

The sailor's Wife.

The sun is shining o'er the sea,
The morn is fair as morn can be,
And on the sands she waits for me,
While over the waters I roam;
My bonnie boat has been afloat upon the bay,
Far out of sight, for many a night and weary day,
But on the sands she waits and stands, and o'er
will stay,
"Till I come sailing home.

The breezes blow her golden hair,
Thesunbeams kiss her forehead fair
And she is ever waiting there,
Watching the great ships speed away;
And every gale and every sail upon o'er the sea
A message brings of happy things awaiting me—
Two eyes so blue, a heart as true as heart can be,
A prayer breathed up each day.

Oh! soon my voyage will be o'er;
Oh! soon my bark will touch the shore;
And then she'll never, nevermore
Wait on the sands for me.

For as the sun, when day is done, sinks in the
west,
Or when the bird's last note is heard, he seeks his
nest,
So when shall come the going home, we both will
rest,
Together by the sea.

LOVERS YET.

(By the author of "Madoline's Lover.")
Lillian Earle did. He watched her keenly; she was truthful and open as the day. He never heard a false word from her—not even one of the trifling excuses that pass current in society for truth. He said to himself, if any one was all but perfect, surely she was. To use his own expression, he let his heart's desire rest in her; all he had ever hoped for or dreamed of was centered in her. He set to work deliberately and with all the ardor of his impetuous nature to win her love.

At first she did not understand him; then by degrees he watched the pure young heart awaken to consciousness. It was as pretty a development of love as ever was witnessed. At the sound of his footstep or his voice the faint color flushed into her face, light came into her eyes; and, when he stood by her side, bending his handsome head to read her secret, she would speak a word or two, and then hurry away from him. If he wished to join her in her walks or rides, she begged to be excused with trembling lips and drooping eyes.

She hardly knew herself what had come to her—why the world seemed suddenly to have grown so fair—what made fresh luster in the sky above. A vague, delicious happiness stirred in the gentle heart. She longed for, yet half dreaded, Lionel's presence. When he was near her, the little hands trembled, and the sweet face grew warm and flushed. Yet the measure of her content and happiness seemed full.

Lionel saw it all, and he wondered why such a precious treasure as the love of this pure innocent girl should be his. What had he ever done to deserve it? Through her he began to respect all other women, through her he began to value the high and holy teachings he had hitherto overlooked. She was his ideal realized. If ever the time should come for him to be disappointed in her, then he would believe all things false—but it never could be.

How should he tell her of his love? It would be like trying to cage a startled bird. He stood abashed before her sweet innocence.

But the time came when he resolved to woo and win her—when he felt that his life would be unbearable without her; and he said to himself that sweet Lillian Earle should be his wife, or he would never look upon a woman's face again.

Lionel felt some slight jealousy of Beatrice; he paid dearly enough for it in the dark after days. He fancied she eclipsed Lillian. He thought if he spoke to Lord Earle of his love, he would insist upon both marriages taking place on one day; and then his fair gentle love would, as usual, be second to her brilliant sister.

"That shall never be," he said to himself. "Lillian shall have a wedding day all her own, the honors unshared. She shall be the centre of attraction."

He determined to say nothing to Lord Earle until Beatrice was married; surely her wedding must take place soon—Lord Earle seemed unable to exist out of her presence. When they were married and gone, Lillian should have her turn of admiration and love. It was nothing but proud, jealous care for her that made him delay.

And Lillian discovered her own secret at last. She knew she cared for Lionel. He was so unlike every one else. Who was so handsome, so brave, so good? She liked to look shyly at the frank, proud face and the careless wave of hair thrown back from his brow; his voice made music in her heart, and she wondered whether he really cared for her.

In her rare sweet humility she never saw how far she was above him; she never dreamed that he looked up to her as a captain to his queen. He was always by her side, he paid her a thousand graceful attentions, he sought her advice and sympathy; some outspoken words seemed ever on his lips. Lillian Earle asked herself whether he loved her.

She was soon to know. From some careless words of Lord Earle, Lionel gathered that Beatrice's marriage would take place in November. Then he decided, if he could win her consent, that Lillian's wedding should be when the spring flowers were blooming.

August, with its sunny days, was at an end. Early in September Lillian stood alone on the shore of the deep, clear lake. Lionel saw her there, and hastened to join her, wondering at the grave expression of her face.

"What are you thinking of, Lilly?" he asked. "You look so sad and serious."
"I was thinking of Beatrice," she replied. "She seems so changed, so different. I cannot understand it."
"I can," said Lionel. "You forget she will soon leave the old life far behind her. She is going to a new world; a change so great may well make one thoughtful."
"She loves Lord Earle," returned Lillian—she could hear even the musical voice saying, "I love him so dearly, Lilly!"
"She cannot be unhappy,"
"I do not mean that," he replied; "thought and silence are not always caused by unhappiness. Ah, Lilly," he cried, "I wonder if you guess ever so faintly at the thoughts that fill my heart! I wonder if you know how dearly I love you. Nay, do not turn from me, do not look frightened. To me you are the truest, noblest and fairest woman in the world. I love you so dearly, Lilly, that I have not a thought or wish away from you. I am not worthy to win you, I know—you are as far above me as the sun shining over head—but, if you

would try, you might make me what you would. Could you like me?"
The sweet, flushed face was raised to his; he read the happiness shining in the clear eyes. But she could not speak to him; words seemed to die upon her lips. Lionel took the little white hands, and clasped them in his own.
"I knew I should frighten you, Lilly," he said, gently. "Forgive me if I spoke too abruptly. I do not wish you to decide at once. Take me on trial—see if you can learn to love me weeks, months, or years hence. I am willing to wait a whole lifetime for you, my darling, and should think it well spent. Will it be possible for you ever to like me?"
"I like you now," she said, simply.
"Then promise to endeavor to love me," he persisted—"will you Lilly? I will do anything you wish me; I will try my best to be half as good as you are. Promise me, darling—my life hangs on your answer."
"I promise," she said; and he knew how much the words meant.
On the little white hand that rested in his own he saw a pretty ring; it was a large pearl ring set in pale gold. Lionel drew it from her finger.
"I shall take this, Lilly," he said; "and when Beatrice is married and gone, I shall go to Lord Earle and ask him to give you to me. I will not go now; we will keep our secret for a short time. Two love affairs at once would be too much. You will learn to love me, and when the spring time comes perhaps you will make me as happy as Beatrice will by then have made Lord Earle. I shall keep the ring, Lillian; you are my pearl, and this will remind me of you. Just to make me very happy, say you are pleased."
"I will say more than that," she replied, a happy smile rippling over her face—"I have more than half learned my lesson."
He kissed the pretty hand and looked at the fair, flushed face he dared not touch with his lips.
"I cannot thank you," he said, his voice full of emotion. "I will live for you, Lilly, and my life shall prove my gratitude. I begin to wish the spring were nearer. I wonder if you will have learned your lesson then."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Lord Airle's return to Earlescourt had been delayed. The changes to take place at Lynnton involved more than he thought. It was quite three weeks before he could leave the Hall and seek again the presence he loved best on earth.

Three weeks, yet nothing had happened. Beatrice had watched each day begin and end, until her heart grew faint with fear; she was as far as ever from a solution of her difficulties—as far as ever from finding herself free from Hugh Fernely.

Lord Airle, on his arrival, was startled at the change in her brilliant face. Yet he was flattered by it. He thought how intensely she must love him, if his absence could affect her so strongly. He kissed her pale face over and over again, declaring that he would not leave her any more—no one else knew how to take care of her.

They were all pleased to welcome him; for every one liked Lord Airle, and the family circle did not seem complete without him. That very night he had an interview with Lord Earle, and besought him to allow the marriage to take place as soon as possible. He had been miserable away from Beatrice, he declared, and he thought she looked pale and grave. Would Lord Earle be willing to say November, or perhaps the latter end of October?
"My daughter must arrange the time herself," said Lord Earle; "whatever day she chooses will meet with my approval."
Lord Airle went back to the drawing-room where he had left Beatrice, and told her Lord Earle's answer; she smiled, but he saw the proud lips quiver as she did so.

Only one month since his passionate, loving words would have made sweetest music to her; now she listened and tried to look like herself, but her heart was cold with vague unutterable dread.

"The 14th of October"—clever Lord Airle, by some system of calculation known only to himself, persuaded Beatrice that that was the "latter end of the month."
"Not another word!" he said, gayly. "I will go and tell Lord Earle. Do not say afterward that you have changed your mind, as many ladies do. Beatrice say to me, 'Hubert, I promise to marry you on the 14th of October.'"
She repeated the words after him.
"It will be almost winter," he added; "the flowers will have faded, the leaves will have fallen from the trees; yet no summer day will ever be so bright to me as that."

She watched him quit the room and a long low cry came from her lips. Would it ever be? She went to the window, and looked at the trees. When the green leaves lay dead, would she be Lord Airle's wife, or would the dark cloud of shame and sorrow have fallen, hiding her forever from his sight.

Ah, if she had been more prudent! How tame and foolish, how distasteful the romance she had once thought delightful seemed now! If she had but told all to Lord Earle!

It was too late now. Yet, despite the deadly fear that lay at her heart, Beatrice still felt something like hope. Hope is the last thing to die in the human breast—it was not yet dead in hers.

At least for that one evening—the first after Lord Airle's return—she would be happy. She would throw the dark shadow away from her, forget it, and enjoy her lover's society. He should see smiles on her face, and hear bright words such as he loved. Let the morning bring what it would, she would be happy that night. And she kept her word.

Lord Airle looked back afterward on that evening as one of the pleasantest of his life. There was no shade upon the beautiful face he loved so well. Beatrice was all life and animation; her gay sweet words charmed every one who heard them. Even Lionel forgot to be jealous, and admired her more than he ever had before.

Lord Earle smiled as he remarked to Lady Helena that all her fears for her grandchild's health were vain—the true physician was come at last.

When Lord Airle bade Beatrice good night, he bent low over the white jeweled hand.
"I forget all time when with you," he said; "it does not seem to me an hour since I came to Earlescourt."
The morning brought the letter she had dreaded, yet expected to see.

It was not filled with loving, passionate words, as was the first Hugh had written. He said the time had come when he must have an answer—when he must know from her own lips at what period he might claim the fulfillment of her promise—when she would be his wife.

He would wait no longer. If it was to be war, let the war begin—he should win. If peace, so much the better. In any case he was tired of suspense, and must know at once what she intended to do. He would trust to no more promises; that very night he would be at Earlescourt, and must see her. Still, though he intended to enforce his rights, he would not wantonly cause her pain. He would not seek the presence of her father until she had seen him, and they had settled on some plan of action.

"I know the grounds around Earlescourt well," he wrote. "I wandered through them for many nights three weeks ago. A narrow path runs through the gardens to the shubbery—meet me there at 9; it will be dark then, and you need not fear being seen. Remember, Beatrice, at 9 to-night. I shall be there; and if you do not come, I must seek you in the house, for see you I will!"

The letter fell from her hands; cold drops of fear and shame stood upon her brow; hatred and disgust filled her heart. Oh, that she should ever have placed herself in the power of such a man.

The blow had fallen at last. She stood face to face with her shame and fear. How could she meet Hugh Fernely? What should she say to him? How must such a meeting end? It would but anger him the more. He should not touch her hand in greeting, she said to herself; and how would he endure her contempt?

She would not see him. She dared not. How could she find time? Lord Airle never left her side. She could not meet Hugh, the web seemed closing round her, but she would break through it.

She would send him a letter saying she was ill, and begging him to wait yet a little longer. Despite his firm words, she knew he would not refuse if she wrote kindly. Again came the old hope something might happen in a few days. If not, she must run away; if everything failed and she could not free herself from him then she would leave home; in any case she would not fall into his hands—rather death than that.

More than once she thought of Gaspar's words. He was so true, so brave—he would help her, if she could but call him to her aid! In this the dark hour of her life, by her own deed she had placed herself beyond the reach of all human help.

She would write—upon that she was determined; but who would take the letter? Whom could she ask to stand at the shubbery-gate and give to the stranger a missive from herself? If she asked such a favor from a servant, she would part with her secret to one who might hold it as a rod of iron over her. She was too proud for that. There was only one in the world who could help her, and that was her sister Lillian.

She shrank with unutterable shame from telling her. She remembered long ago at Knutsford that she had said something which had shocked her sister, and the scared, startled expression of her face was with her still. It was a humiliation beyond all words. Yet, if she could undergo it, there would be comfort in Lillian's sympathy. Lillian would take her letter, she would see Hugh, and tell him she was ill. Ill she felt in very truth. Hugh would be pacified for a time if he saw Lillian. She could think of no other arrangement. That evening she would tell her sister—there was rest even in the thought.

Long before dinner Lady Helena came in search of Beatrice—it was high time, she said, that orders should be sent to London for her *trousseau*, and the list must be made out at once.

She sat calmly in Lady Helena's room, writing in obedience to her words, thinking all the time how she should tell Lillian, how best make her understand the deadly error committed, yet save herself as much as she could. Lady Earle talked of laces and embroidery, of morning dresses and jewels, while Beatrice went over in her mind every word of her confession.

"That will do," said Lady Earle, with a smile; "I have been very explicit, but I fear it has been in vain. Have you heard anything I have said, Beatrice?"
She blushed, and looked so confused that Lady Helena said, laughingly:
"You may go—do not be ashamed. Many years ago I was just as much in love myself, and just as unable to think of anything else as you are now."
There was some difficulty in finding Lillian; she was discovered at last in the library, looking over some fine old engravings with Mr. Dacre. He looked up hastily as Beatrice asked her sister to spare her half an hour.
"Do not go, Lilly," he said, jestingly; "it is some nonsense about wedding dresses. Let us finish this folio."
But Beatrice had no gay repartee for him. She looked grave, although she tried to force a smile.
"I cannot understand that girl," he said to himself, as the library door closed behind the two sisters. "I could almost fancy that something was distressing her."
"Lilly," said Beatrice, "I want you very much. I am sorry to take you from Lionel; you like being with him, I think."
The fair face of her sister flushed warmly.
"But I want you, dear," said Beatrice. "Oh, Lilly, I am in bitter trouble! No one can help me but you."
Then they went together into the little boudoir Beatrice called her own. She placed her sister in the easy lounging chair drawn near the window, and then half knelt, half sat at her feet.
"I am in such trouble, Lilly!" she cried. "Think how great it is when I know not how to tell you."
The sweet, gentle eyes looked wonderingly into her own. Beatrice clasped her sister's hands.
"You must not judge me harshly," she said. "I am not good like you, Lilly; I never could be patient and gentle like you. Do you remember, long ago, at Knutsford, how I found you one morning upon the cliffs, and told you how I hated my life? I did hate it, Lillian," she continued. "You can never tell how much; it quieted my toney was killing me. I have done wrong; but surely they are to blame who made my life what it was, then—who shut me out

from the world, instead of giving me my rightful share of its pleasures. I cannot tell you what I did, Lilly."
She laid her beautiful, sad face on her sister's hands. Lillian bent over her, and whispered how dearly she loved her, and how she would do anything to help her.
"That very morning," she said, never raising her eyes to her sister's face—"that morning, Lilly, I met a stranger—a gentleman he seemed to me—and he watched me with admiring eyes. I met him again, and he spoke to me. He walked by my side through the long meadows, and told me strange stories of foreign lands he had visited—such stories! I forgot that he was a stranger, and talked to him as I am talking to you now. I met him again and again. Nay, do not turn from me; I shall die if you shrink away."
The gentle arms clasped her more closely.
"I am not turning from you," replied Lillian. "I cannot love you more than I do now."
"I met him," continued Beatrice, "every day, unknown to you, unknown to every one about me. He praised my beauty, and I was filled with vain joy; and he talked to me of love, and I listened without anger. I swear to you, she cried, "that I did it all without thought; it was the novelty, the flattery, the admiration that pleased me, not he himself, I believe, Lilly. I rarely thought of him. He interested me; he had eloquent words at his command, and seeing how I loved romance, he told me stories of adventure that held me enchained and breathless. I lost sight of him in thinking of the wonders he related. They are to blame, Lilly, who shut me up from the living world. Had I been in my proper place here, at home where I could have seen and judged people rightly, it would not have happened. At first it was but a pleasant break in a life dreary beyond words; then I looked for the daily meed of flattery and homage. I could not do without it. Lilly, will you hold me to have been mad when I tell you the time came when I allowed that man to hold my hands as you are doing, to kiss my face, and win from me a promise that I would be his wife?"
Beatrice looked up then, and saw the fair, pitying face almost white as snow.
"Is it worse than you thought?" she asked.
"Oh, yes," said Lillian—"terrible, irretrievable, I fear!"

CHAPTER XXXV.

There was unbroken silence for some minutes; and then Lillian bent over her sister, and said:
"Tell me all, darling; perhaps I can help you."
"I promised to be his wife, Lilly," continued Beatrice. "I am sure I did not mean it. I was but a child. I did not realize all that the words meant. He kissed my face, and said he should come to claim me. Believe me, Lilly, I never thought of marriage. Brilliant pictures of foreign lands filled my mind; I looked upon Hugh Fernely only as a means of escape from a life I detested. He promised to take me to places the names of which filled me with wonder. I never thought of leaving you or mamma—I never thought of the man himself as a lover."
"You did not care for him, then, as you do for Lord Airle?" interposed Lillian.
"Do not pain me!" begged Beatrice. "I love Hugh with the love that comes but once in a life; that man was nothing to me, except that his flattery, and the excitement of contriving to meet him, made my life more endurable. He gave me a ring, and said in two years' time he should return to claim me. He was going on a long voyage. Lilly, I felt relieved when he was gone; the novelty was over—I had grown tired. Besides, when the glamor fell from my eyes, I was ashamed of what I had done. I tried to forget all about him; every time the remembrance of him came to my mind, I drove it from me. I did not think it possible he would ever return. It was but a summer's pastime. That summer has darkened my life. Looking back, I own I did very wrong. There is a great blame attaching to me; but surely they who shut me out from the living world were blameworthy also."
"Remember all through my story, darling, that I am not so good, not so patient and gentle as you. I was restless at the Elms, like a bird in a cage; you were content. I was vain, foolish and wilful; but looking back at the impetuous, imperious child, full of romance, untrained, longing for the strife of life, longing for change, for excitement, for gaiety, chafing under restraint, I think there was some little excuse for me. There was no excuse for what followed. When papa spoke to us—you remember it, Lilly—and asked so gently if we had either of us a secret in our lives—when he promised to pardon anything, provided we kept nothing from him—I ought to have told him then. There is no excuse for that error. I was ashamed. Looking around upon the noble faces hanging on the walls, looking at him, so proud, so dignified, I could not tell him what his child had done. Oh, Lilly, if I had told him, I should not be kneeling here at your feet now!"
Lillian made no reply, but pressed the proud, drooping figure more closely to her side.
"I can hardly tell the rest," said Beatrice; "the words frighten me as I utter them. This man who has been the bane of my life, was going away for two years. He was to claim me when he returned. I never thought he would return; I was so happy, I could not believe it." Her sobs choked her utterance.
Presently she continued—"Lilly, he is here; he claims me, and also the fulfillment of my promise to be his wife."
A look of unutterable dread came over the listener's face, pitying face.
"He wrote to me three weeks since; I tried to put him off. He wrote again this morning, and swears he will see me. He will be here to-night at 9 o'clock. Oh, Lilly, save, save me, or I shall die!"
Bitter sobs broke from the proud lips.
"I never knelt to any one before," Beatrice said; "I knelt to you, my sister. No one else can help me. You must see him for me, give him a letter from me, and tell him I am very ill. It is no untruth, Lilly—I am ill, my brain burns, and my heart is cold with fear. Will you do this for me?"
"I would rather almost give you my life," said Lillian, gently.
"Oh, do not say that, Lilly! Do you

know what there is at stake? Do you remember papa's words—that, if ever he found one of us guilty of any deceit, or involved in any clandestine love-affair, even if it broke his heart he would send the guilty one from him, and never see her again? Think, darling, what it would be for me to leave Earlescourt, to leave all the magnificence I love so dearly, and drag out a weary life at the Elms. Do you think I could brook Lord Earle's angry scorn and Lady Helena's pained wonder? Knowing our father as you know him, do you believe he would pardon me?"
"I do not," replied Lilly, sadly.
"That is not all," continued Beatrice. "I might bear anger, scorn, and privation, but, Lilly, if this miserable secret is discovered, Lord Airle will cease to love me. He might have forgiven me if I had told him at first; he would not do so now. He would know that I had lied to him and deceived him. I cannot lose him—I cannot give him up. For mother's sake, for my sake, help me, Lilly! Do what I have asked!"
"If I do it," said Lillian, "it will give you but a few days' reprieve; it will avail you nothing; he will be here again."
"I shall think of some means of escape in a few days," answered Beatrice, wistfully. "Something must happen, Lilly; fortune could not be so cruel to me; it would not rob me of my love. If I cannot free myself, I shall run away. I would rather suffer anything than face Lord Airle or my father. Say you will help me for love's sake! Do not let me lose my love!"
"I will help you," said Lillian; "It is against my better judgment, against my idea of right, but I cannot refuse you. I will see the man, and give him your letter. Beatrice, let me persuade you. You cannot free yourself. I see no way—running away is all nonsense—but to tell Lord Earle and your lover; anything would be better than to live as you do, a drawn sword hanging over your head. Tell them and trust to their kindness; at least you will have peace of mind then. They will prevent him from annoying you."
"I cannot," she said, and the breath came gaspingly from her lips. "Lillian, you do not know what Lord Airle is to me. I could never meet his anger. If ever you love any one, you will understand better. He is everything to me. I would suffer any sorrow, even death, rather than see his face turned coldly from me."
She loosened her grasp on Lillian's hands and fell upon the floor, weeping bitterly and passionately; her sister, bending over her, heard the pitiful words—"My love, my love! I cannot lose my love!"
The passionate weeping ceased, and the proud, sad face grew calm and still.
"You cannot tell what I have suffered, Lilly," she said, humbly. "See, my pride is all beaten down; only those who have had a secret eating heart and life away could tell what I have endured. A few more days of agony like this, and I shall be free for ever from Hugh Fernely."
Her sister tried to soothe her with gentle words, but they brought no comfort.
"He will be here at 9," she cried, "and it is 6 now. I will write my letter. He will be at the shrubbery gate. I will manage so that you shall have time. Give him the note I will write, speak to him for me, tell him I am ill and cannot see him. Shall you be frightened?"
"Yes," replied Lillian, gently; "but that will not matter. I must think of you, not of myself."
"You need not fear him," said Beatrice. "Poor Hugh, I could pity him if I did not hate him. Lilly, I will thank you when my agony is over; I cannot now."
She wrote but a few words, saying she was ill, and unable to see him; he must be satisfied, and willing to wait yet a little longer.
She gave the letter to her sister. Lillian's heart ached as she noted the trembling hands and quivering lips.
"I have not asked you to keep my secret, Lilly," said Beatrice, sorrowfully.
"There is no need," was the simple reply.
Sir Harry and Lady Lawrence dined that day at Earlescourt, and it was nearly 9 before the gentlemen, who did not sit over their wine, came into the drawing-room. The evening was somewhat chilly; a bright fire burned in the grate, and the lamps were lighted. Sir Harry sat down to his favorite game of chess with Lady Helena; Lord Earle challenged Lady Lawrence to a game of *ecarte*. The young people were left to themselves.
"In twenty years' time," said Lionel to Lillian, "we may seek refuge in cards; at present music and moonlight are preferable, Lilly. You never sing to me; come to the piano now."
But she remembered the dreaded hour was drawing near.
"Pray excuse me," she begged: "I will sing for you presently."
He looked surprised; it was the first time she had ever refused him a favor.
"Shall we finish the folio of engravings?" he added.
Knowing that, when once she was seated by his side, it would be impossible to get away, she again declined; but this time the fair face flushed and the sweet eyes dropped.
"How guilty you look!" he said. "Is there any mystery on hand? Are you tired of me? Or is there to be another important consultation over the wedding-dresses?"
"I have something to attend to," she replied, evasively. "Get the folio ready—I shall not be long."
Beatrice, who had listened to the brief dialogue in feverish suspense, now came to the rescue, asking Lionel to give them the benefit of his clear, ringing tenor in a trio of Mendelssohn's.
"My clear, ringing tenor" is quite at your service," he said, with a smile. "Lilly is very unkind to me to-night."
They went to the piano, where Lord Airle awaited them; and Lillian looked at her small jeweled watch—Lord Earle's present—saw that it wanted three minutes to 9.
She at once quitted the room, unobserved as she thought, but Lionel saw her go.
No words can tell how distasteful and repugnant was the task she had undertaken. She would have suffered anything almost she had evaded it. She who had never had a secret, she whose every word and action were open as the day, she who shrank from all deceit and untruth as from a deadly