

## LITTLE MISTRESS SANS-MERCi.

Little Mistress Sans-Merci—  
Trotted world-wide, fancy free;  
Trotted cool to and fro,  
And her cooling is command—  
Never ruled there yet, I trow,  
Mightier monarch in the land;  
And my heart it leeth where  
Mistress Sans-Merci doth fare.

Little Mistress Sans-Merci—  
She hath made a slave of me!  
"Go!" she biddeth, and I go—  
"Come!" and I am fain to come—  
Never mercy doth she show,  
She writh or frollosome;  
Yet am I content to be  
Slave to Mistress Sans-Merci!

Little Mistress Sans-Merci,  
She hath grown so dear to me  
That I count as passing sweet  
All the pain her moods impart,  
And I blest the little feet  
That go tramping on my heart;  
Ah, how lonely life would be  
But for little Sans-Merci!

Little Mistress Sans-Merci,  
Cuddled close this night to me,  
And that heart which all day long  
Brought thou had been upon,  
Small out-of-the-way song  
For its best beloved one—  
All its tenderness for thee,  
Little Mistress Sans-Merci!

Eugene Field, in *Ladies' Home Journal*.



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## CHAPTER XVI.—CONTINUED.

As North entered he perceived a gentleman in a richly embroidered dressing-gown, lying at full length in a reclining chair. In his first glance North recognized in this person the irascible invalid whom he had within the past hour encountered on the street.

This speedy identification of his assailant affected North somewhat as an earthquake shock might have done; but, concealing his feelings as well as possible, he advanced with the greeting:

"Good morning, Maj. Maynard. I believe this is the second time to-day that I have had this honor."

A silent, sneering scrutiny was at first his only answer, and North was beginning to feel seriously annoyed, when at last the major, motioning toward a chair which North declined, began in a mocking way:

"Oh, you're not 'preoccupied' now, eh? You recognize me, do you, Mr. North? Heavens and earth, sir! It's a wonder that you didn't come in pretending that you had never seen me before. Do you often get drunk, North?"

"Never, sir!" returned North indignant.

"Never! Oh, very likely—very likely, indeed! Then I have no explanation of your extraordinary behavior this morning; none whatever. Now, North, I am going to ask you a few plain questions, and I expect you to answer them. Do you hear me, North?"

"Certainly, Maj. Maynard," returned North, with a delicate sarcasm in his emphasis, "I hear you." For the major's voice had been anything but "soft and low."

"Well," pursued that gentleman, impudently, "are you going to answer me?"

"That will depend altogether upon the nature of your questions," said North, looking him steadily in the eye. "It is perhaps unnecessary for me to say that I shall use my own discretion in the matter."

"Oh, you will, eh? Use your own discretion, sir? Heavens and earth, I'll not stand this!" roared the major, perfectly furious at North's hauteur. "You'll find, sir, that your best discretion will be to treat me with proper respect. Now, I've kept myself posted about this case. Oh, you needn't ask me what case! You know perfectly well that I allude to that forged will. It's a very mysterious affair, North, very mysterious, and I have my own suspicions about it. Now I want to know in plain terms, without any cowardly evasions, what share you and Mrs. Maynard have had in this business. It looks bad for you, North; don't deny it, now. Are you mixed up in that forgery?"

Even eyes less shrewd and unfriendly might have seen the gradual whitening of North's face, though he held every

"Pardon me, this is Mrs. Maynard's own affair. Whatever she is pleased to communicate to you, Maj. Maynard, you are at liberty to know. You are not at liberty to question me on the subject."

"Answer my question, North!" roared the major, in great wrath. "Are you doing this, or not?"

"I distinctly decline to answer."

"And I insist that you shall answer! I have a right to know."

"Then why do you not ask Mrs. Maynard?"

"Because I choose to ask you. Don't interrupt me, North, with your impudent questions! I disapprove of this whole business, sir—totally disapprove of it, and Mrs. Maynard is well aware of the fact. Yet she disregards my advice and goes directly counter to my express wishes, simply because, forsooth, you counsel such a course! Your conduct is reprehensible, North, reprehensible to the last degree and I have a right to complain of it. I tell you, North, you and Mrs. Maynard are bent upon robbery—downright, deliberate robbery, sir—and it's time there was a check put upon your proceedings."

"Robbery?" North repeated the word with calm surprise, while he stood with folded arms, looking steadily and haughtily at the major. "Of whom, may I ask, sir?"

"Of whom?" retorted the major, angrily. "Of that orphan whose fortune you are trying to steal. Annie Dupont, sir—that's whom!"

"I am happy to assure you, Maj. Maynard, that nothing could be further from our intentions than what you suggest. If it should ever be my good fortune to discover that young lady I should do everything in my power to place her in possession of her legal rights."

"Oh, you would, eh? Place her in possession of her legal rights, would you?" sneered the major. "That's a likely story! Why are you trying so hard to find her, then, and keeping so very quiet about it, if you intend any good to her? Fair words don't cheat me, North. I know very well that you've a scheme in your heads to steal every dollar of that fortune from her. But I'll thwart you yet, North—Heavens and earth, I'll thwart you, if I have to bring disgrace upon the family name to do it!"

"Are you insane, Maj. Maynard?" cried North, white with the indignation that he could no longer control. "Your malice explains your bringing this preposterous accusation against me; but one would think that the very commonest instinct of chivalry would forbid you speaking thus of your wife!"

For one moment the major was silenced; catching his breath quickly he looked up at North, with a dazed wonder that presently gave place to boisterous and contemptuous merriment.

"My wife?" he repeated, almost choking over the words. "Heavens and earth, sir, do you intend this for a ghastly attempt at a joke? My wife? Hang me if I don't believe that you are drunk, after all! How dare you refer in this way to my brother's widow?"

"Certainly, Maj. Maynard," returned North, with a delicate sarcasm in his emphasis, "I hear you." For the major's voice had been anything but "soft and low."

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In Mrs. Maynard's drawing-room a soft glow from the sea-coal fire in the grate was filling the early twilight with sparkling ruddy tints. Seated in a low easy chair just within the glow, during the leisure hour before dinner, Mrs. Maynard was musing bitterly, with no interruption save the tinkling melodies that Miss Hilary's idle fingers were sweeping from the glistening white keys of the piano-forte. But soon the player rose from the instrument, and, coming toward the fireplace, she stood revealed in the fitful red light, a slender, queenly figure in her soft-clinging black gown.

Mrs. Maynard quickly roused herself from her reverie on Miss Hilary's approach and addressed her with a slight nervous tremor in the voice that she surely strove to keep in its usual sweet, low, even tone:

"My dear Miss Hilary, if you will permit me, I should like to speak to you about Mr. North. Is it quite true that he is an old friend of yours? You know, my dear child, you are in a certain sense under my social guardianship, and I feel responsible for you—for anything affecting your happiness."

The proud girlish face changed color slightly during this address, and the red lips were firmly compressed for an instant as if to control a sudden quiver of pain; but the eyes remained dreamily fixed upon the glowing fire and there was no indication of emotion in the low voice that presently answered:

"Pray, do not include Mr. North among any of the possibilities affecting my happiness, Mrs. Maynard. His existence even is a matter of indifference to me."

Mrs. Maynard was too thoroughly a woman not to understand the exaggeration in this statement. She immediately decided that she would be justified in renewing the attack upon the same line:

"I wish, for his sake, that I could say as much for him," she said, slowly, affecting to be absorbed in her idle twirling of the dainty hand-screen that she held before her eyes, but in reality watching anxiously the play of expression in Miss Hilary's changeable face.



WITH NO INTERRUPTION, SAVE THE TINKLING MELODIES.

"But he betrayed to-day, when off his guard for a moment, a degree of interest in you which, under all the circumstances of your recent meeting here, seemed to me very singular, to say the least; and when I commented upon this fact he attempted to explain it by saying that you were old friends. It seems strange, does it not, that he should have resorted to a declaration that is so easily proven to be mistaken?"

Miss Hilary was now pale as ashes, and in the soft shining of her eyes, as they were still fixed upon the coals, there was a suggestion of repressed tears. But she spoke in a firm, calm manner, after a little silence, and with scarcely a perceptible unsteadiness in her voice.

"It is quite true, Mrs. Maynard, that we were once friends—and more than friends. If I had dreamed that it would result in my meeting Mr. North, I should never have come to you at all. No, I mean if I could have foreseen that our meeting would be what it was, for I confess that I had expected something very different if Fate should once more throw us together! But it is far better to have all illusions swept away than to waste one's time in useless dreaming; it is not, ma chere!"

"My dear Myra!" It was the sweetest and most delicate sympathy that was mingled with the surprise in this low-bredthed exclamation.

"Oh, I am forcing a disagreeable confidence upon you!" cried Miss Hilary, with a sudden little laugh of self-distrust. "I forgot how uninteresting such things are to a third person. Pray forgive me, Mrs. Maynard."

"Not forcing, my dear Miss Hilary," protested Mrs. Maynard, reaching up quickly and clasping the fair hand that hung listlessly at Myra's side. "Did not I invite your confidence? But indeed, I have no wish to intrude upon any experience that is sorrowful or sacred; do not misunderstand the feeling that prompted me to introduce this subject."

Withdrawing her hand quietly after a moment, Miss Hilary drew a low hassock forward into the glowing firelight and seated herself near the chair in which Mrs. Maynard was reclining. For a moment she remained silent, with her gaze once more dreamily intent upon the fire, where a fairy castle, glowing from the very heart of the white coals, reared its fantastic towers; then she began slowly, in a voice in which a little effort was betrayed:

"It seems strange for me to speak so freely of this affair, and yet, after all, there are sufficient reasons why I should confide the story to you. Since we have been thrown together under your roof, and especially since Mr. North has chosen suddenly to depart from the cold formality of a perfect stranger, with which he first met me here two weeks ago, and assume the attitude of an old friend—to which privilege he has forfeited every claim!—it is only right that you should know the little that there is to tell concerning my past acquaintance with him."

"I shall be glad to know all, my dear Myra," interpolated Mrs. Maynard.

CHAPTER XVII.

Player King—\* \* \* Tis not strange that even our love should

With our fortune change,

For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,

Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.

—Hamlet.

softly. "It may serve as a guide to my own future course."

"I met Mr. North," continued Miss Hilary, musingly, "in the White mountains, four years ago. We were guests at the same hotel, and through the introduction of a common friend we were made acquainted. From the hour of his introduction he became one of our select party, and wherever we went, whatever we did, he was sure to be with us—with me," she added, in a lower tone, while the fire-light flashed more redly for an instant over her pale cheeks, "for he devoted himself to me from the first. He charmed mamma by his constant and delicate attentions to her, and when, after a six weeks' acquaintance, he asked for my hand in marriage, he readily won her consent. He had told us little about himself or his family, but mamma understood from some New York friends that his antecedents were irreproachable, and she never thought of questioning the worth of his personal character.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## AN ELEPHANT'S EMOTION.

He Was Overcome by Festivities of His Deceased Mother.

Some of the European newspapers are telling a truly veracious story of the sagacity of a trained elephant which adorns a French traveling show. The proprietor of the circus announced that on a certain night his elephant would play the Russian hymn on a piano with his trunk. Intense interest was aroused and when the evening came the expectant public crowded the circus to the roof, says the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette.

After the usual performances four men carried in a cottage piano, which they placed in the center of the arena. Then the intelligent animal was brought in, paraded with much dignity three times around the ring and then, amid the keenest excitement, advanced to the piano. With the movement of his trunk he touched the keyboard, but hardly had he done so when a surprising change came over him. He trembled with fear and rage, whirled his trunk into the air and then with a scream of terror rushed out of the arena.

There was a great hurrying to and fro of the employees of the circus proprietor and the elephant keeper left the ring for consultation. In a few minutes the proprietor returned and announced with regret that the performance could not take place. The fact was, he said, that the elephant had recognized in the key-board of the instrument a portion of the tusks of his long-lost mother, who had fallen a prey to the ivory hunters of Africa. He had suggested to the keeper that another piano might be procured but that expert had informed him that the animal was so overcome with emotion that it would be impossible for it to perform that evening. Under these circumstances he suggested that the "Russian hymn," followed by the "Marseillaise," should be played by the band. The entertainment was thus brought to a close amid the frantic applause of the audience.

## THE GRIPMAN'S ARM.

Work at the Lever Makes His Grips Grow to Mammoth Proportions.

The introduction of cable cars in this city has been responsible for the rearing of a peculiar race of people, says the Philadelphia Record. Every gripman employed by the Traction Company finds himself so peculiarly developed after a few months' work at the lever that one-half of him would weigh about twice as much as the other.

A West Philadelphia physician tells of a frail young man of his clientele who accepted a place in the bay window of a cable car. After six weeks of work at the lever he came puffing and panting to the doctor's office one evening to say that he was suffering from a one-sided case of elephantiasis. He hastily stripped to the waist and showed one arm that would be the glory of a prize-fighter, while any girl would be ashamed to display the other one because of its puny outlines. The young man was assured that his malady was not at all serious, and was nothing but an overdevelopment of one arm by constant exercise. It is known by physicians as the "gripman's arm." He had stripped to the waist and showed one arm that would be the glory of a prize-fighter, while any girl would be ashamed to display the other one because of its puny outlines. The young man was assured that his malady was not at all serious, and was nothing but an overdevelopment of one arm by constant exercise. It is known by physicians as the "gripman's arm." The young man was assured that his malady was not at all serious, and was nothing but an overdevelopment of one arm by constant exercise. It is known by physicians as the "gripman's arm."

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## DEFICIT IN WHEAT.

Half Way Between the Extremes Places the Deficit at One Hundred and Fifty Million Bushels.

While the price of wheat in Chicago is at its lowest point in thirty years and farmers are correspondingly depressed, it is interesting to note that the best authorities estimate that for the world at large there will be a deficit in the wheat crop this year.

The report of the department of agriculture for May renders it reasonably certain that the American wheat crop will be below the average of years of 1880-90, or less than 450,000,000 bushels. This will be true even should the remainder of the season be so favorable as to insure a yield of spring wheat quite up to