

## SUMMER NIGHT.

Oh, silent night!  
Oh, smooth stillness!  
That's tides down on drooping bough,  
Thou hold'st the earth in breathless slumber,  
Awake, but now.  
Gray mists arise,  
From dew-wet flowers.  
That lend thir fragrance to the night:  
And languid float on breath of summer.  
An incense light.  
A pale moon shines  
Over weary grass.  
That bend their heads with mournful glances;  
Then sinks behind the white clouds floating.  
And veils her face.  
Heat quivers off  
In lightning flashes.  
Along the soft gray northern sky,  
And illuminates the grand old forest.  
In shade near by.  
A bird sings out  
To broken strings.  
From you tall bush with blossoms fair,  
Dream songs that, sung in drowsy snatches,  
Arouse the air.  
And echoes find  
In hidden music.  
That soft descend from regions high,  
And wake the sleeping, sultry breezes  
To softly sigh.  
—[F. S. Ward, in *New York Independent*.

## THE LOST BRIDE.

BY MATT LAMAR.

There was a great crowd in the hall. Everybody was talking in a high key, and the orchestra in the back parlor was furiously convulsing itself in the throes of a pot-pourri.

At the top of the stairs was the bride. She was a symphony in lavender. She was not a conventional girl, perhaps, but in the matter of dressing garments she had been found to follow precedent, and she looked so irresistibly charming that nobody who saw her could believe for the moment that a "going away" gown should be anything but lavender.

They made way for her on the stairs, and for the groom, with a tan-colored overcoat on his arm, behind her. The women began kissing the bride, who submitted with flushed cheeks and dancing eyes. One or two elderly men near the doorway came in for a kiss, too. The groom was shaking hands with everybody, the young men all yelling "Good-by, old fellow," as if the groom were 60 instead of 24.

For a time it was almost impossible to get the front door open in the crush; and when at last they got the couple out, and the steps twenty handbells of rice hailed upon the retreating figures. A fresh chorus of giggling and shouts of "Good-by," and the coach door slammed and the Watterson wedding had begun to be a matter of history.

They reached the station at 10:45. In fifteen minutes they were rolling away in a drawing-room car. The bride could still feel the sting of the rice to her neck—a very pretty neck, encircled by a narrow ribbon of lavender velvet. When the groom took off his silk hat several white grains fell to the floor, and the groom covertly scanned the cars to see whether the tell-tale sign had been detected.

Charming innocence! As if rice grains were required to advertise the obviously just-married condition of this radiant pair!

Most of the car had been made up as a sleeper, and only three human beings were visible in unmade-up sections. These charitably feigned to regard the new passengers as in no wise exceptional, and did not appear to be taking very much notice of them.

When the train conductor and after him the Pullman conductor had been around to collect the tickets, and the groom had for the first time performed that interesting function of introducing to the world, as it were, himself and wife, the pair tried to settle back in the soft seat and appear indifferent. But the bride had 300 things she wished to say and so they got to talking in a low tone, until presently the white jacketed porter came along.

The sight of this functionary startled the groom in an inexplicable way.

"Make up the section, sir?" said the porter, with what might be called an invisible grin.

"N—no," said the groom, trying not to appear startled, "we are only going as far as Pittston."

The porter looked for a moment as if he disapproved of Pittston, or of something else and went back into his den.

For half an hour their low talk kept in a sort of harmony with the solemn rumble of wheels. Her gloved hand had fallen into the nearest of his. The pressure he gave it contained the essence of a mighty embrace. There was nobody to see if their hands came very close together.

Suddenly the groom sat upright and darted at the inside pocket of his sack-coat.

"Great Scott!" he gasped; "I forgot to tell the baggeman about that satchel."

"Charlie!" She said no more, but there was a world of distress in the tone.

"I shall telegraph for it in the morning," he said.

"But, Charlie," she protested, "don't you know that we can't go anywhere without the satchel?"

A deep gloom began to settle about Charlie. The train slowed up at a station. "I will get off and get the station man to telegraph back and we can have it by the midnight train."

She did not object in words, but she half grasped his arm as he started for the door. In a moment she could see him crossing the dim platform. It came into her thoughts that it would be a real tragedy if he should get left at the station. Her impatience developed into agony when it began to appear that the train would soon start again. She knew it was silly, but she got up and went to the door. One or two passengers were getting on. Then the porter climbed up with the stool used as a mounting step. Plainly she thought Charlie was going to be left behind. She stepped out and caught the vestibule door.

"Excuse me, madame," said the porter.

"I know it," gasped the girl, "and my husband is over there."

The situation was grotesquely terrible to her. With no satchel and no husband it seemed simply absurd to stay on the train. She would not stay on the train.

The wheels were already moving when she eluded the porter and sprang to the platform. As she ran across the platform to where the station master's light was glaring, her husband, who had triply mounted the steps at the other end of the car, was wandering in some perplexity through the aisle. Could he be in the wrong car? No, here was her little travelling fan.

The porter came over. "Did you see the lady, sir? She was afraid you would get left, sir."

Charley Merrill rushed for the platform. But the vestibule doors were locked and the train was under good headway. At that moment life began to seem like a melodrama to poor Merrill. "When do we reach the next station?" he asked of the porter.

"At 12, sir," was the answer.

Merrill dropped into a seat in grotesque despair. The twenty-five minutes to Silver Hill seemed longer than the wait of a table d'hôte. Merrill occupied the time with more or less torturing speculations as to what the girl would do when she found that he had not been left behind, and that they had been separated by another ridiculous mistake. He did not blame her for her blunder, for this had been the result of a blunder of his own in forgetting certain necessary arrangements at the station from which they had started. He pictured her despair at the separation, and then he tried to think that the whole thing was comic, but did not succeed very well in the effort. He could come to no conclusion as to what she would do. She might have taken the midnight train and followed him if she had been supplied with the money to buy a ticket. As it was he did not see that she could do anything more than wait for him to come back for her.

Merrill found that there was a train of Silver Hill back to the station of the mishap a few minutes after 12. He could reach the girl, he calculated, soon after half past 12. He sprang off the train at Silver Hill in a fever of impatience. The northern train was due in a quarter of an hour. Merrill hunted up the station master, without thinking it necessary to say anything about a wedding, yet he fancied that the station master took a degree of interest in the matter that might look as if he suspected a sentimental side of the case.

Presently the telegraph instrument in the station was ticking a message. "I think I can find out whether she is still there," said the station master. Merrill said nothing. He did not wish to delay for the space of a second the coming of the quarry was, and then take the road just beyond the tobacco barn.

Poor Merrill, who pitifully timed every turn, reached the tobacco barn at twenty minutes to six. He then put in a straight half-hour on the right road, and at the end of this very muddy period he heard the low whistle of a locomotive. It was the train he might have comfortably taken if he had kept out of the Gibbs contact.

At seven o'clock he reached the outskirts of a town. "Is this Pittston?" Merrill asked of a boy with a pail.

"Good!" gasped Merrill, with a sense of relief that was abruptly terminated by something in the look of the station master at his side.

"The midnight does not stop here," said the station master.

Merrill was ready to faint. His bride would be carried through to Pittston without him. "How soon can I follow that train," he choked, as if with some expectation that the station master might have the decency to modify the time table.

The station master looked commiseratingly at him as he replied. "The next train stopping at Pittston is 5:30."

Merrill sat down on the nearest bench. He could not think. The situation had become absolutely stupefying. He would not be able to reach his wife for over six hours. What would become of her in that dreadful interval? And how could he live during such a ghastly period of waiting? Merrill made up his mind that he simply could not stand the torture of such protracted uncertainty. He would have liked to hire a special train. People had done such things. Perhaps all of his honeymoon money would hire an engine to carry him to Pittston. He fancied himself riding madly across the country in the cab of a snorting locomotive.

Pretty soon he abandoned his thought and began figuring on the distance to Pittston. They told him it was thirty-one miles. He asked to be directed to a public stable. They didn't know of anybody but Gibbs, and were very uncertain about him at that hour. After fifteen minutes' delay Gibbs was found in a barroom half a mile from the station. At first Gibbs wouldn't drive anybody to the station master, and was twice assured that the station was at the end of the route.

Merrill was on the platform of the car when the station became visible. He rushed almost madly into the waiting room. No bride was in sight. Nor could he see any welcome figure in the ladies' waiting room.

He was almost running across the station to the inquiry window when the violent tapping of a pencil on the ledge of the telegraph office attracted his attention. The pretty girl behind the grating was beckoning to him.

As he paused there the pretty telegrapher was asking: "Are you the gentleman—that is looking for the lady who was waiting for the gentleman?"

"Yes, I am," gasped Merrill.

"Well, she is in here."

Merrill found her sleeping on a sofa. Her eyelids were red. As the bride-groom well wet and sputtered with mud, knelt down beside the sofa and took hold of one of her hands the bride awoke with a start and the pretty telegrapher turned her face away. —[Philadelphia Press.]

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Charley Merrill rushed for the platform. The rain was falling. Gibbs called up a man who lived in a white house, after having made Merrill wait until he had bestowed the horse and buggy in the barn back of the village store. "Giles," said Gibbs, to the head that appeared at a window, "this gentleman wants to get to Pittston. Have you got a horse you can let him have?"

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Merrill sprang into the road. "Good morning!" he shouted, striding off through the soft clay. But when he heard a protesting snort from Giles he turned about for a moment and shoved a \$5 bill into the man's hand. For an hour he struggled on through the dim road, which grew but little lighter during that time, and became increasingly wet. At the fork of the road he had to delay for ten minutes until he could find a sleepy man with red whiskers who gave him instructions to keep to the left all the way. Merrill looked at his watch with a shudder. A quarter past 5. He kept to the left with a persistency born of a lover's faithfulness and expectancy, until he came against a huge barn. When he appealed brokenly to a solitary woman at a well she yelled back at him that he would have to go back about three-quarters of a mile to where the quarry was, and then take the road just beyond the tobacco barn.

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