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## Poetry.

### AFTER.

After the shower the tranquil sun;  
After the show the emerald leaves;  
Silver stars when the day is done;  
After the harvest golden sheaves.

After the clouds the violet sky;  
After the tempest the lull of waves;  
Quiet woods when the wind goes by;  
After the battle the peaceful graves.

After the knell the wedding bells;  
After the bud the radiant rose;  
Joyful greetings from sad farewells;  
After our weeping sweet repose.

After the murmur the blissful meed;  
After the flight the downy nest;  
After the furrow the waking seed;  
After the shadowy river—rest!

## Love Works Wonders.

BY BERTHA M. CLAY.

She flung up her arms with a wild cry of despair. None ever suffered more than did Pauline Darrell then.

'Oh, my sin,' she moaned, 'my grievous sin!' She tried to soothe the unhappy woman, but Lady Darrell turned to her with all the energy of despair.

'I cannot believe you,' she cried; 'it is an infamous plot to destroy my happiness and to destroy me. Hiark! There is Aubrey Langton's voice; come with me and say before him what you have said to me.'

### CHAPTER XXXIX.

FACE TO FACE.

Captain Langton looked up in surprise not altogether unfounded, the sight that met his eyes was so unusual.

Before him stood Lady Darrell, her face white as death, her lips quivering with excitement, her superb dress of pink brocade all disarranged, her golden hair falling over her beautiful shoulders—a sight not to be forgotten; she held Pauline by the hand, and in althier life Lady Darrell had never looked so agitated as now.

'Captain Langton,' said Lady Darrell, 'will you come here? I want you most particularly.'

It was by pure chance that she opened the library door—it was the one nearest to her.

'Will you follow me?' she said. He looked from one to the other with somewhat of confusion in his face.

'Miss Darrell!' he cried. 'Why, I thought you were at Oberleigh.' Pauline made no reply.

Lady Darrell held the library door open while they entered, and then she closed it, and turned the key.

Captain Langton looked at her in wonder. 'Elinor,' he said, 'what does this mean? Are you going to play a tragedy or a farce?'

'That will depend upon you,' she answered; 'I am glad and thankful to have brought you and Miss Darrell face to face. Now I shall know the truth.'

The surprise on his face deepened into an angry scowl.

'What do you mean?' he demanded, sharply. 'I do not understand.'

It was a scene never to be forgotten. The library was dim with the shadows of the autumn evening, and in the gloom, Lady Darrell's pale pink dress, golden hair, and white arms bare to the shoulder, seemed to attract all the light; her face was changed from its great agitation—the calm, fair beauty, the gentle, caressing manner was gone.

Near her stood Pauline, whose countenance was softened with compassion and pity unutterable, the dark eyes shining as through a mist of tears.

Before them, as a criminal before his judges, stood Aubrey Langton, with an angry scowl on his handsome face, and yet something like fear in his eyes.

'What is it?' he cried, impatiently. 'I cannot understand this at all.'

Lady Darrell turned her pale face to him. 'Captain Langton,' she said, gravely, 'Miss Darrell brings a terrible accusation against you. She tells me that you stole the roll of notes that Sir Oswald misused, and that at the price of her life you extorted an oath from her not to betray you; is it true?'

She looked at him bravely, fearlessly. 'It is a lie,' he said.

Lady Darrell continued: 'Here, in this room, where we are standing now, she tells me that the scene took place, and that, finding she had discovered you in the very act of theft, you held a loaded pistol to her head until she took the oath you dictated. Is it true or false?'

'It is a lie!' he repeated; but his lips were growing white, and great drops stood upon his brow.

'She tells me,' resumed Lady Darrell, 'that you loved her, and that you only care for Darrell Court not for me. Is it true?'

'It is false,' he said, hoarsely—'false from beginning to end? She hates you, she hates me, and this foul slander has only been invented to part us!'

Lady Darrell looked from one to the other. 'Now Heaven help me!' she cried. 'Which am I to believe?'

Grave and composed, with a certain majesty of truth that could never be mistaken, Pauline raised her white hand.

'Lady Darrell,' she said, 'I swear to you in the presence of Heaven, that I have spoken nothing but the truth.'

'And I swear it is false!' cried Aubrey Langton.

But appearances were against him; Lady Darrell saw that he trembled, that his lips worked almost convulsively, and that great drops stood upon his brow.

Pauline looked at him, those dark eyes that had in them no shadow save of infinite pity and sorrow seemed to penetrate his soul, and he shrank from the glance.

'Elinor,' he cried, 'you believe me, surely? Miss Darrell has always hated you and this is her revenge.'

'Lady Darrell,' said the girl, 'I am ashamed of my hatred and ashamed of my desire for vengeance. There is no limitation which I would not submit to atone for my faults, but every word I have said to you is true.'

Once more with troubled eyes Lady Darrell looked from one to the other; once more she murmured:

'Heaven help me! Which am I to believe?'

Then Captain Langton, with a light laugh, said: 'Is the farce ended, Lady Darrell. You see it is no tragedy after all.'

Pauline turned to him, and in the light of that noble face his own grew mean and weak.

'Captain Langton,' she said, 'I appeal to whatever there is of good and just in you. Own to the truth. You need not be afraid of it—Lady Darrell will not injure you. She will think better of you if you confess than if you deny. Tell her that you were led into error, and trust to her kindness for pardon.'

'She speaks well,' observed Lady Darrell, slowly. 'If you are guilty, it is better to tell me so.'

He laughed again, but the laugh was not pleasant to hear. Pauline continued:

'Let the evil rest where it is, Captain Langton: do not make it any greater. In your heart you know that you have no love for this lady—it is her fortune that attracts you. If you marry her, it will only make her unhappy for life. Admit your fault and leave her in peace.'

'You are a remarkably free-spoken young lady, Miss Darrell—you have quite an oratorical flow of words. It is fortunate that Lady Darrell knows you, or she might be tempted to believe you. Elinor, I rest my claim on this—since you have known Miss Darrell, have you ever received one act of kindness from her, one kind word even?'

Lady Darrell was obliged to answer: 'No.'

'Then I leave it,' he said, 'to your sense of justice which of us you are to believe—her who, to anger you, swears to my guilt, or me, who swears to my innocence? Elinor, my love, you cannot doubt me.'

Pauline saw her eyes soften with unutterable tenderness—he saw a faint flush rise on the fair face. Almost involuntarily Lady Darrell drew near to him.

'I cannot bear to doubt you, Aubrey,' she said. 'Oh, speak the truth to me, or my love's sake!'

'I do speak the truth. Come with me; leave Miss Darrell for a while. Walk with me across the lawn and I will tell you what respect for Miss Darrell prevents my saying here.'

Lady Darrell turned to Pauline. 'I must hear what he has to say—it is only just.'

'I will wait for you,' she replied. The captain was always attentive; he went out into the hall and returned with a shawl that he found there.

'You cannot go out with those beautiful arms uncovered, Elinor,' he said, gently. He placed the shawl around her, trying to hide the covert, trembling fear.

'As though I did not love you,' he said, reproachfully. 'Show me another woman only half so fair.'

Pauline made one more effort. 'Lady Darrell,' she cried, with outstretched hands, 'you will not decide hastily—you will take time to judge.'

But as they passed out together, something in the delicate face told her that her love for Aubrey Langton was the strongest element in her nature.

'Lady Darrell,' she cried again, do not listen to him! I swear I have told you the truth—Heaven will judge between him and me if I have not!'

'You must have studied tragedy at the Porte St. Martin,' said Aubrey Langton, with a forced laugh; 'Lady Darrell knows which to believe.'

She watched them walk across the lawn, Captain Langton pleading earnestly, Lady Darrell's face softening as she listened.

'I am too late!' cried the girl, in an agony of self-reproach. 'All my humiliation is in vain; she will believe him and not me. I cannot save her now, but one word spoken in time might have done so.'

Oh, the bitterness of the self-reproach that tortured her—the anguish of knowing that she could have prevented Lady Darrell's wrecking her whole life, yet had not done so! It was no wonder that she buried her face in her hands, weeping and praying as she had never wept and prayed in her life before.

'Elinor, look at me,' said Captain Langton; 'do I look like a thief and a would-be murderer?'

Out of Pauline's presence the handsome face had regained its usual careless, debonaire expression.

She raised her eyes, and he saw in them the lingering doubt, the lingering fear.

'If all the world had turned against me, you, Elinor, my promised wife, ought to have had more faith.'

She made no reply. There had been some thing in the energy of Pauline's manner that carried conviction with it; and the weak heart, the weak nature that had always relied upon others, could form no decision unaided.

For argument's sake, let us reverse the case. Say that some disappointed lover of

you came to tell me that you had been discovered stealing; Should I not have laughed! Why, Elinor, you must be blind not to see the truth; a child might discern it. The fact is that long ago I was foolish enough to believe myself in love with Miss Darrell; and she—well, honestly speaking, she is jealous. A gentleman does not like to refer to such things, but that is the simple truth. She is jealous, and would part us if she could; but she shall not, My beautiful Elinor is all my own, and no half-crazed, jealous girl shall come between us.'

'Is it so, Aubrey?' asked Lady Darrell. 'My dearest Elinor, that is the whole secret of Miss Darrell's strange conduct to me. She is jealous—and you know, I should imagine, what jealous women are like.'

She tried to believe him, but, when she recalled the noble face, with its pure light of truth and pity, she doubted again. But Captain Langton pleaded, prayed, invented such ridiculous stories of Pauline, made such fervent protestations of love, lavished such tender words upon her, that the weak heart turned to him again, and again its doubts were cast aside.

'How we shall laugh at this in the happy after years!' he said. 'It is really like a drama. Oh, Elinor, I am so thankful that I was here to save you! And now, my darling you are trembling with cold. My fair golden-haired Elinor, what must you think of that cruel girl? How could she do it? No; I will not go in again to-night—I should not be able to keep my temper. Your grand tragical heroine will be gone to-morrow.'

They stood together under the shadow of the balcony, and he drew her nearer to him.

'Elinor,' he said, 'I shall never rest until you are my wife. This plot has failed; Miss Darrell will plot again to part us. I cannot wait until the spring—you must be my wife before then. To-morrow morning I shall ride over to talk to you about it.'

She clasped her arms round his neck, and raised her sweet face to his.

'Aubrey,' she said, wistfully, 'you are not deceiving me?'

'No, my darling, I am not. I bent down and kissed her lips. She looked at him again, pleadingly, wistfully.

'Heaven will judge between us, Aubrey,' she said, solemnly. 'I have a sure conviction that I shall know the truth.'

'I hope Heaven will assist you,' he returned, lightly; 'I am quite sure the decision will be in my favour.'

And those words, so wickedly, so blasphemously false, were the last he ever spoke to her.

### CHAPTER XL.

DYING IN SIN.

Captain Langton left Lady Darrell at the door of the porch, and went round to the stables. He was a man as utterly devoid of principle as any man could well be, yet the untruths he had told, the false testimony he had given; the false oaths he had taken, had shaken his nerves.

'I should not care to go through such a scene as that again,' he said—'to stand before two women as before my judges.'

He found his hands unsteady and his limbs trembling; the horse he had to ride was a spirited one. The captain half staggered as he placed his hand on the saddle.

'I am not very well,' he said to one of the grooms; 'go to the house, and tell Frampton, the butler, to bring some brandy here.'

In a few minutes the butler appeared with a tray, on which stood bottle and glass.

'This is some very old brandy, sir,' he said, 'and very strong.'

But Captain Langton did not appear to heed him; he poured out half a tumbler and drank it, while the butler looked on in amazement.

'It is very strong,' he repeated. 'I know what I am doing,' returned the captain, with an oath.

He was dizzy with fear and with his after-success; he shuddered again as he mounted his horse, and the memory of Pauline's face and Pauline's words came over him. Then he galloped off, and Frampton, turning to the groom, with a scared face, said:

'If he gets home safely after taking so much of that brandy, and with that horse, I will venture to say what I think again.'

Lady Darrell returned to the library, where she had left Pauline. They looked at each other in silence, and then Lady Darrell said:

'I—I believe in him, Pauline; he cannot be what you say.'

Miss Darrell rose and went up to her; she placed her in a chair, and knelt at her feet.

'You do not believe what I have told you?' she questioned, gently.

'I cannot; my love and my faith are all his.'

'I have done my best,' said Pauline, sorrowfully, 'and I can do no more. While I live I shall never forgive myself that I did not speak sooner, Lady Darrell. Elinor, I shall kneel here until you promise to forgive me.'

Then Lady Darrell looked at the beautiful face, with its expression of humility.

'Pauline,' she said, suddenly, 'I hardly recognize you. What has come to you? What has changed you?'

Her face crimsoned with hot blushes, Pauline answered her.

'It is to me,' she said, 'as though a veil had fallen from before my eyes. I can see my sin in all its enormity. I can see to what my silence has led, and, though you may not believe me, I shall never rest until you say that you have forgiven me.'

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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