit!"

"So I do!" said Gretchen.

"So she do! she like 'em in a stew, I say! So I creep up to the rabbit—he had long ears sticking up like that!"

Rip held up two fingers in imitation of the phenomenon he had come upon.

"Und a long white tail was standing up like this!"

He held up one finger this time, to the amusement of the dog and the children, the whole three of whom had approached the hunter.

"So I creep up to him," proceeded Rip. "You know you mustn't get too close away from a rabbit!"

Gretchen assented.

"You will remember that, Hendrick, when you go hunting whales mit der Nor' Pole," remarked Van Winkle for the lad's benefit.

"Well?" said Gretchen.

"Will, I lift my gun—I took good aim, I pull der trigger."

"Bang! went the gun!" said Gretchen, interested.

"Yaw—bang! went der goon!"

He laughed.

"Und der rabbit run'd away!"

The children laughed, and Schneider gave a little satisfied snort of a chuckle as if a fly was up his nose.

"So, you have shot nothing?" queried the dame, whose vexation began to revive.

"No more rabbits," rejoined Rip frankly. "But you know the pond, in der pasture, under the old cherry-trees?"

"Oh, yes. We hire it of the Bleekers."

"Yaw. What do you think I see there?"

"In the pond?"

"Yaw, in the wasser."

"Oh! ducks!"

"Ducks!" echoed Meenie.

"Um?" queried Rip dubiously. "Yaw, I believe he was ducks! Yaw, dere was more as fifty t'ousand ducks!"

"Fifty thousand!" repeated Gretchen.

Schneider whisked his tail briskly and displayed perfect readiness to go before the proper authorities and make an affidavit to the complete truth of the assertion.

"Quiet, puppy!" said Rip, pushing the dog's head and paws off his knee.

"Well, I crawled up mit my goon!"

Gretchen, suspecting another story, silly took up her washing-stick and grasped it firmly.

"I lifted up the goon," said Rip, "to let 'em have it."

Gretchen raised the stick, muttering:

"So will I you, if you miss fire this time!"

The unconscious Rip pursued:

"I took mooch better aim as before, un'——"

"How many down?" cried Gretchen meaningly.

Rip paused. Perhaps a shade of suspicion came over him.

"Eh?"

"How—many—down?" repeated she deliberately.

"One!"

That was all Rip said.

As it was not worth while to let the hunter off with a single stroke, Gretchen lowered her cudgel.

"Only one out of fifty thousand," said she in pretended amazement.

"Oh!" said Rip, "It was more than one duck!"

Gretchen could not penetrate the riddle.

"It was our old bull!" burst forth the hunter.

In his roar of laughter, the children joined.

Schneider cut a caper on two of his legs, but he cut it altogether on a cut that Gretchen's stick made at him.

"Mein Gott in Himmel!" exclaimed Rip, "how he did roar und bellow! ha, ha, ha! Den de old bull run'd after me, und I run'd away from der old bull, und when I got to der fence—if I had not been quick he would have made me break der pledge und take two horns again' my will?"

Gretchen sighed. She pushed the children into the other room, gave them a candle and a dish or two, and bade them eat their supper.

Schneider, carefully cruising around her, ran into that room, too, to share with Meenie her meal.

Then the wife of the neer-do-well returned to her chair, leaned her arms upon the table, her apron to her eyes, and began to sob, as if, as she said, her heart would break.

Rip regarded her very calmly.

"Its all richt," said he philosophically. "When I get her crying it's all right!"

Gretchen stamped her foot nervously.

"No, I must keep my temper down," muttered she.

"Dat's richt," said Rip, nodding his head approvingly. "Keep it down, old woman, keep it down."

She still kept sobbing.

"Oh, now, Gretchen," said Rip, in that tone which the Irish call "soothering" and the Dutch what we regret not knowing: "Come now, don't be crying, my dear! what for you cry, eh?"

He ventured to draw up his chair beside hers, and, seeing no resistance to that, went farther and patted her shoulder.

Then, finding that her indulgence in tears took off her attention, he dextrously exerted his other hand in taking the bottle from her reticule.

"Ah! Gretchen, my darling!" said he to cover the sound attending the abstraction, "don't be crying like that?"

Then, in his most insinuating of tones, he cunningly inquired:

"My good frai, wont you give me a little drop out of the bottle?"

Gretchen sighed, and with accent both mournful and indignant, said:

"The man's drunk, and he asks for more!"

"Droonk!" cried Rip like a saint of the temperance school. "Who's droo (hic) onk! I wasn't droonk! I—I swore'd off!"

"No!" said Gretchen.

"Only a little drop mit wasser! so mooch in a toombler?" said the drunkard, making a sign of the quantity.

Gretchen stamped her foot:

"No! I said!"

"Den why didn't you say so at first! I only wanted ein drop to keep me from crying mit you!" said he apologetically.

Gretchen murmured that liquor could not keep her from repining.

"Try it, my dear!" was all he said.

Then she attempted another means, reproaching him with letting his wife and children go about in rags.

"So am I the same way, my dear," said Rip conclusively.

Thus he tired out all her arguments.

"Oh, Rip, if you would only try to be yourself," said she. "It would blot out the past and add ten years to my life!"

Rip looked doubtful as to the claim of the offer as an inducement.

However, after a while, he gave his word to drink no more, asserting strenuously that he had already "swore'd off."

So completely did he delude her for the thousand and first time, that a smile came to her face. She called Meenie in.

But, alas! as her back was turned, Rip must take a good-bye drink because he had swore'd off.

"I knew when I got her saying that it was all right," said the Rip-robate, emptying the bottle by half. "Didn't I smoothe the old woman down nice!" chuckled he.

Gretchen heard and saw all this illustration of his promise-keeping.

"I'll smoothe you down," muttered she.

"Well, old woman," said Rip, holding up the flask, as if to her, "here's your very good health und your family's!"

But, as his lips were parting to receive the bottle-mouth, the hand of his infuriated wife snatched it from him.

"Oh! you wicked fool!" cried she bitterly.

She flung the bottle upon the hearth where its contents gurgled out and flamed up red and blue.

"Dere was a drop left," muttered Rip mournfully.

"What you had is the last drop you shall ever take in my house!" cried Gretchen.

"Ah!" ejaculated Rip, the energy of her accent somewhat cooling him.

She flung the door widely open, despite the rain-laden blast that rushed in and circled around the room ere flying up the chimney.

"Out! you sot! out you disgrace to your wife and child!"

Meenie and Hendrick looked on terrified.

Schneider, seeing the door open, dropped his tail, laid back his ears, and darted out into the rain without a sound.

"This house is mine," said Gretchen. "Mine! Had it been yours, you would have wasted its price long ago in riot and drink! But it is mine! and henceforth, you have no share in me and mine!"

The storm seemed to rage with more violence.

"Oh, no! mother, not in the storm!" cried Meenie, clinging to her father's skirts.

"Begone, man!" said the woman firmly.

Rip drew his hand across his obscured eyes; tears were washing the blur out of them.

"So, Gretchen," said he in a broken voice, "so you drive me out of—out of —" with an effort—"your house!"

He put aside the little girl gently and went towards the open door slowly but steadily.

"Well, I will go!" he said. "You turn me out—you turn me out of your house like a dog! It is your house—your house! Very well! The foot of Rip Van Winkle will never darken its doors again!"

He was going! Gretchen felt something tug at her heartstrings spite of all his undeniable faults.

"Oh, no, not in the storm, father!" cried Meenie.

"Don't go, Rip!" said Hendrick, adding his voice.

"The storm!" repeated the hunter. "Der dunder und blitzen und der rain has no duysels so bad like dat woman!"

He removed Meenie's hands from the fringe of his hunting-frock, and holding her back, kissed her tenderly.

"My child! Gott in Himmel, bless you!" said he in a deep voice so earnest that the last trace of intoxication vanished before it.

Gretchen, who had been struggling with herself, achieved the victory at that moment.

"Oh, Rip!" she broke forth, "come back!"

But man's pride was stinging the hunter.

"No!" said he. "You opened the door—the door of your house for me to go! and you never can open it again for me to come back!"

He was gone, still looking behind.

A startling crash of thunder drowned the last appeal, and the wind flung the door shut with as loud a sound.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ON THE KAATSKILLS. THE VIEW FROM THE BERG. THE INTERRUPTED SLUMBER. THE SCHNAPPS-CARRIER.

The roar has ceased; the hush of inter-calm  
Numbs with its leaden finger Echo's lips,  
And angry spirits in mid havoc pause.  
The forest has more tenants than I knew,  
Look underneath this branch; see'st thou not yonder  
Among the brushwood and the briery weeds  
A man?—

[BEDDOES.]

RIP, his dog at his heels, his gun in his hand, his hat pulled down over his eyes, had not gone far from the cottage than he found himself in the thick of it.

As far as he could discern, a perfect hurricane seemed to be raging around. The gusts of wind roared down the vales, like blasts from a thousand gigantic furnaces. The sky, which had been clear and azure but a few hours previously, was covered with dark clouds, from which, at rapid intervals, flashes of lightning darted, while the thunder bellowed its own terrific accompaniment, so as to be distinctly heard over the tumult of the hurricane.

"Come along, Schneider," said the hunter, stretching his legs into a quicker pace. "A dog isn't like a woman! dey sticks closer to a fellow when he's in trouble."

He had left the village behind.

A flash illumined the scene, coming from the heights overhead.

"Oh! dere is old Captain Hudson lighting his pipe," said Rip, and he added when the thunder boomed, "un' his boys playing ten pins."

He was in a mood far different to what his jesting seemed to imply.

"How I would like to have some fun mit dem fellows sometime," said he to lighten his heart.

He was now in a broken and interrupted path, into one of those marshy hollows so characteristic of scenery in mountain districts, before draining and cultivation had changed it into what we see it now; and was forced to pick his way among a succession of low brushwood, rocks, streamlets, and bog (into the latter of which he frequently sunk), in a manner and with a resolution that would seem incredible to the laughing ringletted belles who make the millionaires of our day wish they were the waiters at the "Mountain House."

At length, emerging from this sort of ground, and following for a space, in perfect darkness, a dry path, that cut off the angle of a close wood, then clothing the sloping side of the opposite hill.

Rip and his dog came upon the summit of the first semi-circular range around the main mountains.

As something that Schneider looked at, drew the shot from Rip's gun. The effect was wonderful.

From cave to cave the sound appeared to be taken up; not in one continuous roar, but report after report, as if five or six cannon had been exploded at rapid intervals, all planted on a line which receded from you. Finally, the sound having attained its utmost limits, was rolled back in an echo, which, though produced by an implement so small as a gun, rivalled in its volume, a peal of thunder.

"Mein Gott! how the mountain was full of echoes more dan ever I knew it was," said Rip a little startled. "Well, I missed him, whatever he was. I don't know! The more darker it gets, the more worser I can't see!"

The storm was mostly in the low-lands; Rip found when he paused to gaze from the heights.

Like all forced to commune with nature, the hunter had a love for it in his heart.

And now his pleasure of viewing the panorama was enhanced by the tempest.

For the music of wind and thunder is very exciting, and the illumination which is produced by frequent flashes of lightning, gives a majesty to the character of night under the most ordinary circumstances; whereas when shot across a scene like that which encompassed Rip after he had cleared the vales, the effect was sublime.

As Rip wound up the serpentine road by which the first range is crossed, the deep dark ravines which skirted it on either hand, with the groves nestling in their lowest depths, became from time to time distinctly visible, only that a darker and sterner gloom might in a moment afterwards enshroud the whole; while by and by, as he mounted nearer and nearer to the ridge, the same process spread out beneath him the river of beauties, the land of richness but only promising the wonders partly wrought out in our day.

Beyond the little limits of the village of Falling Water, there were no orchards, no waving wheat, no low but graceful shrubberies; no corn-fields, nor any other sign afforded of nature's bounty, or of the industry of man; but hills, rising or falling like waves of the sea, with room for many a valley of which you could say that it was such as even the most exacting gladly might inhabit. It had neither the grandeur of a district wholly precipitous, nor the deep solitude of a moor; it did not repulse one by an air of barrenness, however, like that in many a district of the Old World.

All this spread banquet for a Titan, was displayed, we say, by the storm-flambeaux in every single beauty,—all that they might come and go with the rapidity of a dream, and the splendour and the glory of some scene which is produced by the power of magic.

Amid such a tumult as this, and under the pelting of the furious rain, Rip



strode slowly onwards till the crest of the berg was gained; when he began to move more rapidly, and the storm, as if it had been designed to last no longer, lowered by degrees its tone. The flashes of lightning came at longer intervals, and the thunder grew more hollow and protracted in its sound; while the rain ceased, and the wind died quite away.

"Good!" said Rip, "I'm glad that I'm not going to be soaked through and through. I wish Nick Vedder's had not been shut up, and I had called in for another bottle."

His weather-beaten frock and leggins of yellow were equal to the undiscovered india-rubber as regarded water-proof qualities.

Still he and Schneider, both drenched, presented no very agreeable appearance.

A small cave was Rip's resort on similar hegiras to this one.

He looked up at the trees by its mouth.

"Der old branches almost *bough* as if they knew me," said he, laughing. "Hullo, old fellows! you keep me from the rain und der wind, und you never blows me up when I lays down here on the broad of my back."

He kicked a pile of leaves together and threw himself upon them. Schneider curled himself up by his side, and the hunter threw one arm around him.

"Good dog!" said he, "don't you wake me up till morning und den we will go hunt!"

A couple of hours passed.

Poor Rip had thought to forget his sorrows in a long slumber.

But alas! what are the hopes of mortals? Not more than two or three hours had elapsed when Rip awoke under a sense of intolerable irritation, and starting up, he found that a whole army of little black Voltigeurs had been performing their evolutions on his unfortunate body—an annoyance bad enough in itself, but rendered ten times more provoking by his inability to catch one of these truculent sleep-murderers, so rapidly did they describe their wingless flights, and skip, not only out of reach, but out of sight.

Never had he witnessed so sudden and marvellous a transference from everywhere to nowhere. Like the Weird Sisters, "they made themselves air into which they vanished."

It has been computed, that if an elephant had the same saltatory power as the flea, in proportion to his bulk, the aerial traveller, trunk and all, might easily leap over Mount Washington; he could not, however, like the volatile insect, jump into invisibility—for when Rip looked for his late tormentors, lo! they were not! and yet they were, so numerous, that had they been aware that "Union is strength," and combined their efforts, they might have fairly pushed the hunter out of the cave to which they seemed to declare their pre-emption right.

Schneider, as if the same army had launched one division against him, was also very uneasy. He whined, ran every now and then to the mouth of the cavern, and lay down with reluctance.

Rip, too, went to the entrance, and found all signs of a clearing off. The moon was appearing in the horizon among driving clouds.

In the hope that his sudden uprising had scared them from their fell purpose, Rip recommitted himself to the bed, and endeavored to resume his slumbers; but it seemed as if his imagination were flea-bitten, for it suggested nothing but anecdotes bearing reference to these volatile assailants.

Such recollections hopped about his brain for some time, for the Dutch vessels had imported these diminutive imps to that extent that stories of their prowess were as plenty in 1600 as tales of Jersey mosquitoes are in 1800—99.

But they at length jumped out of his thoughts, and gentle sleep returned once more "to steep his senses in forgetfulness."

Like the sentimental heroine, however, of so many romances, the hunter had

"retired to rest, but not to sleep;" Morpheus would not recognise a ten minutes' doze as any legitimate exercise of his influence, and at the end of that short respite he was again awakened by an attack which added insult to injury, for it was a fierce assault upon his nose, universally held to be the frontal seat of honour.

Well warmed by the late potations at Vedder's, the injured feature resented the wound "with considerable smartness."

And Rip, equally provoked by the sharpness and the locality of the bite, pounced his nail upon the spot so passionately, as to scratch off a small portion of the skin; so unskillfully as to miss the assailant whom he had hoped to seize and sacrifice.

Haste and anger had aggravated the evil he sought to remedy. He had removed the cover, as it were, from the dish, tempting the marauder to a fresh repast, and sharpening his appetite, while he had less defence against his proboscis.

Scarcely, therefore, had he again begun to doze, when he felt the painful insertion of his blood-sucking apparatus into the most sensitive part of the excoriation, but his last failure having warned him against precipitation, he resolved to arrest him in the most gentle, noiseless, and winning manner possible.

Vain precaution!

Not alone did he escape that subtle design, but, taking advantage of Rip's attention being wholly on their brother, two or three simultaneously levelled their lances.

Rip jumped up, half rolling over Schneider.

"Mein Gott! dey must be duyfels abroad to-night."

"Oh, ho! Rip Van Winkle!" cried a voice without the cave.

"What's that?" exclaimed the startled hunter. "Not my wife's voice, hers is loud and strong—good for the mate of a vessel, to make the sailors stand around!"

The same shrill voice indulged in a laugh.

Schneider, his hair bristling, followed his master to the mouth of the cave.

The storm had utterly gone. The full moon inundated the mountain, and made the wet leaves and the drops bending down the points of grass, glitter like polished metal.

There seemed to be something of witchery in its rays, for, instead of purest silver only, it caused a thousand tints to glow out in every direction that the hunter turned.

"It is beautiful as Gretchen, when she was young!" said Rip, enthusiastically.

Out of the vacancy, as it were, a deep bass voice roared:

"Rip Van Winkle!"

Schneider fairly howled with terror.

Rip could see nothing.

"Who calls Rip Van Winkle," said he, preparing his gun. "Here I am!"

All he could hear was a prolonged echo, like the laughter of many voices at no great distance.

Schneider, suddenly staring down the hill, yelped and darted off into the bushes.

"Sic 'em, Schneider!" said Rip, lifting his gun.

But the dog, only uttering a long howl, was to be heard leaping down the slope at a fast run.

"Come back, come here, you pup!" cried Rip.

In vain he whistled, called, and cried, the dog was disobedient for once.

"Is that you, dog?" exclaimed Rip, as he descried something ascending towards the cave.

It was a huddled-up ball of a form, which it was hard to say was either walking, rolling, or crawling.



"Not my wife, sure!" muttered Rip. "Mein Gott! vat is dat!"

For the last score of years that he had been hunting on the Kaatskills, he had never set eyes on such a shape.

"I will go home to mien frau," thought he, "she is less to be dreaded than dat? I will go home——"

"No, you won't," said a voice, interrupting.

Rip started, looked about; not a soul could he see. No, no one was there.

"I will," said Rip. "Dunder!"

"No, you won't," said the voice.

There could be no mistake this time; it wasn't a man's voice, it wasn't the voice, at least, of any man that he had ever known.

"Who are you?—where are you?" said Rip, looking about. "Ah, I see you!"

"No, you don't," said the voice.

"Where are you?" repeated Rip.

"Here," said the voice; "don't you see me now?"

Rip put his hand to his eyes to shade them from the glare of the moon, and espied, a queer little creature.

He was a mere dwarf, the body and head of a large man set upon mere stumps of legs.

His face was of a mahogany color, but still bloodless so that he looked like a negro's corpse. His eyes, large and fishy, were full of wierd flames that cast unpleasant reflections on what ever they surveyed.

He was attired in an old fashioned sailor's suit, and he had the air of a seaman.

A little, rough, blue jacket of long dimensions; breeches of most capacious size, blue stockings, shoes with buckles, and a high-crowned hat; and with a pipe in his mouth, which the old fellow seemed to enjoy with much relish.

What had increased the strangeness of his figure was his carrying a small cask on his shoulders. To give it room, he had cocked his hat over his eyes.

With the greatest coolness, not to say impudence, he set down his burden in the moonlight, and then sat down upon it.

To the deepening of the hunter's astonishment, he beheld no shadow cast by the dwarf, by his pipe or his load.

"Mein Gott!" he marvelled. "How he roll his eyes! I wish my old woman was here, for to be scared for oncit."

The little old man grinned.

"Gretchen knows better than that, Rip," said the stranger.

"Der duyfel! what! you know my name, un' my family's?" gasped the hunter.

"Don't all the village know Rip Van Winkle, the idle, lazy good for naught, who sees a little fellow like me carrying a keg of schnapps too heavy for him, and won't offer to help," said the dwarf.

The word "schnapps," which the tempting look of the bulging, swag-bellied keg amply verified, caused Rip's mouth to water, although he was drier and more thirsty, than ever.

"It was schnapps dat was in there, hein?"

The sailor nodded, and pointed to the marks on the keg.

"Yaw, but I can't read," said Rip.

"See!" said the sailor, reading off the brand burnt in old letters:

"Passed the Customs Clerk of the College of XIX., De Halver Mond, 1608."

"Sixteen hundred and eight. Mein Gott!" exclaimed Rip, "how he was old!"

He patted the keg, from which the seaman had risen, quite affectionately.

"I show you that I can carry schnapps, inside or out mit any man no matter what age or sex he was!" said Rip, shouldering the vessel.

"Will you carry my gun?" from the hunter elicited an affirmative from the other.

The sailor took the lead, and climbed the mountain with a curious waddle of his short legs.

"I'm sure of a drink, anyhow!" muttered Rip, as he heard a slight sound as the liquor in the keg moved the compressed air within it.

As he rose higher and higher on the mountain, the air seemed to be fuller of queer noises, and often Rip started at some supposed phantom gliding past him to peep back at his face, or at gigantic toads that appeared to be under his feet.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HENDRICK HUDSON. UNCHAINING THE DEMON LIPS. THE UNHOLY CAROUSAL. THE BROKEN SPELL.

The moon at full, by clearness of her light,  
Breaks through the thickness of the troublous shade,  
Whose bristling horror, leagued with the night,  
Has the wayfaring wanderer dismay'd.—MAURICE SEEVIL.

The grisely wasserman, that makes his game  
The flying ships with swiftness to pursue;  
The horrible Sea-Satyr, that doth shew  
His fearful face in time of greatest storms.—SPENSER.

THE guide and the Dutchman continued to ascend.

The latter had never been so high up on the mountain before.

"When I promised to carry up der schnapps," muttered he, "I never thought it was going to be so far up like this."

Presently the dwarf, scrambling over the pile of rocks that formed the outer sweep of an amphitheatre, disappeared.

Rip, on looking up, saw a man before him.

He wore a sailor's dress of antiquated fashion, and had a cutlass and a pair of pistols in his broad-buckled belt.

He had a boarding-pike in his hand, and seemed to be on guard.

But though Rip, afraid to pass him, made signs to him and spoke, the seaman made no answer other than waving his bony hand, blanched as if moulded in pipe-clay, for the hunter to proceed.

Van Winkle sidled by him, and stepping over the rock found himself in a species of enclosed ring.

Here were some forty strange figures, none of whom noticed his entrance.

Some were sitting at a flat-faced block of stone which served as table.

Others were lying on the ground, smoking or chatting in the moonlight.

Still another party were watching one of their number, who, with a cannon-ball in his hand was about to bowl at a set of ten-pins, which were made of marlinspikes.

Each of these men had a visage of a peculiar and horrible cast.

But in this, he who seemed their leader, surpassed them.

Rip, startled at the view of so many revelers in this lonely spot, had set down the keg, near where he found his gun leaned up against a tree.

In the striped shirt, with the blue jacket, black belt, and dark blue breeches of the other mariners, was this commander of them all.

An ample black cloak lined with scarlet, flowed all about him. A tall black hat, with a single crimson feather, made him look still more lofty, while shading his countenance to almost blackness.

He had been sitting on a stone, a couple of men by his side, like lieutenants of his, but he rose to his feet on Rip's intrusion.

On beholding him, the idea that he stood in the presence of an unearthly being created in Rip an indescribable feeling—his heart leaped to his mouth at the conviction, and a cold shivering thrilled his body. He tried to shut out the vision, but his eyes were fascinated by some spell against which he had no power of resistance. As he continued to gaze on the spirit commander's face, it gradually became brighter and more defined, until the hunter distinguished the face, wan and ghastly—its eyes, lustreless and fixed, as those in the sockets of a dead man.

Rip shuddered with horror at the sight, his knees bent beneath him, and he was on the point of sinking down.

Panting and breathless, a cold perspiration bursting through every pore, and with a feeling as if the scalp of his head was shrinking to nothing, Rip again looked on it. The captain stood without motion with his dull and lifeless eyes still riveted upon him.

The Dutchman managed to collect a boldness that seemed impossible, and returning the stare, he forced his pale lips to flutter out a:

"How you was, old shentleman! how zu beest, hein?"

At the sound of the voice, all the seamen stopped in their pursuits. The ball, darted from the bowler's hand, flew at the pins, made a ten stroke, and racing forward with a couple of the impelled spike, rolled down the rocks, into the depths where echo thundered up.

All the party, quickly but without a sound, gathered around the leader, and while all their right forefingers were leveled at Rip, all their unearthly eyes were also aimed at him.

"Dunder und blitz!" muttered Rip, dropping his gun that he had instinctively taken up, "dat moost be der old grandfather of dem all!"

The right-hand man of the commander, put his silver boatswain's-whistle to his blued lips as if to send forth a call.

But, just as each man lowered his hand from pointing at the mortal to place them on dirk, firearm or cutlass, the dwarf that had guided the Dutchman, waddled up to the commander, and seemed to explain in signs.

The faces relaxed into grim smiles.

This, somewhat reassured Rip, but very little.

"They are going to decide which way to cook me," thought the Dutchman. "Roasted or biled! I wish they would stew me in schnapps, if I must be dished. Oh, how I wish my old woman was here!"

As he uttered the charitable desire, he imagined what the dwarf had communicated to the captain. He hastened to clunch the statement.

"Yaw, mynheer," said he, "he's de feller that I met down by der cave, old shentlemen, un' I help him up mit der schnapps."

The sailors went and sat at the table, and sundry tin plates were placed before each man, and, nevertheless, not a tinkle of metal resounded.

The captain made a sign to Rip.

It invited him to sit at the board with the company.

Rip wondered whether any harm was meant him.

As if aware of his thought, the cloaked man shook his head.

"Un' your family wont hurt me neither?" asked the Dutchman aloud.

Again the red feather waved.

"Well," said Rip, rolling the keg over that way, "if you do mean me any tricks, why, say so! and if I can't run away, I will die game. You shake your head?"

The strangers, except the dwarf, had not yet uttered a word.

"You're not deaf?" said Rip, puzzled.

The feather shook again.

"No? How could he be deaf, und he hear my thought even?" said Van Winkle correcting himself. "What is't der matter mit you, old shentleman, that you bob your head so mit it, hein? You are dumb?"

The feather nodded.

"Un' your family?" asked Rip, risking a glance on the assemblage.

The captain nodded.

"All the boys dumb, all troubled mit the same complaint?" repeated the hunter. "What a pity! ich was ein pity, yaw! Have you any girls mit der family?"

The commander shook his head, as he took his place at the head of the board.

"No dumb girls," muttered Rip, remembering a certain female of the name of Gretchen Van Winkle. "What a pity dat was! What capital wives dey would make for a fellow!"

The dwarf came to him, and said in his queer voice.

"The captain asks you to sit at the table here."

"Oh! he was a captain, eh?" said Rip. "He was der skipper of der——?"

"Of der Halver Mond," answered the dwarf.

"Der Half Moon," reiterated Rip. "Mein Gott!"

All the auditors started at the oath.

"I was know all der schloops that go up un' down der Hoodson un' I never know that boat!"

So musing, Rip let himself drop upon a stone that did passing well for a seat.

He was at the right hand of the captain.

On his right, there sat the big bearded man, who wore the silver whistle round his neck, and who was a lieutenant.

At the head of the table, as we have said, was he of the cloak.

The dwarf lifted the keg of schnapps up, after knocking out the bung with the butt of a pistol, and poured its contents into large pewter flagons.

Out of the pitchers again, the cups before each man were filled.

The captain of the Half Moon pushed a beaker towards Rip.

"What? you was ax me to drink mit you?" said Rip. "No, I swore off from drinking!"

The liquor, as each bubble broke around its beaded brim, sent up an aroma extremely alluring.

Mechanically, Van Winkle found he had drawn the cup to him.

"Well," said he, "ash dis is der first time what I see you, und your family why, I don't mind, for once!"

So he lifted the goblet quite in the old style.

"Old shentleman," said he, "here is your good health, und your family's und may you live long und prosper!"

So saying, he touched the cup that the captain held up, and they drank together.

All of the crew had turned their eyes upon the hunter. When they saw him set down the vessel drained, they opened their mouths in a wild laugh.

Not only was the liquor such as Rip had never tasted before, making him wild as it ran through his veins like quicksilver and made his heart dance, but it had other qualities.

Though the sailors had laughed, talked, moved, before, not a sound could Rip hear.

But now, his ears unsealed, he heard their voices, the rattling of their weapons against the buckles of their belts or their sea-boots.

And the captain, no longer confirmed to nodding and shaking his head, lifted

his voice, roughened with blowing orders into the face of Northern gales but hearty as a good-humored giant's, and cried:

"Hail, new recruit! Another cup, till we pledge him all together!"

Every man standing each drank to the hunter.

This second draught completed Rip's initiation among the disembodied revenants.

"You are Yolly Dogs!" cried he. "I will drink with you, captain, till all is blue mit 'em! un mit your family!"

Then the revelry began.

Rip joined in all, and in each feat sought to be foremost.

The boatswain's pipe, as if it held an imprisoned spirit within, warbled a wild dancing tune, sometimes the voice of a Lucifer falling, sometimes that of the demon in torture.

Rip flew around, hand in hand with the crew, in many a whirl.

Then while reeling he sang a drunken-song, while in reply, the captain of the Half Moon intoned a pirate's song:

Oh, lady, come o'er the ocean with me,

And reign and rule on the sunny sea;

My ship's a palace; my deck's a throne—

And all shall be thine the sun shines on.

A gallant ship and a boundless sea,

A piping wind and the foe on our lee;

My pennon streaming so gay from the mast,

My cannon flashing all bright and fast.

The Bourbon lilies wax wan as I sail,

The yellow of Spain, I strike it pale;

Let kings rule earth by a right divine,

Thou shalt be queen of the fathomless brine.

The chorus with a marking-time of cups banged on the table, was deafening. Some one proposed a game at dice.

Rip eagerly acceded, staking his gun against a handful of silver.

He won, and continued to win, while, with each prize the fever of play gained upon him.

The captain's great bag of coin melted one by one, and flowed to the hunter's side.

As the pile of wealth before him grew in bulk, his eagerness increased; he risked greater stakes, and so anxious was he to swell the heap, that his fingers, like the talons of a bird, were outstretched and quivering to clutch the gold all the time the bones were being rattled. The rapture of the strife brought a deep glow to his cheeks, and his lips curled in triumph.

He was utterly engrossed in the game, not seeing how his neighbors were engaged.

Of them, some shouted, some sang, all blasphemed, and one loud din of cursing and carousal echoed far and wide: the mingled clamour that ascended from this scene of wickedness and debauchery partook of all the evil qualities of debased minds and the most infamous pursuits, and cannot be described.

But Rip's agony of joy was not destined to last. Nor was it a momentary change, for, although an occasional adverse throw checked its progress to victory, like the rallying efforts of a beaten foe in the desperate effort to win a day irretrievably gone, the full tide swept over these obstacles, and gain succeeded gain, until Rip lost all he had won, with his gun, his garments, his all, in a word.

As he vainly tried to imagine with his disordered brain what other resource

he had, the captain leaned over to him and proposed to stake all the vast heap against that immortal gift that the most debased of men possessed, if even as a mere sparkle.

Already was the word of consent on Rip's lips, already was the grin on each satanic face widening into a laugh, when a distant bark of a dog startled Rip amid the silence.

"It is Schneider, Mein Gott!"

"He has sworn!" cried the dwarf.

"No!" returned Rip, rising and upsetting the cup and dice-box before him.

"Mein Gott, no!"

All rose.

"Gott bless de faithful dog!" said Rip mournfully. "I know you now! I know you, Hendrick Hoodson, and your dryfel of a family! I will not stake mein soul, no! for hundred times what gold you have! I don't doubt I have lost for having done this!" said he, looking round.

The faces, lately red with animation, were paling with rage.

"I don't doubt," went on Rip, "that hot hell will hold us, me un' you; and the mother who bore, and the wife who loves me, und the babe I have nursed on my knee, will behold me no more; and all for being in company with such hell-hounds as you; but, Hendrick Hoodson, I will not do what you un' der dryfel wish, no! no!"

At the resolute speech, the sailors pressed around him.

Unarmed, he held himself boldly against all the cutlasses and wide-mouthed pistols.

But, at that instant, the dog barked again.

The moon had gone down, and the dawn was peeping.

A shrill blast sounded from the silver pipe.

"All hands, away!" was the hoarse shout.

As the hunter dashed his arm at a broad blade that menaced his heart, it and the arm thrusting it, with the whole figure attached, faded to nothing.

Captain and crew, they were not, in an instant.

Heavens! what a blinding glare of light broke round the spot, and lit it up with a burning flame, and wrapped all the banquet-table in one sheet of glowing gloriousness. And hark to the mad wild shriek that, accompanied with that flame, and pierced through the distance like a cutting sword, a sound that went into the very soul of the hearer, clear, sharp, penetrating—a sound that made Rip high mad, as if he was so full of unearthly meaning. The cottager started from his sleep in dread, as he heard that shriek; the halting traveller shrank from fear, and hid his eyes, muttering prayers, as the fierce glare broke out from the haunted berg, and wrapped the sky and woods, and even the very mountain-tops in flame; and children moaned, sleeping in their mother's arms, and some woke up, and cried for very dread, they knew not why. And still the shriek grew louder and louder yet, and still the blinding glare mocked the fiercest sunlight of the east, and still rang through all the deep, pointed cry, "Not ours! not ours!"

And when Schneider, kept off no longer by the supernatural dread, came bounding to the spot, there were no more songs, and shouts, and laughter heard in the moonlight, no mocking shapes and strange shadows, sitting off and on the way, to tell that the old place was still inhabited by its demoniac tenants.

No!

When the flame cloud veiling their flight had faded away, the sun was shining, the birds sang overhead, pale flowers glistened round, the rushing Hudson foamed and flew, the sky arched its clear vault, and the hunter was sleeping on the lonely spot. The poor dog guarded the unconsumed body, while only left it now and then to catch a squirrel or eat the herbs. At last he grew fat

weak for even this, and one time that he left the sleeper's side, he fell, as with old age, over the rocks, and perished at the foot of the ravine.

\* \* \* \* \*

At the cottage of the hunter, the hours had passed; Gretchen herself would go in search beneath the midnight blackness; but the faint light showed her nothing among the waving hearse-like trees, or on the heights, save desolation, solitude, and despair. The morning found her roaming yet through thicket and through meadow; not wildly, not distractedly; with a settled determination—the calmness before the storm. And then she went back to her homestead; but it was deserted; only the child to greet her. Again she is out, searching wherever a human foot could cross; oft perilling her life; careless of the beating sun, careless of hunger, thirst, or fatigue; quickly tracking the wild country for miles round, nor resting from her task.

## CHAPTER IX.

AFTER A SCORE HAS GONE BY. DERRICK UNIMPROVED. THE Taming OF THE SHREW. A PRETTY PLOT.

The woman did just what her partner told her,  
For it is no less strange than true  
That wives did once what husbands bid them do  
Lord, how this world improves as we grow plder!

G. COLMAN THE YOUNGER.

Oh, heaven, I'm sure, ne'er meant that he  
Should thy young daughter's husband be:  
We have no common sympathy—  
So let youth's bud unbroken blow—  
For I will have no husband—no!

JUAN DE LINARES.

Time has worn on. The Village of Falling Water has increased in size as in character. The American Spirit has succeeded the slower but still enterprising Hollandish.

A neat brick house, on the corner of the two main streets, displays on a large metal plate a curious coat of arms over the name of "Derrick Von Beekman."

His profession is not designated. Everybody in the place too well knows that he owns full four fifths of the property round about. Almost every tenant pays him ground-rent or house

rent. When the English (in the year preceding this) took possession of the territory given to the Duke of York, their vessels only had to come up the river to and Falling Water quite at their disposal. Derrick was no war-dog of the "silver-leg" Stuyvesant stamp, to set down his foot in resistance to Carolus Rex.

Beekman's wife, let it be said, flamed up with the spirit of old (which poor Rip Van Winkle knew so well); and spoke of dragging the only big gun in the place, to the river-side and banging away with one charge before the royal lion should scratch out the Prince of Orange's flag.

This woman, we should say, was Gretchen, relict of Rip Van Winkle. The hunter, lost upon the mountains on that stormy night, had not been heard of for five years.

Gretchen though working hard, found herself poorer and poorer each day. Nick Vedder and the other cronies of her late husband, helped her in many instances, when a glance at her girl Meenie in rags broke her pride.

But, in the end, to have a roof over the child's head and bread for her, much

more than for herself, the widow agreed to reward Derrick's patience by accepting his hand, rejected fifteen years before.

Beekman displayed more feeling than the "miserly cur," as he was affectionately called, had ever evinced before.

He loosened his purse-strings for a grand merry making over his bridal. But the fates willed otherwise in that.

It rained the whole day, and the evening brought with it discord, confusion, and the devil to pay. The gunpowder (the groom was made to understand) had got wet in the mortars on the first fall of the evening dew. The faggots for the bonfires seemed equally affected by the dampness of the atmosphere. The market place remained obstinately, ominously, dark and mute. Nick Vedder contended that, owing to the severity of the weather, or else to the terror of the festive artillery that did not go off, every drop in his casks had turned as sour as the grapes in the fable, and the mob in the market-place, affected by the drought, and afflicted with a sudden sore throat, could muster no livelier shout, no heartier cheer, than a most jarring chorus of crowing, groaning, and hissing.

And to cap the climax, a battle royal ensued as the party came out of church.

Cookies, who was an attendant, was a little rude to little Meenie Van Winkle when, like a bantam, young Vedder, scarcely twelve years of age, resented the affront.

The lawyer's clerk cuffed the urchin's ears, when the latter, getting hold of the schoolmaster's cane, actually trounced the young man soundly, to the high delight of the spectators.

All this was long ago, however.

We must enter the landlord's residence, and see the young girl who, abstractedly knitting, is really musing, in the best room.

In truth, it would have been a pity to have kept a creature so charming as Meenie Van Winkle waiting. She was, at the time we are speaking of, about five-and-twenty years of age, strikingly handsome, with bright eyes, dazzling teeth, and the sweetest mouth that ever was seen; her figure was just the middle height, neither too tall nor too stout; it was shaped in fine proportion, and her carriage was easy and graceful.

She was attired plainly but still nicely.

Derrick had some pride in her, for many of the villagers had grown to look upon her as his child, more than the forgotten parents.

Meenie might well be full of thought at this moment.

She had heard, now and then, of late, certain snatches of conversation between her mother, her father-in-law, and his nephew that had made her sigh oftener than ever she had done before.

Her mother, subdued by her husband, was no longer her confidante, as of old.

The only other person that she was interested in, was none knew where.

Her having been so poor had prevented her having associates as she grew up. The farmers' daughters had their little aristocracy, such as it was.

The only one, we say, was absent.

Hendrick Vedder, soon after his father's death (the poor fellow's heart broke when Derrick turned him out of the tavern for non-payment of rent), had gone to sea.

He had been away, on a third voyage, for some five years now.

Yet Meenie, who had passed her word to him had remained true, despite the many that, as much for the wealth it was not impossible Derrick would leave her as for her beauty, pressed themselves upon her notice.

From the window, her glance could reach a shining piece of the river surface, and thence her mind took up the pursuit and went far away to the sea, on which the lover might be.



So enwrapt was she that she did not look up as footsteps were audible in the room.

This was a woman of perhaps no more than forty-five or so, but great sorrows or tribulations that she had passed through, had added fully ten years to the apparent sum.

Her hair was prematurely grey, that peculiar grey of flaxen hair, and arranged under a plain lace cap, in a way that revealed how entirely thoughts except the maternally had fled long ago.

Contrast her with the Gretchen of '45, fiery-eyed, ready of tongue, quick in every action, and say you hardly recognize her now.

In a voice, mild, tamed down, still sweet, nevertheless, and all the more for that reason perhaps, she said:

"Meenie, may I have a word with you?"

The girl started out of her brown study, lifted her eyes, and, sighing, answered:

"Oh, mother! when you know how happy I am to hear you."

"Your father has bade me come, and—"

"My father!" interrupted Meenie, dashing down her knitting; "no father of mine, you know! He is your husband, mother! That is all, and nothing to me."

"Sh!" said the other timidly. "Don't so loud! If he were to hear you, he would make me pay for it."

"Pardon me, good mother!" And the impulsive child, her glance softening, fell by her mother's side kneeling.

"I always forget!"

"Do not blame him or pity me, child. I deserve this all by my treatment to your poor father."

"My father! oh, you were loving towards him."

"Ah! you were little, too young, then, to understand what wives may anger husbands with, even before their unsuspecting children."

"I remember my father," said Meenie, looking off into vacancy at an imagined picture, while she placed one hand in her mother's. "I remember him well. Always with a smile and a kiss for me, often letting me sleep on his knee, my curls all about the rough hunting-frock he wore, letting my fingers stray over knife-handle, bullet-bag and powder-horn, ah! who wouldn't love, though years are passed, a father so tender and kind."

"He was all that, dear!" said Gretchen. "I should have gained my points by appeals to that very good-nature of his, but I took another course, and drove him to his death."

"You, mother?"

"It was after a quarrel, one of many, unfortunately, that he went up on the mountains. Several years afterwards, they found a dog's skeleton up there, and its collar was the same as his usual companion."

"Oh! I remember 'Schneider,'" said Meenie, almost merrily. "He had a coat always tangled so that you couldn't run your fingers through it."

The reminiscences thus revived, came thronging upon the twice-married to that extent that she forgot her errand.

As Meenie studied her grave face, she saw tears roll down the wrinkled cheeks, and a sob burst from her.

"Oh, there! mother! dear mother, don't cry!" said Meenie in a tearful voice herself.

Ah! snivelling again, sneered a harsh voice, and the girl started.

In a rusty black suit, tightly fitting his withered form, Myneer Derrick Van Beekman, chief proprietor of Falling Water, stood before his wife.

"Oh, sir!" said Meenie reproachfully, as she rose as though to shield the weeping one.

"Hold your tongue, miss, hold your tongue," croaked the landlord, dropping into a seat. "Well, Gretchen, have you told her all about it?"

Gretchen, drying her eyes, said:

"Not yet, sir!"

"Then set about it at once, do you hear? Do as I say, mistress."

"I will, sir."

"Of course, she will," said Meenie, tauntingly, trying to catch Derrick's eyes, to give him a glance of her indignant ones; "you've made her a slave, and you can naturally expect a slave's obedience."

At this outbreak, quite in his own style, the landholder almost let fall his snuff-box, and it killed the sneeze he was about enjoying.

"How dare you—" began he, springing to his feet quite agilely.

"Take care!" returned Meenie, looking him in the face unmoved. "Take care. I am keeping a strict account of all your outrages on me, and there'll be a full quittance when Hendrick comes home!"

"Ah!" said Derrick, lowering his hand.

"Your nephew will tell you how Hendrick pays my debts!" continued Meenie in the same provoking tone.

Derrick turned and darted a spiteful glance at his wife.

"You shall pay for this!" said he.

"Oh, Meenie dear, for my sake!" said Gretchen, laying her hand on her daughter's arm.

The latter let her voice drop.

"Yes," said she. "I had again forgotten that he is capable of avenging a woman's truth-telling by cruelty to you."

Derrick's sneeze luckily prevented his sharp ears catching this.

As soon as that was over, he hastened to have his hand in.

"Hum!" said he, with an evil-sounding cough. "There's news of your sailor bulley!"

"News!" exclaimed the young woman. "Oh, tell me, sir?"

"He's gone to the bottom, at last!" said Derrick, grinning with pleasure.

Meenie felt her heart leap to her mouth, then fall as though it should never exult again.

Her mother's hand pressing her's prevented her answering.

"Gone!" repeated she to herself. "Hendrick gone!"

"Yes!" said Derrick, never more maliciously. "The vessel was wrecked coming round Cape Horn, and he went to the bottom with a lot more—good riddance, especially him!"

"For pity's sake," said Gretchen.

"What ail's you?" cried the interesting landholder.

"You announce it so sudden—"

"Oh! do I? I tell you the sailor bulley has been dead two years—drowned. I don't see why I should be nice about it, and he dead two years!"

Gretchen led her daughter silently towards the door.

"You will tell her what I bade you—"

"Yes," said Gretchen.

"And get her consent."

No answer.

"Get her consent, I say. I'll stand no nonsense. I've had to deal with obstinate women before now," said Derrick attempting to look grand. "And I took 'em down, too, you know."

The two women were on the threshold.

"You know who I mean," continued the amiable old gentleman in a voice certainly not a gentle whisper. "Stop!" cried he.

Gretchen halted on the threshold, like a well-drilled soldier.



"Do you—know—who—I—mean," said he deliberately.

"Yes," replied she very softly.

"Then, why the devil didn't you say so before," said the woman's master, loudly.

He was left alone by the woman's disappearance.

"A pretty how to do," muttered he, flinging himself angrily into a chair again. "I'll let 'em know who is master here. Well, who is it, blacky?" demanded he of the servant, who entered.

"Massa Cockles," replied the negro, chuckling over the tit-bit of a name. "Massa Cockles—him say dat he want see de young missus if you not be in!"

"But I am in. Let him step into this room."

The person ushered in was a middle-aged man, with a harsh face not a whit more pleasant than his uncle's own.

He neither had improved physically during the quarter century. As for morally, we shall judge.

"Take a chair," said Derrick. "I suppose you have come to waste your time on this girl?"

"Rather near the truth that," replied the nephew.

"What you see in the saucebox, I really can't see," croaked the landholder.

"However you are old enough to choose for yourself. But in all seriousness, tell me, you don't have any foolish sentiment for her, eh?"

"Not a bit."

"None of what they call love, whatever that is! You won't let her rule over you when you marry her, eh?"

"Not much!" rejoined Cockles. "I'll tell you, uncle. I never thought anything about her until she refused me."

"Ah!"

"And then I felt a hunger for her, that nothing but she can allay."

"That's precisely how I felt towards Gretchen," exclaimed Beekman, delighted at coming upon such a chip of the old block. "I wish you my luck!"

"Thank 'ee!" But see here, munkey. You must push on, go ahead, as these men from the Hartford settlement say."

"Why?"

"For fear of Hendrick's return—"

"Pooh! he's under the water, down among the quahogs."

"I'm not so sure about that," said Cockles, in a dubious, believe-nothing-without-positive-proof accent that pointed him out as a lawyer thirty nautical leagues off.

"He wasn't among the crew of the Hwallen that were saved," said Derrick.

"That I will admit. But if they were rescued, in one boat, why may not another containing him have been picked up by another craft?"

"Humph! Well, I will not let the iron grow cold on my side."

"You understand why the haste. She must sign away those deeds, or else all the property will be hers. That Englishman is eager to buy as soon as we have the proper authority."

"Oh, I know. Oh! why did I ever let Rip Van Winkle wander away to the mountains that night!" said Derrick.

"It is lucky he roamed so far that he never came back, or broke his drunken fate over some stone," said Cockles. "If that deed you so easily let him have had ever turned up, a nice box you would have been."

"Ah!" said Beekman. "Many a sleepless night the fear cost me. However, it is so long ago that I had quite forgotten it."

"I, too. But, haste, I say."

"Very well. But, my boy, you have seen what Gretchen was and is before and after her union with me. Let it be a lesson to you."

Cockles laughed in his discordant key. "Ahem! I prefer to take a leaf out of your book, nunkey, and make it a lesson to her!"

## CHAPTER X.

### THE WAKING. SURPRISES AT EVERY STEP. UNKNOWN AND UNKNOWNING.

Still question by the month or year;

The burden of my song is here:

Where are they?—Tell me if ye know!

What is come of last year's snow?

FRANCIS VILLON.

Wearing his old familiar face,

And galligaskins;

For one would almost swear

They were the very pair

That eighteen years since braved the summer's baskings;

Vest, coat, continuations seem'd the same,

The voice, the gait, the spot, and eke the well-known name.

LEIGH HUNT'S "FATHER."

At early dawn of this same day, the sun, falling upon a human form upon the scene of the demons' revels in the Kaatskills, had something akin to the effect attributed to the moon upon vampires.

As the slanting ray diffused warmth, the figure moved, drew a long breath and went through all the actions of one aroused from a sleep.

"Ach! mein Gott!" ejaculated he, sitting up. "Don't leave me, Yolly Dogs!"

It was in a cracked, shrill voice that he spoke though his tone seemed to be meant for a light one.

A pain in every one of his rusty joints, as, by an effort, he got upon his feet, made him groan.

"What wast der matter mit my back," moaned he. "No one here. How was it all?"

He leaned up against a tree, and closed his eyes, weary, heavy, worn and dazzled by the sunbeams, far from powerful as they were yet.

He could remember

"A quarrel with his wife, and a fight to the mountains. A meeting with some Yolly Dogs, drinking such liquor like he never had before, gaming mit de debble—steen—der dice, yaw! A dance, playing ten pens, and maybe more."

In a word, he had been stopping out all night again, had Mynheer Rip Van Winkle.

"I feel like as if I don't know," muttered he. "Oh, my el—le—bow! Ach, mine shoulder! Am I aschleep yet or dreaming?"

He looked about him again. No signs of the feast spread on the table, not a crumb, not a drop.

"I will go home, and my wife will tell me whether I am aschleep or not," said Rip.

In vain he searched for the celebrated Schneider. No dog answered his appeals.

He went to pick up his gun, lying at the foot of a rock. His fingers met a long line of oxyd, honeycombed and like dust.

"Look at that!" exclaimed Rip, starting back. "Oh, dat was awful. Some

tief was go und steal my good gun and leave dis old one in its place. What will I do?"

As he had not been the deadliest of marksmen when the piece had been his, his Nimrodian exploits for the weaponless future promised to be little uncommon.

With a slow and unsteady step, which he was unconsciously compelled to take, Rip began the descent of the mountains.

His mind had experienced the same advance as his body, but his reason, completely intact during the past time, could not recognize the truth.

The scenery was the same as in the age before. Man had not ventured so near to the clouds yet awhile, burying himself deeper and deeper in the gloom of the gorge at every step he took.

From time to time he cast his eye upwards, though without any idea that the mountain side was covered with labourers at work, in the construction of a road. After tracking a very steep and winding course, Rip had nearly reached the level of the valley, through which a rivulet foams and rushes, when a loud shout rent the air, and "Fire! fire!" echoed from hill to hill. It was not easy at the first outcry to understand that this warning was intended for Rip, or that it came from invisible workmen; but he naturally paused, and retreated up the slope. In good time the hunter did so, for immediately after the cry, a dull, heavy, stifled sound shook the hill-side, which was to be recognised as an explosion of gunpowder, and close upon it came an avalanche of masses of rock, thundering in their descent, and crushing a forest tree at every giant leap, till, spent with the distance, they found a resting-place in the torrent or were caught in some accidental hollow. It was lucky for Rip that he had not advanced further, as escape would then have been difficult, several fragments of enormous size having crossed that part of the road on which he was walking when the first alarm was raised.

All Rip could see amid the smoke overhead, was a man in shirt-sleeves waving a red-flag.

"Mein Gott!" exclaimed he, running down the hill as far as he could. "What they was blown up der hills for?"

In two hours more, he was in the outskirts of the Village of Falling Water. There was a marvel at every glance.

Ten houses to every one he had seen of yore, thirty persons to every soul; trees cleared away, streets laid out where paths had leisurely wound;

Rip, tired of wonderment, moved as in a dream.

"I don't know how it was," muttered he, sitting down on a stone, and looking at a mound before him. "But yesterday my house was here."

"Yesterday," a cottage bright with lime, with the Dutch tiles, the moss just beginning to grow in the rain-gutter, and under the eaves, a wife's or a child's face seen smiling through the little panes, had been there surrounded by its little garden.

But now a wreck, a fading ruin.

Its outlines had assumed those rugged and indistinct forms which are the more interesting because they stimulate the imagination to complete the design; its walls were tamed down by lichens, ivy, and the breath of ages, to a mellow tint; trees sprung up within and around its area; nature's own hand places flowers upon the window-sills, and forms a variegated parterre over all.

How eloquent the silence of a ruin! how affecting when it is broken for a moment by the hollow echoes of a stone falling from some ledge into the deserted garden! How startling when the song of birds recalls their forgoers who once trilled their merry lays on the same spot!

Nature, the best of all artists, resuming what man has abandoned, and combining her own sylvan charms with the architectural beauties that time has

spared, blends the forms and tints into one of those harmonious pictures which she alone can produce.

Rip without understanding the mystery, bowed his head at the sight, and silent tears flowed for many moments to relieve his perplexed and saddened heart.

Tearing himself away from that spot with an effort, he went a few rods farther.

The village had been built up so as to leave the old site on one side.

There were not so many alterations or innovations, thus, where the returned hunter naturally turned.

Enlarged by a wing, mended in many places by newer stones that mocked at their grey and venerable neighbors, the tavern that had been Nicolas Vedder's still stood.

But when Rip lifted his eyes to the doorway, he, knowing the former lettering by its appearance, though he could not read, saw it replaced by a flaunting sign:

"Y<sup>e</sup> YORKE ARMES, by SETH JACKSON, Goode entertainment foore manne & beste."

Rip could make nothing of it.

As he stood puzzled, he found himself the centre of a rapidly thickening ring of villagers.

Never had they seen a man so bearded or arrayed.

Slightly stooping, leaning on a stick he had picked up, Rip presented a decidedly curious sight.

His leathern suit, stained with many a rain, baked with the sun, discolored by moon and starlight, had fallen away in patches here and there.

His game-bag hung from him like Mahomet's coffin, by a thread so nearly intangible as to be unseen.

His bullet-bag and powder-horn had dropped off, on the rolling away of their cord and strap.

His hat was gone, and his white hair and beard, grown to a great length, flowed in tangled threads every way.

The look of amazement that he bestowed on each of the bystanders completed the amusement he afforded them.

A young man, with an apron on, with the air of the landlord he was, headed a detachment who came out of the York Arms.

"Wall, Mister Jackson," said a tall Yankee, pointing at Rip, "what do you think o' that prodge-e-dee!"

All laughed.

"I declare," said the landlord, "what a queer fish! He looks as if he had been buried fifty years and only just dug up!"

"I say, old feller," said the Yankee to the hunter, "hain't you seen any think of a kiver any where round about here?"

This allusion to the mortuary box which the facetious New Englander hinted was Myneer Van Winkle's proper dormitory, entirely upset the slight knowledge of English that the honest Dutchman possessed.

"Was is das?" cried he, "was is kiver? Mein Gott, how de Yangliche Aussprache is sehr schwer!"

"Who is your barber, old friend?" said a third wag, in a pretendedly deeply interested tone.

"Who was whose barber?" inquired Rip, waxing wroth. "Who wast ein barber—what you mean?"

But having laughed their fill, the mob declined to break up for the present and carry the intelligence to their friends, that the Wandering Jew had apparently crossed the ocean at last, for the especial benefit of the Falling Water-ians.

Rip, bewildered, rambled on a few yards, and sat himself down at one of the tavern tables under a tree. The same tree that had rattled down chestnut burrs upon his head many a time.

For the first time he gave that attention to himself that he had hitherto paid utterly to the outer world.

He found how tattered was his dress, how altered his face and wrinkled hands.

"I must have cotched the ague up on top der mountains," thought he. "Und how my beards grown. Why, Gretchen won't know me when I goes home—only where is der home?"

Jackson, finding himself idle, and not at all careless when perhaps a lion was on his hands, sauntered out of his doorway to chat with the quaint old way farer.

"Keep your seat," said he graciously. Rip took a comprehensive glance of him, but had to shake his head at last, quite sure he had never seen him before.

"Do you live near here?" asked the Dutchman. The other stared.

"Rather, old cock," said he, leaning back in the chair in a don't-care-if-I-should-break-you-to-bits style that proved he owned it. "I was born here!"

It was Rip's turn to stare.

"You was born here?" repeated he. "Then, do you know where I live?"

"Well," returned the landlord, after due reflection, "I should say that you belong to Noah's Ark!"

"Noah's Ark!" reiterated Rip. And then, taking the joke he chuckled: "Yaw, Noah's Ark! dat ish goot! So you live here," he resumed. "Did you ever hear of Rip Van Winkle?"

The other studied this leading question, and then remarked that he had heard of the name. The old settler who had borne it was known as the idlest, drunk-est vagabond of that remote age.

"Dat was him!" cried Rip unaffectedly.

"He's dead some twenty years now," observed Jackson in continuation.

"Dead!" echoed Rip, adding to himself: "So, Rip Van Winkle was dead! Well, I am sorry for it! Rip Van Winkle dead! Oh, my!"

"What a queer old codger," said Jackson to himself, as he drew at his pipe with true British phlegm.

"What made Rip Van Winkle go and die, hein?" inquired the hunter, earnestly.

"Ha, ha! I forget what the crowner's quest said about it. His dog was found dead in the hills and his master never put an appearance."

"Ach! der tog was died! Rip Van Winkle's tog was dead," murmured the hunter.

"They suppose he wouldn't leave his master," said Rip, sighing.

"Schneider! who was he?" inquired the other.

"He was the tog—you not know him?"

And there was a pause, during which the hunter called to him many remembrances of his companion. He was well aware of the truth that "lessons of fidelity are found in every bob-tailed cur."

"Where do you live, my friend?" asked Rip, breaking the silence.

"In this house."

"Was? Ah! take care what you say?" cried Rip. "Nick Vedder has that house."

"If Nick Vedder leases that house, I wish he would pay the rent," said Jackson, laughing.

"Nein," returned Rip; "he never pays rent!"

"Why, my man, Nick Vedder died—let me see—well, nearly fifteen years ago. Our folks came over the second time we took the colony from the Dutch."

"Nick Vedder is dead?"

"Yes, and nearly all his ormonies."

"Aha! Sylvester Bleecker?"

"Oh, he went to New York, and died there some time since, very rich in real estate."

"New York!" repeated Rip. "Who was he?"

"It's the big town down the river—New Amsterdam of two years ago."

"Oh!"

"So all those old Tobies Tossopot are gone—they were the hot-heads, the rake-hells, the gimbleteers that lived fast and drowned themselves in drink, jollily and merrily!" said the host, professionally enthusiastic.

"Yaw," said the Dutchman, "so they was! I knew all them fellows! Blokenschlager und der clerk, und Bram Brom, und Rip Van Winkle—I knew dem all!"

He sank into a deep fit of reflection.

The landlord, quite endeared to him by finding that the venerable had known so many notorious supporters of his trade, went into the house to get a drop for the poor devil, seeing he was cast down at the loss of his friends.

Deeper grief than their departure afflicted the hunter. All seemed to have gone. Gretchen might have made his life harder than a more patient woman, but she was, for all that, the wife of his bosom and the mother of his child.

Jackson clapped a tankard down upon the table.

"There, old chap," said he. "Take a drop of that, it'll cheer you up a bit."

Rip looked at the foaming liquor.

"It was beer, dat, hein?"

"It's English ale that came over with the expedition last year."

Rip ought to have been thirsty.

"I swore off drinking," said he, hesitating. "But, still, as this is the first time what I see you, I don't mind taking a glass, mit you."

He took a long pull at the pewter.

"It was goot—I don't know him, though," muttered he, lifting up the vessel again. "Well, here is your good health, and your family's, and may you live long and grow up!"

"Thank 'ee!"

"It warm my heart," said Rip. "It give me strength to ax you a question, which weigh upon me like lead."

After a pause, in a voice more broken by emotion than by the age that had crept over him, he went on:

"There was a childt—a leetel girl named Meenie."

"Oh, that's all right," said Jackson, calmly filling his pipe.

"I know it was all right," said Rip, doubtfully though, "but Meenie—she is not de—not gone, too."

"No, not she, she is a fine young woman! the prettiest in the village."

"Dat was her!" cried Rip, exultantly. "Yaw!"

He caught up the tankard again and drained it to "her good health and her family's!"

"But she'll be quite an old maid soon if she grieves any longer for Hendrick Vedder!" observed the landlord.

"Hendrick—I know him. But what you say about old maid? Meenie was a little girl—six year oldt!"

"Six-and-twenty more like," rejoined Jackson, staring.

Rip returned the look of astonishment with compound interest. "Meenie was a little girl only so high!" said he, touching the top of the table.

"Ha, ha! She is bigger than her mother!"

"Bigger than her mother? what? Bigger as Gretchen?"

"Why, yes."

"And Gretchen is not dead?"

"Not a bit of it. Alive and married again."

"Married again?" ejaculated the Dutchman. "Oh, take care what you are saying like that! How could Gretchen marry again?"

"Easy enough," returned the host. "Rip Van Winkle left her a widow."

"Oh, yes!" cried the hunter, the light breaking in upon him. "Rip was died! Oh, yaw! I never think of that!"

"Yes, and after some years, she married Derrick Von Beeckman."

"Gretchen marry Derrick," repeated Rip. "Now I always said that Derrick wouldn't never come to no good! So, Gretchen's got Derrick at last! Poor Derrick, poor Derrick!"

A call from the tap, took Jackson into the house.

For some hours, far into the afternoon, indeed, Rip remained in the chair, deep in reverie, and as if in the fatal sleep.

This attracted attention to him, and the idlers swarmed around him like flies about a sugar hog's head.

The beadle was so taunted by the populace that he took the bold measure of shaking the old man by the arm.

"Come, enough of this," growled he. "Get up and go home!"

Rip looked about him mildly.

"This is my home," said he.

All laughed.

"None of that! we can't take you on the county, or we'd have all your tribe on our hands," said the beadle.

The crowd groaned lustily at such an imposition on the tax-payers.

"Look him up! Put him out! Set the dogs on him—he's shamming! Go in, beadle!"

It almost looked as if the hunter had been assuming the decrepit state, for roused, *a la* the dead lion, at a push from the beadle, he up fist and knocked that official flat across a seat.

The crowd for once, took the authority's part, and all promised no end of ill usage for the returned prodigal father.

Into the middle of the throng, elbowing his way in a most unpleasantly go ahead style, a man suddenly rushed.

"Avast, avast!" cried he, knocking the man to the left that held Rip's collar and him to the right that had grasped at his sleeve. "You cowardly lubbers you, what are you doing to the old man?"

They all retreated at this interposition, and eyed the new comer a little fearfully.

He was a young man, going on thirty, a little heavily built, but just the size for the sailor of those days of ships not too roomy. He wore a loose blue shirt, tucked into duck trousers, a belt around all, and a flapping jacket hung from his neck, round which the sleeves were negligently tied.

The beadle, who had been assisted to his feet, stammered out his desire to know who this apparition was.

"Well, in three words, I'm a man!" replied the sailor. "And if any of you doubt, I'd be happy to satisfy you all, two by two!"

He seemed to mean what he said, so clearly that the mob faded away from that moment.

The beadle lingered a little longer, but the seaman, no great respecter of the

law, intimated that he ran a great danger of being treated as Rip had already done, if he remained much longer.

"Only wait till I catch the old beggar away from you, my jolly tarpaulin," muttered the official, retiring in good order to wash his bloodied face at the pump.

With the same bustle with which he had packed off the villagers, the seaman made Rip take his seat inside of the tavern, and ordered a dinner for two.

"And enough for three, mind," added he.

Then he turned to Rip, and after surveying him as a custom-house officer does a vessel, to see the cut of his jib, thought he might call him "mate."

"So, mate, you're a little down by the board, eh?" said he.

Rip shook his head.

"Ich weiss nicht," replied he, oracularly.

"You don't know anything?" repeated the mariner, who seemed to be well acquainted with Dutch. "Where's your barkey—where do you live?"

"I wish you'd tell me," said the hunter gravely.

"What don't you know?"

"Damn me if I do!" rejoined Rip, ripping out the oath in the excess of his bewilderment.

"What's your name?"

"My name is—is—I don't know."

"Well, you are a interesting craft, or I'll be blown out of water!" said the sailor.

"My name was Rip Van Winkle yesterday!"

The sailor started at the declaration and darted a quick glance at the speaker. When he lifted his eyes, though, after the examination, they showed that recognition had not been theirs.

"Oh, come now," said he. "Not Rip Van Winkle of Falling Water? You're on the wrong tack, mustn't foul another's hawse, you know, mate."

"I will tell you how it was," said the Dutchman slowly. "Last night—I think it was last night—I was oop on der berg—and I met some Yolly Dogs, und we had fun, und I got so droonck! Und when I woke oop this morning, I find that I was—"

The sailor waited intently.

"That I was dead!" said the hunter.

The other turned away, smiling pityingly.

"Poor fellow," muttered he. "Cracked as the cook's kettle! Why, old

mate, Rip Van Winkle has been dead all of twenty years. I knew him when I was a child."

"Und you do not know me?" asked the old man eagerly.

"Certainly not. You are not a bit like him. I've sat on Rip's knee many's and many's the time—so I ought to know."

"I can't make it out at all," murmured the hunter in a resigned tone.

"Everybody knew me yesterday in this village where my fader struck the first axehead into a tree. Und now nobody know me. What a change for me!"

The sailor, gazing out of the window, which commanded a view of the part of the place around Beeckman's house, paid no attention to the other's barely audible thinking aloud.

"The children used to run to me to climb upon my shoulders, the very dogs fought mit Schneider—poor Schneider!—for a pat from my handt! Und to day, der children have sticks to strike me, und der dogs run to bite me. Ah!"

said he, in a tone reminding one of a death-bell, "are we so soon forgotten when we are gone?"

The sailor was affected.

"Cheer up, old bo, the worst sea goes down arter a while! There'll be that



grub up soon. Hilli—oh—ahoo! make haste with that order or I'll go below and rouse up the cook!" shouted he, running to the doorway of the room.

"I have not the heart to eat," muttered Rip. "But I thank you."

"Well, I'm going to be poor company, too," said the sailor, sitting in the open window, on the sill, restlessly. "There's a pretty lass in the case, I don't mind telling you, gran'ther?"

"Ach! dat was goot."

"She is good, too, and the downright prettiest girl that I've seen in the three years I have been away from Meenie!"

The Dutchman nearly fell out of his chair.

"Meenie! Meenie Van Winkle?" exclaimed he.

"Yes, only they generally call her Van Beeckman now," returned the sailor. "But she's a Van Winkle every inch; ah! there's no good in the Beeckman stock!"

"Yaw, but I thought Meenie meant to wed her little playmate Hendrick Vedder," observed Rip.

"Well, I'm Hendrick Vedder."

"You, Nick Vedder's son? Oh, no! you don't look a bit like him, and I have had him on my knee many's and many's the time—so I ought to know," retorted Rip meaningly.

The other did not notice the reproof.

"Why, Hendrick was a boy, not so high like that," went on the hunter.

The sailor laughed.

"How mad he is?" muttered he.

Suddenly he started, and got down from the window.

"By George, as the English sailors say, here is the old miser coming up the street with his wife. That's leaving the coast clear for me, if Meenie's at home. Take care of yourself, old fellow!" cried he, to Rip. "And now to run down into harbour alongside my pet!"

With that, he jumped out of the window upon the ground, and, hiding behind a tree until the couple he had espied had passed, he ran towards Derrick's house.

Rip, startled at the sudden evasion, involuntarily went to the window.

The two who, arm in arm, passed along the road, were easily recognized by him.

He pressed his hand on his forehead and fell back under cover instantly.

"Mein Gott, it was Gretchen, as big as life!" exclaimed he.

The fates were still against the returned hunter. When the landlord of the York Arms found that the sailor ordering the meal had disappeared, he expressed his belief in the whole being a plot in no mild tones.

In vain Rip's protestations of innocence. The infuriated landlord bade the servant take the repast back to the kitchen, while he unceremoniously bundled the Dutchman out of the house.

"I hope it will be the last of you!" cried he.

Poor Rip sauntered, as in a maze, up the street. Fortunately, no one molested him.

By an impulse that was beyond himself, he sat down at last under the very porch of Derrick's house.

Gretchen was returning alone, her husband having stopped to confer with his nephew.

Only as she was about to enter, it was that she saw the man.

She but too well knew what would arrive to a poor stricken wretch like him, if her husband should come along and find him there.

She tapped him on the shoulder.

Rip rose in amaze.

"You mustn't stay in this place," said Gretchen, kindly. "Here's a shilling—I have no more in my pockets now. Take it!"

Rip received it in his hand mechanically.

"So old," murmured Gretchen, seeing him tremble. "Poor old man! Are you alone in the world?"

Rip sighed. His own wife asking him that question!

"You may come in and have a rest inside," said Gretchen. "Come," repeated she, with the courage of charity, "for once, I'll dare him. Come, lean on me, lean on me."

Thus the re-united husband and wife, she opening the door, entered the dwelling.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A PLEASANT SIGHT FOR A LOVER. THE MAIDEN'S SACRIFICE. THE RIVALS. THE SHREW-TAMER.

Oh, darling! say, what wilt thou do  
When thou shalt find me far removed?  
—Oh! I shall love thee, fond and true,  
Better than I have ever loved.  
But if time from thy distant view  
Drive the thoughts of him who roved—  
—Nay! I will love thee, fond and true,  
Better than I have ever loved. —[JUAN DE LINARES.]

Nor long before the exact minute closing the last chapter, the following scene was transpiring in the sitting-room of Derrick's house.

Cockles, on his knees in the traditional lover's attitude at the critical instant, was uttering in the tone of a catalogue reader, the innumerable reasons why Meenie Van Winkle should be his betrothed in lieu of any other man's.

She listened to him without hearing.

Her mind was full of a fearful problem.

She had learnt within a few hours how matters stood.

A species of agreement had been arranged by her father-in-law and his nephew.

Meenie was to be the latter's bride. Then, Mistress Von Beeckman would receive permission to depart from her husband's side and live where she pleased on a small annuity that the landholder promised.

Meenie felt that her mother's life was shortened hourly by the inexhaustible malice of Derrick.

True, the young woman was betrothed to Hendrick.

But then the young sailor was reported drowned.

And ought not even that go for nothing when a mother's peace and happiness could be bought with her hand?

Hence why she let the man speak whom she, with the repulsion natural to the pure, detested.

"You will give me the joy of your hand, Meenie?" said Cockles for a second time, as she had given no signs of hearing it before.

His voice was sufficiently loud to pass through the open casement and reach a third person's ears.

It was Hendrick Vedder. Hurrying from the inn, he was about making a clandestine entrance when the man's voice checked him.

Al's fair in love?

At all events, hiding behind the wild honeysuckle growing around the windows, Hendrick carefully peeped into the room.

He was well paid for the indiscretion.

He saw Meenie lay her hand on Cockles' eager palm, and heard her in a voice (tremulous, it is true) clear enough, say:

"Yes!"

The sailor had quite sufficient. He left the grounds as secretly as he had come upon them.

After her reply, Meenie omitted the usual fifth act (which consists in falling into the lover's arms, I believe), and ere Cockles had risen to his feet, she was gone from the room.

Still, the lawyer had gained the case. The verdict was for plaintiff, and the costs could be collected in due time.

As he went towards his office quickly, he reflected on the momentous interview.

"On the whole," thought he, after summing up, "I'm satisfied, although she took me like a dose of pills!"

In his deep reflections, he managed to stumble up against a man, walking as fast and in as profound speculation as himself.

"Hendrick Vedder!" exclaimed he with the same accent as he would have used to say: "the devil!"

It was the sailor. He had returned to the tavern, expended his fury in frightening the whole household into convulsions for turning away the old man, and swore:

"By the beard of my captain I'll bring the old beggar back and he shall eat nine-and-fifty dinners before he goes away!"

In his search, he meets the lawyer, as aforesaid.

"Oh, you needn't be afraid!" cried Hendrick, seeing how Cockles recoiled.

"You are welcome to the false-hearted girl who played with my heart!"

Cockles regained some courage, or, better, some of his native impudence.

"You couldn't expect," sneered he, "that she should remain faithful to you, when you were wrecked and left a beggar!"

"Wrecked," echoed the other. "Aye! but I never was so hurled upon the reefs and broken alive as now! Ah, the last penny of my 'lay' in oil went down two year' ago—but I never was so castaway as at this day!"

Cockles smiled at the picture of grief presented by his rival.

"It'll do you good," said he. "There's nothing like adversity to teach a young man. Begin again! Go away, there's no use of you troubling her who had taste so good as to choose me!"

"I am going," said Hendrick. "Why should I wish to see her any more?"

"That's just what I say," said Cockles.

Thus they parted.

"I must set uncle to quicker work," said the lawyer, hurrying on to his house. "If she had caught a glimpse of this sailor, she'd never have listened to me, let me be sure!"

When he arrived home, he found that Derrick had been there, not a quarter of an hour before, and had been very eager to see him.

So he took some papers, already drawn up, from his private strong-box, and left his house to find his uncle.

Thus, everybody was on the quest for one another, so to say.

\* \* \* \* \*

Meanwhile, Rip Van Winkle, introduced by his wife, into the large sitting

room, but recently vacated by Meenie and the successful suitor, had remained quiet as a mouse.

He was so completely in a whirl even now that he preferred to let things take their own course, fearful of assuming the initiative himself in the slightest matter.

Gretchen was pondering over what she should do next, her inclination prompting her to prepare one of the spare beds that house-wives kept in those days in readiness, for this stranger who deservedly excited her compassion, while her fears told her that Derrick would far from approve.

In this juncture, the master of the house came in. He did not observe Rip, who kept himself secluded in the corner.

"Ah, wife!" croaked Derrick amiably. "I wanted to see you. My nephew was out when I called. Now, in one word, are you going to do what I say?"

"I'm blowed if she will," thought Rip, arguing from the old conclusions he had drawn of his wife's character.

"Don't drive me to the wall," said Gretchen bitterly.

Derrick was surprized. Such a show of resistance seemed to be inspired by the unsuspected presence of Rip.

"She's biling over," muttered the latter, watching Gretchen's trembling under-lip.

"Hark you!" cried Derrick. "I order you to do this!"

"Oh, how can I allow my child——"

"Pooh! allow, indeed! Will you do as you're told?"

"The next thing she will do," thought the hunter, "is to knock you flat on the floor."

The broomstick presented itself to his imagination.

"You must obey," cried Van Beekman. "Why, woman, I'm surprised! Do you think you have got your first husband to deal with?"

"Heaven knows I have not," said Gretchen so piteously that Rip felt her dearer than ever to him.

"I'm no such a weak minded fool as to let any woman get the upper hand of me!" said the landholder. "Look out, or I'll bundle you and the mixx both into want and misery like I picked you up out of."

"Yes. It was to save Meenie from that that I entered your door at all."

"Oh, ho!" exclaimed Derrick. "So you come to me as if mine was the poor-house. Very well, then, you can't complain of the treatment! In short, go up and bring Mistress Meenie from her room, where I suppose she is sniveling again. You sacrificed yourself to her. The best thing she can do is give herself away for your benefit."

Whether this way of putting it convinced the dame or not, it would be premature to say. At all events she moved towards the doorway.

As Derrick, convinced he had succeeded, took his eyes off her, they fell upon the old man in the corner.

"Ha! hillo! who's this?" cried he. "What's that, I say?"

"Oh, sir, only a poor old man that I left in to rest."

"Poor old fiddlestick!" croaked the sweet-tempered master. "Give the old vagabond a cold potato and let him go!"

With that, he quitted the room and the house, to procure the documents with which his nephew was on the way to his house.

Gretchen made Rip a sign that he need not stir, and left him alone.

The hunter drew a long breath.

"Mein Gott," thought he, "was dis Gretchen what was a terror? and now she let little dried-up Derrick order her round? I must see by what rule he got her so good a wife now! It was wonderful!"

"Oh! who's this, mother?" cried Meenie, as she, her eyes red with weeping, came into the room with her mother.

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"Oh, don't mind him. It's only a poor old man I let come in. He quite touched my heart, Meenie!"

"Meenie," echoed Rip, devouring with his weakened eyes the young woman's face.

"Don't mind him, my girl," said Gretchen, noticing that the hunter's singular tone had exerted over the daughter some emotion. "Poor simple-hearted creature, he quite affected me by his strange questions as we came in."

So saying, she left the two together, to have "her cry out," for all we know. She wouldn't shed a tear before her daughter. Mothers find a strange pleasure at soothing their girl weeping on their bosom, but they would die before they would cause them pain by mourning in their presence.

Meenie, leaning by the window, pretended to look off over the garden, while she was really battling with her thoughts.

For some time, Rip only could gaze lovingly, expending all of the twenty years' spell-bound affection in those few moments.

The young maiden was a sight, all enveloped in the sun's rays as she was, to make the heart dance, if her face had not worn the sadness that clouded her beauty.

"My child," said Rip at length, "your name is Meenie Van Winkle?"

Meenie awoke from her meditation. With a quickness that showed how full was her nature of the wish to please, she came to the ragged fellow's chair, and sat down on a footstool that she drew up to it.

"Yes," said she, "yes, my poor old wanderer. But I am usually called Meenie Von Beeckman, my stepfather's name—little as I like it."

The sympathy that a princess in misfortune might have for a peasant girl in grief, attracted her to listen to the stranger.

"I am glad you are not afraid to come near me," said Rip, uttering his words with difficulty. "The sun was so bright when you were there by the window, and my eyes are not so good like they was—yesterday!"

She gently leaned still nearer to the speaker.

"Yaw, you was like her—only more so—more fine to see—the hair was darker, but the eyes is the same little Meenie what I knew," murmured the hunter, scarcely audibly. "Meenie, do you remember your fader, your real fader, I mean?"

"I shall never forget him and his goodness to me."

"Then you—should—know me, eh?"

Meenie shook her head, not understanding.

"My father is dead," said she, as if to tell the other that he was apparently in error. "Even when I was a child, they told me that he was gone away for ever. Go where he might, he can never have found those to love him as I have loved."

"Ah!" sighed Rip, tears in his eyes.

"Did you know him, sir?" asked Meenie.

"Know him?" repeated the hunter. "Well, I thought I did once. I don't know how it was now. Meenie Van Winkle—your fader is come home at last. If you know him, look at me!"

He drew back the long hair over his forehead.

"Look at me! Mein Gott in Himmel—you know me?"

The heart-breaking tone made Meenie thrill with emotion, but her cold reason caused her to utter:

"No! Oh, why do you look at me so strangely—nay, so fondly?"

Both had risen.

"Don't say no!" cried Rip, stretching out his hands appealingly. "It would break my heart! it would break your fader's heart! Meenie, hear me!"

In a voice so pregnant with feeling that each syllable had its weight, the hunter went on:

"I tell you! Last night, I sleep on the mountains. To-day, I come home. I come home—and dere's no home—no house! der old friend was gone—all! My wife is a noder man's. Mein Gott in Himmel! no one knows me! I try a last time! I tell my daughter, my own little Meenie, who was little no more! and she was the only one that know me!"

"She is! Father!"

She fell into his arms, completely assured.

"Somebody know me at last!" cried Rip, in agony of delight.

Each poured out to the other then, as their hearts met again and again in embrace, a thousand questions, careless whether answered or not, while each heard the other's voice.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PENT UP VOLCANO ERUPTS, TO DERRICK'S SURPRISE, AND THAT IS NOW HIS ONLY ONE. THE UPSHOT AND DOWNFALL. THE END.

In the front parlor of Derrick's mansion, the whole of his family were gathered.

He, Cockles, Gretchen and Meenie.

On the table were several legal papers, by the inkstand and half dozen quills.

"Now, Mistress Meenie," said Derrick, holding up a pen, "you will sign these two documents. In return, I will give you my promise of the annuity, and so forth to your mother."

Meenie kept her seat.

But Gretchen, in a voice with difficulty kept steady, responded:

"I have determined that my daughter shall do no such thing, for any inducement whatever!"

"What?" exclaimed Derrick and his nephew together.

"She has given her promise—"

"Gretchen!" cried the landholder through his set teeth and clenching his fist.

"Oh, beat me, starve me, kill me—you are capable of all that," said the woman, "but she shall not break her word given to Hendrick Vedder."

"Hendrick Vedder is dead!" Cockles hastened to say.

"That's a lie!" broke in a man's voice, rudely and loudly.

It was the sailor himself who bounded into the parlor from the sitting room, in the manner of boarding a hostile craft.

With a faint cry of joy, Meenie sprang to her feet and fell into the young man's arms.

"He is here!" said the latter. "Oh! you rascals! I know all about you! Only wait till I have done with her," said he kissing Meenie at a clipper's rate. Cockles turned pale green.

Derrick was the first to recover from his confusion.

"Then, be off! Get you gone—you, you minx, I mean—begone with your beggarly sailor!"

"Let us go, mother," said Meenie in a low voice. "It never was home to us."

"No, she don't!" interposed Beeckman.

"Yes, she will, if she likes," returned Hendrick.

"I don't think so," sneered Derrick. "She is my wife."

Gretchen hung her head.

"Heaven help me," said she. "I am his wife."

"Well, I am not so sure of that!" cried Rip Van Winkle, as he threw open the door that Hendrick had already passed through, and appeared before all.

Meenie was the only one who did not express wonder at the intrusion. "Where is Rip Van Winkle?" asked that personage himself. "Dead!" replied Cockles and his uncle. "Und that's anoder lie?" returned the hunter. "Everything scoundrels wish doesn't happen yet awhile." "What does the old vagabond mean?" screamed Derrick in rage. Rip was rummaging in his mouldy gamebag. To his own astonishment, handful after handful of tarnished gold coin rolled between his fingers. "Mein Gott! it was my winnings mit der dice," muttered he. At the bottom, crumpled up but legible nevertheless, was the strip of parchment.

Rip, heedless of the gold under his feet, held the document out to the sailor. "There," said he, "you have not forgot how to read, Hendrick?" "No!" "Then read that!"

The seaman's eyes opened immeasurably, as his eyes again scanned the lines.

Derrick had let all this proceed without interruption, for he had been speechless with indignation.

"Der duyfel!" burst forth he at last. "Be off out of this, all of you! and you, you old vagabond! How dare you come into my house?"

"I'm not so sure that it is your house," said Hendrick. "This document seems to imply that Rip Van Winkle never sold his estate."

"That paper's false—a forgery!"

"Oh, no," returned Hendrick; "I can swear I read it twenty years ago!"

Derrick and his accomplice were mute.

Meenie and Gretchen and Rip had conferred together. The wife was soon and easily undeceived, and Rip received an embrace that made his eyes water, so forcible was it.

"Dere's no mistake, said the hunter. "This was Gretchen all over!"

Derrick was wild with anger at the sight.

"Well, if you stand that, uncle," said Cockles, "you deserve to be hanged!"

"Do you mean to say you are Rip Van Winkle?" cried the landholder.

"Rather. Isn't that paper proof enough, Derrick, that you wanted me to sign twenty years ago? But Rip was sober enough and knowing enough not to do it!"

"Stuff!" cried the other. "Do you think I'm such a fool as to give up a rood of my property on such pretenses as these? Pooh, pooh!"

"No!" said Hendrick, sarcastically. "You are fool enough to hold on to it, until we make you surrender it with an account of all the money received while you were in possession."

"Uncle," whispered Cockles, "we'd better leave."

"Give him a cold potato and let him go," said Rip, laughing.

At the doorway, Derrick turned to fire a last shot at his victors. But he saw the husband and the wife, and the lovers embracing, all so clearly careless of his utmost malice, that he did not stop even to cast off the lashings of one gun.

"I hope this will be a lesson to you," observed his nephew, to cover his own vexation. "Never nurse another man's property!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Derrick Von Beeckman left the village before daybreak by a sloop going down the river. Rumor had it that he distinguished himself before he gave up life's lease, by some speculations in land in New York, the memory of which has been perpetuated by a street bearing his more or less musical name.

This is the more to be credited, because it was one of his supposed descend-

ants there that had the great literary contest with the revered Diedrich Knickerbocker, upon the Rip Van Winkle subject.

The Beeckman side was that our hero had, on the eventful night, really met some seamen. And, afraid to face Gretchen, he had accompanied them in their voyage. Certain accidents in maritime life occurring, he had been, at sea, literally, for the score of twelve months, before turning up in his native place.

Thus the coin that Rip brought home was accounted for. But—the reader had better take our word for it—Knickerbocker demolished his theory in some thirty-three ponderous tones elephant-folio, with a supplementary clincher in seven parts.

This work is *unique*. Fifty copies only being in the Astor Library, and a few others (seventy-four in the British Museum, ninety-three imperfect—in the Imperial Library of Paris, and two hundred elsewhere) on the Continent.

As for Cockles, we have, after a century's personal research, discovered, that a legal gentleman of his name and characteristics was shot by one of the Rensselaerwyckians, for having too plainly hinted that a patroon ought receive rent from grants of his.

Hendrick Vedder never regretted the sea, while Meenie was his wife. A woman that could accomplish that feat deserves to be chronicled among wonderful mates.

Gretchen insisted that Rip should have a pipe and a glass now and then, and he—though maintaining quite an iron rule over her—yielded on this point.

Often of a fine afternoon, he was to be seen in his porch, surrounded by all he loved, by friends, by children and dogs, especially those of the latter who bore a resemblance to the lamented Schneider.

After telling his marvellous story, he would lift his glass of cider, or something stronger, to his lips, and say:

"Und now my good frien's, I drink your good healths, und your familie's, und may you live long, und grow up, und prosper!"

### HUGH, THE ROVER.

ABERYSTWITH, CASTLE is among the several structures which take their date from the time of Edward I.; when, after the conquest of Wales had been accomplished, at least to so great an extent, that all their attempts to throw off the iron yoke of their conqueror, whatever may be said of the boldness and daring of this tameless people, proved to be abortive, and only entailed upon the brave defenders of their lost liberties, new miseries and fresh exaction.

It stands on a bold and craggy height projecting into the sea, at the western extremity of the little sea-port town of the same name, which is situated at the confluence of the two rivers, the Ystwith and the Rhyddol, the former of which discharges its waters into the Bay of Cardigan (Cardiganshire, South Wales), and which, in its present ruined aspect, is not devoid of a considerable share of romantic beauty, as many a picnic party, held within its ruined walls, can testify; a favorite resort of those who visit the pleasant and curious-looking little town, during the bathing-season and the summer.

Little that is historical, in the strict sense of the term, is on record with regard to the castle, it being secondary in importance to the other great fortresses with which this monarch kept his insurgent native populations and princes in subjection.

Nevertheless, there are family records, of more or less interest, pertaining to each and all of these, however inferior they may be to the more momentous episodes of a warlike age.

These, of course, take the form of legend or tradition; and the following, be-



longing to the warlike age of Elizabeth, recalls a now forgotten time, when Sir David Elstron and his haughty lady lived in the castle, and the dreaded name of "Sir Hugh the Rover" sounded across the seas.

There was something brooding in this family, that took a shadow of mystery, and became significant of a grim dark secret, which lay heavily on the breast of the stout baron, Sir David, whose intercourse with his lady was marked by a cold and frigid restraint, which she herself seemed to reciprocate with great frigidity.

Sir David was married now for the second time, and it was said that there was a story told of her having made it a condition with her husband that he should dismiss and discard, at once and for ever, a son which he had by a former wife, and who had, in some manner or other, given her mortal offence.

It was added, too, that the youth was of a wild, violent, and tameless nature—that he defied parental authority, scorned all rule, and was not to be controlled by the common laws of nature, which bind the young to revere and honor age.

The Lady Elstron was then young and beautiful, imperious and proud, as was to be expected from one with the blood of the Willoughbys in her veins; and, unfortunately, she was as poor as she was proud.

Sir David Elstron had been a prudent man—had grown rich; men said he had a mercenary spirit, against which the frank and generous nature of his son revolted; and that the quarrel between son and sire was fomented by the latter's love for gold, rather than from any sense of duty, or of outrage to revenge.

Sir David Elstron was an eligible match—grave widower that he was—and his castle of Aberystwith had many a rood of noble land belonging to it.

His demesnes were broad, his pastures fat, his cattle many.

He was infatuated with the dazzling loveliness of the lady; and if there was any sacrifice at all in the matter it was made and they were wedded.

A son "blessed" their union—as the phrase goes; but if it was a blessing, it brought little share of happiness with it.

Sir David Elstron did not by any means appear to take the same pride in his second son—promising and handsome, young, gallant as he was; though his proud mother, still very fair—her proud beauty remaining to her still, though its youth had fled—doted upon her boy.

His majority was at hand, and at the time our story opens, the event of his "coming of age" was about to be celebrated at the castle, with a vast deal of ostentation and display.

Many were the guests invited; the castle was thronged with visitors, and among them were many members of the Lady Elstron's family.

The Willoughby's mustered among them in goodly numbers.

There was one in the gay and goodly crowd, who merits some farther notice as we proceed; for Blanche Willoughby, who inherited the more dazzling loveliness, added to the youth, the beauty, graces, and the faded fascinations of the Lady Elstron, will presently become the heroine of our story.

Tall, finely formed, with dazzling eyes, a complexion tinted and ripened into luscious richness by the son of the tropics—for she had been in the train of a Spanish Princess, who had visited the Brazils—Blanche Willoughby, who added the lofty graces of courts to her own natural gifts, was one of those creatures who command homage and admiration, while they repel familiarity, and make love shrink in dismay from the frigid *hauteur* which slumbers beneath the arched and shaded eye-lids.

She was walking with her relative, the Lady Elstron in the garden groves overlooking the tranquil sea one morning, when the following conversation took place between them:

"I am proud of thee, Blanche," the lady was saying. "Thou hast the

stately air and the proud brows of the Willoughby's! and this reminds me of what I was ere the woman's doom was forced upon me!"

"And what is that, my stately aunt?" demanded Blanche, with a musical laugh and a flashing eye.

"To be wedded, child, whether you love your husband or no!"

"Indeed that is a doom, truly!" was the reply. "But methinks that Sir David is—hum—passable."

"Passable!" repeated the other with a smile of scorn. "Truly, he had wealth, and we were impoverished. The women of my family mate to advance and to enhance its dignities, and he endowed me richly, I must say; but it was a sacrifice, nevertheless."

"And you love him not?" asked Blanche, pausing a moment.

"Love him! I endure him! Love! We may mate with princes, and love them, too, for such dignity as they lift us to—"

"And yet—" hesitated the young beauty.

"And yet—what? my lovely niece!" said the lady.

"You would have me wed—your—son, Master Willoughby Elstron," she answered with some meaning.

"Ay, would I, girl; for he will have possessions, power—ay, and state, if two women—his mother and his wife—two women who have a hand to grasp, a brain to work, an ambition to achieve, if *we*, my Blanche, do but urge and keep him on." Lady Elstron paused.

"You would have me—wed him; and—yet, I may not love him!" said Blanche Willoughby, plucking a flower to pieces.

"Not love him! Not love Willoughby!—my son!" exclaimed Lady Elstron in some amazement. "I had thought *that* made a difference!"

"And you, who wedded the father—love him not?" replied Blanche, turning her eyes full upon her kinswoman.

"I do not *hate* him, and I make others respect him. I am beyond the vulgar sentiments of common-place affections. I do not believe in those extreme affections—that dying for love, as they term it; and the lady laughed scornfully. "But thou must love Willoughby!—he is handsome—gentle," she added hastily, as if to unde something that might prejudice her.

"A little forward—a little silly—a little presuming, too, methinks," murmured Blanche, carelessly and half apart to herself.

"Blanche! But no—for my sake, and even as I conquered my instincts, and sacrificed myself for the benefits that would accrue—for all these goodly holdings, which may leave us else—"

"Leave you! how? Would he disinherit his son, then?"

"His son!—*which?*—Nay, I jest—I—ha! ha!—I know not what I say. But thou must love Willoughby—a little—thy very best—"

"Still I don't think—that affection—is impossible—that dying for love may not be—likely enough—"

"Have you felt any deeper emotion than ordinary at any time, Blanche, that you speak thus? Have you met the man in your far travels, at any former time, who made your heart stir within you?" asked Lady Elstron.

"I think I have; I am not sure; but it was an adventure, a romance, like some story in 'Boccaccio.'" And Blanche stopped.

"Let me hear it—come!" continued Lady Elstron. "Let us sit on this mossy bank. The flowers are sweet this morning, and the air is bland and odorous; and look, far beyond the waters of the bay is a white sail gleaming in the sun."

"A sail!" and with a strange start, Blanche lifted up her splendid face, and glanced far away.

"Ay, a brave ship I warrant you!" answered Lady Elstron.

"And to-morrow Willoughby is of age?" said Blanche in an absent tone.

"It is so!" And Lady Elstron said apart, "Does she think of him?"

"And there is a sail yonder?" Blanche went on.

"Undoubtedly."

"It is very strange!" and her pale face fell on her hands.

"What is strange?" demanded the lady.

"Do you often see vessels hereabouts, my aunt?"

"Not of such size as you one rising in the horizon; she must be a royal cruiser, or some stately merchantman from the Indies."

"It is strange—strange!" repeated the girl in a dreamy voice.

"Explain, Blanche, for you excite my curiosity."

"Well, dear aunt, listen, and then judge if the story which I shall tell you is not entitled to be called 'strange?' whether its conclusion—if I do not err; and if it really happen to have a conclusion—be not strange!"

She reclined herself on the soft slope at the Lady Elstron's feet, and half shading her eyes with her hands, still intent on watching the rising sail, began her narrative.

Perhaps we shall render it less tedious, if we condense its somewhat diffuse form—as broken into question and answer—if we sum it up in our own words.

On a certain day, a noble and stately Spanish ship of war, freighted with rich stuffs, boxes of dollars, doubloons, and pieces of eight, in addition to a considerable amount of Peruvian gold and specie, sailed forth from the port of Vera Cruz on the Spanish Main, and heading a convoy of vessels, all carrying the Spanish flag, and bound for the kingdom of Spain, where, at the time, the gloomy and bigoted Philip was king.

On board was a princess of the house of Castile, and in her suit among other high-born dames and maidens, was Blanche Willoughby.

At the time that Spain and England were on friendly terms, and Philip was suing for the hand of Elizabeth, a De Willoughby was in the Spanish service, and had been instrumental in what was supposed to be the promotion of his kinswoman, who with youth, and lacking none of those peculiar qualities which lead to fortune, and who deem that alliance and friendship with the great is the real object of life. Blanche Willoughby—for all her ingenuous face and subdued expression—was not behindhand in the ambitious strife.

She had made up her mind. She might wed a Spanish nobleman of twenty descents—an "hidalgo" of Castile. She might have done so—but did not.

Her purpose was frustrated!

With fair winds, with songs and prayers, with wine-cups flowing, with yard and mast bedecked by flags and silken streamers; with cloth of gold spread out on the quarter-deck—Admiral and officers in high costumes; with cannon booming—bells ringing; with farewells, adieus, and some sorrowful partings, the rich flotilla set forth; and ere the night darkened over the land was many a mile at sea.

But much was apprehended from the rovers and the buccaneers of the Spanish Main, who within a few years after made themselves so dreaded and renowned.

But there was a class of rovers already existing, who had sworn eternal war upon the Spaniards, partly owing to some old tyrannies and tortures they had to avenge; for the cruelty of the Spanish nature—his *autos dd fe*, and his smooth perfidy, had been already notorious.

Nevertheless, well armed, well manned, confident, and not a little arrogant, those on board the "Santa Anna" never dreamt of any danger.

The idea of being attacked by a pirate or a rover, single-handed, was too laughable; and the argosy sailed on with swelling sails, amidst the toast, and laughter, and dance, and music—clumsily enough for the Spaniard was no great seaman, and his ships were not a little unweildy, with their castellated poops and heavy armament—sailed on, unconscious of any danger being near.

Some days after having been at sea a squall arose, and the convoy lost sight of its small fleet.

Much was the bustle, and great the apprehension, as the heavy vessel of the Admiral went climbing up and down the great Atlantic billows.

Many were the signals, and the guns fired; but the greater portion of the fleet was missing.

On the second day, as the squall went down, the look-out aloft gave notice of a sail in sight, and thinking it one of their own ships, the Admiral hove to.

There came at last plainly in sight of them a vessel that, to the eyes of the Spaniards, was clearly foreign; being, in fact, a Bristol-built, square-rigged ship, with a low black hull, and a mountain of snowy canvass, under which she bent gracefully to the breeze, and every eye on board the "Santa Anna" was bent on the stranger, the extreme elegance of the long, low hull, and tapering spars, raising their admiration, until the stranger was abeam of them, and the Spaniards, from their altitude, could gaze upon its decks.

Straight and flush from stem to stern ran the white planks, with their black polished seams.

Out of the portholes ran forth the black muzzles of the cannon on either side, around which were clustered groups of men armed to the teeth; the gunners, with match in hand; and others assembled in the body and on the fore and after parts of the stranger, armed with pike and axe, with petronel and musketoon—grim bearded, brawny, athletic, and singularly ferocious-looking men—to the number of at least a couple of hundred.

The cool air of the stranger, the ease with which he managed his sails and his ship; the audacity with which he came up close to the stately Admiral; heedless of the royal banner of Spain flying at his peak; the silence in return to the salutation; the contempt of the order to send a boat with the Captain on board; and presently an apprehension began to be felt, when, from the mast-head, unfurled a black flag, on which the ghastly skull and cross-bones—the pirate's insignia—confirmed their worst suspicions.

But the Admiral was not to be trifled with. He ordered a gun to be fired. The shot went over the royer, and not a sign passed among the statuesque groups now visible within pistol-shot of them, and who looked so confident and defiant.

Another gun, with the same result, followed. Next a broadside.

They must have been but bad marksmen on board the Spaniard; for not a shot struck the royer, who, when the smoke had cleared away, was seen, with every man at his post, as before, and every sail intact, and who seemed to be coming nearer and nearer, with that ominous and threatening silence, which implies a meaning as desperate as it was undaunted, by his resolute attitude.

During this time Blanche Willoughby, with something of that calm courage which spoke well for the bravery of her race, had been closely watching all that passed on the royer's deck, and glancing from the fierce, dark faces of the men to the smiling countenance of their Captain.

The commander of the royer formed a striking and imposing picture, during the terrible moments of suspense which followed.

His figure, tall and athletic, was remarkable for its statuesque grace; for he stood on his quarter-deck, with his silver speaking trumpet in his hand, but neither having moved or spoken a word.

His face, once fair, was embrowned by the sun of the tropics. He wore a moustache and beard; and his long brown hair fell in curls beneath his embroidered sea-cap.

His attire was a coat of blue, richly embroidered with gold, in a bandolier, he carried several pistols.

A sabre, mounted with gems, was by his side, and his whole mien was hand-

some and gallant, dashed off and heightened by a somewhat reckless grace, which became him admirably.

But he seemed to wake up all at once. His deep, clear voice—not loud, but reaching every ear—sounded on his decks, and came across the water.

“Ready, my men! Ready! Fire high! Cripple the Spaniard, my lads! There are women aboard! Aim at his rigging! Let them have it! Fire!”

At the words, the guns gave forth sheeted flames, and a horrible crashing, splintering, and rending followed. The next moment every spar and mast on board the Spaniard was over the side.

The gallant Admiral seemed a perfect wreck, and rocked and reeled in the water, as if suffering convulsion.

Then rose, like a trumpet blast, the voice of the terrible rover, ringing across the sea, “Close, and board him! Heave the grapplings! Away there boarders! Up to his decks!—and the Spaniard is your own!”

While the Admiral was hurrying the Princess and her suite for safety into the recesses of the ship, Blanche had the brief opportunity of witnessing a scene of such terrific splendour of such a wild, fierce human hurricane—of the storm and fury of men, in a raging fight as woman rarely beholds.

The Spaniard had fired his broadside; but, if the aim was this time taken with better effect, it was useless, for the rover had shot ahead, and, by a clever piece of nautical skill had rounded the Spaniard, as she was careering over, and, while the crew or the Admiral were mustered with weapons in their hands in large numbers, all at once, clambering, with curse and fierce “Hurrah!” weapon in hand, the crew of the rover came tumbling on the deck, and then ensued a carnage which made her shudder, as, sick with terror, she crept down the cabin stairs.

She had seen the noble, chivalresque form of the rover first on the deck; his sabre flashing like lightning—his eyes darting fire—his thrust and cut, quick and deadly. She saw no more.

In a quarter of an hour, the Spaniards had cast down their arms.

The proud ship of the proud King of Spain was a crippled captive.

The rovers, having cleared the deck of corpses, secured the prisoners, and were busy in transferring the valuable part of the cargo on board their own uninjured vessel.

In the course of the day, the prisoners were sought—the authority of the rover was pre-eminent.

The females were secured from molestation.

Blanche Willoughby was claimed as an English subject, and with one or two attendants, sent with stern and curt civility on board the rover.

The rest were free to the Spanish Admiral—Princess and all; and the Admiral was free in turn to bear his crippled ships where he could.

She did arrive at last at Spain; and the story of her seizure, and the King's rage at the loss of the treasures, were among the chief causes that produced the historic episode of the “Spanish Armada,” at a future day.

The rover, with his prize, including Blanche, then sailed away on her voyage to England. Now commences a new phase of interest.

They had given three cheers, partly in derision of the scowling but warmed multitudes, gazing wistfully and wrathfully too upon them from the Spaniard's deck, and partly in the reckless farewell of freebooters who have made a good prize.

Up went the white sails—a watch sworn to be perfectly sober was put over the “Vulture,” the significant name of the rover's vessel, while the remainder began a wild and deep carouse.

It was in the midst of the drunken orgie that Blanche, recovering her senses

from a long stupor, and finding all the cabin doors open, made her way on deck.

The sight was fearful, shocking, infernal; but the jolly rovers, who were drenched in wine, had no idea that a female eye would be on them.

As it was, they sprang on their feet, and saluted her with a cheer, a shout of laughter; and each one swore that she should be his *Lindabrides*.

“The pretty girl, by the deep sea! for any sum of prize money,” was the cry.

But a tall, hirsute giant, who seemed an officer on board, *persuaded* them in a prompt manner to leave the little quarter deck.

Some few he flung like empty gloves among the rest; others he convinced by knocking them down with a capstan-bar; at all events, as the Captain of the rovers came on deck, his cold, proud, haughty look wandered over the shrinking revellers with an effect like a spell; the disgust that curled his lip seemed to make them furious with themselves.

With a single gesture, and a brief command to clear the decks and to turn in, an order instantly put in force, he then turned to his gigantic mate, saying, “Look to it, Ralph! Let the scoundrels keep from my sight till the morrow, and continue to hold on your course.”

Then taking off his sea-cap, and letting his curling hair play around his finely moulded head and face, he advanced with a bow towards his fair prisoner, or passenger, whichever she chose to think herself: he apologised for the rudeness of his men, but excused it, on the occasion.

She should be no more annoyed until their voyage was over; and then he led her below, and gave up to her use his own magnificent state room, with attendants, and her own maidens to wait upon her daily. Books, music, drawing were at hand.

In the midst of the ocean, she had a life of luxury, as within a boudoir, adorned with satin and gold.

Little by little, the frigid barriers, which his politeness, of a cold, proud order, akin to *her hauteur*, had set up between them, began to be broken down.

So lofty was his bearing, so gallant, so manly, and at the same time so firm, that she saw in his lofty will, cultured intelligence, and unquestioned despotism, something to awaken curiosity at first—to awaken respect—to command esteem. (At this portion of the narrative, the Lady Elstron appeared to be somewhat disturbed, but Blanche, with her own peculiar composure, continued her story.)

Soon she and Sir Hugh the Rover—for such he admitted his designation—were on excellent terms.

He had made her prisoner, he told her, that he might restore her to her friends and her home. He had *known*—yes, *known well*, the name—the family of Willoughby.

He knew that Spain and England were on the point of war.

He had exercised the power and authority he held (*she* might, if she pleased, term it force and violence—it mattered little, he added smiling) in separating her, an English lady, from the Court of a Spanish princess. Her ransom and her passage were amply discharged. If she could but make the voyage more agreeable—and so on—how delighted he would be.

She found him to be a man—young then, not thirty-four—handsome, few men more so, with his aquiline features, bold oval face, with its rich, ruddily bronzed hue, and his dark brown beard.

She found him cool in the awful perils of storm and tempest—a consummate and skilful navigator—daring to temerity in the adventurous perils of his career, gifted in an unusual degree, with learning little known—familiar with every quarter of the globe—one whose conversation was more delightful than a book.

He *did* keep his word—he *did* land her honourably in England—protecting her, and once saving her life. He——

"But, you know, aunt," continued Blanche—"and all this story must be interesting—all this is nothing to what he told me of himself. He was well born; his father had discarded him for some alleged follies; but *he* added, that his father, a widower, might marry a beautiful lady——"

"Blanche! my God!" and the Lady Elstron turned a face, ghastly white, upon her young and startle kinswoman. "It is nothing! nothing!—go on, go on!" she said, quickly recovering herself. And Blanche went on and on, and told an unintelligible history, all filled with the rover.

As she ceased, she looked up with an exclamation, and pointed out, with trembling hand, upon the waters spread before them.

"The vessel has cast anchor in the bay!" cried Lady Elstron. "The one we saw just now. It is a large cruiser, as I told you."

"And, as I live, it is the very vessel!" gasped Blanche.

"The very vessel! Which?—what vessel?" cried the Lady Elstron, as she sprung up to her feet.

"The rover's—his who saved my life, and protected my honour!—the 'Vulture'—commanded by Sir Hugh the Rover." Her voice fell from its old scornful key, and became broken and tender, at once.

"The rover's! A pirate, and on the coast?" and Lady Elstron's brow darkened. "What wants the creature here? This must be seen to, and speedily, too."

"Not so! he is a privateer; he fights under the authority and the flag of the Queen. Do you not see it?" said Blanche, pouting.

"Ay, true!" said Lady Elstron, musingly.

"And, lo! they are lowering a boat! It is *he*, himself! and his crew are rowing him on shore!"

"What of that?" cried the other, in undisguised alarm. "No, no! they are going to the port. They—they—are provisioning, mayhap."

"True!" said Blanche. And a shadow fell over her face.

"But, come, let us in—in—and speak of my son, Willoughby Elstron. Come, Blanche, my dear niece, come!"

"Let us rather speak of this picturesque Sir Hugh, and go to offer him hospitality at the gate, for he comes hither. There! I hear his summons."

They went; but how widely different was the expression of either countenance.

\* \* \* \* \*

The gentleman adventurer of that day—known indifferently as buccaneer, rover, privateer, and called by the less scrupulous, pirate—was, nevertheless, not the vulgar cut-throat he afterwards became.

The men of his class formed some of the finest sea-captains of the age of Elizabeth, and Sir Hugh the Rover found welcome and hospitality within the walls of Aberystwith, as his credentials were of undoubted authority, and of the highest kind.

He had come for munitions and supplies, he said, and his stay was limited.

He would spend a day or two on the occasion of the festivities, and then bid the happy heir adieu—though the heir was not happy, at all.

Unfortunately for Master Willoughby Elstron's peace of mind, he loved his fair cousin madly; her beauty fascinated him; and he liked not the smile, the warm welcome, Blanche gave the noble looking rover, and his dark, hirsute giant of a second officer, "Black Ralph;" and he liked less to hear the splendid story of his capture of the Spanish Admiral, and how he had—despite herself—redeemed her from what, in her fickleness, she said, would have been a future captivity.

During his stay, while he mingled with the utmost ease and familiarity with

the great people of the castle, and treated all with an equality that galled many pretensions the Lady Elstron conducted herself with such abrupt peculiarities of pride and passion, of alarm and servile fears, as communicated themselves to her more retired and timid husband.

Sir David Elstron had loved, feared, and now stood in awe of her. The face of the rover, so frank and ingenuous, seemed to haunt them both.

It was strange enough, how, in an absent mood, he seemed to gaze on Sir David and his lady, by turns; on the young master of the castle—in honour of whose majority the high feastings went on—and finally rested, with a sort of regretful yearning, on the magnificent countenance of Blanche.

These two latter were often together, apart from the rest, but it was known that she had accepted Willoughby as her husband, and that on the following day, as if her hesitation had been precipitated into decision, on the arrival of Sir Hugh.

"And so, there follows fast upon the heels of this fine revelry," he said to her, as they were strolling in the woods, "the wedding favours and the feast? By my hand, he's a happy man, and you lose no time about it!"

"And you congratulate me, no doubt?" she said with a slight petulance in her tone.

"Why not," he remarked. "A handsome youth, a likely man, lands, dowry, and a kindly father—father-in-law, I should say—and how he loves his son, too!"

He gave her a strange glance; his tone was half-ironical, and tinged with bitterness.

"And I," she said, "I ought to be within, with my friends, instead of accompanying in his walks one who is—a—a——"

"A stranger! and likely to be so. Be it so," replied the rover. "I shall bear with me to other seas and climes, the memory of the happiest period of a life that has known two many storms, too much of its hopelessness, in the most promising hour, to trust to it long. I have had so much of the share of the bitter fruits and the brackish waters, that little more would be left me in the way of suffering."

"What mean you, Sir Hugh?" exclaimed Blanche.

"I mean—but, no—who speaks it?" His eye turned full upon her, full of a fire, at once tender and fervid. "No! let it rest! If you have not my secret I have not yours, and we are quits. I must abroad in the morning—I will congratulate you on your happiness. Would I could read your heart?" he suddenly added, snatching her hand. "Do you love this youth?"

"I shall accept him!" she said, with an icy voice, but with a pale, tearless face.

"And you will do well!" was his fierce answer, as he cast her hand from him. "Others have done so before, and did not scruple to sacrifice those who harmed them not, as well as themselves. Ask your aunt, the Lady Elstron, for the story of her wooing and wedding, and she will very likely tell you so."

"Do you know her before to-day?"

"Know her? Ha! ha!" he laughed, sarcastically. "Oh, yes, well—better by far than she knows me. I think she may have guessed——" And he paused.

"What?" cried Blanche, hanging on his word.

"That men are not always what they seem to be," was his careless answer. "How beautiful my vessel looks in the bay!" he said, admiringly. "An obedient crew—a ship no less obedient to my will! Well, she shall be to me as the maiden I would love—as the woman I would wed; and you, you will be very happy—will you not? By heaven, if you are not, you will either have merited your fortune or deserve it not."



"I know not, Sir Hugh, how this can interest you," she said, coldly. "I owe you my life, 'tis true; have you a price to put upon it?"

"Ay, by moon and stars, by sea and sky!" shouted the rover; "one I cannot get, and that one is *yourself*!"

Ere she could reply or recover from her momentary stupor, he had lifted her hand to his lips, descended the declivity, and was seen hurrying to his boat by the beach.

She sank on the ground—weeping, wringing her hands—all but fainting. "And he has my secret! Yet he will not know it! Well, let him lose his prize! I will do their bidding to the very letter!"

And she returned gay and smiling to the castle.

That night the Lady Elstron and her husband, Sir David, had a long, agitated colloquy together,—the only result of which was to hurry the nuptials.

The welcoming of age to the heir of Aberystwith was over. Sir Hugh had attended it—had shaken hands warmly with the Master Willoughby—had congratulated him on his position.

Sir David and Lady Elstron had drawn deep breaths on witnessing this scene.

The next morning was appointed for the wedding; Sir Hugh had promised to attend that; and before noon the castle chapel was crowded with a brilliant throng. Much whispering—some surprise, perhaps, at what appeared an unseemly hurry, passed among them.

But there stood the pale bride and bridegroom, before the officiating priest.

On either side was Sir David and Lady Elstron.

When the question was put as to whether there was any plea or reason why the nuptials should not go forward, to the amazement and the alarm of the guests—to the indignation of the Willoughbys, males and females—proud, fierce, armed, and undaunted enough, the rover stepped forward from the crowd.

"One moment or so," he said, in his calm, thrilling voice,—*"one moment!* Pardon for the interruption, but I would ask if any one here knows me?" And he paused.

The question, so abrupt—the pause so striking—the seeking glance that at last wandered to Sir David and his lady—from Willoughby Elstron to the astounded Blanche—held the assemblage for some moments in mute dismay. At last the Lady Elstron spoke.

"Who is he—adventurer, or better or worse—that seeks to be known by any here?" Her voice was measured, calm, and seemed intended to silence his boldness by its collectedness.

"Possibly *you* do not—possibly *you* may! Does no one else here speak?" And he looked once more about him on the gaping company.

"What imposture do you mean now, catiff?" at last broke out Sir David Elstron, trembling, whether with anger or fear none knew.

A spasm of anguish crossed the rover's handsome face, illuminated as it was, with something lofty and even solemn in its expression. On the pale, worn, and working face of the speaker, who seemed to shun his gaze, he now fixed his mournful eyes.

"Is there no instinct in any breast here that leaps to life at my summons—at my appeal—at my entreaty? Is nature quite dead within the bosom which, for the sake of her more sacred ties, might have forgotten something of the past—which, in the oblivion of time, might have forgotten all offences, all injuries, rebellion, and wrong? What! no voice yet to reply?"

"Sir Rover," broke in the Lady Elstron, with bitter emphasis, while she cast a look upon her husband; which had the effect of making rigid the relaxing expression of his face, that to the speaker's sad and mournful appeal appeared to be yielding, "Sir Rover, do you not see that you lose your labour, fail in this

player's scene, and cast away your chances?—do you not see that you lose labour, time, and opportunity by your trickery?"

"Madam," he exclaimed, turning upon her with eyes from whose lightning flashes she shrank, and speaking in a voice that made her heart sink in fear—"madam, the trickery lies with you—ay, *you*, madam; and before God! you have not yet *won* so far that you can afford to taunt me with *loss*! If I have lost, possibly you—none, perhaps, better than *you*—can tell me—can tell *all* here, what I have lost! Stand you back, and for the present, believe me, your best plan is silence!"

"Insolent menial! Cut him down! drive him forth!" broke in angry murmurs from the men and gallants of the Willoughby faction; and a dozen hungry swords leaped forth into the light. Quick as lightning the rover himself drew his own flashing brand.

"Stand back! Ho! Are you so backed by reason, and a good cause that you will peril your lives upon this cast? Nay then—"

There followed a few thrusts, which he parried with ease; and then, as if acting on a new impulse, he stepped back, and lifted up his voice in a mighty hail, that would have raged across the sea.

"All hands ahoy! This way, my lads! Let them hear you shout, my sons of thunder! Let the rovers come to the rescue! Tumble up—tumble up!" And even while he spoke, fifty grim, fierce-looking, heavily-armed desperadoes, rushed tumultuously into the chapel, and filled up every avenue of the place.

"Belay there! Fall back, or, split me, you'll have your laced coats spoiled!" And the speaker a gigantic seaman, having the silver whistle, the badge of his office, hanging from his neck by a massive chain, and who answered to the hail of Black Ralph, drove the gallants back with shrewd knocks given by a stout oaken sapling, which he carried.

"Humph! shiver my timbers, if there wouldn't be a pretty cargo here to feed turtle in the Tobagos, or dig in the Spaniard's mines. I say, you old salt, thereaway! what do you think of young madam there?" pointing to Blanche. "Not quite so peaking, eh? as when she was out on the Main, brother!"

"Sarvant, my pretty madam!" said the other, scraping his foot to Blanche. "Better have slung in a rover's hammock than salting fish ashore. I say, Captain, give the word, and we'll board this old hurricane house."

"Fall back there, my men, and hold your hands! Touch none, unless they attempt violence—touch nothing that is theirs! Ye are witnesses of what I say this day. I repeat my words—Do any here know me?"

"Marry!" spoke Black Ralph, raking his rough head and speaking in a hoarse voice, as dense as ocean fog; "marry, that do I! What say you, my hearties? Those who know Sir Hugh the Rover, give it throat, and make the welkin ring!"

Then rose cheer on cheer—peal on peal—clamorous, thunderous, and infernal. The rover again waved his hand for silence. A pause followed, and once more he spoke.

"Father! have you forgotten your son?"

"Old man, do not be fooled!"—and Lady Elstron gripped him by the arm as he was advancing. "It is a lie!—a cheat!—an imposture! Oh, sirrah! the trick is clever, but here—here stands Sir David Elstron's son!" and she pointed to the shrinking Willoughby Elstron, who drew back.

"You know better, heartless step-mother of mine! you who bought my father's hand, for the possession of his wealth; at the sacrifice of the thoughtless boy he loved once so dearly! Because he once offended you—because he loathed your pride—scorned you and your whole house—Ay, sirs!" he continued, addressing the Willoughby faction, who stood with bare swords and frowning brows, yet in salutary awe of the wild freebooters who backed the rover,—*"ay, sirs—your whole beggarly, boastful house! Madam,"* dropping

his tone, and turning his hard face to Blanche, "I crave pardon. That you belong to it is a pity—but I will not even spare you! And now hear me farther."

"Driven a mere boy from my father's roof, while that happy ruled the fond old man, the sea became my nurse—the ocean my mother—the tempests my lullaby—the brave ship my home—and there I ruled as king and monarch! When, but two days ago, I saw my half brother hailed as lord of this castle—heritor of these broad lands, which mark me, are mine—all mine!—I held my peace, I surrendered my birth-right without a murmur, and I thought, then, that Nature would plead with her unerring instincts in my father's breast—that he would kiss my brow—call me, 'son'—one brief moment more—and I would depart for ever from his presence, and trouble no one any more!"

"What now—supposing the tale true?" broke in the Lady Elstron. "Do you bring these marauders here to pillage—burn—destroy—to slake your burning revenge in the lives of those whose love and protection you forfeited?"

"I speak to you no more—never more! Peace, woman! or I'll have you gagged! You best know whether I lost any love or no—whether you drove me forth or no, and made the father play an unnatural part to his own child!"

"Oh, Hugh! Hugh!" broke in Sir David.

"A moment yet," continued the rover, avoiding his father's eyes, and turning to Blanche. "I met you on my rough and perilous path in life; I loved you—I adored you! I would have made you rich and honoured—renowned and famous! I would have given you a name you will never wear! I love you, and have no trust in you. No—you are of the same viperous breed as the rest and my worst say is said! You love me not—"

"Yea, better than life—being—all the world can offer!" and she fell at his feet with outstretched hands.

"Why, that's well said, and I shall yet avenge myself! Men who have borne great wrongs, as I have done, and tamely, do not take vulgar revenges—neither will I!"

He paused; and, folding his arms, looked around him.

"To you, my father, I bid an eternal adieu. I pardon you! Do you forgive me, and pray for me. To you, mother of my brother, be what you will—remain as you are! I care not, and heed not for you. To you, Willoughby Elstron—the blood my sire owns is in your veins, and I disinherit myself to make you master of all; be grateful or not, if you will, for I heed not either. To you,"—and he turned to Blanche,—"I say, that I forgive you for what you have made me suffer! And now, to all, farewell—an eternal farewell! Father, one kiss—one embrace—one blessing!" and convulsively clasping the panting old man in his arms, he waved his crew from the spot, and heedless of the hysterical cries of Blanche—the sobbing of the father—or the softening of his step-mother—he once more bade them "farewell for ever!" and was gone.

Before the night came on, the sails of the flying "Vulture" sank below the far horizon; but Sir Hugh the Rover was never heard of more.

Strangely enough, Blanche *did* marry Willoughby Elstron, and both made a very edifying couple. Of the rest nothing more need be said.

#### TUNBRIDGE CASTLE.

TUNBRIDGE CASTLE—beautifully effective, as it is, in one of the loveliest bits of landscape the richly fertile county of Kent can boast of (among other things, be it remembered)—belongs, in its worn and hoary majesty, to the past rather than to the present, though, possibly, anything more thoroughly picturesque, if taken in association with all that is accessory to it, cannot be found in all England.

The pleasant town itself, above which it rears its broad front—the charming walks offered within its ruins along the river's side—the grassy lawns, with their rich, umbrageous shelter, and gaily fringed with spring and summer flowers—all combine to enhance its varied attractions.

The place derives its name from the river Tun, one of the five rippling streams into which the meandering Medway is divided, in its length of three-score miles, or more.

The castle belongs to the eleventh century, and is of Norman origin, becoming, by degrees, a place of great strength and importance, around which the old-fashioned town gradually sprang up and extended itself.

During the wars of Rufus, with the partisans and friends of his brother, Robert, Duke of Normandy, the former laid siege to it; but it was recaptured by John, during the "barons' wars."

In the reign of Henry III., when siege was laid to it by Prince Edward, the garrison, in order to check the advance of the royal forces, set fire to the town—an expedient which might have been successful, but which, at the same time, the town's folk might reasonably consider to be equivocal, when the sacrifice is taken into consideration.

It next devolved to the family of the Clares (Earls of Gloucester), and lapsed into the possession of the crown in the reign of Edward II.

Next, the Staffords held it; but on the attainder of Henry Stafford (Duke of Buckingham) under Henry VIII., it once more became a royal possession, and has since remained so.

No memorials of the civil wars, which devastated so many, are pointed out or recorded of Tunbridge Castle, as it had long fallen into a state of decay and ruin before the era of the Stuarts.

The remains of the grand and massive portal, with its two flanking towers, like broad-shouldered giants, standing ready for defence, together with the donjon tower, erected on an artificial eminence, indicate both the strength and extent of the walls, works, and defences.

The following tradition, relating to one of the Clares of Gloucester, and occurring about the beginning of the fourteenth century, is submitted to our readers as being more identified with the history of Tunbridge Castle than any more modern one we have found recorded.

Among the numerous knights and barons who had distinguished themselves in the warlike age of the first Edward—first in the Crusades, where his strong arm and his courage, to which his unrelenting nature added a certain lustre, which, while it accorded with the pitiless and brutal spirit of the age, had little in it that was in unison with the humanities that have since then ennobled mankind, and given an impetus to civilization—and next, in the fierce wars with Scotland—among these, few stood forward more prominent, or higher in the favour of that monarch, than was Lord Robert of Clare, who, for the great services he had rendered the state, had the castle of Tunbridge, with its rich enfeoffments, bestowed upon him as an appendage—"to him and his heirs forever."

To this was added the title of Earl of Gloucester.

At the time that the strife with Scotland was at its highest rage—caused by the dispute between Baliol and Bruce for the crown, and in which Edward, having the "casting vote," found himself forced to assert his supremacy—a considerable command was entrusted to the Lord of Clare, who discharged his trust with a ferocious fidelity, which made his name a terror and a dread among the people he was commissioned to hunt down.

He left behind him, at the time of his departure, a young daughter, some twelve or fourteen years of age, whose mother having died at her birth, the charge of her rearing and education had been given to the superior of a neighbouring convent, and to a female relation and nurse, who had been a foster-mother to her; and without entering into a very special description of the

tuition and way of life in which the young Lady Clare, of Clare (as she was called), was brought up, it is sufficient here to say, that the promise of her girlhood was likely to be realized in the 'budding woman'; while her intelligence—save that she lived in utter ignorance of the world and its ways, the life of courts, or the nature of men and cities—was upon a scale that gave indications of being amply redeemed in the future.

Her father's long and continued absence—her seclusion—the complete solitude in which she dwelt—the lawless violence of all exterior to her—even the half-outlaw, half-soldier life of those who constituted the bulk of those left to defend the castle—a precaution quite indispensable—her restriction to the state apartment—the gardens—a visit to the friendly superior at occasional times—an interview with her father's lieutenant, a grisly old soldier—in a word, the utter difference which existed in the life of females of that remote period, and as we know them to exist now, will naturally explain how devotion, solitude, and a quiet routine of duties, will impress themselves upon natures generically the same, the condition of their formation alone being altered.

Thus year by year passed on with little or no change—without society, save her nurse, her maidens, and the confessor—with no knowledge of the rude was-sail and habits of the castle, save that she grew daily more graceful, more endeared to those around her, her father's haughty bearing and fierce disposition being absorbed in the calmer graces of her sainted mother; and still the bold Lord Robert was away in the long-contested Scottish wars.

On one of his expeditions in the neighbourhood of Stirling, while he was prosecuting his purpose with fire and sword, and every latent element of pity was hardened into blind ferocity, he came unexpectedly upon the rude retired home of a Scottish gentleman of name and some influence, who had followed the fortunes of Bruce, and whose bravery was as conspicuous, and equalled only, by his forbearing disposition in many a trying hour of peril and success—the success which teaches men mercy, as reverses should teach men how to endure worthily.

A wild, lonely glen, bounded on either side by furzy hills, and bleak, sapless moorland, growing again beyond into the altitude of mountains, formed the valley, bounded by a lake, whose dark and lonely waters reflected the solemn fringe of pines nodding in mournful grandeur over their depths.

The absence of animal life, with the exception of a few frightened wild deer afar off, heightened the oppressive loneliness, the heavy solitude of the scene.

On one side, in a rough enclosure, and built of unhewn stone, with arrow-slits and a rough battlement at the top, the whole being a simple keep, which the castled noble laughed at, rose the dwelling of Donald Say, of Say, a thane or chieftain, whose wealth was by no means equal to his station or his rank.

A flight of steps led to the entrance of this half-warlike dwelling, and a broad ditch moated it round. A few wooden outhouses straggled at the sides and in the rear for the lodgment of the cattle, and for those few faithful clansmen whom fidelity and his foes had left him.

Everything wore a forlorn, naked, blighted appearance; and the armed party, who rode clattering along, as they pulled up in front of the proud, but poor and ruined house of "Say," burst into laughter and derisive remarks as they gazed on those primitive walls, which, with the exception that they rose to a third storey—a distinguishing trait—might have lodged a peasant.

But the Lord of Clare, an earl, master of baronies, and lands, and fat Kentish pastures, as he drew up, and gazed with an ominous scowl at the quaint portal across the moat, muttered, beneath his iron casque, "And so this is the den of Donald Say, of Say!"

"Aye," said one who rode at his side, with a brutal laugh,—“aye, by the bones of the conqueror, Lord Robert! and who did you the honor to hold back

his bright blade when you were like to be down in the last fight we had before Stirling!"

The Earl turned to the speaker with a frown; but the bravo-looking knight heeded not that look, and only beckoned to his men-at-arms.

"Ho, there!" he shouted. "Get ladders—planking—cross the moat! Get me faggots, and burn them forth, if there be any within; if not, down with it, roof and rafter, stock and stone!"

"Ud's daggers! an old rookery like this can hold but little that is dangerous!" said one, under his voice, to a comrade.

"And not a soul, may be, to guard the doors!" added another.

"Think of Cressingham, Dickon of Newark! Odds death, man! the loons murdered and flayed him!" said a third.

"And made them saddles out of his skin, to take them a-field upon!" said a fourth, taking up the burden; and in a few moments, in obedience to the commands of the younger in authority, who seemed to enjoy the ferocious amusement the scene was likely to afford, a number of the soldiers had dismounted, began to hunt up for furze-bushes, to cut into faggots, to bind up some ladders they bore with them on some spare horses, in order to cross the moat, while others sought to wade through, and the rest to shoot bolts and arrows at the windows and openings, so that the late stillness which had reigned around was converted into a horrible Babel.

For a while there was no sign of any one being within. At last, arrows and bolts were discharged in turn, but as several had, by this time got over the moat, and began to batter at the door, this opened, and a man of a noble form and with a kindling eye—clad in his country's costume, but bare-headed—stood there, sword in hand, and backed by some dozen others, who, as the besiegers fell back a moment, in a loud voice cried out, "Who are you that attack the walls of a peaceful family in this base manner? I am Donald Say, of Say! What would you with me?"

"We fight for King Edward!" cried a soldier, striking at him; but with his head cloven through, he bit the dust.

"Soho, dogs, and Southron cowards! Do you attack a man a dozen to one?" And his broad, shining blade began to make deadly play among them.

"This for Cressingham!" shouted another ruffian making a thrust with a pike. The handle was cut in two, and the headless trunk followed.

"Seek him in hell!" cried the noble Scot, who was thus so outrageously beset. "You will find the hound there, howling, I'll warrant you! Strike and fly!—make each pay the ransom of a life! Ho, Andrew! to thy mistress!—close and guard! I'll hold them at bay here!"

And presently the desperate man, backed by half a dozen clansmen, was lost in a crowd of gladiators.

"Philip de Fiennes, it's scarcely worth our knighthood to stir in this matter," at last observed the Lord of Clare, moodily. "I like it not!" And, in truth, he had sat immovable in his saddle, but had not farther interfered in the sanguinary raid.

"Bah! My Lord of Clare," was the answer, "by good St. Blaize! but this will please King Edward! Do you know, he is yet wrath that Cressingham's death is not avenged? And see how the knave holds out! Ho, there! Furze and faggot, fire and flame! Scorch them out, and slay!"

"Away there, David MacAlister!—away with the child! Away, Foston! I give him to you; and let him never forget this day of blackest murder!" shouted the Master of Say, with the whole power of his voice, as he still fought desperately, and once more extricated himself out of the miscreant mass.

"See, see!—there are some escaping by the back! By St. George! it is the young cub of the wolf-den! They have a bridge there! A horse, bearing him,

crosses! He is followed by a stalwart vassal! Shoot me the fellow, knaves! A broad piece to him whose bolt reaches him!"

While the young nobleman (a count of Aquitaine) was speaking, through the rising smoke now reeking upward from the heather bushes collected, and hurled across the moat and above the heads of those engaged in fight, they beheld a young lad borne away as described, by a narrow plank-bridge, on a shaggy Highland pony, followed by a gigantic mountaineer, armed only with his glaive and targe.

As bolt and arrow flew, he turned his targe to defend the boy; and on went the springy animal, followed by the gaunt protector,—who, hurt though he was by dint of the greatest exertion forced the active creature, with its burden, up a ravine, until a projection of rock put them in safety and out of sight.

From that butchery, only two human creatures—the son of Donald Say, and his father's faithful follower, whom he had called "Foston"—escaped with their lives.

Donald Say, of Say, was at last overpowered by numbers.

All the remnant of his broken clan slaughtered—his wife burned in the fire that finally destroyed his little home and stronghold—and only a pile of stones, and some charred ashes, and burnt timber, remained to tell the dreadful story.

Six or seven years now passed over; and at last, when Stirling was taken, the brave Wallace—who nobly avenged the wrongs done to his country—a prisoner, and afterwards ignominiously executed, Lord Robert of Clare turned him homeward to his Castle of Tunbridge, accompanied by his friend, the bold and hardy, but truculent knight, Count Phillip de Fienmes of Aquitaine, who was now a suitor for the hand of the Lord of Clare's daughter.

Let us now see what in the interim had been the fortunes of the Lady Clare of Clare—the fair Castellan of Tunbridge.

Beyond messengers rarely passing to and fro, and the occasional necessity that occurred of sending to the Earl such supplies of men, money, or the like, as he required, the father and the daughter had held little or no communication.

But the life of the Lady Clare had not been uneventful, as we shall show.

There happened, on one occasion, to call at the Castle of Tunbridge a wandering minstrel, or more properly, a troubadour—as was the custom of the time; and as was the custom also, he was received with welcome; and after having amused the soldiers in the guard-room with a merry song, which spoke of a hooped flagon, and the joys of revelry—matters that chimed in very well with such jolly roysterers—the seneschal introduced the handsome youth into the presence of the Lady Clare, to a chamber which looked pleasantly forth upon the swarded garden-plats, reaching down to the rippling river.

Having first obtained her leave, he left the minstrel and his attendant, waiting the lady's pleasure, who contemplated his countenance and mien in some surprise, not unmingled with admiration, till Mistress Barbara—her nurse and foster-mother—broke the silence that intervened.

No question, that the young stranger, with his blue eyes, his frank and open countenance, darkened by a foreign sun, the beard upon his lip showing approaching manhood, and his athletic, finely-formed limbs, setting off a garment that was elegant, though travel-stained—with his baldric strung across his breast, and his sword at his side—was a gallant form enough to look upon, and please a maiden's eye.

He had a look that was free, without boldness, and had the air of one who knew how to wield a weapon, as well as touch the harp his follower carried slung on his shoulder.

Their was a mark of lineage and gentle birth about him; while something else told of misfortune and a great sorrow, which made its way with a strange appealing to her heart.

His follower was a man of almost gigantic stature, of a gaunt and almost terrible aspect.

His hair was gray, but tossed in tangled masses from a broad, corrugated forehead.

He wore his moustaches and beard long and shaggy; and the stout sword he bore, the broad dagger in a belt at his side, and the rusty half-armor peeping through his partially tattered garments, told of a man who had shaken hands with adversity, as also one who had used his mighty weapon in twenty deadly frays.

What struck the Lady Clare most was, that while he stood behind the minstrel in an attitude of respect, and his fierce look was softened by her gentle eyes, he cast upon his master—as the other seemed—ever and anon, glances of such affection and love, as showed there was a tie deeper than death between them—perhaps the same tie that gave them both something of the forlorn and friendless aspect of outcasts.

"They wait, my sweet Lady Clare," said Barbara; "would you speak with the minstrels? They have had refreshment, and the minstrel may be willing to amuse you with some roundelay, or a story of his travels, for he seems to have seen both sun and rain, and—"

"And, by my faith!" whispered a young abigail, somewhat pertly, perhaps from being a favourite with her mistress, "he is a proper youth of his inches as one can meet with."

"Not even excepting Hubert the hunter!" said another in her ear, with a sly glance.

"Peace, you sluts!" remarked the dame in a low, but angry tone. "Is this befitting for your mistress to hear?"

"Your pardon," broke in the Lady Clare, with a blush and a start; "but be seated. Pray you place them stools,"—pointing her pages to do so, and which were accordingly placed at the appropriate distance from the dias on which the lady sat.

"They tell me that I have some little skill in music," she resumed; "if it would please you, I would hear some lay of knightly deeds—some romance of Palestine—or the story of the brave Roland."

The old man, as she spoke, lifted up his eyes, and fixing them full upon her, a flash of exultant delight filled them, as if he saw within her fair form and girlish frame a soul of kindred nature to his, who having now taken the harp, began to strike its chords with a master hand.

"No puling songs of love—no whining Cupid's ballad-mongering," he said, apart. "So much the better—and yet, she hath a face whose magic he cannot resist—if the old second sight of my native hills fails me not. She hath a face should catch his soul at once and forever!"

"And what meant the strong shiver that ran through him—that came cold as a dart of ice from his heart to mine? The tie between us is no weak one—the very dead have cemented it the stronger. But, hush! Foston, hush! watch—watch! This night decides his fate for ever!"

While he was thus murmuring, a bold, lofty, triumphant strain leapt into life from the harp of the minstrel, whose fingers ran to and fro the thrilling strings, as if imbued with an instinct beyond that of mere art.

Then his voice, deep and rich in quality and tone as it was, and modulated with practised skill, fell in accord with the instrument, and the words, filled with the divine fire of poesy, gave vitality and a wild, winged life to the leaping music, with an effect which cannot be easily described.

There was the charge, the onset, the strife, the battle-shout, the defiant cry, the shriek of pain, the moan of anguish, the exultation of conquest, and the resistless, animating, rejoicing march of victory, which followed, made every



eye kindle, and every heart beat fast; and when the noble battle-cry was ended, the face of the Lady Clare shone with a light which illumined it like a halo.

"Worthily sung; minstrel. Nobly played, and I look on thee as a master. Wear me this ring as thy present guerdon. If thou art not bound onward on any special errand, or to any special play, tarry here awhile; make thy home at Tunbridge Castle. The daughter of Sir Robert Clare, Earl of Gloucester, welcomes thee. She will be thy pupil—be thou, awhile, her teacher." So spoke the lady.

"It is done—it is sealed—it is accomplished. Nothing in the lowest deep nor the highest height can undo it. And the ring is the pledge and the troth." So murmured the old man, as he bowed his head once more in his hands.

"I bow to your will, sweet lady. Accept my grateful thanks," said the minstrel, as he put the ring on his finger, and bowed deeply as he retired back to his seat again; and bending his head to his follower, Foston, he murmured some words in the old man's ears.

"But what said she?" and the gaunt man lifted up his face again. "Did she not name the name of him who has been so long the bane of Scotland, Lord Robert of Clare? Where have I heard that name—do you remember, Foston Say?" addressing his ward.

"No," answered the other; "save that it is mingled with the sad, sad tale of our country's misfortunes. But can she be held answerable for her sire's misdeeds? Look on her face, old friend, and answer truly—is it not one to disarm the edge of wrath?"

"It is true; the fates have woven the warp and the weft together for you. Oh, me! but I cannot see further! There is a mist—dark, deep, red—a mist of blood before mine eyes!"

"Can you, good minstrel," said the lady at this juncture, "relate something of your own life? I can feel that sorrow hath laid a hand not over light upon you. I would not tax old griefs—yet, if it may be so, I would fain hear."

"Listen, lady—listen!" said Foston Say, the minstrel; "my story lies in little compass, and my harp shall relate it."

"Then began to steal a soft symphony, as of a happy childhood.

It changed into sad and sobbing music.

It wailed and shrieked as if it sang of death, and woe, and utter desolation. His voice took up the burden: his parents slaughtered—his ancient home the prey of flames—his kindred exterminated—his escape into far lands—his life in camp and field—his wandering homeward to behold the hills and the valleys once more—to lay him down and sleep for ever beside the graves of fire and of blood on the withered hill-side; and so, with moaning and articulate wail, the music at last died away, and all were melted into tears—the Lady Clare sobbing like a child.

\* \* \* \* \*

Days passed by, and Foston Say and his follower remained in the castle.

The young minstrel and the lady Clare were ever together.

Dame Barbara feared to interpose, but dreaded the worst.

The irrevocable fate had overtaken them both—"She loved him for the dangers he had passed, and he loved her that she did pity them!"

The poet's old story told over again.

One day, at a neighbouring hermitage, where dwelt one whose life shamed the asceticism of friar or monk for his holiness, Foston Say, of Say, was secretly married to the Lady Clare—daughter of the proud Earl, and Lord of Tunbridge Castle.

The only witnesses were the old clansman, Foston—he had given his name to his charge after the day of blood-baptism at the "raid of Say"—and the trembling nurse, Dame Barbara, who could not say her foster daughter nay.

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A year had passed; Lord Robert of Clare was on his return, and the castle was all in commotion.

The Lady Clare had, in secret—for so was the marriage kept—become a mother, and her babe was brought up by a peasant nurse, who dwelt in a secluded cot, not far removed from the hermitage where the nuptials had taken place.

The Lady Clare, pale, but mastering her agitation, was preparing to receive her father and his friends. Foston Say, under an assumed name was still an inmate of the castle, as secretary and tutor to the lady; and his faithful follower, the elder Foston, held an office under the seneschal—some post of trust over the soldiery of the castle.

As for Dame Barbara, she was almost beside herself for dread of the fierce and remorseless lord, whose acts in field, and camp, and city made the cheeks of brave men blush.

Stolen now were the meetings, and seldom, between Foston and his pale, beautiful bride; furtive were their glances, but no less fond.

They had, as it were, been surprised in a dream of joy, and saw before them the hideous shape of misery taking the benign shape by the throat and strangling it.

They had lost themselves in an Elysian world—a paradise of fools—and lo! they were in the midst of the world and its strife, and Terror stalked around them, so that they were unable to pluck up courage and run from it.

Escape!—and escape together!—why not? They were paralysed.

Foston, the henchman, only looked with a sad, loving eye on his foster-son, but gave vague answers when pressed to help him with advice.

Dame Barbara had lost her poor five wits, and only sobbed and wrung her hands, when the Lady Clare implored her help.

Thus they were, when, one day, the martial sounds of a trumpet at the outer gates drew attention to a large party of horsemen and footmen, who came with lance and spear, flag and banner, and all the panoply of men whose daily trade is fighting.

At their head, clad in heavy armour, was the tall, strong figure of Lord Richard.

Beside him, clattering over the drawbridge, came Count Philip de Fiennes, his fierce visage seamed with excesses, and his eyes glowing in the fire of unrestrained passions.

Haughty, unhandsome, and cruel, as he appeared to the eyes of all who met to receive their lord, there was none that looked upon him with more loathing than the gentle Lady Clare; while Foston Say, who stood in his humbler guise and more peaceful garb some paces back, felt his heart struck by a sudden thrill of inborn detestation as he looked upon him, the reason of which he did not comprehend or know.

But none was possibly more moved than the henchman, Foston.

His dark face grew white, his eyes emitted a fiery light, his teeth were heard to grind, and his nervy hand clutching at his "skene," or dagger, half drew, and thrust it to and fro in the sheath, as though it was hungering for the blood of the Aquitaine noble.

With a bluff, rude courtesy, but somewhat softened by that mysterious sentiment of paternal love, which lurks in the breast of every man who sees his child, after long years of parting, Lord Robert saluted the Lady Clare.

His rough manner softened—his voice became tender; and, as he introduced her to his bosom friend, and comrade and brother-in-arms, the Count de Fiennes, it became broken.

Then came trumpet-blasts, the tramping of horse, the dismounting of men, the clatter of arms, greetings, welcomes, cups drained dry, and all the rest of

that joyous relaxation, when peace lends a zest to approaching festivities, after long fatigues, dangers, and tedious journeys.

There was a feast in the castle-hall that night, upon a scale of splendour and plenty befitting one who held the earldom of Gloucester, and who returned as a conqueror.

At the right hand of Lord Robert sat the bloated Count Philip; at his left, the Lady Clare, whose pallor only increased her beauty.

Behind her chair was Foston Say, as her cup-bearer. Apart from them, his foster father—the henchman—his gaunt frame in a quiver; his vast stature expanding, as it were, with some nameless motion, and his statuesque figure dilating beneath the armour he wore, until beneath the light of the hundred torches, flaring in the brackets on the walls and pillars of the hall, he looked something that was ghostly and menacing in his aspect. *What ailed him?*

"Come, friends!" shouted Lord Robert, as his page filled his beaker; "pledge me in a cup to the noblest in the field and the bravest in battle—bold in counsel, and unflinching in his act; to one who more than once saved my life, whom I am proud to call friend! A cup—full and brimming over—to Count Philip de Fiennes, of Aquitaine! Health and long life!—and a fair bride, whom I will presently name! A health!—and let the trumpets sound, and your shouts re-echo in every rafter!"

The torches flared wildly—the shrill trumpets rang forth their tan-ta-ra!—and as the clangour rose, the guests rose, too, and "a health to Count Philip!" resounded through every arch and roof-tree.

"Thanks, my lord!—my trusty friends and fellow-soldiers, all thanks!" and Count Philip, his swollen face in every feature inflamed with wine, rose upon his unsteady feet; "and, in return, I will give you a pledge you will not fail to drain knee-deep—to the fairest of the fair, the lovely Lady Clare, to whom I swear myself her most devoted knight and the humblest and most faithful of her servants! To the Lady Clare!" And he and the guests stood to the toast.

But the Lady Clare grew white and deadly faint; and, from behind her, came a moan and a start, and a fierce exclamation.

It was from Foston Say.

"Stand still!" whispered a voice in Foston's ear, sounding like the breathing of a lion; while a lion's gripe was on his arm, holding back that which had seized the sword at his side, and half drawn it.

None heeded them, unless a careless glance, which was like a sneer, crossed the visage of the Count, who now observed Foston and the gaunt Highlander.

Lord Robert had graciously drank the health, blandly thanked the Count, and called for another beaker. Then he said to the Lady Clare, "I learn, my daughter, you have a minstrel here, who deftly tunes his harp and sings like a true troubadour."

"Bid him step forth and troll us one of his lays! Come, Sir Minstrel, step forward! Give him his harp, thou grizzly-bearded Hercules! Presently, I may want to question *thee*!"

Conquering his emotion, Foston took his harp, rang forth his awful song of death and ruin, and there was a terrible pause in the hall.

"Ha! ha! ha!" rang forth the mocking laugh of the Count; "but this is not so mirthful, my lord, as I had hoped for!"

"By'r lady, no!" cried the Earl. "No matter; it may be merrier on the bridal morn! What say you, daughter mine? I have given the Count assurance of your hand—have plighted you to him! What say you to a gallant soldier for a husband?"

"*Him!* she cried, rising in disgust, and calm as any stone, though her eye kindled sternly; "*him!* NEVER!"

"Ho! ho!" shouted the Count; "do you hear the damsel, my lord? By St. Denis, and St. George to boot, 'tis like there hath been some smug-faced wooer in the way before me! What say you, Sir Minstrel!—eh?"

"I say that she should be the bride of death first!" exclaimed Foston, in a tone that rang through the hall, and made the Earl start to his feet, with a fierce cry of rage.

"Hold, my lord, a moment!" said Count Philip; "there is some merry jest here, to be bitterly rewarded by stripes at the porter's lodge! Did you notice the words of the song he sung?"

"I thought they minded me of a black day and a bitter deed!" said Lord Robert, his brow darkening for a moment.

"Ay! aha! When we smothered the foxes out of their holes—the wolf and the dam out of the den; smoked them in their fastnesses; and for every drop of the brave blood of Cressingham, spilt ten! By this bright wine, it was the finest sport—you recollect it—that low house in the wild Highlands—what was its name? Ho, Gasper! Mongizert!—you—you recollect!" And he motioned to some men-at-arms, who were at the low-end of the table.

"Ay, my Lord Count—in Scotland. Say—the Master of Say was his name!"

"'Twas so; and thus it was we lost the cub fox—do you not recollect?—no man could shoot bolt, or drive arrow home; so some tall fellow and the brat made off and up the hills? Ha! ha! The fire, and the smoke, and the hurry!"

"And, by Heaven!" muttered a soldier, "I'd rather ha' been cleft to the chin than had hand in it!"

"And that you see, my Lord Robert, is the secret of the minstrel's music. Why, I've heard it since!" shouted the Count, reeling; "and, *perdie*, it's too dismal to be even sorrowful!"

"Ay, Sir Count! that wailing lament has a name, and we called it the 'Bloody Raid of Say!' I remember the day well—the devilish deed of murder—the faggot and the fire;" and the gaunt Highlander, who thundered these words into the ears of the Count, had seized him by the corslet, with his knuckles in his throat, and with a resistless force dragged him to the centre of the dais, where a space was made around them—pressing him down to the ground.

But those last words told with an instinct that needed no fuller explanation to the beating heart of the Lady Clare, the sanguine tragedy of Foston Say's history. The loving maiden, the tender wife, wedded to the victim of her father's savage impassibility!

He had been a spectator, and had not interfered!

He had been in command, and had not prevented the wanton butchery! Alas! for the grievous fruit now, and for the ghastly scene that presently must follow!

Would he love her—the child of Lord Robert, the cruel Earl of Gloucester—more? Could she hope it? A mist of unspeakable fear was beginning to fall over her eyes, blinding every perception.

"Stand, dog! cur! dastard! thou carrion, scarcely as fit for my dagger as for the halter of the hangman, stand! and do you, all of you, my masters, stand back; and you, Lord Robert, do you beware me, too! Oh!" continued the henchman, "the black deed is coming home—home, do you hear?—and you, who saw a brave man hacked to pieces like a piece of timber—who beheld a wife and mother dishonourably slain—who commanded your dastards to shoot arrows after a helpless orphan child—who, devil-like, has laughed at the horrible story since—do you go down—down to your kindred sire, the foul fiend; and—then—laugh—then—if you can or dare!"

Ere they could stay his hand, twenty stabs had let the crime-stained soul out of the horrible carcass of Count Philip.

"There!" said Foston, the avenger, calmly; and he hung down his reeking dagger, and folded his arms. "I have avenged the father. Let the son (point-

ing to the young minstrel) avenge his mother—for fate plays into his hands?  
 “Oh, Foston! friend! protector! beloved! husband! what is all this?”  
 and the Lady Clare with her hands folded together, sank imploringly at Foston Say’s feet.

“Husband!” exclaimed Lord Robert, with that transition from the stupor of astounded surprise, into which the audacity of a menial, and the evidence of his vindictiveness, who lay flaccid and drenched in his own blood, at the giant henchman’s feet, was bearing him to rage, and a fierce thirst to punish the audacity which dared to brave him so far.

“Husband!” he repeated. “Who is thy husband?”

“He—Foston—he is my husband; but, will—will he acknowledge it now?”  
 and she sank on the ground.

“Ay, Clare, beautiful and beloved!” and the youth was rushing forward to assist her, when the Earl, drawing his glaive, shouted:

“Back!—serf—slave—thing that I will crush under my heel—back, or I slay you both!”

“Back, you!” and the elder Foston, aroused afresh, sprang between them; his own broad gleaming brand in his firm grip, and his form like that of a leader of Titans, panting as if for the commencement of a mightier strife than yet had been.

“Listen to me, Lord Robert of Clare, and Earl of Gloucester—if you may, or will! Listen on peril of your soul—listen but a moment! You wronged him—for you deprived him of sire, and of mother! I, for years, have been as both to him!”

“Good, true, noble, single-hearted friend and foster-father!” sobbed Foston, as he fell on the old man’s neck, and clasped his arms round him.

“Peace! He has wedded your daughter! They met—they loved! I could have slain you!—I would have done so, but you expressed a regret for the savage act. They are united—bless them! Forgive her—him you have nothing to forgive. That is his prerogative alone; and his blood is as free, as pure, as lofty—ay, more so than your own, he can claim kindred with kings!”

“Peace! Never, thou beggar knave! Thou—but why do I parley? Set on—seize them—tear them asunder—hack me this creature to shreds!” and the furious Earl foamed at the mouth like a baffled tiger.

“Do you begin, then?” said the henchman, with an almost appalling coolness dropping his sword. “This night’s deeds must have a like ending to its beginning; and ere its hours are worn out, another tribunal—”

He spoke no more. Like lightning came the sweeping grand on the faithful, the noble head. It was cleft in twain; and the last faithful sob went heaving from his heart with his latest breath in a broken prayer to heaven. Let us draw a veil here over the scene which followed.

\* \* \* \* \*

But the story got abroad.

It was too full of unmitigated cruelty and atrocity to pass the King’s attention. Lord Robert’s deeds were lost in his misdeeds; and many a year after attainder—the reversal of his possession of Tunbridge to the Crown, and his death, which was, in some sort, tranquil—Foston and the Lady Clare lived in their humbler home on the bonny braes of Say, far from the turmoil and the oppression of men, the very elements which might have kept them asunder only binding them the more fondly and devotedly to each other.

### THE “PRINCESS.”

THE despotisms of a German Court are all the more absurdly stringent in proportion to the littleness of its means, and its infinitesimal amount of territory. They could not love without loss of dignity and caste. They could not

marry, for the same reason; and the story of the Princess Dorothea, daughter of the reigning sovereign of Saxen-Hausen, is a case of point.

Endowed with a beauty which cast all rivalry into the shade, gifted by nature in an unusual degree, with a mind cultivated beyond the general range of acquirements required in a Court, the Princess Dorothea was an object of general interest, admiration, and esteem.

For some considerable time past, she had, as her secretary—an officer of a merely honorary order, as may be conceived—a young gentleman, of good descent, and whose family, without being noble, stood high amongst the burgher class of Stuttgart. It was, however, chiefly as her tutor in many branches of learning, and especially in music, that Max Von Schlesingen was recognised in the princely household of Saxen-Hausen.

One day, the Princess was seated alone in a noble chamber of the “Schloss,” which, at present, was the residence of her father. The expression of her face was sweet and gentle, although a melancholy air pervaded it. She was looking fixedly before her; while in her trembling hands she held an open letter, which seemed to contain matter that had caused the agitation she was evidently endeavouring to quell.

A softly breathed sigh startled her out of her reverie, and lifting up her eyes, she saw before her, standing at some little distance, a fine-looking young man, dressed in a court suit of black velvet, and in whose intelligent and manly countenance the deepest admiration was expressed. He seemed to have been devouring her face with his ardent eyes, beneath whose steady fire she was even obliged to lower her own, while a soft and tender blush gathered upon her cheeks:

“Max!” she said; “is it you? Why do you start?”

“Did I?” he returned. “Ah, you have awakened me out of a rapturous dream! I was gazing upon your face, fascinated by your loveliness; and, lost in its contemplation, forgot that you looked at once so sad and beautiful.”

“You have often told me that I am beautiful, Max,” said the Princess Dorothea. “You are an excellent flatterer.”

“Do you think so?—and yet you believe me, do you not? Do but behold yourself in yon mirror; you will see, then, how well that rich tiara becomes you. I think you would feel its weight, were you to endure it long.”

“And yet, Max, I shall have to wear one still heavier than this before long,” she said, in a tone so grave and deep that he seemed to detect a lurking meaning lying hidden in her words. He turned pale, and retreated a step.

“You do not mean—you cannot mean—No, no; it would be too cruel!” he exclaimed, with a passionate, eager gesture.

“I do not understand you, Von Schlesingen,” she coldly replied.

A shiver ran through his frame. For an instant he seemed about to fall; but by an effort he recovered his self-possession.

“Am I no longer aught to you?” he moaned. “You know that you have taken my heart out of my breast! It is in your hands to torture, or to deal tenderly with! You know that I worship and adore you—that I am yours for life or death! And you—you also said—”

“What have I said?” demanded the Princess, with such an icy tone and manner that they seemed to freeze him.

“Alas!” said he, “I had dreamed, at least, that you loved me! Loved me! oh, rapturous word!—oh, blissful moment!—oh, golden grain in the falling sands of time! And is the memory alone to be left me, in order that I may know how near I was to felicity, and that I may be cast down into the very depths of despair?”

“Listen! The Duke of L—has proposed to my father for my hand, and the proposals lie within this paper.”

He uttered a cry as of pain; he struck his forehead with his hand. For an instant the wildness of his looks alarmed her.

"It shall not be!" he said, hoarsely. "I will kill him! Do you hear? I will slay him who dares to take you from me!"

"Are you mad? Do you know what you say, and in whose presence you speak and act thus?" demanded the Princess, with that abrupt hauteur, which those raised in the stilted prejudices of Court etiquette can at times assume, and which would be simply absurd, were it not for the almost implicit belief which they have in its reality.

"Pardon me!" said the young man, bowing with an air of humillity, "but I love you so deeply—so passionately—that—"

"That it will be necessary for you to forget a passion so fruitless and so foolish!" she interrupted him in a voice almost harsh.

He seemed not to have heard or else to have been stricken dumb with consternation. He gazed upon her vacantly awhile.

"What, then, do you love the Duke of —?" he demanded, his eyes dilated with surprise, and the words stammering over his tongue.

"I!" she said, "why should I? How can I love, or even esteem a man who is stained by crime, and whose life is a round of vices?" and she shrugged her shoulders in contempt.

"Ah! thanks to heaven for that!" cried Max clasping his hands. "You do well to hate him. And they would give you, who are so young, so pure, and so lovely, to one whose elevated rank only makes his infamy the more prominent!"

"Herr Von Schlesingen," began the Princess, in a constrained voice, "you must learn to speak of the head of a princely house in another manner. You must use far different words when the man who is to become my husband is the subject of your remarks."

"You are very cruel to me this morning, Dorothea," he said, advancing towards her, and with a pleading gesture; "I do not understand you, and you torture me with suspicions and doubts."

"Oh!" she replied, "if you do not understand me, so much the better or so much the worse—whichever you like—only I have the Duke's proposals. The Prince, my father, has sent them to me by his Chancellor, and I am expected to answer them."

"Well, and you—what do you say?" demanded Max with his usual impetuosity of manner.

"I accept," she said quietly, and fixing her eyes upon him.

"You accept a man stained with crimes!—a man of known riotous life!"

"He is not the less a Duke," she replied, with a cold, constrained smile upon her lips. "I accept, for am I not a Princess?"

"And I, Madam—and I—what becomes of me?" asked Max, holding out his hands to her.

"You will take leave of the Court, and forget me?" she answered; and as she spoke, she saw him shrink as from a blow. His limbs bent under him, his face became of a deadly paleness, and suddenly collapsing, he fell on the floor in a swoon. She started from her chair with a cry in turn; rushed forward, stooped and lifting up his head, she tenderly caressed him, uttering fond rhapsodical words.

"I have slain him, wretch that I am!" she said. "Max, dear Max! my own true lover! nothing shall part us! My cruel jesting has struck him to the heart! Look up! revive! And he loves me so deeply, so devotedly! Alas! I shall never have another heart to beat so with me! He begins to recover!"

"So please your Highness to leave the Herr Von Schlesingen to the care of the attendants," said a harsh voice in her ears; "it will be for the best. His Royal Highness, your father, wishes to see you."

Pale and alarmed, she recognised the astute countenance of the Chamberlain, who, she knew, would inform her stern and stately father of what, she doubted not, he had seen and heard. She would have implored him to spare Max, but that she knew him to owe the young man a bitter grudge; and tottering like one about to swoon in turn, she quitted the chamber, leaving Max to the charge of the attendants.

There followed stormy scenes after this. Max was summoned to the presence of the Prince, and severely chidden for his presumption in daring to lift up his eyes to one whose exalted rank none could venture to approach who could not boast of a ducal or royal descent, and was peremptorily dismissed from his post, and ordered without delay to quit the Court. Half maddened by this disgrace—frantic at the idea of never beholding his beloved mistress again, the young man sought every opportunity the remaining few hours left him of obtaining an interview with the Princess; but in vain. Although his amiability and good-nature had rendered him a favourite with most about the person of the Princess, still the natural jealousy felt against a favourite prevailed against him; while the injunctions of the Prince, and the espionage of the Chancellor (who also had an interest at stake in fulfilment of the projected match) contributed to mar this object.

The Court, nevertheless, wore an air of constraint and gloom. The Princess, who was constantly in tears, confined herself exclusively to her own apartments, and would receive no one that her father did not insist upon her so doing.

Max Von Schlesingen had not yet quitted the Court, the Prince having found himself in need of his services as secretary—pending negotiations rendering his great abilities necessary. Strictly forbidden to be seen in the neighbourhood of the princess's apartments, yet reminded every hour by letters and documents he was copying, of the treasure he had lost, the pain he endured may be readily understood.

But he was not the less determined to see the Princess, and to learn from her own lips his final sentence; for even to know that she still loved him would sweeten his banishment—to feel that he yet held a place within her esteem would be a grateful sense of relief.

Some few evenings after the scene we have described took place, and mystery and fear, recrimination and discord, had passed in the household between those most interested, the Princess was seated in her chamber, a grand piano open before her, over which her fingers wandered vaguely, drawing, nevertheless, some wondrous but sad chords, which served to express the melancholy of her mind, while the mournful, drooping eyes filled unconsciously with tears, as the notes thus awakened recalled back to her some fancy more or less tender—some emotion more deep—some memorial more delicious, unconsciously associating themselves with the recollection of the hapless Max.

An attendant, on whose fidelity she had most reliance, was in waiting, doing some embroidery or needlework, when she suddenly aroused her mistress by uttering an exclamation of terror. Turning round her head, the Princess beheld Max himself—with dishevelled hair, his visage pale and wan, misery and anguish in his eyes—who, rushing forward, fell on his knees, saying, "Dorothea! Oh, beloved one! Do I behold you once again!"

The Princess trembled, for besides his liberty, his very life was in danger. "Oh, rash and misguided youth, do you defy your fate? Who is it that has done this?" she exclaimed.

"I—I alone am to blame!" he said. "Do you think I could longer endure my misery—that I could exist without beholding you?"

"You tempt; danger! You menace us both with ruin!" she exclaimed.



*H. M. S. Lee*

"I fear naught for myself!" rejoined Max. "Better death than exile from you, Princess! Better imprisonment, if I may but breathe the same air with you, than banishment and absence from you! Have you not said you loved me?" he fiercely added.

"Why did you tempt me from my duty, Max?" she asked in turn. "Was it generous in you to wrest my secret from me? Why did you destroy those hallucinations which the artificial life of a Court had familiarized me with?—and for the splendour, glitter, and servility which surround me, awake within me perceptions of that happiness which never, never can be mine? Oh, Max! it was a bitter wrong! and the wrong is all the more, that having once broken the tie, you force yourself before me, compromising my reputation and endangering yourself!"

"For myself, I care not what becomes of me!" he retorted, with a desperate calm which frightened her. "But for your sake, I am willing to take my sentence of banishment. Say you pardon me!—you pity me!—you do not utterly forget me! and I go, never to cross your path more!"

"I pity—I forgive—I—I—cannot forget you, Max!" and she held forth her hand to him, which he devoured with kisses; and for an instant—a brief moment—carried away by the force of her passion, the beautiful maiden bending down her stately head over him, let her lips touch his pale forehead in a parting kiss.

Max, losing all control, sprang to his feet, and drew her, unresisting, to his bosom, wildly kissing her brow and lips, and murmuring in broken words his wild and frantic love.

"Oh, your Highness!—Herr Von Schlesingen!" cried the attendant, who had been stricken dumb with surprise at this unexpected scene passed rapidly before her eyes. "Here comes the Grand Chamberlain and a guard! Fly, escape? or your life will be forfeited to your temerity."

Ere, however, Max had time to escape from the chamber, and before he could loosen her fainting arms from the hold they had taken upon him, a rude grasp was on his shoulder, and a sinister voice sounded in his ears.

"Ho, traitor! here again! in defiance of the commands of his serene highness, the Prince. Arrest him sirs,—first to the dungeon of the Schloß, and next——"

"Release him, I command you!" cried the Princess, stamping her foot with passion.

"Your Highness will pardon me, but I have your royal father's commands," replied the Chamberlain.

"It is useless!" cried Max. "Plead no more for me, sweet Princess. Take my blessing, and eternal adieu!" and despite her cries and protestations, Max was hurried away.

She never beheld Max Von Schlesingen more. His name was never heard of; neither his person seen among the living. What his ultimate fate was, never could be distinctly known. Exile or death,—it was all one. The Princess was soon wedded to the Duke, and a round of revelry and festivities may have helped to obliterate the humble lover from her memory.

It is an old story. Dorothea is not the only princess to whom the exercise of the natural affections are denied, and whose fond feelings, and better nature must be sacrificed upon the altar of convention, to the proprieties of royalty and etiquette.

THE END.