

**Astray.**

I traveled a forbidden road, Which first appeared so flowery fair That onward eagerly I strode Till—by my horse and driver's care— All both and blossoms blooming green, All tender boughs and twigs of green Stood changed to burrs and nettles keen, Whose angry points my garments tore, And I checked my horse as they were sore.

Revisited at the wondrous change, That should have warned me from the place, I kept my course with swifter pace, And saw a marvel still more strange; For cruel flints sprang through the ground To meet my feet at every bound, With gash on gash they made them bleed, Then time it was that I should heed!

Just at the moment of my need, A shining man stood at my side— Whose breast I felt all around, And gazed a glory far and wide!

"And who art thou?" I trembling cried. "Give me," said he, "to what I say: I am the guide of all that stray. To point thee back to virtue's path, To be guardian of thy erring way; And step by step—in love, not wrath— Those angry flints and briars I strive To warn thee from wandering so."

I knelt and kissed his garments' hem, And cried: "Oh, angel sent from heaven! Make share of each my sorrow's stem: Increase the shafts to seven times seven! I will endure and not complain!"

He fled, and I with deep remorse Turned back to my forbidden course— But, oh, how many weary hours I traveled o'er those blighted flowers Reborned with all their former colors.

— *Isadora Tilton.*

Unlocking the Shackles.

The sun was just getting at the close of a long, hot day in June, when a Black and mixed breed man on a pack horse, and a young man on the Indian Territory side. We were hauling freight for the United States government, and were on our way to Texas for a load.

We signalled the ferryman, living on the Texas side, and as soon as he came over board to cross. The boat was too small to put over both wagons at once, so I crossed first and came back to assist Ernest.

He had two refractory mules, which had always to be held in a ferryboat, and it sometimes took both of us to do so.

Just as the ferryboat neared the Chickasaw nation side a large, powerful horse, but evidently nearly exhausted, came into view around a bend in the road, a double burden on his back. A young man of noble appearance, but looking weary and harassed, rode in front; behind a beautiful girl, nearly white, but with sufficient Indian blood showing through the clear skin to add a picturesque quality to her features. They rode up to the wagon, and the young man, without dismounting, spoke to Ernest:

"Sir, I am a white man, and some days since had a quarrel with another, in which I was victorious. I am decidedly shot. I am pursued by his brothers, who are close behind, and who have sworn to kill me on sight. I ask your help to cross the river, if possible, unseen."

"Why do they?" began Ernest; but the stranger cut him short.

"Time presses, sir; you must answer 'yes' or 'no'! If I do not I must do the best I can for myself. I decline to shed blood, but if I am too closely pursued—and the gleaming of the blue eyes finished the sentence.

"Ernest took another look at the open, sunny face, which might have been written there, showed no trace of crime.

Then he spoke, and fast, for the tramping of horses' feet rapidly approaching could now be heard:

"I suppose you wish to take the lady with you. Get into the wagon, and under a wagon sheet which you will find there loose. I will hide your horse in the bushes."

The young man dismounted, assisted the girl who was riding behind him and as directed, covering down in the bottom of the wagon.

After depositing the sheet so as to look as if it had only been carelessly thrown in, Ernest led the horse a short distance from the road, and after having taken off saddle and bridle turned him loose and returned to his team.

He had witnessed the scene from the boat, which by this time had reached the bank, and the wagon drove in. After giving the ferryman a caution to silence, Ernest turned to me:

"I may be helping a fugitive from justice to escape, but I will risk it. Loose the boat and put off, Beecher!" he added to the ferryman.

At this moment, however, a pair of horses, covered with mud, and came round the turn in the road, and their drivers drew rein at the river side. They were two powerful, evil-looking fellows, with belts stunk full of revolver, and a lead across the pommel of each saddle.

The elder-looking one of the two addressed Ernest:

"Have you seen anything of a man and a woman on one horse anywhere here?"

As he spoke his eyes roamed to the wagon and sheet in it, and both men dismounted.

"Why, what do you want of them?" asked Ernest.

"He has killed a man in the Choctaw nation, is trying to get away, the woman with him, and I decline to take him. If you help him to get away it will be the worse for you. I believe he is under that sheet anyhow."

And he stepped on the ferryboat. The other remained on the bank with his hand on a pistol, ready to assist his brother.

The one on the boat approached the wagon and was about to raise the sheet, when Ernest, with his eyes gleaming dangerously, spoke to him:

"This wagon is in the employ of the United States government, and no one but a regularly authorized official can search it."

The fellow, however, still persisted; but as he laid his hand on the sheet a well-directed blow from Ernest floored him.

The one on the bank started to draw his revolver, but before he could do so I had him covered. One learns to be quick with the pistol on the frontier, where a man's life may depend on his "getting the drop" on one ruffian,

The ferryman, terrified at the scene before him, had remained quiet, but now, at sign from Ernest, pushed the boat from the bank.

Ernest, keeping the prostrate man covered with his pistol, spoke to the one left behind:

"I shall take your companion with us as a hostage for your good conduct. If you shoot after us, he suffers. Remember!"

We crossed the river without accident, the better reason on the bank making the record of our escape. When we reached the Texas side, Ernest turned to me:

"Frank, drive my wagon up the bank to where yours is, while I see this fellow back across the river. Beecher, take your skill and row him over; he will hardly hurt you. If he tries, I will put a bullet through him."

After seeing his captive into the skiff, first discharging all his weapons, he spoke to the now covered man:

"When you get to the other side, stand on the bank until the boat returns. If you attempt to go into the bushes, or try any other treachery, I will shoot you dead."

The ferryman put him across the river and returned, and Ernest came over the bank to where the wagon was. Meanwhile I had driven up the hill and relieved the occupants of the wagon from their uncomfortable covering. They were nearly smothered, but had made no movement until all was safe.

The young man jumped to the ground, and with simple grasp of the hand and the earnest words, "I thank you both," assisted his companion out.

Ernest now came up, and to him the stranger turned:

"I owe you my life, and if ever I can in some way pay so great a debt, trust me I shall not be wanting."

"I am glad to have been of service to you," said Ernest, simply. "I think you are safe for the night. There is no other ferry within about twenty miles, and they will not cross any one after night. Red river is too high to swim over. If you remain with us to-night we can make the lady a bed in the wagon, and the rest of us can sleep on the ground. You can tell us then how you managed to get into this scrape."

After some further discussion it was arranged, and we went into camp. Supper was eaten, and the young man retired to one of the wagons, while the rest of us, at some little distance, reclined on the blankets and saddles, guarded by our faithful dog. Nothing more was said in the wagon, but the camp without his giving us warning.

Then the stranger, whose name was Herndon, gave us an account of how he happened to come to the river in such a plight.

"Some months since I was in the Chickasaw nation buying up cattle, when I became acquainted with a Mr. Williams, who had married and settled among the Indians."

"I found it convenient to go very often to his house about, cattle I persuaded myself at first, but I soon had to acknowledge that the situation was his daughter, Lily, the young lady who is with me."

"She is only an eighth Indian, well educated, and as to her beauty you can see for yourself. She soon began to look with favor on me, and I asked her of her father. He was willing, and we were engaged."

"But there were three sons of the old man, by a former marriage, with a white woman, who had been the first wife of Lily's property, but know, if I married her, there would be but little chance of it. Matters were not much to them, although they became more unbearable from day to day. They bore no good reputation in the country, and I was warned against them more than once."

"Three days ago the explosion came. I was walking with Lily, when the youngest of the three met us, and after a few insulting words, accused me of dishonoring a conduct."

"It was more than I could stand, and I sprang toward him to strike him. He attempted to draw a pistol, but I closed with him and attempted to take it away. In the struggle the pistol reached the house, and the oldest son stood for a moment stunned with horror, when Lily's voice roused me."

"Oh, fly, fly! The others will kill you when they see you. They will swear that you have shot a man."

"Not much of an accident! I saw the whole thing and he shall swing for it," said a voice behind me.

"I turned, and there stood one of the other brothers, with a revolver in his hand, and he would not allow it."

"March straight to the house, and if you try to get away I'll kill you like a dog. I would shoot you now, but for the pleasure of having you here."

"My own protestations, Lily's tears, and entreaties, were of no avail, and to avoid immediate violence I thought it best to comply."

"On the way to the house we were joined by the other brother, and after a few words in some language unknown to me, they both hurried me on. The old man was not at home, and after another consultation they chained me securely, and then made preparations for a journey."

"As I gathered from hints—purposely left drop—they intended to take me to Fort Smith to be tried. I did not exactly see the object of this, since if the case was once brought to trial I could easily be cleared by Lily's evidence."

"After sending some of their servants to bring in the body, they mounted me on a horse, tied my hands behind me and my feet under the horse, and with one riding before and the other behind, we set out."

"Lily begged to be allowed to go, but they refused. It was a lonely country where Mr. Williams lived, no house within twenty miles, or she would have gone for help to stop them."

"The first day's travel passed without incident. My captors were taciturn, saying nothing to me and but little to each other. At night they loosened my hands sufficiently to let me eat, which was a little more than I expected; but after supper my hands and feet were securely chained, the chain carried around a tree and fastened with a padlock."

"The next morning our journey was resumed. We had reached the Kiamatis mountains, over which we were going by a bridge of logs, a very desolate region, fit place for a deed of crime. I began to fear, from the looks and words which passed from one to the other,

that I would never reach Fort Smith. It would be an easy matter to kill me, and they had down into some part of the ravines which we were constantly crossing, and invent some plausible excuse for my disappearance."

"An night came to them they frequently stopped and held consultations with us, each other, casting the white glances of mingled hate and triumph on me. It was easy enough to tell the meaning of this; but even if I had condescended to entertain it would have been of no avail."

"Let my fate be what it might I must meet it in silence. Many were the thoughts which passed through my mind on that hurried ride, but it is needless to dwell on them."

"The night of the second day we camped on the edge of an old field, grown over with brown grass. The same precautions were taken as on the previous night, and soon my captors were wrapped in slumber. I knew that in all probability it was my last night on earth, and many conflicting emotions filled my mind, driving away sleep. Only I thought of Lily, my faithful flower, left to the mercy of these rude men."

"About midnight my meditations were interrupted by a soft rustle behind me in the bushes. I could not speak or make a motion, a voice, which I never expected to hear on earth again, said, 'Hush!' and in a moment Lily was beside me."

"Then, with her arms around me, her lips close to my ear, she told that she had overheard her brothers talk of killing me on the way, being afraid to do so at home; had caught two of her own horses, and she had ridden off with me, followed with the hope of rescuing me."

"She had a key which she thought would open the padlock fastening the chain that held me. The padlock was one of the spring kind, with the keyhole a simple slip, at the bottom. The key is a plain, flat bar, with various indentations in it to fit the wards of the lock, and by simply pressing on it the lock was open."

"Lily tried the key, but it would not fit. As I could see by the moonlight, an expression of dismay flitted over her face and she pressed her hands to her forehead as if to smother a cry. As for me, I had so long given up all hope of this, that I sat in silence, awaiting what she would do, unable to offer any suggestions."

"Then, with the murmured words, 'It may do,' she tried me a moment, going into the old field. Then she returned, bringing a handful of the broom-grass with her. Selecting a twig of this of just sufficient diameter to fill the slit in the bottom of the lock, she cut it perpendicular as far as it would go, broke it off a quarter of an inch from the lock. She did this with other straws, until the whole keyhole was full, breaking them off evenly on the outside, though, of course, the inside ends fitted into the wards of the lock. Then she pressed on the wards and the lock fell open."

"So glad that she had not a link rattled. Lily went to the chain, and I was once more free. We started for the horses, but unfortunately had gone but a few feet when I stepped on a dry stick, which broke with a loud crack. Lily's eyes flashed, and she sprang to her feet, and just as we reached the horses one of them caught a glimpse of us and fled, and the other, Lily's horse and mine, were in a moment I had seated her behind me, and concealment being no longer possible, rode away at full speed."

"They assailed and came hard after us. We kept our distance; but on account of the double burden which our horse carried were never able to get far out of hearing, while they followed with a persistence worthy of a better cause. Not caring to stop in the Indian Territory among the Chickasaws, I rode for the river, which I fortunately reached just in time to meet you and the other brother. Our horse, good as he was, was nearly exhausted, and could not have carried us much further. Thanks to you, I hope we are safe now."

"Your thanks was ended and we were soon asleep. In the morning we took Herndon and Miss Lily to the railroad, where they took the train for Fort Smith."

"I received a letter from him after about a week. He stood his trial, came out clear, and married Miss Lily. The Williams boys were soon afterward both killed in a drunken frolic ending in a fight."

KATE SOTHERN.

**Thrilling Story of a Wife's Revenge—A Once Mountain Belle in a Georgia Prison—Appeal to Women for Her Vindication.**

An Atlanta (Ga.) correspondent of the Cincinnati Commercial writes as follows: Five years ago there lived in Fitchburg county, among the mountains, as fair a lass as such a region is proverbial for producing, a rosy-cheeked, brown-haired, blue-eyed maiden, with the form of a model and the grace of a gazelle. She was the daughter of a well-to-do farmer, and her smiles were courted by the brave-hearted young mountaineers, who engaged in honorable competition for a monopoly of her society. Among these was a handsome young man, handsome, of princely carriage, and whose fame for courage made him known in all the counties around. Doughtless in the bushes, he had the attention of the heart of this mountain belle, and she whom she captivated, and though but a girl in years—seventeen she was—they were married. She idolized her husband, and he loved her with a devotedness that knew only when with and ready to sacrifice her life if need be for him. And he, feeling secure in her love, repaid her attachment with indifference, and gave her attention to some back her, she thought, than was consistent with his obligation as a husband. She bore this long in silence, and tried to persuade herself that there was nothing wrong in the world, but she could not help but feel that she was being deceived. Her husband's conduct was so strange, and she was so sure that she was being deceived, that she began to feel that she was being deceived. Her husband's conduct was so strange, and she was so sure that she was being deceived, that she began to feel that she was being deceived. Her husband's conduct was so strange, and she was so sure that she was being deceived, that she began to feel that she was being deceived.

her little girl dying during her stay at the Washington county camp. After eleven months in Taylor county she was removed to Back county, where the family of the lessee resided, where she remained in the capacity of a domestic until last February, when the lessee, Colonel C. B. Howard, removed to Atlanta, bringing with him the fair convict, who is still retained as a servant in his household. Her husband remains with her and acts as her escort, no surveillance being kept on their movements. She attended the exposition frequently and alone.

To the readers of five years ago the name of this woman, the circumstances of her crime, the trial, conviction and death sentence will be familiar, for "Kate Sothern" appeared in the columns of every newspaper printed in this country and in many out of it. The victim of her outraged love was Narcissa Covart, or "Cis Covart," as she was better known.

Although only twenty-two years old now, Mrs. Sothern bears the age traces of thirty. Her countenance wears the marks of a woman who has been through a life of sorrow and grief. Her great blue eyes a perpetual expression of sadness. A visit to her by your correspondent has led to a revival of the tragic history of her life, but not for the purpose of entering upon a sensational appeal of the public. Far from it. The columns of the Commercial are sought with a higher aim, which is an appeal to every wife and mother in this land to be less susceptible than the husband in a like effort? Again, if the purpose of the law is punishment for crime, in what measure has the law been satisfied in its execution in the case of Kate Sothern? Clearly she was either guilty or not guilty. If guilty, she should have been punished according to the degree of her offense. If not guilty she should have been acquitted. Her punishment has not been in satisfaction for the crime of which she was found guilty, for she has virtually enjoyed unrestrained liberty, which is wrong if she is innocent. Certainly she is innocent, for she has not been in satisfaction for the crime of which she was found guilty, since her sentence is permitted to go unexecuted, and it would appear that whatever the extent of her crime, she has atoned to the law and society in the four years of her detention at the camp of the convicts, and it is believed that the adoption of the suggestion herein contained is only needed even in part to induce Governor Colquhoun to grant "Kate Sothern" her freedom. It is left for the ladies. Let them seek it.

FOR THE LADIES.

**Remarkable Types of Women.**

The remarkable types of nihilist women are well known. Vera Blinnitch, whose abhorrent terrorism was the most modest of her sex. In the court-room she blushed when she perceived any one staring at her. Lydia Farrow, a charming lady and accomplished singer, got her eight years in the Siberian mines by sitting in the parlor and playing the piano for weary hours, trying to drown the noise made by the secret printing press in the next room. Sophy Perovskaya, the master of a general and senator, who declined the dignity of maid of honor to the empress and entered the Nihilist fraternity, dug the Moscow mine and directed the late czar's assassination. Sophy Blandin, who was welcomed as a shining star in the literary horizon, wrote a few poems which, though gems of Russian literature, were treasonable, and the singing of them was a crime.

**Cuban Women.**

I do not think there is a land in the list of civilized countries that produces more generally conspicuous women than Cuba. As a rule she has a round figure, not large, but inclined to dumpling-shape. Whatever else she may be, she is never without a certain grace. Her hair is often a "glory" but her face, while seldom wanting in intelligence, is hardly ever vicious. A sameness, a desert-like monotony of expression, pervades the sex. Strong traits of individual character are rarely indicated. If the reader has ever seen a flock of ducksling on their way to the nearest water hole he has a fair idea of this little woman's gait and general bearing. Her hair is often a "glory" but her face, while seldom wanting in intelligence, is hardly ever vicious. A sameness, a desert-like monotony of expression, pervades the sex. Strong traits of individual character are rarely indicated. 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