Shall We Meet Them Again?

Shall we meet them again—our pets whom we tenderly cherish,
With the dear shaggy brows, and unspeakable love in their eyes?
Can it be that such generous friends can eternally perish,
Or will they live on in the land where the day never dies?

Such love, past expression, must be in its essence immortal,
Such fealty noble can never be fathered of time,
But still will shine brightly beyond that mysterious portal
Which leads to the dells of a happier, holier clime.

They share our joys, and they bound when they mark our gladness,
They know our tones, and they catch our lightness of heart;
They share our sorrows, and yearn to dispel our sadness
With looks and caress that can blunt the keen edge of the dart.

Man turns from us oft with a dubious turn of the shoulders
When things go amiss, or when slander's at work in the dark;
The dog is staunch still, with a heart that can never wax colder,
Still leal is the ring of his short irrepressible bark!

We deal him a blow—all unmerited—given in ire;
He freely forgives, as he lovingly licks our hand;
For us braves the blast, or the fetterless fury of fire;
He has but one "love" through the length and breadth of the land!

And is such love as this to be quenched in a night without ending?
Shall beings like these be decreed an ephemeral fate?
Ah no! they will greet us, with rapture untold when we're wending
Our way on to rest through the golden and glorious gate

THAT BEAUTIFUL RIVER.

But to herself she was saying:

"If there is a mystery, I will find it out. Nothing will please me so well as to injure the girl who married St. Leon Le Roy."

But though her suspicions were aroused, they were vague and unformed. She did not dream of the real truth.

Before leaving she said, with her most innocent and engaging air:

"I have a great mind to run down to Eden with you when you go. It is only recently I received a letter from Mrs. Le Roy, inviting me to visit her. We are quite old friends you know. Shall you object to have me make one of your party?"

Mrs. Gordon thought it would be rather pleasant than otherwise to have the pretty, vivacious widow accompany them to Eden. She expressed her opinion very graciously, and Mrs. Merivale was delighted.

"A thousand thanks," she twittered. "I shall enjoy the trip with you and Mr. Gordon so much. And I do so want to see dear Mrs. Le Roy, and our sweet bride and her husband, who, by the bye, was once my *fiance*. But that was long ago. I threw him over for Mr. Merivale, who had the most money, although, unfortunately, he sunk a great deal in a foolish speculation after I married him. Ah, well, St. Leon will bear me no ill-will now, when he has secured such a bonny bride."

She lingered until they had named the day for the trip, then departed, full of vague plans against the happiness of St. Leon's bride.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Ross Powell had been bitterly chagrined and disappointed at his failure to trace Laurel Vane, after his meeting with her at the gates of Eden.

Her beauty had inspired him with a passion that all her anger and scorn and detestation were powerless to chill. While he tried to hate her for her disdain, he could not help loving her for the rare loveliness that had won him at first sight. Brooding deeply over the subject after his return to New York, he made up his mind that, if he could not possess Laurel in any other way, he would make her his wife. He did not doubt but that she would be delighted at the chance of becoming Mrs. Powell, and, after coming to this magnanimous resolve, he was exceedingly anxious to find her out and propose to her.

But fate was against him. His clerkly duties kept him chained to his desk so closely that it was only at the Christmas holidays he found an opportunity of returning to the vicinity of Eden to prosecute his search. After long cogitation on the subject, he had concluded that Laurel had misled him in stating that she was not staying at Eden. He now believed that she belonged to the staff of domestics at Eden, and that she had hidden her identity under an assumed name.

"The little jade tricked me cleverly that time, but I'll catch up with her yet!" he muttered, angrily, to himself, for he did not relish the idea of having been duped by a simple girl like Laurel.

So, with his faculties sharpened by reflection, and spurred on by his passion—which only gained in strength by the months of suspense he had endured—Ross Powell returned to the palace on the Hudson, where he hoped to find Laurel employed in some menial capacity by the proud, rich Le Roys.

Alas for Laurel if she had remained at Eden! for the villain would most undoubtedly have detected her this time; but, as the reader knows, she was absent in Europe with her husband. Mr. Powell, in a sly, underhand way, informed himself thoroughly regarding the household at Eden, and became satisfied that the object of his search was not there. He was bitterly enraged at his non-success in the pursuit of the beautiful, and, as he imagined, unprotected orphan.

"I was a fool to let her slip through my fingers so easily that day," he told himself. "I wish I had followed her, and let Mr. Gordon's business go to the mischief until I had settled my own! A little delay would not have mattered to him, while my own cause was ruined by my attention to business. Never mind! Once I get on her track again, she shall not escape me! Twice she has given me the slip. Let her look to the third time!"

Alas poor Laurel, in her summer home across the sea, she had forgotten this crafty spider that lay in wait for her, whose love was crueller than hate.

He returned to the city, sullen, angry, disappointed, but more anxious than ever to find her. A new idea had taken possession of his mind.

It occurred to him that Laurel had perhaps gone abroad in the capacity of maid to the young bride, Mrs. Le Roy.

This idea having once taken possession of his mind, was dwelt on until it became a rooted belief. He was quite certain that he had solved the mystery of her absence now. He cursed her for a clever little wretch, who could never have eluded him so cleverly if she had not inherited her father's brains.

"And he was a genius," he said. "Egad, it seems a little strange that old Vane's pretty, high-bred looking girl should descend to the level of a common servant. He was proud, although he ruined himself by drink. I wonder if his bones don't turn in the coffin at the thought of little Laurel waiting on Beatrix Gordon!"

He made arrangements to be informed at the earliest hour of the return of Mr. Le Roy and his bride to Eden. He swore that quick-witted Laurel should not forestall him and get away this time.

"If she only knew that I meant to do the fair thing by her and make her Mrs. Powell, I have no doubt she would be deuced glad to have me find her," he thought, egotistically. "It's a bother that I can't have her without, but she's a high strung little filly, and has her own notions. Perhaps I can arrange for a mock marriage. Then, when I am tired of her, I can drop her more easily. She will drown herself, of course, when she finds out she has been deceived."

So ran the musings of the wretch, and his impatience reached fever-heat as the dreary winter months dragged away and still Mr. Le Roy lingered abroad with his lovely bride, little dreaming in their happiness of the clerk sitting behind the desk in Mr. Gordon's office and growing ever more and more impatient for their return.

Winter passed away at length, followed by March with its chilling, boisterous winds, its clouded, murky skies; April came with its sunshine and rain, May with its balmy airs and fragrant flowers. Still they came not. How he hated those grand, rich people who could loiter their time away amid the beauties and luxuries of the old world, and keep Laurel away from him, losing her heart perhaps to some musical Italian, frog-eating Frenchman, or sturdy Englishman. A vague, bitter jealousy of he knew not what filled his heart.

He never forgot how glad he felt when in the latter part of May he heard that Mr. Le Roy and his bride had returned to Eden. A burning impatience filled him to get away from the office and go down to Eden to assure himself if Laurel were really there.

He made some excuse of indisposition or private business—in fact, the first ready lie that came to his tongue—and asked Mr. Gordon for a holiday; it was granted, and on the same day Ross Powell went down to Eden, so confident of success that the disappointment he experienced staggered him with its bitterness and intensity.

For when he went boldly to the servants' entrance and asked for young Mrs. Le Roy's maid, a pert foreigner, a mademoiselle whom St. Leon had engaged in Paris to attend his wife, came to him. Her broken English, her voluble French, her cap, and ribbon, alike disgusted him. He crushed a bitter oath between his teeth and went away.

"It is just as I feared and dreaded," he thought. "Some jackanape over the sea has won her, and she would not return with the Le Roys, who had to engage that painted, beribboned, chattering monkey in her place. I have a great mind to go and ask Mr. Gordon's daughter to tell me about Laurel Vane."

But on second thoughts he concluded not to do so. It would come to Mr. Gordon's ears and might possibly set unpleasant inquiries on foot. After all it could not avail him anything to know how he had lost her. Fate had played him a trick, a dastardly trick that nothing could undo now. There was nothing to do but resign the hopes that had buoyed him up for many months, realize that the game he played was over, and that he had been the loser. His love turned to hate, his passion to a dastardly yearning for revenge upon the beautiful, high-spirited girl.

"The little black-eyed jade! How cleverly she gave me the slip! I would give anything on earth to be able to punish her," he muttered, wickedly, to himself.

He was walking slowly along the dusty road that wound along the banks of the river, and had already left the beautiful, extensive grounds of Eden some distance behind him. The sun was sitting resplendently, gilding the beautiful river with gold, and a soft breeze fanned his hot brow; but the beauties of nature had no charm for his passion-seared soul. He walked on with lowering, moody brows, and did not look up until a cloud of dust blowing over him and the sound of approaching carriage wheels forced an impatient imprecation to his lips. Then he looked up, and the sight he beheld was photographed on his memory for ever.

An exquisite little phaeton—the daintiest, the most fairy-like he had ever beheld in his life—was approaching him, drawn by two superb white horses, whose smooth, satiny coats, gold-mounted harness, and azure bridle-reins glittered in the golden sunlight. Among the blue satin cushions sat a lady and a gentleman, the latter a dark, handsome, prince-looking man, whom he recognized instantly as St. Leon Le Roy. Beside him sat a young beauty, in the daintiest Parisian bonnet and toilet, smiles on her lips, love in her eyes, peerless loveliness on the face lifted so tenderly to St. Leon's. Ross Powell gave one quick look into that beautiful face, and gasped, like one dying:

"Laurel Vane!"

St. Leon saw the man trudging in the dust, and touched his hat courteously. Laurel saw him, and her young face whitened to the hue of death. Ross Powell did not return the gentleman's bow, did not move nor speak; he only stood still in the road, like one dazed, while the dazzling equipage whirled past him and covered him with dust.

The echoing sound of the wheels, that seemed to roll over his heart, died away; the dust-cloud slowly lowered and sunk to its kindred earth again. During those moments he had stood stock-still, like one dead, staring blindly before him. He roused himself like one awakened from a painful dream, and, turning, gazed down the road.

He was too late! The dainty equipage, with its daintier mistress and handsome master, had gone out of sight like a dream. He was alone in the golden glow of the beautiful sunset, the soft sound of the river in his ears, his heart on fire with the memory of that lovely face that had flashed on him suddenly like a star out of blackest night.

"Laurel Vane! And by St. Leon Le Roy's side! What does it mean?" he asked himself.

He went over in his mind every detail of the beautiful, happy face, the rich dress, the shining jewels she wore. Only the richest ladies in New York wore such things as these, he knew. Why did Laurel Vane have them? How came she to be sitting by St. Leon Le Roy's side—one of the proudest, richest men in the State?

He sat down on the grassy river bank, and tried to collect his thoughts. He was all at sea; he could not understand.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

There was no longer any fear that Mrs. Le Roy would die. She was better. She was rapidly convalescing.

St. Leon was very happy over her recovery.

He had not known how well he loved his mother until the dread of her loss hung over him. He had been sad and gloomy over the prospect of losing her. He was light-hearted and jubilant now over her convalescence.

Not the least happiness was that his mother, with all the fancifulness of an invalid, ascribed her recovery to her daughter-in-law's devoted care and nursing. She would not give any credit to the physicians who had exhausted the skill of the Esculapian art for her benefit. She declared that the paid nurses were a set of careless, neglectful dolts. She was quite sure that she must have perished among them but for the love and care of her son's wife.

St. Leon and his wife both knew that the invalid was unjust to her faithful attendants, and that really they had done all they could to hasten her recovery. But they could not help being pleased and happy over her affectionate fiction; and, indeed, Laurel had devoted herself, with unsparing love and patience, to St. Leon's mother. When care and skill had failed, she had gone on her knees in prayer, though it often crossed her mind that, perhaps, God would not hear the pleadings of one who was herself living a dreadful lie of which she could not repent, because she was so blissfully happy that she could not realize the enormity of her sin.

But all doubt was over now. The gloomy shadow of the death-angel's wing no longer hung over Eden. The physicians declared that Mrs. Le Roy would live, and Mrs. Le Roy declared that her daughter-in-law had saved her life. No one gainsaid her, for they saw that the fancy made her happier, and St. Leon, if possible, loved his wife more passionately than before for her devotion to his mother.

When the long strain of fear and anxiety was over, they began to see that the faithful nurse had suffered somewhat in her tireless vigils by the couch of pain. She was thinner and paler, her eyes looked wide and dark and sombre, just as they did when, almost a year ago, now, she had first come down to Eden.

When St. Leon's terrible anxiety over his mother was dispelled, he began to be alarmed over his wife. It struck him that she was not looking well and scarcely happy.

"My darling, you have worn yourself out in tender cares for my mother," he said. "I have been selfish to allow it. But I did not think! You should have been more careful over yourself! But she is better now, and you must relegate the cares of the sick-room to others, while you go out with me and brighten your faded roses."

A strange mournful smile quivered over the beautiful face.

"I must not leave her yet," she said, "she would miss me so much. She loves me."

He could not understand the wistful pathos that trembled in the tone. He believed that her wearisome confinement to the sick-room had saddened her spirits.

"She loves you," he cried, catching her in his arms, and kissing the pale face until it glowed with tender blushes. "Who does not love you, my own, my peerless Beatrix? You are the queen of love and beauty! I worship you as the lovely incarnation of all that is best and purest in your sex! And, deeply as I loved you before, I shall always love you better for your devotion to my mother!"

"Always?" she murmured, and again it seemed to him there was a ring of pathos that was almost pleading in the low, sweet voice. It confirmed him in his belief that she was saddened and overwrought by her wearisome confinement in the sick-chamber.

"Always, my darling. Can you doubt it?" he said, looking fondly into the wistful dark eyes, as he held her in his arms.

"I will not doubt it. I will be happy as long as I can," she answered, with a sort of desperation.

That day when they sat by Mrs. Le Roy's couch together, she began herself to realize the change that had come over her son's wife. She missed the roses from the delicate cheeks, the brightness from the eyes, but most of all, the happy smile from the red lips. It even seemed to her that they had a wistful, pathetic droop.

"I have been selfish over my daughter," she said, repentantly. "She has broken herself down waiting on me. Beatrix, my darling, can you forgive me for being such a selfish, thoughtless, old woman?"

"There is nothing to forgive," she answered. "I have not felt any weariness, and I have been only too happy to be with you and to care for you."

"You are a dear, unselfish child," cried Mrs. Le Roy, "but I don's intend to be so unreasonable again. You must leave me with the nurses now that I am better, and go out with your husband riding and driving again. I want to see the roses back in your face and the light in your eyes. And, St. Leon, you must write to the Gordons, and ask them to come and make us a visit."

"Oh, for Heaven's sake, do not ask them," Laurel cried out with such sudden energy and passion that they were startled. Her face was deathly white with the shock she had received. They looked at her in surprise.

"My dear, I do not think you understood my mother," said her husband. "She wishes to invite your parents to visit you. Should you not be pleased to have them come?"

She saw that in her terror she had almost betrayed her horrible fear of the Gordons.

"I understood," she faltered. "I only meant—meant that it would be better not to ask them just yet, until your mother is better—until she is able to go out some. I would be pleasanter for all, would it not?"

They agreed with her that it would be pleasanter for all parties, but they did not want to tax her patience too much. It seemed only natural that she should be longing to see her mother.

"I might take you up to New York for a day or two," St. Leon suggested.

And again the beautiful face grew ghastly pale with fear and dread.

"No, I should not like that," she said, "I would prefer to have them come here. But let us wait a few days before we invite them."

She left them and went away to her own private room, locked the door, and threw herself down on her couch in a perfect passion of despair. The coils of fate were narrowing around her. She could not escape from the web her own hands had woven. A few hours or days at most, and then detection, shame, ignominy, perhaps banishment. The thought quivered like a sword-point in her heart.

"Will he forgive me, or will he send me away from him?" she asked herself, fearfully.

She sat up and looked with dazed, heavy eyes at the elegance and luxury with which his love had surrounded her—at the diamonds on her hands, at her rich and costly robes—all mute tokens of the adoration in which he held her.

"He loves me so dearly, perhaps he will forgive me," she whispered to her beating heart. "I know if he had wronged me ever so bitterly, I should forgive him and love him still if he prayed me on his bended knees, as I shall do."

She pinned all her faith to the strength of his love and the power of that beauty on which he never wearied of gazing. She grew suddenly alarmed at the pallor of her face and the heaviness of her eyes. She thought that her beauty was deserting her, that potent charm by which she hoped to hold his heart when he found her out in her sin.

"I must go out, indeed," she cried to herself, in sudden terror; "I must get back my brightness and my color. I cannot afford to lose one charm that may hold my husband's heart!"

She forgot that he valued truth and honor more than mere physical loveliness—she forgot that he had scorned all womanhood for long years because one beautiful woman had been false to him. She could think of nothing but her anguished yearning not to lose her husband.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

That day on which Ross Powell saw Laurel with her husband was the last of a series of happy walks and rides she had taken with St. Leon.

On that day that closed in so softly with the goldenest sunshine and tenderest twilight, that day seemed too fair for a day of fate, the suspended sword fell.

Yet she had never felt its shadow less than she did that day. She gave herself up blindly to her happiness, prizing it all the more because she knew it could not last. When she went to dress for her drive that evening she was most particular about her toilet. She chose a Parisian robe of cream and ruby colors, that was particularly becoming. Her bonnet was of creamy duchess lace, and its coronet of pale-pink rosebuds rested daintily against her rich golden waves of hair. The delicate lace at her throat was held by a gold bar set with pink coral and diamonds. Her boots and gloves were Parisian; her rose satin parasol shed a lovely glow over her pearl-fair complexion.

She was lovely as a dream, and she looked the dainty aristocrat from head to foot. St. Leon Le Roy said to himself with pardonable pride that he had won the most beautiful woman in the world for his wife.

She had never enjoyed a ride more than she did that afternoon. St. Leon had never been more tender and devoted. It was like heaven to look up into those dark, speaking eyes and read the love and adoration in his face. It filled her with a great passionate rapture and delight. She worshipped her noble husband with the blindest, most unreasoning passion woman's heart ever knew. In him she "lived and moved and had her being."

She had forgotten for a little while the brooding shadow of the sword that hung over her head. The sunshine was reflected in her eyes, smiles were on her lips, when suddenly like a thunder-bolt falling from a clear sky, the sight of Ross Powell's face came before her—that evil face which she both hated and dreaded, remembering how he had sworn to be revenged on her for her just womanly scorn.

In that moment the sun went out of her sky, the light went out of her life. She stifled the wail of dismay that rose to her lips, and sunk back among the satin cushions pale as death, her breath coming and going in great panting gasps, a mute terror in the depths of her wide, dark eyes.

He recognized her. She read that in the wonder and amaze that flashed over his face. What would he do? she asked herself. She almost expected to see him spring to her horses' heads, and, checking them with a grasp of his infuriated hands, charge her then and there with her sin.

He did nothing of the sort. He only stood and stared like a man turned to a stone while they whirled past him. St. Leon touched his hat courteously, and in a moment it was all over. They had turned a bend in the road, and the man standing there, ignobly covered with the dust of their carriage-wheels, was out of sight.

St. Leon turned to his wife.

"It is your father's clerk—is it not?" he was saying; but he paused, stricken dumb by the sight of her face. He was startled and frightened. It was a moment before speech came to him. Then he cried out in alarm: "Beatrix, my darling, what is it? You are as pale as a ghost. Are you ill?"

Her voice sounded faint and far-off, even to herself, as she answered him.

"I felt a sudden pain in my heart. Do not be alarmed, St. Leon. I shall recover in a moment."

He watched her anxiously, and he saw that she did not recover herself very fast. She tried hard to shake off the terrible weight that oppressed her heart, and to be her own natural self for the few last moments that were all that remained to her of the happiness that had been so perfect and so brief.

But she could not do it; she could not summon back the color to her face, the smiles to her lips, the brightness to her eyes. She could not still the wild, terrified beating of her heart. She felt a terrible choking sensation, like one dying. When she spoke, her voice had a strange sound even to herself.

Mr. Le Roy was frightened over his darling. He did not think of connecting her sudden seizure with the appearance of Ross Powell. He had forgotten the man's very existence in his anxiety.

When he reached home he almost carried her into the house in his arms. He brought wine to her with his own hands. It was only when he saw that it had revived her and made her better, that he left her to the care of the little be-ribboned French maid.

(To be continued.)

Northwest Notes.

Advices to-day say Killam's appointment as judge has been confirmed by the Governor-in-Council.

The Reform Association also met and unanimously selected W. T. Luxton, of the *Free Press*, to contest South Winnipeg with the Tory nominee. Their meeting was enthusiastic and united.

The officers of the Farmers' Union are issuing a circular calling a general convention for March 4th. The union is dissatisfied with Norquay's delay regarding better terms, and is determined to take such measures as may be deemed necessary to assert Provincial rights.

A last (Wednesday) night's Winnipeg despatch says: Mayor Hamilton was sworn in as Attorney-General to-day. The Conservative Association met to-night, and the "Old Guard," incensed at the attempt of Norquay and the junior associates to force Hamilton upon them, nominated H. M. Howell, Q.C., for South Winnipeg. The meeting was very stormy. The two factions are bitterly hostile. It is not known at present what the Government and disaffected section of the Conservatives will do.

Give the Cats Grass to Eat.

Dr. Hale, of Chicago, a devoted admirer of cats, states that puss "will never thrive without grass to eat. It is a panacea for all their ills; keeps the stomach in order, cools the blood, prevents humors and aids digestion. It is supposed to aid in getting rid of the hairs swallowd during the process of washing. During the winter it can be procured by keeping a piece of turf in the cellar or hothouse, or it may be cultivated in a flower pot. Cats are fond of asparagus, which many persons raise especially for them, and their natural preference for catnip will suggest a like course. A cat should be washed regularly with warm water and mild soap, dried with towels and kept in a warm place to prevent cold. For state occasions, if the fur be lightly sponged with sweet cream, pussy will polish her coat up to its pristine beauty." The doctor goes on at length about the various diseases to which cats are subject, and the proper remedies. He also discusses with gravity the great question of cats' diet.

How to Talk to a Boston Baby.

A New Yorker who happened to be in Boston for a day availed himself of the opportunity to make a social call. He was shown into the parlor, and while waiting there a nurse entered with a little baby in her arms.

"Ity pity tootsey wootsey," said the New Yorker, addressing his conversation to the infant. "oozy, boozy, goozy, nooz—"

At this juncture the child set up a howl that made a steel engraving of Emerson rattle against the wall.

"I'm afraid she doesn't understand you, sir," remarked the nurse. "There, there, Penelope," she said soothingly, "and were you alarmed at a combination of circumstances over which you had no control that led to the unexpected appearance of a strange gentleman?"

At this the screwed-up expression on the child's face relaxed, her sobs ceased, and she slumbered.

Dominion Alliance.

The Alliance discussed at Ottawa on Saturday a resolution affirming total prohibition as the best policy for the country. A long and earnest discussion also took place on the resolution, "That the time had come when Parliament ought to pass such legislation." It was supported in speeches made by J. R. Spence, Rev. John Wood, Rev. Lucas, Rev. B. B. Keefer, and opposed by Prof. Foster, M.P., Noah Shakespeare, M.P., S. A. Fisher, M.P., and A. H. Gillmor, M.P. The result of the discussion was the adoption of the motion by 13 to 9.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, Senator Vidal; Chairman of the Executive, Professor Foster; Solicitor, John J. McLaren, Q.C., Toronto; Treasurer, Geo. May, Ottawa; Corresponding Secretary and Parliamentary Agent, Rev. John Wood, Ottawa; Recording Secretary, A. P. McDiarmid, Ottawa.

From Behind the Horns.

Landlady — Do you find your steak tender, Mr. Dumby? If not I will—

Dumby (who was wakened at 5 o'clock that morning by the cook pounding it)—Er—it might be well to let the cook hit it a few more times, I think.

Gen. Stewart is not only thorough in routine business, as a good many soldiers are not, but he is remarkably shrewd and enterprising. Some years ago, in peaceful times, he foresaw an extension of the fashionable quarters of London. So he organized a syndicate, bought up all the small and uncomfortable houses around Hans place, London, extended and renovated some, and tore down others, and substituted a lot of handsome residences, and he made a considerable sum of money the venture.

The Mormon temple at Salt Lake will yet require more than four years for its completion, and will cost $3,000,000.

The great value which tilling adds to land is shown in the case of the onion tract at Chester, in Orange county, N.Y., which once was a worthless piece of ground, but is now said to be worth $1,000 an acre. Last season 120,000 bushels of onions were grown on these meadows, and were sold, it is stated, for more than $120,000. This season's crop is expected to be larger.