

QUATRAINS.

BY NINETTE M. LOWATER.

HAPPINESS.

Like him who once sought for the fountain of youth.
We spend our lives seeking the waters of bliss;
But we find by the aid of the touchstone of truth
That they lie at the bottom of Duty's abyss.

CLEOPATRA.

Full many a Cleopatra lives to-day,
And many a powerful power spells as she
Who lived and loved long centuries ago,
But there is now, alas! no Antony!

ROCK ELM, WIS.

BERENICE ST. CYR.

A Story of Love, Intrigue, and Crime.

BY DWIGHT BALDWIN.

CHAPTER I.

LOVE AND PEERL.

FIRE! FIRE!"
I started, terrified tones, the ominous word rang out.
"Fire! Fire!"
Scores, hundreds, of voices caught up and repeated the dreadful warning, until the vast dome of the great exposition building at Chicago echoed them back, as if in scornful mockery.
A police officer, whose watchful eye had detected a slight blaze in one of the magnificent booths, caused by a spark from the electric lamp, had raised the first cry.

Its repetition was the work of the throng of visitors, which, notwithstanding the circumstance that the evening was far advanced, still lingered in the incendiary place.

The incipient blaze, fed by laces from far-famed Valenciennes and riu Gobelin tapestries, became almost instantly a mass of seething flame.

With fearful rapidity the fire-fiend extended his domain, his voracious appetite increasing as his huge red mouth licked up costly fabrics and destroyed elegant fittings, until to the practiced eyes of cool-headed men who had witnessed the great conflagration which had one time destroyed the Garden City, the enormous structure in which the last of a long series of annual exhibits was being held, appeared doomed to speedy and complete destruction.

Confusion reigned supreme; children screamed, women fainted, and men ran wildly about, seeking an egress, and breaking windows to facilitate their escape from a seeming frightful doom.

But high up above the panic, flame and smoke, above the arched roof, above all save the clear vaulted heavens, stood three persons who seemed in imminent danger of meeting an awful death.

By means of the elevator that pierces the roof of the monster building they had gained a high position, from which vantage ground the beautiful lake, gleaming beneath the beams of the full effulgent harvest-moon, like a mass of molten silver stretched out before their eyes.

"We are lost, father," and a young lady, in whose form and face nature seemed to have blended in rich profusion her rarest charms, as she clung convulsively to the arm of a gray-haired, rather feeble-looking old man.

"Lost! No! no! Berenice!" shouted he. "The elevator—"

"It is deserted! The flames surround the shaft. We are left to die here alone."

The old man looked downward and gave utterance to a cry of despair as the glance verified the words of his daughter.

"This way!" shouted he a moment later, and dashed over the railing towards a flight of stairs which descended from the tower to the roof proper.

There the old man paused that his daughter might precede him.

When well-nigh down, her dress caught upon a projecting corner, and, with a cry of terror, she fell forward.

With a spasm of horror which rendered him incapable alike of speech or motion, the old man saw his daughter sliding down the arched metal roof of the building.

Her infancy, prattling childhood, youth, and budding womanhood passed like a lightning-painted panorama before his eyes, and he clutched them to shut out the seemingly inevitable fate of her he loved next to idolatry.

At that instant a form rushed past him.

It was that of a young man who, like his daughter and himself, had been gazing upon the beauties of the moonlit lake.

"Save her!" pleaded the fond old father, hope restoring his power of speech.

Without a word, a look, the young man projected himself forward and downward toward the place where Berenice was clinging to a small ornamental cupola.

He saw her an' with renewed courage tightened her grasp.

But her fingers twitched convulsively, and her face, white as the moonlight in which it was bathed, told plainest that her strength was almost gone.

The old man uttered a groan of agony, for to his excited mind her heroic would-be rescuer could but join her in a frightful death upon the pavement, far beneath.

With rapidly accelerating speed the youth sped downward.

With dexterity which bespoke both agility of muscle and coolness of brain, he caught the small cupola and came to a stop.

At the same instant the slender jeweled hand relaxed, and the form of the now unconscious girl began moving onward toward certain death.

But fair Berenice St. Cyr had in store a fate other than destruction; clouds, darkness, and tears were soon to gather like the mockery of an aurole around her sunshiny head, yet death was not to be her portion.

The young man noted her deadly peril, and seized her wrist. Then, with an almost superhuman effort, in which every nerve and muscle played its part, he drew her upward to a point of temporary safety.

In the meantime, the fire engines and hook-and-ladder company, which are housed at the north end of the long building, had arrived and made short work of the fire, but not until the devouring element had wrought damage to the extent of scores of thousands of dollars.

Shouts from the throng, which in the briefest possible time had grown to thousands, now attracted the attention of the gallant firemen to the imperiled twain above. Ladders, to whose length there seemed no limit, rose as if through the power of magic, and a rescuing party soon reached the roof.

But not even to the powerful arms of the skilled and intrepid "fire laddies" did the young man convey his precious burden. Instead, he bore her away himself, and, amid the enthusiastic plaudits of the vast crowd which filled Michigan avenue, carried her safely down the tall ladder.

"God bless you!" cried Mr. St. Cyr, in fervent tones, as he joined our hero a moment later. "You have saved my child, my all. This way, John."

In response to the direction, a handsome carriage was driven through the curious, pressing people, to the curb-stone.

"Lift her in, please," continued the old gentleman, as he swung open the door.

The other complied, and a moment later, clear of the crowd, the trio so strangely united in one party, were being whirled rapidly away to the southward.

Before an elegant man on in Calmette avenue the vehicle came to a stop.

The other complied, and a moment later, clear of the crowd, the trio so strangely united in one party, were being whirled rapidly away to the southward.

"Come," said the latter, as he led the way toward the broad threshold.

"Please excuse me," returned the young man, lifting his hat. "The lady is happily restored, I can do."

"Nothing," interrupted Mr. St. Cyr; "but you can give us an opportunity to express our thanks for the inestimable service you have rendered us. Come!"

On the point of repeating his declination, our hero turned his eyes upon the fair girl whose life he had so recently saved at the peril of his own.

A strange thrill pervaded his frame as his glance rested upon her face, half shy, pleading, but wholly beautiful, and fascinating beyond all he had been fated to look upon.

A momentary glance into the dark tube of a camera obscura, and one's features, to the smallest detail, are fixed for all time.

The convex glasses of the photographer, are not truer or clearer than the thoughts and purposes of a right-minded young man, and the delicate chemical plate no more sensitive to impressions than is the sympathetic, grateful heart of a girl.

What marvel, then, that one exchange of glances give a new direction to the impulses of both?

The young man bowed, and followed his fair though silent persuader up the marble steps.

CHAPTER II.

AN AWFUL AWAKENING.

"This is our home," said Mr. St. Cyr, as with a hospitable wave of the hand he ushered his guest into the drawing-room.

And such a home! The young man had expected to see elegance, but the richness of the scene quite astounded him, and bespoke a wealth with which he had never before been brought in contact.

"Let us go to the library, father," suggested Berenice. "It's far cozier there."

Straws are said to show from which direction the wind is blowing, and the alacrity with which the father acquiesced was sufficient to convince the young man that the daughter was the ruler of the mansion.

Assuming the office of guide, the beautiful girl led the way through a number of large apartments luxuriously furnished, and glowing with the richest hues of art, to the apartment she had suggested.

"Some refreshments, John. Serve them here, and as quickly as possible."

The man looked curiously at the ring which Cole was in the act of placing upon his finger, and withdrew.

Half an hour later the little company separated for the night.

"Master must think a power of that young man to give him that ring," mused John, as he went sleepily down the stairs after having shown Cole Winters to the most sumptuous guest-chamber in the whole mansion.

It was long before sleep visited the eyelids of our heroine, whose happy, innocent heart kept beating time to a new and glorious measure—first love.

When, at last, slumber locked fast her outer senses, the new-born sentiment controlled her half formed thoughts, and dreams of Cole Winters floated through her brain.

Again she heard the startling cry of fire, and with fast failing strength saw our hero—her hero, as well as risking his life to save her.

"Help! Help! Murder!"

From a vision at once awful and fascinating, she was awakened by these dreadful words.

They proceeded, as she thought, from the library, where she had so recently spent one of the pleasantest hours of her brief life.

In instant; almost, she was there.

Day had broken, and objects were distinctly visible.

The outcry had emanated from the servant, John Kedzie, who stood in the doorway, a look of horror depicted on his face.

Rushing past him, Berenice saw chairs overturned, the safe open, and papers scattered about.

"Burglary!" she gasped.

"Worse!" said John Kedzie, in a hoarse whisper.

She followed with her eyes the direction indicated by his trembling finger, and saw a sight that fairly froze her young blood, and deprived her of the use of her faculties.

Before her upon the floor, a frightful wound in his throat, lay the lifeless body of her beloved father, Paul St. Cyr.

And pleasure beaming on Berenice's admiring face.

"Not a particle. You have told your story; let me reciprocate in kind. For half my life I have been an active business man of Chicago. This is my daughter's eighteenth birthday. Some time ago I promised her that when this day came I would abandon all business and devote the remaining years of my widowhood to her, my only child."

"This I have only been able to accomplish in part. I have withdrawn from two firms in which I was interested, and the proceeds, \$30,000 in bonds, are now in safe."

The enormous sum mentioned, together with its unexpected proximity to him, caused Cole Winters a sudden start of surprise.

In this action he was not alone. The curious glances he cast at the cube of polished steel, which held secure behind its bars and massive locks more than a king's ransom, was duplicated by a pair of dark sinister eyes which gleamed at the lower part of one of the windows behind the backs of the interested trio.

"I have fully twice as much more safely invested in good real estate," Mr. St. Cyr went on. "These bonds draw only a very low rate of interest, and I am desirous of changing them to houses and other rental property. This, my contract with my daughter, prevents me from attending to it in person."

"I am glad you remember your obligations, father," smiled Berenice.

"In a week we are to leave for New York, from where we will soon sail for a tour of Europe. I have as yet no agent to reinvest my money and care for my property during my absence. You seek employment. I will pay you \$3,000 a year. Is it a bargain?"

"My dear sir—what can I say? I have had no experience."

"Experience an honest man can easily acquire, while experienced men seldom turn honest. You are bright, energetic, sincere. Is it a bargain?"

Besides the father and daughter, the person at the window awaited the response.

"If you think me competent, sir, I will not otherwise disappoint you."

"Enough!" cried Mr. St. Cyr, extending his hand. "We will settle the details to-morrow. In the meantime accept and promise to wear this as a memento of this day. It belonged to my only son, long since deceased."

The speaker removed and handed our hero a curiously wrought old-fashioned ring, richly set with diamonds and rubies.

"What is it, sir?" asked a servant who had entered the apartment in response to an electrical bell which his master had touched.

Some refreshments, John. Serve them here, and as quickly as possible."

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[TO BE CONTINUED.]

His Table Etiquette Faulty.

The Sultan never uses a plate. He takes all his food direct from the little kettles, and never uses a table, and rarely a knife, fork or spoon—his bread, a pancake, or fingers are found far handier. It requires twice as many slaves as there are courses to serve a dinner to him.

"And failed at all points?"

"Something worse. A private banker hired me for a year. I saw his expenses of him and his methods; and discovering him to be engaged in a dishonest business, quitted him after working a month, for which I received no compensation."

"And besides losing your salary have made an enemy?"

"Exactly."

"What is his name?"

"Max Morris."

"Hai!" ejaculated Mr. St. Cyr. "The friend and former partner of Almon Sears!"

"The same. I've often seen Mr. Sears in his private office."

"This Almon Sears is the son of an old and valued friend, who died years ago, leaving him penniless. I loved him for his father, gave him every educational advantage, started him in business, and had he proved in all respects worthy, I had even designed—

The speaker paused as he caught a glimpse of his daughter's pale face.

"He contemplated marrying him to his daughter," was Cole's ment comment.

"Enough of him!" said the old man, with a slight show of petulance. "Pardon the interruption."