

AT THE GATE.
And where were you just now, Mabel?
Where have you been so long?
The moon is bright, and the stars are
Have you sung that evening song,
I have you following down the path,
So loudly and so long,
Boys and the well and lilac bush,
And hanging by the gate.
I love to hear the birds, mother,
And see the tiny things,
And, oh! the summer air is sweet
Beneath the sky of June.
My cow is milked, my hens are cooped,
And washed are cup and plate,
And so I wandered out awhile
To hang upon the gate.
The gate is by the road, Mabel,
And idles folk go by;
Now should a maiden brook the glance
Of every straggling eye.
Besides, I thought I saw a cap—
You sure you had a mate?
So tell me who was with you, child,
Just hanging at the gate.
Now you know just as well, mother,
Two only Harry Gray;
He spoke such a nice word to-night
I know not what to say.
And, mother, oh, for your dear sake,
Do not, I beg, go to the gate,
And say I run and tell him now?
He's hanging at the gate.

MOLLY BAWN.
BY THE AUTHOR OF "PHYLIS."
"Oh! Molly Bawn, why leave me pining,
All lonely waiting here for you."—*Old Song.*
"Well, I don't think," emphasizing each word with a most solemn nod, "it would come off your mousetraps in a hurry."
"I'll risk it, anyhow," says Lettice, stooping suddenly to impress a fervent kiss upon the little powdered fingers he is holding.
"Oh! how proud, how extremely proud of you!" exclaims Miss Massereene, as successfully shocked as though the thought that he might be tempted to kiss her had never occurred to her. Yet, true to her nature, she makes no faintest pretence at withdrawing from him her hand until a full minute has elapsed. Then, unable longer to restrain herself, she bursts into a merry laugh—a laugh as sweetest, clearest music.
"If you could only see how funny you look," cries she. "You are fair with a vengeance now. Ah! do go and see for yourself." Giving him a gentle push toward an ancient glass that hangs inconspicuously near the clock, and thereby leaving another betraying mark upon the shoulder of his coat.
Luttrell, having duly admired himself and given it as his opinion that though flour on the arms may be effective flour on the face is not, has barely time to wipe a moustache from his eye, when Mrs. Massereene enters.
"You here," exclaims she, staring at Tedcastle, "of all places in the world! I owe I am amazed. Oh, if your brother offers could only see you now, and you coat all over flour! I need hardly inquire what is Molly's singing. Poor boy!" with a laugh. "It is a shame, Molly, you are never happy unless you are tormenting some one."
"But I always make it up to them afterwards, don't I now, Letty?" murmurs Molly, sidling up to Lettice, and directing a dark glance at Luttrell from under her long dark lashes; this side-glance is almost a promise. "Well, so you come at last, Letty. And how did you enjoy your nice, long, happy day in the country, as the children say."
"Very much indeed—far more than I expected. The Mitchells were there, which added a little to our liveliness."
"And my poor old nunny, was he there? And is he still holding together?"
"Letty, I'm not sure, but he was asking most tenderly for you. I never saw him look so well."
"Oh! it grows absurd," says Molly, in disgust. "How much longer does he intend keeping up the farce? He must fall to pieces some day."
"He hasn't a notion of it," says Lettice, warming to her description; "he has taken a new lease of life. He looked only too well—positively ten years younger. I think myself he was done up. I could see his coat was made and his hair trimmed his head with a very strong brown wax."
"Jane," says Molly, weakly, "he so good as stand close behind me. I feel as if I were going to faint directly."
"Law, miss!" says Jane, giving way to her own exclamation. She is indeed, and her soul where pots and pans are concerned, but apart from them can scarcely be termed eloquent.
"You are busy, Jane," says Mr. Luttrell, obligingly, "and I am not. I see you are washing up the long and the short of it. Let me take a little trouble off your hands. I will stand close behind Miss Massereene."
"He had quite a color, too," goes on Lettice, mysteriously, "a very extraordinary color. Not that of an old man, nor yet of a young one, and I am sure it is not the pink of it. It was a vivid, uncompromising red; so that I think the poor old thing's valet must have overdone his work, for fun. Wasn't it cruel?"
"Are you ready, Jane?" murmurs Molly, with increasing weakness.
"Quite ready, miss," returns Luttrell, with hopeful promptness.
"I asked John on the way home what he thought," goes on Lettice, with an evident interest in her tale, "and he quite agrees with me that it was a rage, or at all events something artificial."
"One more word, Lettice," faintly—"a last one. Has he had that sole remaining touch in the front of his mouth made steady?"
"No," cries Mrs. Massereene, triumphantly, "he has not. Do you not remember that awful tooth? It is literally the only thing left undone, and I can't imagine why. It still waggles uncomfortably when he talks, and his upper lip has the same old trick of catching on it and refusing to come down again until compelled. Sir John was there, and took me to luncheon; and as I sat just opposite Lord Rosmere I could see distinctly. I particularly noticed that."
"You have answered me," cries Molly, briskly, "but you have never been told that I was, I would not have hesitated for a moment; and you would have gone off into a dreadful swoon. Thank you, Jane, with a backward nod at Luttrell, whom she has refused to recognize; "I need not detain you any longer."
"Mrs. Massereene, I shall never forgive you," says Lettice, "for the way you entertain your guests, Molly!" she kisses Lettice. "Have you spent your day in the kitchen?"
"The society of the upper ten is not good for you, Lettice," says Molly, severely. "There is a little flavor of sarcasm about her remarks, and it doesn't suit you in the least; your lips have not got the correct curve. No, my dear; although unnoticed by the nobility of our land, we too, have had our nice, long, happy day in the country. Haven't we, Mr. Luttrell?"
"Do you think he would dare say no with your eyes upon him?" says Lettice, laughing. "By and by I shall hear the truth. Come with me"—to Tedcastle—"and have a glass of sherry before your dinner; I am sure you must want it, after all you have gone through."

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"If I must confess it, I have been thinking of how unkind a luxury at this moment would be an iced bath."
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"No material advantage, but they would be of any disadvantage." "Were you?" "Really?" "With such overpowering interest as induces him to raise himself on his elbow, the better to see her. "You were thinking—that?"
"Don't excite yourself. I was wondering whether, when you were a baby, your nose—in proportion, of course—was as lengthy and solemn as it is now."
"Pshaw!" mutters Mr. Luttrell, angrily, and goes back to his original position.
"If it was," pursues Molly, with a ruthless and amused laugh, "you must have been an awfully funny baby to look at." She appears to find infinite amusement in this idea for a full minute, after which follows a disgusted silence that might have lasted an hour, but for the sound of approaching footsteps.
Looking up simultaneously, they perceive Lettice coming towards them, with Sarah behind, carrying a tray, on which are cups, and small round cakes, and plates of strawberries.
"I have brought you your tea at last," cries Lettice, looking like some great fairy goddess, with her large figure and stately walk and benign expression, as she bears down upon them. "The long way off, but your her voice comes to them clear and distinct, without any suspicion of shouting. She is smiling benevolently, and has a delicious pink color in her cheeks.
"We thought you had forgotten us," says Molly, springing to her feet with a sudden return of animation. "But you have come in excellent time, as we were on the very brink of a quarrel that would have disgraced the Kilkenny cats. And what have you brought us? Tea, and strawberries, and dear little round cakes!" Oh, Letty, how I love you!"
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"Before you go any farther," says Luttrell, "I won't have that plate. Nothing shall induce me. So you may spare your trouble."
"You may go without any," says Molly, self-intending eating all the other for the tray.
"Mrs. Massereene, you are my only friend. I appeal to you; is it fair? Just look at all she is keeping for herself. If I die for it, she will get my rights," exclaims Tedcastle, gazed into activity, and, springing from his reclined position, he is straight for the tray. There is a short but decisive battle; and then, victory being decided in favor of Luttrell, he makes a successful raid upon the fruit, and retires covered with glory and a good deal of juice.
"Coward, I never won't pay you out for this!" cries Molly, indignantly.
"I wouldn't use school-boy slang if I were you," returns Luttrell, with provoking coolness, and an evident, irritating, appreciation of the fruit.
Fortunately for all parties, at this moment John appears upon the scene.
"It is wonderful," says he, sinking on the grass under the weak impression that he is imparting information.
"I think there is thunder in the air," says Lettice, with a mischievous glance at the late combatants, at which they laugh in spite of themselves.
"Are you all my dear; you are remaining," says John, "and you are remaining."
"Yes; I am in a hurry; I cannot listen—now," says his benevolent, unable to relax.
"Some other time—when you know me better—you will listen then; is that what you mean?" still detaining her with passionate earnest both in tone and manner. "Molly, give me one word of hope."
"Are you now what you mean," she says, effecting her escape, and moving back to the obscurity of the drawing-room window, which stands open. "I never do know. And I have not got the least bit of memory in the world. Do you know I came out here to tell you tea was to be brought out in under the trees on the lawn; and when I saw you I forgot everything. Is that a hopeful sign?" with a playful smile.
"I will try to think so; and—don't go yet, Molly," seeing her about to enter the drawing-room, and to be on the lawn, it is there we ought to go."
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"I will have no buts. Promise what I ask, or I will hide myself from you for the rest of the day."
"I swear, then," says he, and, so protected, Miss Massereene ventures down the balcony steps, and goes off into a dreadful swoon.
By this time it is nearly five o'clock, and as yet oppressively warm. The evening is coming with a determination to rival in heat the early part of the day. The sheep in great numbers are gathered in the distant corners of the adjoining fields; the cows, tired of whisking their foolish tails in an unsuccessful war with the insatiable flies, are all huddled together, and give way to mournful lows that reach the tarrying milkmaid.
Above in the branches of tiny birch essays to sing, but stops half stilled, and forgetting the useful note, contents itself with a lazy cluck that presently degenerates still further into a dying coo that is hardly musical, because so full of sleep.
Molly had seated herself upon the soft young grass beneath the shade of a mighty beech, against the friendly trunk of which she leans her back. Even this short walk from the house to the six stately beeches that are the pride and glory of Brooklyns has told upon her. A gently merry eye has subsided into a gentle languor; over them the white lids droop heavily. No little faintest tinge of color adorns her pale cheeks; upon her lap her hands lie idle, their very listlessness betokening the want of energy they feel.
At about two yards distance from her reclining herself, her feet, her fingers interlaced behind her head, looking longer, sligher than usual, as with eyes upturned he gazes in silence upon the far-off, never-changing blue showing through the network of the leaves above him.
"Oh! why could you not," says Molly, in the slow, indifferently tone that belongs to heat, as the crisp, gay voice belongs to cold. "I never heard you sing for so long before. Do you think you are likely to die? Because—don't do it, please; it would give me such a shock."
"I am far more afraid I shall live," replies her companion. "Oh, how I loathe the summer!"

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Molly had seated herself upon the soft young grass beneath the shade of a mighty beech, against the friendly trunk of which she leans her back. Even this short walk from the house to the six stately beeches that are the pride and glory of Brooklyns has told upon her. A gently merry eye has subsided into a gentle languor; over them the white lids droop heavily. No little faintest tinge of color adorns her pale cheeks; upon her lap her hands lie idle, their very listlessness betokening the want of energy they feel.
At about two yards distance from her reclining herself, her feet, her fingers interlaced behind her head, looking longer, sligher than usual, as with eyes upturned he gazes in silence upon the far-off, never-changing blue showing through the network of the leaves above him.
"Oh! why could you not," says Molly, in the slow, indifferently tone that belongs to heat, as the crisp, gay voice belongs to cold. "I never heard you sing for so long before. Do you think you are likely to die? Because—don't do it, please; it would give me such a shock."
"I am far more afraid I shall live," replies her companion. "Oh, how I loathe the summer!"

"You are not so far gone as I feared; you can still use bad language. Now, tell me what sweet thought has held you in thrall so long."
"If I must confess it, I have been thinking of how unkind a luxury at this moment would be an iced bath."
"An iced bath!" With a most contemptuous look she looks at him. "How prosaic! And I quite flattered myself you were thinking of me." She says this as calmly as though she had supposed him thinking of his dinner.
"Tedcastle's lips part in a faint smile, a mere glimmer—a laugh is beyond him—and he turns his head just so far round as will permit his eyes to fall full upon her face.
"I fancied such thoughts on my part tabooed," he says. "And, besides, would they be of any advantage to you?"
"No material advantage, but they would be of any disadvantage." "Were you?" "Really?" "With such overpowering interest as induces him to raise himself on his elbow, the better to see her. "You were thinking—that?"
"Don't excite yourself. I was wondering whether, when you were a baby, your nose—in proportion, of course—was as lengthy and solemn as it is now."
"Pshaw!" mutters Mr. Luttrell, angrily, and goes back to his original position.
"If it was," pursues Molly, with a ruthless and amused laugh, "you must have been an awfully funny baby to look at." She appears to find infinite amusement in this idea for a full minute, after which follows a disgusted silence that might have lasted an hour, but for the sound of approaching footsteps.
Looking up simultaneously, they perceive Lettice coming towards them, with Sarah behind, carrying a tray, on which are cups, and small round cakes, and plates of strawberries.
"I have brought you your tea at last," cries Lettice, looking like some great fairy goddess, with her large figure and stately walk and benign expression, as she bears down upon them. "The long way off, but your her voice comes to them clear and distinct, without any suspicion of shouting. She is smiling benevolently, and has a delicious pink color in her cheeks.
"We thought you had forgotten us," says Molly, springing to her feet with a sudden return of animation. "But you have come in excellent time, as we were on the very brink of a quarrel that would have disgraced the Kilkenny cats. And what have you brought us? Tea, and strawberries, and dear little round cakes!" Oh, Letty, how I love you!"
"So do I," says Luttrell. "Mrs. Massereene, may I sit beside you?"
"For protection?" asks she, with a laugh.
"In the meantime Molly has arranged the tray before her, and is busily engaged placing all the sweet and savory and the smallest cake on one plate.
"Before you go any farther," says Luttrell, "I won't have that plate. Nothing shall induce me. So you may spare your trouble."
"You may go without any," says Molly, self-intending eating all the other for the tray.
"Mrs. Massereene, you are my only friend. I appeal to you; is it fair? Just look at all she is keeping for herself. If I die for it, she will get my rights," exclaims Tedcastle, gazed into activity, and, springing from his reclined position, he is straight for the tray. There is a short but decisive battle; and then, victory being decided in favor of Luttrell, he makes a successful raid upon the fruit, and retires covered with glory and a good deal of juice.
"Coward, I never won't pay you out for this!" cries Molly, indignantly.
"I wouldn't use school-boy slang if I were you," returns Luttrell, with provoking coolness, and an evident, irritating, appreciation of the fruit.
Fortunately for all parties, at this moment John appears upon the scene.
"It is wonderful," says he, sinking on the grass under the weak impression that he is imparting information.
"I think there is thunder in the air," says Lettice, with a mischievous glance at the late combatants, at which they laugh in spite of themselves.
"Are you all my dear; you are remaining," says John, "and you are remaining."
"Yes; I am in a hurry; I cannot listen—now," says his benevolent, unable to relax.
"Some other time—when you know me better—you will listen then; is that what you mean?" still detaining her with passionate earnest both in tone and manner. "Molly, give me one word of hope."
"Are you now what you mean," she says, effecting her escape, and moving back to the obscurity of the drawing-room window, which stands open. "I never do know. And I have not got the least bit of memory in the world. Do you know I came out here to tell you tea was to be brought out in under the trees on the lawn; and when I saw you I forgot everything. Is that a hopeful sign?" with a playful smile.
"I will try to think so; and—don't go yet, Molly," seeing her about to enter the drawing-room, and to be on the lawn, it is there we ought to go."
"I am half afraid of you. If I consent to bestow upon you a little more of my society, will you promise not to talk in—in—that way again to me?"
"I will have no buts. Promise what I ask, or I will hide myself from you for the rest of the day."
"I swear, then," says he, and, so protected, Miss Massereene ventures down the balcony steps, and goes off into a dreadful swoon.
By this time it is nearly five o'clock, and as yet oppressively warm. The evening is coming with a determination to rival in heat the early part of the day. The sheep in great numbers are gathered in the distant corners of the adjoining fields; the cows, tired of whisking their foolish tails in an unsuccessful war with the insatiable flies, are all huddled together, and give way to mournful lows that reach the tarrying milkmaid.
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