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THE PLOT OF ECHO BRIDGE.

"This shall end!"

The speaker was Judge Hayward's accomplished and beautiful daughter Myra, and she stood among the flowers that almost concealed one of the balconies of her fair home, and looked upon two persons sauntering aimlessly through the garden below. It was night, and the moon bathed the garden in a weird beauty.

"I did not invite him here that he might fall in love with that doll-faced girl at his side yonder!" she continued, with rising indignation, as she glanced her white hands till the delicate nails scarred the palms. "She has infatuated him—stolen him from me, despite my cherished plans and fondest hopes. I will not submit to it! It would not be womanly if I did not resent this trickery and punish—yes, punish both of them. Father would not have brooked a rival in his courting days, and I will not stand idle beside this defeat and strike no blow for revenge."

Speaking thus, the impassioned beauty watched the occupants of the garden, saw them traversing the flower paths like lovers, and heard the confused murmur of low, gentle voices.

Myra Hayward had been reared in the luxury found among the wealthy homes of the earth. An only child, her slightest wishes had been gratified, and she had grown to dazzling womanhood, petted and almost thoroughly spoiled by an indulgent father. Besides her, and under the same roof, her orphan cousin, Babette, had also been reared. They had the same playthings, sang the same songs and trod the same paths until maturer natures formed; then they separated.

Myra, the dark-haired beauty, developed into the self-willed, capricious maiden, fond of coquetry; while Babette, the golden, was a gentle as the lily that bends to kiss the limpid brook.

During one of her visits to some friends, the Judge's daughter encountered Cyrus Whitney, a young lawyer of prominence, and their acquaintance resulted in his coming to her aristocratic home.

For several weeks prior to the date of our story the visitor had dwelt beneath the Judge's roof, loved passionately by the spoiled child of luxury, and trusted by the gentle cousin.

The rivalry on Myra's part had grown into the galling bitterness of hatred.—She had never mentioned Babette to the visitor before his arrival, and he was surprised to find that she had such a lovely relative.

Perhaps the young lawyer had fathomed the depths of Myra's scheming, for he showed a decided liking for Babette, and the jealous one was not long in discovering that her planning had but produced a lover for the girl she hated. The discovery had given birth to a blighting passion before that time, with all her coquetry, unknown to her heart—revenge!

"Perhaps you will condescend to keep your engagement with me to-morrow night!" she hissed, still looking at the couple in the garden. "Cyrus Whitney, all the stars that shine above me cannot tell how I hate you. To-morrow night that hatred may be revealed to you.—There is no one to warn you."

A moment later the balcony was deserted, and the lovers had passed from the garden.

With face still flushed by the words which Cyrus Whitney had breathed into her ear among the flowers, Babette stole to her boudoir, while Myra tossed restlessly on her pillow, her mind a caldron of passion and revenge.

Babette deftly slipped a ring from her finger, and hid it among her keepsakes in her little treasury, saying in a low voice:

"Cousin Myra must not see it for several days, if I can keep the secret so long. She will laugh when she discovers that she brought me a beau."

Poor, confiding, unsuspecting Babette! She did not dream of the terrible days that were to pass before Myra should see the betrothal ring.

True to his promise, Cyrus Whitney rode beside Myra Hayward on the following evening. Their destination was the home of one of the beauty's friends, several miles away, and the amusements there were to be dancing and coart.

There was an unwonted flash in My-

ra's eyes as she looked upon the handsome man who filled a saddle so gracefully at her side, and grew vivacious as they entered over the road.

"Echo bridge," as their steeds struck the planks of the bridge that spanned a deep, dark gorge. "If you have not been made acquainted with the delightful echoes of this region, Mr. Whitney, a rich treat has been withheld."

"Then I have missed the pleasure," was the reply, "though your Cousin Babette has described it."

Myra started, bit her lip and toyed half vexingly with her riding whip.

"When we return we will call out these wonderful echoes," she said.—"When the night is quite advanced, as it may then be, the sweeter and more prolonged are the sounds. One needs to ride rapidly across the bridge, and the rattling of hoofs and planks makes the music wilder."

Cyrus Whitney seemed pleased with the idea of awaking the stumbrous echoes of the hills and gorge, and said that upon their return he would ride like a trooper across the bridge.

Myra shivered and turned her head away to hide a smile of satisfaction.—Perhaps her mind went back to a few moments before the start from the mansion, when she had whispered to the cunning yellow man, who had led her horse to the mounting block:

"Do not fail me, Dick," were her words, and he had answered:

"Never fear, miss."

Afterward the moon became obscured, black clouds hid its disc, and threatened a storm, and the night became as dark as Erebus. Such was the hour when Myra and her escort set out upon their return.

They were nearing Echo bridge as a dark figure turned from it and ran toward the mansion, not far away. He fled like a robber who had been surprised at some nefarious work, for the sound of hoofs were already awaking the echoes of the hills. Once or twice he paused and listened over his shoulder, then darted forward again, and at last became lost among the slave quarters attached to the estate. It was Yellow Dick!

"I wouldn't see it for the world!" he muttered, with a shiver, as he crept into a cabin.

He was evidently frightened, for he crept into one corner of the untidy room, and covered his head with a blanket as if he would keep certain sights and sounds away.

In the meantime Myra Hayward and the man she now hated had drawn rein on a knoll a short distance from the gorge.

"We will court the echo now," she said, with a dash of triumph in her tone. "The bridge is just ahead, and if you will dash across I will follow when you shall have gained the other side.—From its summit you can hear the echo of your horse's hoofs, and when I have joined you I will tell the story that is linked to the gorge."

He heard her, bowed, and with a smile told her that he was off.

The next moment Myra beheld him dart from her side with the impulse of a rocket, and heard the iron hoofs beating the hard road. Then she held her breath and grew pale through excitement.

A minute had not elapsed when there was a cry that seemed to quiver the clouds of darkness that hung low over the chasm.

Myra did not hear the dull thud that quickly followed, for the awful shriek was echoing everywhere, and her soul was full of it. It was not repeated, for it seemed the death-cry of a human being. The silence that followed was almost palpable. Myra heard the beating of her own heart, and at last urged her horse forward. On to the very edge of the bridge she rode; there she drew rein and listened.

Myra gazed into the terrible opening as if seeking the horse and his rider; but darkness that seemed to stretch to the antipodes revealed nothing. Then she raised her voice in loud cries for assistance. The echo sounded everywhere, and at last startled the inmates of the mansion beyond the knoll.

Assistance came, and when the planks had been replaced, Myra crossed the bridge. The excitement that prevailed is indescribable.

The Judge and his laborers were flit-

ting hither and thither with lanterns, cursing the hand that could perform such a diabolical act, while Myra, in an apparently fainting condition, was borne to her chamber. The Judge believed that some villain had attempted to take the lives of his daughter and the young man, and declared that the guilty party should be brought to justice. The boldest in the party shrank from a descent into the darksome gorge, but the Judge's money overcame their fears, and they went down. By and by a shout came up:

"We have found him!"

Judge Hayward started.

"Dead?" he asked, with many misgivings, and waited breathlessly for the reply.

"Breathing—that is all."

"Thank God! bring him up."

It was a mighty work—the rescue of Cyrus Whitney from the rocks and waves at the bottom of the chasm, but the men proved themselves equal to the task, and at last the mangled body of the lawyer was laid at the Judge's feet. There was a plentitude of bruises, contusions, and broken bones, and the soul seemed about to relinquish its tenure of life.

Cyrus Whitney was borne to the Judge's house, and a surgeon sent for. Babette, the pale-faced girl, listened on the top of the stairs to a discussion of his injuries by the group of men in the hall below, and then crept dazed, almost wild, to her room. Myra, with her door ajar, and with flashing eyes, listened to the same words that caused her cousin such anguish.

"I knew he would not survive!" she said, shutting the door. "I said last night that I would put an end to the love making that has been going on in this house, and if I have not kept my word, let the hand of Heaven blight my beauty! My sweet Cousin Babette, you must hunt up another lover now. And let him be one for whom I never tried to scheme."

The days that followed were terrible ones to the tenants of the Judge's mansion. Babette grew thinner than ever over Cyrus Whitney's couch, and while long watching wore her to a shadow, she saw him slowly recovering.

"He is going to live!" Myra exclaimed, one day. "The fates are against me! If God and the doctors save him, my second blow shall kill."

The last word had scarcely left her lips when the door swung open, and her father, pale and excited, stood before her.

"You are going with the Barnwells to Cuba to-morrow," he said.

Myra started. "Father—"

"Not a word, guilty thing that you are!" was the stern rejoinder. "But an hour since, Yellow Dick accidentally shot himself, and I have listened to a confession from his lips that has torn my soul, and almost torn me from my kin. You will not return from Cuba until I send for you, which will not be until Babette has been married beneath my roof. Myra Hayward, I curse the hour that gave you to my arms!"

She sank back speechless, and the father left her to the sting of remorse.

Years have passed since the terrible tragedy of "Echo Bridge." The golden haired girl is the wife of Cyrus Whitney, and the woman who deliberately planned the awful event we have recorded, was lately driven from the capital of the Belgians by order of the king—a beautiful, wild, unprincipled adventurer!

Gems.

Lord Bacon said: If a man be gracious to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island, cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins them.

Deal gently with those who stray. Draw them back by love and persuasion. One kiss is worth a thousand kicks. A kind word is more valuable to the lost than a mine of gold. Think of this, and be on your guard ye who would chase to the grave an straggling brother.

Men will wrangle for religion; write for it; fight for it; die for it; anything but live up to it.

We cannot easily hate the man for whom we always pray.

God draweth straight lines, but we think and call them crooked.

Never ask your wife to wash a handkerchief with a pretty widow's initials upon it.

The Power of Imagination.

A good physician was once called to the bedside of a man who declared that he was possessed of seven devils. The doctor saw that it was a case of hypochondria or mental delusion, and took his cue accordingly, feeling the patient's pulse, looking into his eyes and manipulating his forehead and neck with perfect gravity. "My friend," said the physician, at length, "you made a slight mistake, there are eight devils in place of seven, and the eighth is the leader of the others. We do not often have these cases, but the proper treatment is known to science, and the instrument for driving these spirits out of the human body is provided. Come to my office and you shall be cured." The patient declared that he was powerless to rise. "Ah! I forgot," said the physician, stepping to the mantel-piece. "Here is a Bible; put your right hand upon it." The man obeyed. "Now you can rise!" and sure enough the man arose instantly; the imagination was all potent. Having dressed himself he followed the doctor to his office, where an electrical battery was prepared for use. After giving him a violent shock, the doctor gravely told him one devil was gone, bidding him go about his work and return on the following day.

The patient went away well satisfied, and, coming the next day, received similar treatment, each day the doctor declaring that another devil had departed from his body. On the eighth day, when the patient came, the doctor looked grave and told him it would be very hard to drive out the last devil, and he must be very firm and patient. He then charged the battery to its height and gave the man a shock that knocked him flat upon the floor. "All right," said the doctor, "he is gone, and you are cured." The man was perfectly satisfied, and the cure was complete. So much for the power of imagination.

Don't Be Discouraged.

Don't be discouraged if in the outset of life things do not seem to go on as smoothly as they should. It seldom happens that the hopes we cherish of the future are realized. The path of life in the prospect appears smooth and level enough, but when we begin to travel it we find it all up hill and generally rough enough.

The journey is a laborious one, and whether poor or wealthy, high or low, we shall find it so to our disappointment, if we have built on any other calculation. To endure what is to be endured with as much cheerfulness as possible, and to elbow our way as easily as we can through the crowd, hoping for little, yet striving for much, is, perhaps, the true plan.

Don't be discouraged, though occasionally you slip down by the way and your neighbors tread over you a little; accidents will happen, miscalculations will sometimes be made, things will turn out differently from our expectations, and we may be sufferers.

It is worth while to remember that prospects are like the skies in April, though clear, soon overclouded. As it would be folly to despair of again seeing the sun because to day is stormy, so it is unwise to sink into despondency when fortune frowns, since, in the common course of things, she may be surely expected to shine again.

Don't be discouraged under any circumstances. Go steadily forward; rather consult your own conscience than the opinions of men, though the least are not to be disregarded.

An Extraordinary Heroine.

The bravest girl in Australia is Grace Vernon Bussell. The steamer Georgette was wrecked off the west coast, near Perth; a small boat had been capsized in the surf, and women and children were struggling in the water. On the crest of a precipitous cliff appeared the figure of a young lady on horseback. To the sailors on the stranded vessel it seemed utterly impossible that a horse and its rider should be able to descend that precipice. But the young lady never faltered. She plunged down at full speed, and, reaching the shore, spurred her horse into the boiling surf.

There were two lines of roaring breakers. With splendid pluck she dashed through them and reached the boat, to which the frightened women and children were clinging.

Her horse stumbled over a bawser which stretched between the wreck and the small boat; but she clung to the saddle and brought the women and children to land. There was still a man left on board the boat. She plunged into the breakers again and brought him safe to the shore. While those whom she had saved were rescuing those who remained on the wreck, the heroic girl, drenched with the sea foam, and half fainting with fatigue, galloped a dozen miles home to have relief sent to the half-drowned, half-naked folks whom she had left on the beach. Her sister, Mrs. Brockman, took horse, galloped that night through the woods to the shore, taking tea, milk, sugar and flour for the destitute people; and the next day the rescued were brought to Mr. Brockman's house and cared for. The anxiety and excitement proved fatal to Mrs. Brockman, who took a severe cold, and died eventually of brain fever. Grace Vernon Bussell still lives.—New York Tribune.

"Charge It."

A simple sentence is this, to be sure, and yet it may be considered as one of the most insidious enemies with which people have to deal. It is very pleasant to buy all the little commodities offered for sale in the market, and it is sometimes hard to deny one's self of the same when they can be obtained by saying, "charge it." But this habit of getting articles, however small the charge may be, without paying for them, leaves one's funds in a low state most of the time.

"I have no money to day, but should like the article very much," says a young man who happened to go into a store and see something which strikes his fancy.

"Never mind," says the gentlemanly clerk, "you are good for it."

And so it is that little accounts are opened at one place and another, till the young man is surprised at his liabilities, which, though small in detail, are sufficiently large in the aggregate to reduce his cash materially when settling day comes.

In many instances, if the cash were required, the purchase would not be made, even had the person the money by him; but to some, getting an article charged does not seem like parting with an equivalent.

Still, when pay day comes, as always it does, this illusion vanishes, and a feeling is experienced of parting with money and receiving nothing in return.

If there is an actual necessity of making a purchase, and the means are not at hand, there is a reasonable excuse for obtaining the same on credit; but when the article can be dispensed with until payment can be made, it is much to the advantage of the purchaser to do so.

Liability to Death.

When we walk near powerful machinery we know that one misstep and those mighty engines will tear us to ribbons with their flying wheels, or grind us to powder in their ponderous jaws. So when we are thundering across the land in a railroad carriage, and there is nothing at an inch of iron flange to hold us on the line. So when we are in a ship, and there is nothing but the thickness of a plank between us and eternity. We imagine, then, that we see how close we are to the edge of the precipice. But we do not see it. Whether on the sea or on the land, the partition that divides us from eternity is something less than the oak plank or an inch flange; the machinery of life and death is within us. The tissues that hold the beating powers in their places are often not thicker than a sheet of paper; and if that thin partition should rupture, it would be the same as if a cannon ball had struck us. Death is inseparably bound up with life in the very structure of our bodies. Struggle as we would to widen the space, no man can, at any time go further from death than the thickness of a sheet of paper.

A good story is told of Charles Fox. When his house was on fire he found all efforts to save it useless, and being a good draughtsman, he went up to the next hill to make a drawing of the fire—the best instance of philosophy ever heard of. But maybe his property was insured, when would account for his philosophy.