

A BLUE GRASS PENELOPE.

BY BRET HARTE.

CHAPTER V.

The two men kept their secret. Mr. Poindexter convinced Mrs. Tucker that the sale of Los Cuervos could not be effected...

Meanwhile the winter rains had ceased. It seemed to her as if the clouds had suddenly one night struck their white tents and stolen away, leaving the unvanquished sun to mount the vacant sky the next morning...

"If you do not wish the inquiry carried on," he began, "of course—" "What does it matter to me?" she said coolly. "Do as you please."

"Ah, yes, a soldier of the law—what you call an oficial de policia—a chief of gendarmes, my sister; but not a gentleman—a camarero to protect a lady."

Mr. Tucker would have uttered a hasty reply, but the perfect and good natured simplicity of Dona Clara withheld her. Nevertheless she treated Don Jose with a certain reserve at their next meeting...

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"That's the way to take it," said the woman putting her own good-humored interpretation upon Mrs. Tucker's expression. "Now look here! I'll tell you all about it. She carefully selected the most comfortable chair and sitting down, lightly crossed her hands in her lap..."

"You kin bet your whole pile on what this Mrs. Captin, Baxter, as used to be French Inke of New Orleans—her told ye. Ye can take everything she's onloaded. And its only doin' the square thing to her to say she kin't do it out of her own edness, but just to satisfy herself, now she's married..."

"You want to say," she interrupted coolly. "that you are not friends, I see. Is that the reason you have avoided this house?" she continued, gently.

A quick shadow passed over Mr. Tucker's face. "Indeed!" she said, coldly. "Then I am to believe that you prefer to spend your leisure moments in looking after that creature if an in calling here?"

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Nevertheless, half an hour later, as he was leaving, she said, with a certain hesitating timidity, "Do not leave me so much as to leave—and let that woman go."

"It don't look much like it did two years ago," said the stranger cheerfully. "You've improved it wonderfully."

"Well—go on, then," said the woman laughing and nudging him. "Go on—introduce me—can't you? Don't stand there like a tomb stone. You won't? Well, I'll introduce myself."

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there, nor had he ever sailed from Monterey. "But why was this not told me before?" said Mrs. Tucker, suddenly, "I was almost certain, turning from the one to the other, 'that this had been kept from me.'"

"Well," said Mrs. Tucker, breathlessly. "Well," said Patterson, with the resigned tone of an accustomed martyr, "I reckon I'm a God-forsaken idiot, but I reckon he did come yer. And mebbe I'm that much dumber."

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