

Be Good to Yourself.

"Good-Bye," the driver said.
As the coach went off in whirl
[And the coachman bowed his handsome head]
"Be good to yourself, my girl."

Song of the Roses.

We come at the birth of day on earth.
When the summer days are long.
When the more is ushered in with mirth.
And the eve is closed with song.

The Mate of the Desdemona.

"I wonder what is your definition
of a brave woman?"
The speaker lay in an attitude
of careless ease on the deck of a merchant ship

of Farncombe the manager of the theatre.
"Who knows her then?" asked the first speaker curiously.

"No, I had a slight acquaintance with her father—a very nice fellow.
He died in the Summer of some fever, caught while visiting a poor person.
He was Rector of Chilling—you know where that is?—three or four miles from here.

"I wonder what is your definition of a brave woman?"
The speaker lay in an attitude of careless ease on the deck of a merchant ship lying at anchor in an Australian port.

Robert Alleyne goes with us again—for the sake of my company, he says.
I am glad of this. Wish me bon voyage.
Mother, my thoughts are with you in all and through all.

Robert Alleyne leant on the bulwarks of the Desdemona, looking with dark, dreamy eyes at the white cliffs fading rapidly from sight as the ship sped on.

"It is almost over, dear friend."
A look of intense agony met the sick man's upturned gaze.

and a doctor's care," wept Meg, despairingly.
"I am but a burden to you, darling," was the wistful answer.

The family were living in Ripston now, in a dingy little house, one of many such in a narrow street.
Gilbert had sent home his earnings for the outward trip. These, with Meg's slender salary and a trifle Kate earned by taking plain needle work, were all the helpless family had to live upon.

"Darling may I give my mother another daughter, as Meg gives her another son?"
Even if he had not heard the slow reply, the glimpse he caught of the laughing, happy eyes would have been answer enough.

then become Lord Burleigh, which induced him to travel to London.
His wife accompanied him. Although he had been at great pains to have his wife educated and taught accomplishments, tradition still describes her as ignorant of her rank; and, therefore, she felt surprised at the reception which they met with at the great houses of nobles and commoners on the road.

What a Christmas that was. What fires roared in the cramped chimneys of the dingy house. What savory feasts Kate's dextrous hand prepared.
And amid it all they did not forget those poor ones to whose suffering no bright end had come. Many a crumpled basket found its way to the sad hearts and desolate homes.

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Mr. Pitt in a frolic—Great men need to unbend and have a good frolic, as well as other people.
The younger, William Pitt, was noted for dignity of person and for power of overawing associates. But he could play as well as rule.

How eagerly they listened when Mr. Alleyne told the story of how Gilbert had brought the ship and cargo safely home himself, after the skipper died, and the first mate, like Mr. Alleyne, lay sick; and of how his uncle, the owners, had presented Gilbert with the command of one of their finest ships, together with a purse of gold and a gold chronometer, adding that the whole affair was published in the London newspaper.

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"The weekly payment will be better to us than the quarterly," she thought, as she walked away, trying to tell herself she was glad.

"She will make a fortune with that face and voice," said the manager to himself, as he closed the door after her. It had no need of persuasion to this. It was glad.

It was quite dark when Meg got home. She let herself in quietly. The children were still at play in the upper room. Meg went to the door of the sitting room and turned the handle. A single gas jet from the fire showed her the figure of her sister standing before the hearth with something in her hand. The only way she was crying on the rug, but she did not seem to hear him.

"Come," she said, sharply, gasping for breath—"come and open this I dare not—I have waited for you. Come, open it quick, quick, or I shall die! It is just come."

Meg sprang forward and took what she held forth. It was a large blue envelope, with a strange seal, and addressed to Mrs. Langston, the Rectory, Chilling.

"Mamma, be calm—sit down," she urged. "Open it," uttered the white lips. Meg bent forward to the flames and obeyed, her hands trembling. She read the missive in silence—she could not read it aloud while her heart throbbed madly, and the blood rushed swiftly through her veins, and her brain was hot and dizzy. Mrs. Langston sat cowering with her eyes covered. Meg's hand fell on her shoulder.

"Be brave, old fellow," he whispered. "It was a skipper you buried just now, was it not? I shall be next. Tell her I loved her to the last; her face has been in my dreams so often, lately—her name will be the last on my lips. She will think of me sometimes in the days to come."

"I trust you will get safely to England, Gilbert. The craft is in your hands—the skipper gone—the first mate down with this pitiless fever. Please God, the sea man will be spared. You are a good seaman, Gilbert—you do not fear?"

"It is very easy for me to go, Gilbert; I do not suffer. I am anxious for you, or I would have perfect peace. They are waiting and watching for you—no one will miss me."

The gale was coming up with fearful strength. "Deep call unto deep." Waves mountain high lashed each other with terrible wrath. Breasting the storm rode a ship, laboring more and more as the night advanced. Bronzed cheeks grew pale when the masts fell away and the rent rigging came down upon the deck.

One among the little crew walked amid them fearless where all was fear—him who yet bore on his calm face the lingering light of his boyhood's grace. He walked among them, bidding them work while there was hope, urging, encouraging the rough men whose hearts he held by the power of his brave and true words. As the night wore on there was a sudden alarm, and fearful words were spoken by one with white lips.

"The ship has sprung a leak!" "All hands to the pumps! Boys, keep a good heart, for the sake of those at home!" They needed to do so. But for him they had never done it. So the night wore on, with the storm and the darkness. Would the day ever dawn for them?

The firelight flickered softly on the walls of a little room, the red carpet and moreen curtains of which, despite their thread-bare shabbiness, gave an air of warmth and home-comfort to the apartment. On a sofa lay a lady in a widow's cap. She looked very fragile; but the lines round the mouth and the shadow on the forehead told of the heart's weariness more than the body's sickness—very weary it was sometimes.

"Oh, mamma! Kate! he is coming home—now—Gilbert, I mean! He only received our letter about dear papa two months ago. He does not say much about it, only a few sad words. And, mamma, he is bringing some one with him—the friend of whom he wrote before—Mr. Alleyne."

Gilbert's leave was up—the Desdemona was taut and ready for sea, bound for Java. Robert Alleyne had left his friend's home about a fortnight before. Meg, who had begged a holiday of her employers for the last day of her brother's stay, walked to the Chilling station with him. In these last moments a secret trembled on her lips many times before it found utterance.

"Gilbert," came at last, half sadly, half shyly, "I ought to tell you that Mr. Alleyne—Meg came to a pause. Gilbert looked at her quickly.

"I think I can guess the rest, Meg. Robert Alleyne has asked you to be his wife," he said. "And I have refused," she said, with an effort.

"Not too hard. You must not pity me; you, too, have to bear. Gilbert, I have known your secret long." "Guard it well, Meg; it is an untold secret yet," he said, solemnly. "Now, good bye. Let me have one smile to take across the sea. God keep us all—ill we meet again!" "I'll see you again!" repeated the girl, trying to still her heart's wild beating as she watched him away. "My Father, give me strength till then."

"I wonder what is your definition of a brave woman?"

"I do," he answered bitterly; "my life for ten years past has been an empty existence through the lack of that one virtue in a woman."

"I can picture your home, Gilbert," he said at length, musingly—"a sunny-fronted rectory, wherein loving and tender memories of you are among the dearest pleasures—where every book you ever read, every song you ever sung, are held in reverence. I should like to know your people. If ever we go back to England do you think they would welcome me for your sake?"

"They would welcome you for your own, old fellow."

"It must be pleasant to have some one thinking of a fellow when he is 'way in perils by sea,'" murmured the elder man, wistfully. "It must be pleasant to look forward to a home and woman's loving welcome at the end of the peril."

"I wonder who she is," said one gentleman to another as they walked leisurely up and down beneath the shelter of the shed. "She is governess to the children."