

OVER THERE IN THE WOODS.

I love to stand on the crest of a hill,
When the valley away below
Is hung with a tremulous amber haze
Plunged back from the twilight glow,
And talk to the clouds as they lazily drift
On the breath of the breeze and are gone,
Like the fugitive thoughts of a fevered dream,
Or the mutable tints of dawn.
The sense that weaves through the stillness
Is to be an exquisite rhyme,
Where eternally comes like a gentle maid
And clasps the hand of time.
Ah! dear are the hills, when the shadows fall
And wrap them round with their dusky pall;
But the place I love the best of all
Is over there in the woods.

I love to stroll on the lonely shore
When the sun steals up from the deep
And chases the darkness over the hills
And awakens the world from sleep
I love the thrush of the gray old sea,
Sublime heart-beat of the world
How it speaks to the soul when the morning
Mists
Have their gossamer sails unfurled!
And over the waters like the sun
Is stretching a golden hand,
Like a challenge of hope to a fainting heart
Plunged out by the infinite hand.
Ah! dear are the waves as they rise and fall
And the frenzied joy of the sea bird's call;
But the place I love the best of all
Is over there in the woods.

It's over there in the tangled woods,
Where a thousand echoes roll,
Where the whispering leaves their secrets tell,
And the silence itself has a soul.
It's over there where the clinging vine
Is telling of faith and love,
And the twigs reach out and the leaves bend
Down
To shelter the home of the dove:
It's over there where the nodding fern
Smiles down at the brook's caprice,
And over and through and hallowing all
Is an exquisite sense of peace.
Ah! dear are the hills with their shadowy pall
And the waves with their rhythmic rise and fall,
But the place I love the best of all
Is over there in the woods.
—Chicago Inter Ocean.

THE OLD MILL MYSTERY

By Arthur W. Marchmont, B. A.

Author of "Miser Hoadley's Secret," "Madeline Power," "By His Hand," "Isa," &c., &c.

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CHAPTER XXIV.—CONTINUED.

"No doubt. But will it be enough for a jury? Was there a man ever accused who did not deny the accusation? Don't think me hard, or cruel, or unjust. I am not. I must do what is best for you, even though I know you may feel I am unkind in doing it. But we cannot look at the matter from the same point."

"What do you mean?" asked the girl. "You think and believe Tom is innocent, and that his liberation would be right and just. I think him guilty, and were it not for you I should not halt for an instant in the path of duty."

He paused, and when the girl did not speak, continued: "I must talk of myself to-night, for I can feel that you ought to see this action of mine as I see it myself. If Tom had been a good, true, honest man to you I could have borne it to see you his wife. But when I learned, as I did learn, that he was carrying on a double game with you and that girl Savannah, I began to be afraid for you. Then came the rest; the stories of the money and now this. If I loved him as you do, Mary, I might look at it all as you see it. But I don't. I see it with the eyes of a man, my lass. Could I give you, whom I love, into the care of a man I believe to be a murderer?"

"Ah, don't," cried the girl, shrinking. "Yes, I must. The truth must out. You must understand why I act like this. Prove his innocence; nay, show me how to prove it; put me on the most shadowy track of it, and I'll work to prove it; and when proved I'll be the first to take him by the hand, put him back in his place in the mill, and lay your hand in his with as honest a wish for your happiness as ever filled a man's heart. But I must first know him to be innocent; while at present," he lowered his voice, "I almost know him to be guilty."

Mary was moved in spite of herself, both by his words and his manner, and the proof of his love touched her. "Tom has not left any evidence against himself. He is innocent," exclaimed Mary energetically.

"Yes, right enough from the point of view from which you look at this. I admire you for holding your opinion staunchly like a true lass; but I can't share it. How then must it be?"

"Can't you give me more time? It seems almost as if in making a decision I were condemning Tom," she said.

"The hearing is to-morrow," was his answer.

"But you need not go to it. You could wait until the next hearing," she pleaded. "Will you not do this? You say you are a child in my hands. Well, please me in this," she said, with a wistful pleading smile as she put out her hands and touched him. "Give me more time."

"If I do this, where is the use? There is danger in delay. If the case is heard to-morrow, there is barely enough evidence to secure a committal; but if the committal is made to-morrow the trial will be in time for the assizes next week, and the whole matter may be ended within a week or two. If you delay, the hearing to-morrow will be adjourned for another week, the trial must be thrown over to the next assizes, and a delay of many weeks must take place; during which time the evidence may be strengthened in some way against him."

It was a cruel argument, and for the moment the girl was completely baffled. "Will you let me decide, then, which it shall be?" she asked.

"Yes, certainly. I have no wish but your welfare. Think, however, before you do decide."

"I have thought," she said. "Tom is innocent; and he himself would choose to have the delay in the hope that the proofs of his innocence may be found. I will choose to wait."

"As you will. I fear you are wrong; and if anything untoward should happen you must not blame me. The decision is a momentous one, Mary, and

may mean life or death for Tom," he said, speaking very emphatically. "I have decided," she said. "As you will," he said, again. She was glad when he left her. It was no wonder she despaired. Those who might have given assistance in helping to unravel the mystery either could not or would not help. Reuben Gorrage was too firmly convinced of Tom's guilt to be able to see a single ray of hope anywhere. Savannah had turned away and had refused even to tell the truth, while the only man who had made any sort of profession of belief in Tom's innocence, Gibeon Prawle, was worthless and unreliable and had not even taken the trouble to let her know what he had done.

Had he done anything? Was he in earnest? Or was he merely a shifty, worthless scamp, whose word and help were at the purchase of the last bidder? Could it be that he had had anything to do with the deed?

Then a hundred reasons flashed upon her why he might have been involved in it. He had been on the worst terms with both Coode and Gorrage; the latter had ruined him, and the former, as she knew, had refused to reinstate him. He was hard pressed for money even to exist upon; he knew the mill thoroughly; he was not unlike Tom in general appearance, build and carriage, and in the dark might have been mistaken for him. Given that he had broken into the mill to rob the place, and had been caught and surprised by Mr. Coode, what more likely that he should have turned upon him?

As she thought of this, she grew excited at the idea and was angry with herself for not having thought of it herself. She recalled how he had flinched when she had asked him pointedly the reason of his great interest in the matter. Added to that was his certainty, expressed over and over again, that Tom was innocent; and as she thought of all this she was ready to rush at once to the conclusion that Gibeon was in some way involved in the mystery. She grew more excited as the belief increased, and after some time she dashed her hand on the table and exclaimed to herself:

"I'm right. That's the reason for his interest in the mystery. The villain!" Just then a hurried knock sounded on the door of the cottage, the door was pushed open, a man's steps sounded along the passage, and Gibeon Prawle himself entered the room.

CHAPTER XXV.

"TODAY A MAD WOMAN." When Mary saw who her visitor was she flushed, nervously, as though he could tell what her thoughts of him had just been. She saw that he was tired and haggard and travel-stained. He sank down into a chair, as if exhausted, and gave a sigh of relief.

"Give me some water," he said, eagerly. "I've had neither bite nor sup for hours, and I'm faint."

The girl brought him food and tea, and watched him while he ate rapidly and, indeed, ravenously. During the meal he made no attempt to break the silence, except now and again to declare what a long time it was since he had broken his fast.

She eyed him closely and suspiciously the whole time, noting with restless eagerness the movement and expression of his face at the moments when he was too much engaged to notice her. And her new thoughts in regard to him made her find a more evil and villainous look in his rather handsome face than ever before.

His gluttony, too, disgusted her. The way he bolted the food, the quantity he ate, the noise he made in swallowing it and in gulping down cup after cup of tea, added to the repulsion with which he filled her.

At last he pushed the plate away from him and gave a loud sigh of relief. "That's good. Can I have a whiff of 'bacca?" he asked.

"No," she answered, sharply; "you can't."

"You'd let me sharp enough if you knew what I've got to tell you."

"But I don't know it, and I don't want the smoke here." She was angered at the cool disregard he showed to her intense and painful anxiety.

"You don't ask me what my news is," he said, after a pause.

"No, I'm waiting for you to tell me. Have you found out what you went to find out?" She spoke rather ungraciously, but her suspicions of the man would assert themselves.

"You don't seem over gracious in your manner," he said, looking at her and speaking discontentedly.

"This is not a time when I can keep a smile on my face all day. What have you learnt?"

He was looking back in his chair, but he now sat up and, leaning forward, put his arms on the table and looked earnestly and seriously at her as he answered slowly and emphatically:

"I don't know that I have learnt anything definitely, but I'm on the track of something that will startle Walkden Bridge."

"Is that all?" replied Mary, in a disappointed tone. "Have you been able to find any of Savannah's movements on Friday night?"

"Not on Friday night. But it won't matter so much now."

"Have you found no one who was near the mill on that night?" she asked.

"No; why?" he asked, glancing suspiciously at her. "Why should I?"

"To prove that Tom wasn't about there," she answered. Then she tried to keep her voice steady and her tone indifferent for the next crucial question.

"Where were you yourself that night?"

There was no mistaking the quick movement of uneasiness with which he seemed to spring up into an attitude of eager, listening suspense, while the look he directed at her was full of angry and yet nervous questioning.

"Where was I? Why what has that to do with it?"

"Because as you were about the village you must have seen them to-

gether. Where were you?" repeated Mary, in a clear, firm voice, regarding the man with a fixed, steady gaze as she spoke.

Gibeon laughed uneasily, shifted on his seat, and glowered back threateningly. "I suppose it don't much matter to you, Mary, where I was? You wouldn't take much interest in me and my doings when I wanted you to."

"But I take an interest now," answered the girl, pointedly; "and especially in your doings last Friday. I expect them to show me why you take such an interest in this business." She looked at him fearlessly.

His uneasiness increased manifestly under the keen light of the girl's steady gaze.

"Say what you mean, right out. Don't let us have any beating about the bush. What are you driving at?" "Tell me where you were on Friday night," she repeated.

"I shall tell you nothing. Not a word more will you get out of me till I know what blessed plan you're hatching," he answered, with sullen defiance.

"I have reason to believe that it was you yourself, Gibeon, who was mistaken for Tom getting into the mill on Friday night. That is what I mean."

"Go on!" he said, with a forced ugly laugh. "Go on. Finish up what you've got to say. What next?"

"There's no need to say any more," answered the girl. "You know now what I mean, well enough. Now, will you tell me where you were on Friday night?"

"No, I won't. I can prove where I was easily enough, if it comes to that. But I'm not going to give an account of my doings to you or anybody else." Then, as if he thought he could not leave the matter there: "You mean, I suppose, that you think I ought to be where Tom is now and on the same charge, eh?"

Mary made no answer.

"And do you think that if I'd killed the man and got away I should be such a blessed fool as to come here and put you on the track? If I'd wanted to hang myself, I should have chosen a different line from that, don't you fear. However, that ends matters between us, my lass. I meant well by you and Tom, because you did me a good turn that night in the barn. But when it comes to taxing me with murder, I've done. I'm not going to stand that, even though you did save my life."

"You'll have to say where you were on Friday night," said Mary again, persistently.

"Shall I?" he answered, laughing again, but now more naturally and more angrily. "Shall I? Perhaps I shall stop to be questioned, and perhaps I shan't; and perhaps it won't be good for them that try to threaten me. You've made a mistake for once; oh! and a mistake, too, that may cost you and your precious Tom dear enough. And you'd think so, too, if you'd got hold of the news I came to bring, instead of being so blessed quick, thinking I could be such a gormed fool as to be willing to try and get another man acquitted of a crime which I myself had done."

"You've not been trying," said Mary, induced by the success of her former guess to make another. "You've only been wasting the time to prevent inquiries being made. You've found out nothing, because you've tried to find out nothing."

"All right, have your own way," he said. And from his manner Mary judged that her last charge was so wide of the mark as to make him indifferent to it.

"I'm sorry you've taken it this way," he said, after a rather long pause. "I meant straight by you; I swear I did. But I ain't going on with it." Then as if stung by her taunt he said hastily:

"I've been on the hunt the whole time since I saw you. Ay, and not without finding out something, either. What would you say to Savannah being not Savannah Morbyn at all, but Lucy Howell, an escaped lunatic, eh? Would that prove to you that I hadn't been wasting the time, eh? But I ain't going any further. You can go on by yourself. I'm off. Thank you for the food. I'd pay you for it if I hadn't spent almost the last copper I had, as well as walked miles and miles in hunting this woman down. You've made a fool of yourself, Mary, and some day you'll know it. I'm going. Good night."

He had risen, and spoke the last words standing by the door.

"Don't go, Gibeon. Tell me what you mean," said Mary. "If I'm wrong, I'm sorry."

"No, thank you; not for me," he said, with sneering laugh. "You might veer around again in another five minutes. You can just tackle this bit alone now." And with that he went into the passage.

"Come back, Gibeon," cried Mary, following him. But he took no notice of her, and slamming the door roughly behind him, he left her.

"Savannah not Savannah, but Lucy Howell, an escaped lunatic?" Could it be true? As Mary thought over what he said a hundred incidents recurred to her in which she had observed that Savannah's manner and conduct had been very strange.

Then a plan of action suggested itself and gave her hope. She would deal with Savannah as she had dealt with Gibeon, and as she had surprised him into making dangerous admissions, so she would try to force admissions from Savannah by a sudden and unexpected attack. She would go to her and threaten her with exposure unless she told the truth as to her being with Tom.

She went at once to see Savannah, and hastened down the village street thinking how she was to frame her words. But a bitter disappointment was in store for her. Savannah had gone away suddenly, and would not be back that night.

There was nothing for it but to wait, Savannah did not return for four days, during the whole of which time Mary

fretted and worried impatiently at her inability to do anything.

The second hearing against Tom took place, Reuben Gorrage being absent, and a further remand followed. Mary saw him and saw the solicitor, telling the latter her suspicions about Gibeon, but saying nothing about Savannah. The secret as to the latter Mary kept to herself, waiting with feverish anxiety for the other's return.

On the Monday, two days before that fixed for the third hearing, Mary heard that Savannah was back, and she went at once to her cottage.

"What do you want with me?" was Savannah's greeting, brusque, sharp and hostile.

"I want to see you again about the charge against Tom," replied Mary. "To ask you to reconsider what you said last time."

"I have nothing to reconsider and nothing to say. I won't be questioned."

"Why are you so determined and so hard, Savannah?"

"Because I choose to do what I please and say what I please. Why should I try to save a man from being punished? What is it to me? Nothing. I tell you I have nothing to say. Go away."

"I cannot go away with such an answer," said Mary, gently. "I want to plead to you. You are a woman as I am. You may have loved as I love. Tom's life is more to me than my own. You can save him, if you will, by simply saying what it cannot harm you to say. Why, then, will you not speak for him?"

"It harms me to tell lies," answered Savannah, sharply.

"But they are not lies, Savannah. You were with Tom; you know that. You know that you can account for every hour of the time during which this dreadful thing happened, and that when he was said to have been seen at the mill you and he were some miles away in the direction of Presburn."

The other girl took no notice of this; but getting out some needlework she turned her back on Mary and began humming a tune as her fingers played with the work.

"Why will you persist in keeping silent about this?"

The humming developed into a soft-sung song. Mary went to her and touched her shoulder.

"Savannah, will you not say what you know?"

The song stopped for a moment, and Savannah answered without looking up:

"I will not tell lies to save a murderer's life."

The girl behind her shrank and shivered at the thrust. Then the blood flushed back into her cheeks, and she bit her lips as if to stay the angry words which rose.

Meanwhile the other had resumed her soft, sweet song.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DESERVED TO GET HIT.

Two Irishmen were tramping along the road near Manchester. One of them could not read at all; the other could read only sufficiently well to be proud of airing his accomplishment before his companion. Their journeyings had brought them to the neighborhood of Manchester-by-the-Sea.

Presently they encountered a signpost. Mike stopped to read it and Pat stopped to hear him.

Now, the sign was very simple, and it said: "Manchester, Seven Miles," but it seemed to bother Mike, and he looked puzzled. Pat waited until his patience gave out.

"What does it say?" he demanded.

"Mon-chased-her," returned Mike, slowly. "Mon chased her seven miles."

Pat picked up his bundle in disgust.

"Sure," he remarked, "if he wanted her that bad, I'd hope to Havin he got her."—Boston Budget.

YELLOW-DOG MONEY.

At one time the Mississippi valley was flooded with bills on which was stamped the figure of a big hound and which were universally known as "yellow-dog money." The captain of a steamer was trying to work off some of the stuff in exchange for wood. As he came to one wharf after another on his way up the river he called out:

"Take yaller dog for wood?"

For substance the answer was always the same, though the form varied. Nobody wanted "yaller dog."

At last, however, the captain received an affirmative reply. He steamed up to the wharf at once, but just as the line was being cast off he thought himself to ask another question.

"How do you take it?" said he.

"Cord for cord," was the answer.—Boston Transcript.

THE WORM IN THE CHESTNUT.

A Pittsburg physician explains how the worm gets into the chestnut. When the nut is still green an insect comes along and, hunting a warm place in which to have its eggs hatched, lights upon the green chestnut and stings it. At the same time it deposits some of its eggs in the opening thus made. The chestnut begins to ripen and at the same time the eggs are hatching. The insect selects chestnuts as a place for depositing its eggs as being the best adapted place by instinct. The floury matter in the nut turns to sugar and sugar contains carbon, which produces heat.—N. Y. Tribune.

DARWINISM DEFINED.

Some Manchester (England) workmen were discussing Darwin the other day, when one of them less learned than the rest exclaimed:

"Darwin, I kna that place. A've been ther' monny a toime."

"Get out, you fool!" said another.

"We're not talkin' about the place called Darwin, but the mon. Hev'n't ye never heard o' Darwin? Why, if it hadn't been for Darwin, we sould all hev been chatterin' monkeys, and nut gentlemen, like we are."—N. Y. Tribune.

"Isn't Iaggles a man of very decided views?" "Great guns! yes; his wife decides all of them for him."

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