A Tragedy in Three Parts.

I.

Only a dog, but he waited there
By the picket fence in the chill night air—
He heeded not the dying day—
He'd a job on hand and came to stay.

He had seen a strange pup an hour before
Boldly enter the parlor door;
He had seen his mistress feed him on pie
And regard him withal with a kindly eye.

And the dog's heart hardened; he feared that he
No longer a petted doggy would be;
So he vowed revenge on the upstart pup
And swore that night he would chew him up.

II.

Only a dude, with a stony stare,
Blithely humming the latest air;
He ambled along as best he might,
For his shoes were long and his trousers tight.

A sickly smile played on his face,
He sucked his cane with careless grace,
And remarked, as glass in eye he stuck:
"It's the softest snap I ever struck."

III.

Only a howl—it came from the dude—
While calmly the dog the left leg chewed
Of the upstart pup who dared to share
With him the gifts of his mistress fair.

The poor dude tried in vain to flee,
The dog chewed on with fiendish glee,
Till naught was left but a slender cane
To mark the spot where the dude was slain.

PAULINE.

She passed her hand across her forehead, then once more shook her head. "*Non me ricordo,*" she murmured; then as if the mental effort had exhausted her, sank, with a weary sigh, upon a chair.

I was delighted to hear her speak in Italian. It was a tongue she seldom used unless compelled to do so. That she employed it now showed she must, in some dim way, connect the visitor with Italy. It was to me a new gleam of hope.

There was another thing I noticed. I have said how seldom it was that Pauline raised her eyes to any one's face; but to-day, during the whole time that Macari was in the room, she never looked away from him. He sat near her, and after a few more words to her, addressed his remarks exclusively to me. All the while I could see my wife watching him with an eager, troubled look; several times, indeed, I almost persuaded myself that there was an expression of fear in her eyes. Let them express fear, hate, trouble, even love, so long as I could see the dawn of returning reason in them! I began to think that if Pauline was to be restored, it would be through my visitor.

So when he took his leave I pressed him, with an assumed manner, to call again very soon—to morrow, if possible. He readily promised to do so, and we parted for the day.

I can only hope he was as satisfied with the result of our interview as I was.

After his departure Pauline fell into a restless state. Several times I saw her pressing her hand to her forehead. She seemed unable to sit still. Now and again she went to the window and looked up and down the street. I paid no attention to her actions, although once or twice I saw her turn her eyes toward me with a piteous, imploring glance. I believed that something—some old memory in connection with Macari—was striving to force itself to her clouded brain, and I looked forward with impatience to to-morrow, when he would pay us another visit. The man had something to get out of me, so I felt certain I should see him again.

He came the next day, and the next, and many other days. It was clear he was determined to ingratiate himself with me, if possible. He did all he could to make himself agreeable, and I must say he was, under the present circumstances, very good company. He knew, or professed to know, all the ins and outs of every plot or political event of the last ten years, and was full of original anecdotes and stirring experiences. He had fought under Garibaldi through the whole of the Italian campaign. He had known the interior of prisons, and some of his escapes from death had been marvellous. I had no reason to doubt the truth of his tales, although I mistrusted the man himself. Let his smile be as pleasant as he could make it—let his laugh ring naturally—I could not forget the expression I had seen on that face, or his manner and words on former occasions.

I took care that Pauline should always be with us. It was the only wish of mine the poor child had ever shown even a mute disinclination to comply with. She never spoke in Macari's presence, but her eyes were scarcely ever turned from him. He seemed to have a kind of fascination for her. When he entered the room I could hear her sigh, and when he left it she breathed a breath of relief; and every day she grew more restless, uneasy and, I knew, unhappy. My heart smote me as I guessed I was causing her pain; but, at all cost, I determined to persevere. I felt that the crisis of her life was fast drawing near.

One evening, after dinner, as Macari and I sat over our claret, and Pauline, with her troubled eyes fixed, as usual, on my guest, was reclining on the sofa a little way off, he began to relate some of his military adventures. How once, when in imminent peril—his right arm broken and useless at his side, his left arm not strong enough to wield the rifle with the bayonet fixed—he had taken the bayonet off, and holding it in his left hand, had driven it through the heart of an antagonist. As he described the deed, he suited the gesture to the word, and seizing a knife which lay on the table, dealt a downward blow through the air at an imaginary white-coated Austrian.

I heard a deep sigh behind me, and, turning, I saw Pauline lying with her eyes closed, and apparently in a dead faint. I ran to her, raised her up, and carrying her to her room, laid her on her bed. It was now about 9 o'clock. Priscilla happened to be out, so I ran back to the dining-room and bade Macari a hasty good-night.

"I hope there is not much the matter," he said.

"No; only a fainting fit. Your fierce gesture must have frightened her."

Then I returned to my wife's bedside, and began the usual course of restoratives. Yet without success. White as a statue she lay there, her soft breathing and the faint throb of her pulse only telling that she was alive. She lay there without sense or motion, whilst I chafed her hands, bathed her brow, and endeavored to recall her to life. Even whilst doing so my heart was beating wildly. I felt that the moment had come; that something had brought back the past to her, and that the fierce rush with which it came had overpowered her. I could scarcely dare to put my wild belief into words, but it was that when Pauline again opened her eyes, they should shine with light which I had never known in them—the light of perfectly restored intelligence. A wild, mad idea, but one I had the fullest faith in.

So it was that I did not send for a doctor; that after a while I gave up my own attempts to awaken consciousness; that I resolved to let her lie in that calm, senseless state until she awoke of her own accord. I took her wrist between my fingers that I might feel every beat of her pulse. I laid my cheek against hers that I might catch the sound of every breath—and thus I waited until Pauline should awake, and, as I fondly believed, awake in her right mind.

She remained in this state for at least an hour. So long that at last I began to get frightened, and think I must, after all, send for medical aid. Just as I was forming the resolution to do so, I noticed the beats of her pulse grow stronger and more rapid; I felt her breath drawn deeper; I saw a look of returning life steal over her face; and, in breathless impatience, I waited.

And then Pauline—my wife—came back to life—she rose in the bed and turned her face to mine; and in her eyes I saw what, by the mercy of God, I shall never again see there!

CHAPTER VIII.

CALLED BACK.

I write this chapter with great reluctance. If I could make my tale connected and complete without it, I should prefer to say nothing about the events it records. If some of my experiences have been strange ones, all save these can be explained; but these never will, never can be explained to my satisfaction.

Pauline awoke, and, as I saw her eyes, I shuddered as if a freezing wind had passed over me. It was not madness I saw in them, neither was it sense. They were dilated to the utmost extent; they were fixed and immovable, yet I knew they saw absolutely nothing; that their nerves conveyed no impression to the brain. All my wild hopes that reason would return at the expiration of her fainting fit were at an end. It was clear that she had passed into a state far more pitiable than her former one.

I spoke to her; called her by name; but she took no notice of my words. She seemed to be unaware of my presence. She looked ever, with strange fixed eyes, in one direction.

Suddenly she rose, and, before I could interpose to prevent her, passed out of the room. I followed her. She went swiftly down the stairs, and I saw she was making for the front door. Her hand was on the latch when I came up to her and again called her by name; entreating, even commanding her to return. No sound of my voice seemed to reach her ears. In her critical state, for so I felt it to be, I shrank from restraining her by force, thinking it would be better to leave her free to go as she listed; of course accompanying her to guard her against evil.

I caught up my hat and a large cloak, both of which were hanging in the hall; the latter I wrapped around her as she walked, and managed to draw the hood over her head. She made no resistance to this, but she let me do it without a word to show that she noticed the action. Then, with me at her side, she walked straight on.

She went at a swift but uniform pace, as one who had a certain destination in view. She turned her eyes neither to the left nor the right—neither up nor down. Not once during that walk did I see them move, not once did I see an eyelid quiver. Although my sleeve was touching hers, I am certain she had no thought or knowledge of my presence.

I made no further attempt to check her progress. She was not wandering about in an aimless manner. Something, I knew not what, was guiding or impelling her steps to some set purpose. Something in her disordered brain was urging her to reach some spot as quickly as possible. I dreaded the consequences of restraining her from so doing. Even if it was but an exaggerated case of sleep-walking it would be unwise to wake her. Far better to follow her until the fit ended.

She passed out of Walpole street, and, without a moment's hesitation, turned at right angles and went along the straight broad road. Along this road for more than half a mile she led me, then turning sharply round, walked half way through another street; then stopped before a house.

An ordinary three-story house of the usual London type. A house differing very little from my own and thousands of others, except that, by the light of the street lamp, I could see it looked ill-cared-for and neglected. The window panes were dusty, and in one of them was a bill stating that this desirable residence was to let, furnished.

I marvelled as to what strange freak of mind could have led Pauline to this untenanted house. Had any one she had known in former days lived here? If so, it was, perhaps, a hopeful sign that some awakened memory had induced her to direct her unwitting steps to a place associated with her earlier days. Very anxious, and even much excited, I waited to see what course she would now take.

She went straight up to the door and laid her hand upon it, as though she expected it would yield to her touch. Then, for the first time, she seemed to hesitate and grow troubled.

"Pauline, dearest," I said, "let us go back now. It is dark, and too late to go in there to-night. To-morrow, if you like, we will come again."

She answered not. She stood before that door with her hand pressing against it. I took her arm, and tried gently to lead her away. She resisted with a passive strength I should not have believed she possessed. Whatever was the dimly conceived object in my poor wife's brain, it was plain to me it could only be attained by passing through that door.

I was quite willing to humor her. Having come so far, I feared to retreat. To cross her wishes in the present state of things I felt might be fatal. But how could we gain entrance?

There was no gleam of light upstairs or downstairs. As you looked at the house you knew intuitively it was uninhabited. The agent whose name appeared on the bill carried on business a mile away, and, even if I had ventured to leave Pauline and go in search of him, at this time of night my expedition would be fruitless.

As I cast around wondering what was the best thing to do—whether to fetch a cab and carry my poor girl into it, or whether to let her wait here until she recognized the impossibility of entering the house, and at last growing weary, chose to return of her own accord—as I debated these alternatives a sudden thought struck me. Once before my latchkey had opened a strange door, it was within the bounds of possibility it might do so again. I knew that uninhabited houses are often from carelessness or convenience left with doors only latched. It was an absurd idea, but, after all, there was no harm in trying. I draw out my key, a duplicate of that used on another occasion. I placed it in the keyhole without a hope of success, and, as I felt the lock turn and saw the door yield, a thrill of something like horror ran through me, for now that it had come to pass I knew this thing could be no mere coincidence.

As the door opened, Pauline, without a word, without a gesture of surprise, without anything that showed she was more aware of my presence than before, passed me and entered first. I followed her, and closing the door behind me, found myself in perfect darkness. I heard her light quick step in front of me; I heard her ascending the stairs; I heard a door open, and then, and only then, I summoned up presence of mind enough to force my limbs to bear me in the pursuit—and my blood seemed to be iced water, my flesh was creeping, my hair was bristling up, as, still in darkness, I crossed the hall and found the staircase without difficulty.

Why should I not find it, dark, pitch dark as it was? I knew the road to it well! Once before I had reached it in darkness, and many times besides, in dreams, had I crossed that space! Like a sudden revelation the truth came to me. It came to me as the key turned in the lock. It was in that very house into which I had strayed three years ago. I was crossing the very hall, ascending the same stairs, and should stand in the identical room which had been the scene of that teirible unexpiated crime. I should see with restored sight the spot where, blind and helpless, I had nearly fallen a victim to my rashness. But Pauline, what brought her here?

Yes, as I expected! as, in fact, I felt certain! The stairs the same and the lintel of the door in the exact place it should be. I might be reacting the events of that fearful night, complete even to the darkness. For a moment I wondered whether the last three years were not the dream; whether I was not blind now; whether there was such a being as my wife? But I threw the fancy aside.

Where was Pauline? Recalled to myself, I realized the necessity of light. Drawing my match box from my pocket I struck a vesta, and by its light I entered the room which once before I had entered with little hope of ever leaving.

My first thought, my first glance, was for Pauline. She was there standing erect in the apartment, with both hands pressed to her brow. The expression of her face and eyes was little changed; it was easy to see she comprehended nothing as yet. But I felt that something was struggling within her, and I dreaded the moment when it should take coherence and form. I dreaded it for her and I dreaded it for myself. What awful passages would it not reveal to me?

The wax light burned down to my fingers, and I was compelled to drop it. I struck another, then looked about for some means of making the illumination sustained. To my great joy I found a half burned candle in a candlestick on the mantel-piece. I blew the thick dust out of the cup formed by the melted wax at the bottom of the wick and after a little spluttering and resistance, managed to induce it to remain lighted.

Pauline stood always in the same attitude, but I fancied her breath was quickening. Her fingers were playing convulsively round her temples, fidgeting and pushing her thick hair back, striving, it seemed to me, to conjure thought to return to that empty shrine. I could do nothing but wait; and whilst I waited I glanced around me.

We were in a good-sized room, substantially but not fashionably furnished; the style altogether was that of an ordinary lodging house. It was clear it had not been occupied for some time, as dust lay thick on every article. I could throw my mind back and recall the very corner of the room in which I was stationed whilst the assassins were so busily engaged. I could mark the spot where I fell upon the yet quivering body, and I shuddered as I could not resist peering on the floor for traces of the crime. But if the carpet was the same one, it was of a dark red hue and kept its secret well. At one end of the room were folding doors—it must have been from behind these I heard those haunting sounds of distress. I threw them open, and, holding my candle on high, looked in. The room was of much the same kind as the other one, but, as I fully expected, it contained a piano—the very piano, perhaps, whose notes had merged into that cry of horror.

What possessed me! What impulse urged me! I shall never know. I laid down the candle; I entered the back room; I lifted the dust-covered lid of the piano and I struck a few notes. Doubtless it was the tragical associations of the scenes which made me, without thinking why or wherefore, blend together the notes which commenced that great song which I had heard as I lingered outside the door, listening to the sweet voice singing, and wondering whose voice it was. As I struck those notes I looked through the folding door at the motionless statue-like figure of Pauline.

A nervous trembling seemed to pass over her frame. She turned and came toward me, and there was a look in her face which made me move aside from the piano, and wonder and fear what was to take place.

The cloak I had thrown around her had fallen from her shoulders. She seated herself on the music bench, and striking the keys with a master hand played brilliantly and faultlessly the prelude to the song of which I had struck a few vagrant notes.

I was thunderstruck. Never till now had she shown the slightest taste for music—as I have said, it appeared rather to annoy and irritate her. Now she was bringing out sounds which it seemed absurd to expect from that neglected and untuned piano.

But after the first few bars my astonishment ceased. As well as if I had been told, I knew what would happen—or part of it. I was even prepared, when the moment came for the voice to join the music, to hear Pauline sing as faultlessly as she was playing, yet to sing in the same subdued manner as on that fatal night. So fully prepared I was that with breathless emotion I waited until the song came to the very note at which it finished when once before I listened to it. So fully prepared, that when she started wildly to her feet and uttered once more that cry of horror, my arms were round her in a moment, and I bore her to a sofa close by.

To her as well as to me, all the occurrences of that dreadful night were being reproduced. The past had come back to Pauline—come back at the moment it left her.

What the reflux might do eventually—whether it would be a blessing or a curse—I had no time to consider. All my cares were needed by Pauline. My task was terrible! I had to hold her down by main force, to endeavor in every possible way to soothe her and prevent her cries, which rang so loudly that I feared the neighbors would be alarmed. And all the while she struggled with me, strove to repulse me and regain her feet, as certainly as if I could read her thoughts I knew that whatever had happened formerly was once more before her eyes. Once more she was being held down by a strong hand, most likely on the same couch, and once more her struggles were gradually becoming feebler and her cries growing fainter. It needed only for the latter to sink at last into a repetition of that dismal moan to make the picture, so far as she was concerned, complete. The only difference was that the hands now laid upon her were loving ones.

All things up to the present situation, and all that I narrate after the termination of this chapter, I expect to be believed. I do not say that such events and coincidences are of every day occurrence. Had they been so, I should have no object in writing this tale. But I do say this, all else save this one thing I could prove to be true, if not by direct, by circumstantial evidence; all else can be explained either simply or scientifically; but what follows I can only give my own word for. Call it what you like, dream, hallucination, overheated imagination—call it anything save invention—I shall not be annoyed. This is what happened.

Pauline at last lay still. Her moans had sunk into silence. She seemed once more to have lost all consciousness. My one idea now was to remove her as speedily as possible from this fatal place. All sorts of strange thoughts and speculations were thronging my brain. All sorts of hopes and fears were shaking me. What would the explanaition be, if ever I could get it?

My poor darling lay still and peaceful. I thought I would let her rest so for a few moments before I carried her out. I dreaded what waking her might mean. So I took her hand and held it close in mine.

The candle was on the mantel-piece behind me. It threw little or no light into the front room, the folding doors of which were only partially open—the half behind the couch on which Pauline lay being closed. It was, therefore, impossible for me from my seat beside her to look into the front room. Indeed, as I sat there my face was turned from it.

I held my wife's hand for a few seconds, and then a strange undefinable feeling crept over me—the kind of feeling sometimes experienced in a dream in which two persons appear, and the dreamer cannot be certain with which one's thoughts and acts he identifies himself. For a while I seemed to have a dual existence. Although perfectly aware that I still occupied the same seat, still held Pauline's hand in mine, I was also seated at the piano, and in some way gazed through the half-open doors into the other room, and that room was full of light!

Light so brilliant that in a glance I could see everything the apartment contained. Each article of furniture, the pictures on the walls, the dark curtains drawn over the window at the end, the mirror over the fire-place, the table in the centre, on which a large lamp was burning. I could see all this and more! For round the table were grouped four men, and the faces of two of the party were well known to me!

That man who was facing me—leaning across the table on which his hands rested, whose features seemed full of alarmed surprise, whose eyes were fixed on one object a few feet away from him—that man was Ceneri, the Italian doctor, Pauline's uncle and guardian.

That man who was near the table on Ceneri's right hand—who stood in the attitude of one ready to repel a possible attack, whose face was fierce and full of passion, whose dark eyes were blazing—that man was the English-speaking Italian, Macari, or, as he now styled himself, Anthony March, Pauline's brother. He also was looking at the same object as Ceneri.

The man in the background—a short, thick-set man with a scar on his cheek—was a stranger to me. He was looking over Ceneri's shoulder in the same direction.

And the object they all looked at was a young man, who appeared to be falling out of his chair, and whose hand grasped convulsively the hilt of a dagger, the blade of which was buried in his heart, buried I knew by a blow which had been struck downward by one standing over him.

All this I saw and realized in a second. The attitude of each actor, the whole scene surrounding was taken in by me as one takes in with a single glance the purport and meaning of a picture. Then I dropped Pauline's hand and sprang to my feet.

Where was the lighted room? Where were the figures I had seen? Where was that tragic scene which was taking place before my eyes? Vanished into thin air! The candle was burning dimly behind me, the front room was in dusk. Pauline and I were the only living creatures in the place!

It was a dream, of course. Perhaps under the circumstances, not an unnatural one. Knowing what I knew already of the crime which had taken place here; feeling sure that in some way Pauline had been present when it was committed; excited by what had occurred to-night—Pauline's strange walk, her sudden bursting into song, the very song I had before heard, that song with the dreadful ending—it is no wonder that I imagined a scene like this, and taking the only persons I knew who were in any way connected with my poor wife, brought them into the life-like vision.

But given that a man may dream the same dream twice, perhaps three times, there is no record of his dreaming it as often as he willed. Yet this was my fate. Again I took Pauline's hand, and again, after a few moments' waiting, I felt the same strange sensation, and saw the same awful sight. Not once, not twice, but many times did this occur, until, sceptical as I was, as even I am now in such matters, I could only believe that in some mysterious way I was actually gazing on the very sight which had met the girl's eyes when memory, perhaps mercifully, fled from her, and reason was left impaired.

It was only when our hands were in contact that the scene came before me. This fact strengthened my theory. I felt then—I feel now, it is the true one. What peculiar mental or physical organization can have brought about such an effect I am unable to say. Call it cataleptic, clairvoyant, anything you will, but it was as I relate.

Again and again I took Pauline's hand, and as I held it looked into that brilliantly lighted room.

Like the motionless figures in a *tableau vivant*, again and again, without a change of attitude or expression, I saw Ceneri, Macari and the man in the background looking at their victim. The appearance of the last named I studied very closely. Even with the agony of death on his face I could see he was supremely handsome. His must have been a face that women love to look upon, and even through the horror of the vision, a painful thought came to me as I wondered what might have been his relations with the girl who saw him suddenly struck down.

Who had struck him? Without a doubt Macari, who, as I said, was standing nearest to him, in the attitude of one expecting an attack. His hand might just have quitted the dagger hilt. His downward stroke had driven the blade so deeply into the heart that death and the blow were all but simultaneous. This was what Pauline saw, what perhaps she was seeing now, and what, by some strange power, she was able to show me as one shows another a picture!

Ever since that night I have wondered how I found the presence of mind to sit there and repeatedly call up, by the aid of that senseless girl by my side, that phantasmagoria. It must have been the burning desire to fathom the mysteries of that night, the wish to learn exactly what shock had disarranged my wife's intellect, the indignation that I felt at the cowardly murder, and the hope of bringing the criminals to justice, which gave me strength to produce and reproduce that scene until I was satisfied that I knew all that dumb show could tell me, until my heart smote me for letting Pauline lie so long in her present state.

Then I wrapped her cloak around her, raised her in my arms and bore her from the room, down the stairs to the door. The hour was not late; I soon, by the aid of a passer-by, summoned a cab, and in a very short time reached home, and laid her, still insensible, upon her bed.

Whatever strange power she had possessed of communicating her thoughts to me, it ceased as soon as we were outside that fatal house. Now and hereafter I could hold her hand, but no dream, vision or hallucination followed the act.

This is the one thing I cannot explain—the mystery at which I hinted when I commenced my tale. I have related what happened; if my bare word is insufficient to win credence, I must be content on this point to be disbelieved.

(To be continued.)

THE SEASON FOR LEAVES.

Imagination and Sentiment in the Ribs of the Gaudy-Hued Refuge.

Autumn leaves were robbed of much of their rich coloring by the sudden cold weather of a few days ago. The blast was of short duration, but leaf-gatherers say that however brief a cold spell may be, if it comes at the particular period when the leaves are changing their hue it affects the color to a greater or less degree. Leaves are very tender and susceptible. The most delicate shadings of gold and brown are produced in years when the falls are late. Frost injures them if it comes before the period of transition has commenced. The number of leaf-gatherers increases yearly. Parties are already forming to go to the woods and parks and pick them. Gathering leaves is a pastime which has its equivalent only in chestnut-hunts and picnics. The party carries lunch, and each members vies with the other in finding the prettiest and largest number of leaves. The leaves are made into various unique objects for decorative purposes. Some of them are handsome ornaments, and are shaped into baskets, wall figures, and pasted in "leaf books." There is also a science of leaves, as there is of flowers, founded upon imagination chiefly, but abundant in sentiment. The veins in a leaf are divided by four, and if in any ten leaves the number comes out the same it represents the number of beaux the counter (if it be a young lady) will have during the winter. If the counter is a young gentleman the figure represents the number of young girls he will call on. This test is also applied to engagements, but the number of veins is divided by eight. Leaves are also used largely to press, and are then placed in glass frames.—*Chicago News.*

Whence His Wealth Went.

Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph: "What are you crying for, little boy?" asked the kind-hearted gentleman from the country who read the newspapers.

"I've lost my money, sir," sobbed the child.

"Where did you lose it, my little man?"

"I dropped it in Wall street, sir.'

"Great heavens! Are even children drawn into that great gambling maelstrom? What stock did you drop it in?"

"I dropped it down a cellar-grating, sir. It was a nickel."

A priest in San Francisco has invented a lamp that will burn perpetually, brightly at night and dimly in the day time. The lamp is said to resemble a small engine.

The hay fever sufferer is a devou individual, because he is continually on his sneeze.