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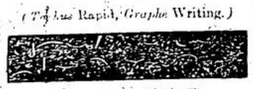

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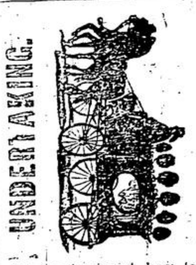

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THE ORPHAN'S LAMENT.

I am standing by your grave, mother,
The winds are sobbing wild,
And the wintry stars look dimly down,
Upon your orphan child;
Dark clouds are wreathed along the sky,
In many a heavy fold;
And the moonlight on the frost-glass
Gleams very pale and cold.

We had a happy home, mother,
Upon a mountain side;
When summer birds sang all day long,
Before dear father died.
Then, mother dear, your cheek grew pale,
And paler every day,
Until at last the angels came,
And bore you, too, away.

I had a gentle sister, then,
She is not with me now,
For the gloomy shadow of the grave
Lies on her holy brow;
And strangers meet around the fire
Upon the old hearth stone;
Oh, mother! in this cold, wide world,
I'm all alone, alone.

I'm standing by your grave, mother,
No human form is near;
And the fitful moaning of the wind,
Is all the sound I hear.
I tremble when the old trees toss
Their shadows to and fro,
But I'll shut my eyes and say my prayers
You taught me long ago.

The morning sun looked gently down,
O'er frozen wood and wild,
And kissed the little pallid face
Of that poor orphan child.
She felt no more the stinging cold,
Nor heard the tempest rave,
The new snow wreath was her winding sheet
Upon her mother's grave.

THE MODERN SWEETHEART.

I whispered in my darling's ear,
"Sweet, do you love me yet?"
She blushed, then came in accents clear
Her soft reply, "you bet."

"Oh, could I die for you?" I cried,
"My charming, winsome elf,"
She lifted up her eyes and sighed,
"I know how it is myself."

"My dar—" "Oh, hush, for goodness sake!"
She cried, "or pa will hear,
And such a row and fuss he'd make—
You'd walk off on your ear."

We waited breathless till a creak
Was heard up overhead,
"There now," said she, "I'will do to speak,
He is in his little bed."

She nestled closely to my side,
With most confiding manner;
Said I, "I want you for my bride,"
Said she, "that's what ails Hanner."

"Then let the blessed day be soon,"
I breathed with a tender sigh;
Said she, "well say the fourth of June—
How will that do for high?"

I clasped her to my throbbing breast,
My heart o'erflowed with joy;
She sighed, her cheek to mine close pressed,
"You're a baby boy."

I told her she was sweet and fair
As angels in the sky,
She said, "don't flatter, sir, take care,
That is all in my eye."

I said she was the queen of girls,
The fairest maid e'er born;
She sighed and shook her auburn curls,
"I am, yes—in a horn."

I whispered, bending down my head,
"Your lips are like a cherry,"
She took my meaning, smiled and said,
"Well, I'm your huckleberry."

THE GHOST ROBBER.

On a fine evening in the spring of 1830, a stranger, mounted on a noble looking horse, passed slowly over the snow-white limestone road leading through the Black Forest.

Just as the sun was going to rest for the day, when the gloomy shadows were beginning to stalk, he drew rein as he said:

'This must be near the spot, surely. I'll stop here, anyhow, for awhile and see what I can learn.'

He thereupon dismounted and entered the parlor of the inn, where he sat down beside a table.

'How can I serve you, meinheer?' said the landlord.

'See to my horse outside,' replied the guest, carelessly, but at the same time eyeing the landlord from head to foot; and let me have some wine—Rhine will do.'

The landlord was turning to withdraw from the stranger's presence, when he stopped and said:

'Which way, meinheer, do you travel?'

'To Nanstadt,' politely replied the guest.

'But you will stay here to-night, I suppose?'

'I will stay here for three hours, but I must then be off, so as to reach my destination there in the morning. I am going to purchase a large quantity of lumber.

'And you have considerable money with you, no doubt?' asked the landlord innocently.

'Yes, considerable,' replied the guest, sipping at his wine in a very disinterested manner.

'Then, if you'll take my advice,' said the landlord, 'you'll stay here till morning.'

'Why?' replied the stranger, looking up curiously.

'Because,' whispered the landlord, looking as if he were disclosing a great secret, and was afraid of being heard by some one else, 'every man that has passed over the road between this and Nanstadt at midnight, for the last ten years has been robbed or murdered under very similar circumstances.'

'What were the circumstances?' asked the stranger, putting down his glass empty, and preparing to fill it again.

'Why, you see,' the landlord went on, while he approached his guest's table and took a seat, 'I have spoken with several who have been robbed; all I could learn from them is that they remember meeting in the lonesome part of the wood something that looked white and ghastly, and that frightened their horses so that they either ran away or threw their riders; they felt a choking sensation and a sort of smothering, and finally died, as they thought, but awoke in an hour or so to find themselves lying by the roadside robbed of everything.'

'Indeed?' ejaculated the stranger, looking abstractedly at the rafters, in the ceiling, as though he was more intent upon counting them than he was interested in the landlord's story.

The innkeeper looked at him in astonishment. Such perfect coolness he had not witnessed for a long time.

'You will remain, then?' suggested the landlord, after waiting some time for his guest to speak.

'I?' cried the stranger, starting from his fit of abstraction as though he was not sure he was the person addressed.—'Oh most certainly not; I'm going ahead to-night, ghost or no ghost.'

Half an hour later, the stranger and a guide called Wilhelm, were out on the road, going at a pretty round pace toward Nanstadt.

During a flash of lightning, the stranger observed that his guide looked very uneasy about something, and was slackening his horse's pace, as though he intended to drop behind.

'Lead on,' cried the stranger, 'don't be afraid.'

'I'm afraid I cannot,' replied the person addressed, continuing to hold his horse in until he was now at least a length behind his companion. 'My horse is cowardly and unmanageable in a thunderstorm. If you will go on, though, I think I can make him follow close enough to point out the road.

The stranger pulled up instantly. A strange light gleamed in his eyes, while his hand sought his breast pocket, from which he drew something. The guide saw the movement and stopped also.

'Guides should lead, not follow,' said the stranger, quietly, but with a firmness which seemed to be exceedingly unpleasant to the person addressed.

'But,' faltered the guide, 'my horse won't go.'

'Won't he?' queried the stranger with mock simplicity.

The guide heard a sharp click, and saw something gleam in his companion's right hand. He seemed to understand perfectly, for he immediately drove his spurs into his horse's flanks, and shot ahead of his companion without another word.

He no sooner reached his old position, however, than the stranger saw him give a sharp turn to his right and then disappeared, as though he had vanished through the foliage of the trees that skirted the road.

He heard the clatter of his horse as he galloped off. Without waiting another instant, he touched his lightly with the reins, gave him a prick with the rowels, and off the noble animal started like the wind in the wake of the flying guide.

The stranger's horse being much superior to the other's, the race was a short one, and terminated by the guide being thrown nearly from his saddle by a heavy hand which was laid upon his bridle, stopping him.

He turned in his seat, beheld the stranger's face, dark and frowning, and trembled violently as he felt the smooth, cold barrel of a pistol pressed against his cheek.

'This cursed beast almost ran away with me,' cried the guide, composing himself as well as he could under the circumstances.

'Yes, I know,' said his companion dryly, 'but mark my word, young man, if your horse plays such tricks again he'll be the means of seriously injuring his master's health.'

They both turned and cantered back to the road. When they reached it again, and turned the heads of their animals in the right direction, the stranger said to his guide, in a tone which must have convinced his hearer as to his earnestness.

'Now, friend Wihelm, I hope we understand each other for the rest of the journey. You are to continue on ahead of me, in the right road, without swerving either to the right or left. If I see you do anything suspicious, I will drive a brace of bullets through you without a word of notice. Now push on.'

The guide had started as directed; but it was evident from his mutterings that he was alarmed at something beside the action of his follower.

In the meantime the thunder had increased in violence, and the flashes of lightning had become more frequent and more blinding.

For awhile the two horsemen rode on in silence, the guide keeping up his directions to the letter, while his follower watched his every movement as a cat would watch a mouse.

Suddenly the guide stopped and looked behind him. Again he heard the click of the stranger's pistol and saw his uplifted arm.

'Have mercy, meinheer,' he groaned, 'I dare not go on,'

'I give you three seconds to go on,' replied the stranger, sternly. 'One!'

'In Heaven's name, spare,' implored the guide, almost overpowered with fear, 'look before me in the road and you will not blame me.'

The stranger looked. At first he saw something white standing motionless in the centre of the road, but presently a flash of lightning lit up the scene, and he saw that the white figure was indeed ghastly and frightful enough looking to chill the blood in the veins of even the bravest man. If his blood chilled for a moment, therefore, it was not through any fear that he felt for his ghostly interpreter, for the next instant he set his teeth hard, while he whispered between them just loud enough to be heard by his terror stricken guide:

'Be it man or devil!—ride it down—I'll follow. Two!'

With a cry of despair upon his lips, the guide urged his horse forward at the top of his speed, quickly followed by the stranger, who held his pistol ready in his hand.

In another instant the guide would have swept past the dreadful spot, but at that instant the report of a pistol rang through the dark forest, and the stranger heard a horse gallop off through the woods, riderless.

Finding himself alone, the stranger raised his pistol, took deliberate aim at the ghostly murderer and pressed his finger upon the trigger.

The apparition approached quickly, but in no hostile attitude. The stranger stayed his hand. At length the ghost addressed him in a voice that was anything but sepulchral.

'Here, Wilhelm, you move out of your perch this minute and give me a helping hand. I've hit the game while on the wing, havn't I?'

The stranger was nonplussed for a moment, but recovering himself, he grumbled something unintelligible and leaped to the ground. One word to his horse and the brave animal stood perfectly still. By the snow white trappings on the would-be ghost, he was next enabled to grope his way in the dark toward that individual, whom he found bending over a black mass, about the size of a man, on the road.

As the tiger pounces upon his prey, the stranger leaped upon the stooping figure before him, and bore it to the ground.

'I arrest you in the King's name' cried the stranger, grasping his prisoner by the throat and holding him tight. 'Stir hand or foot until I have you properly secured, and I'll send your soul to eternity.'

This was such an unexpected turn of affairs that the would-be ghost could hardly believe his own senses, and was hand cuffed and stripped of his dagger and pistol before he found time to speak.

'Are you not my Wilhelm?' he gasped.

'No, Landlord,' replied the individual addressed, 'I am not. But I am an officer of the King, at your service, on special duty, to do what I have to night accomplished. Your precious son, Wilhelm, whom you thought was leading an innocent sheep to the slaughter, lies in the road, killed by his father's hand.'

Two weeks later, at Bruchsale Prison, in Baden, the landlord of the sign of the Deer and the Ghost of the Robber of the Black Forest, who was the same identical person, having been proven guilty of numerous fiendish murders and artfully contrived robberies, committed at different times in the Black Forest, paid the penalty of his crimes by letting fall his head from the executioner's axe, since when travelling through Schwartzwald has not been so perilous to life and purse, nor has there been seen any Ghostly Knight of the Road in that section of the world.

Why He Bought a Tiger.

Those who attended the sale of animals from Barnum's hippodrome at Bridgeport, lately, report the following occurrence:

A tiger was being offered. The bid run up to $4,500. This was made by a man who was a stranger, and to him it was knocked down. Barnum, who had been eyeing the stranger uneasily during the bidding, now went up to him and said:

'Pardon me for asking the question, but will you tell me where you are from?'

'Down South a bit,' responded the purchaser.

'Are you connected with any show?'

'No.'

'And you are buying this animal for yourself?'

'Yes.'

Barnum shifted about uneasily for a moment, looking alternately at the man and the tiger, and evidently trying his best to reconcile the two together.

'Now, my man,' he finally said, 'you need not take this animal unless you want to, for there are those here who will take her off your hands.'

'I don't want to sell,' was the quiet reply.

When Barnum said in his desparation:

'What on earth are you going to do with such an ugly beast if you have no show of your own, and are not buying for some one who has a show?'

'Well, I'll tell you,' said the purchaser. 'My wife died about three weeks ago. We lived together for ten years, and—and I miss her.' He paused to wipe his eyes and steady his voice, and then said: 'So I have bought this tiger.'

'I understand you,' said the great show-man, in a husky voice.

For Young Men to Read.

A. T. Stewart, of New York, first bought a few laces at auction, and opened his way to success in a dingy little shop in Broadway, near the site of his wholesale establishment. He died worth millions.

Daniel Drew, in his early life was a cattle driver at the munificent rate of 72c. a day, and he drove himself into an estate valued at from $25,000,000 to $30,000,000.

Horace B. Claflin, the eminent dry goods merchant, worth, it is estimated, from $12,000,000 to $15,000,000, commenced the world with nothing but energy, determination and hope.

Robert and Alex. Stewart, the noted sugar refiners, in their boyhood sold molasses candy, which their widowed mother had made, at a cent a stick, and to day they are worth probably $5,000,000 a piece.

Cornelius Vanderbilt began life with an old boat, running between Staten Island and New York, and carrying garden stuff to market. With two or three thousand dollars raised from that source, he entered upon steadily increasing enteprise until he amassed the enormous sum of $95,000,000.

ONE OF SOTHERN'S PRACTICAL JOKES.—Sothern invited a party of gentlemen to dine with him. The hour had arrived, and, with one exception, so had the guests. 'We may as well begin,' said Sothern, '——is sure to come, and he would rather we did not wait for him;' upon which the company sat down, and were just finishing soup when the card of the missing guest was handed to Sothern. A sudden inspiration of fun led him to propose that before the gentleman came they should all get under the table. Without an objection, and trusting to Sothern's wit for some comical *denouncement*, the unsuspecting fellows hurriedly crept under the table and awaited results, totally ignorant of the fact that their wicked host had not followed their example but had quietly continued his soup. The belated guest came in full of apology for his tardiness. 'Don't mention it,' said Sothern, 'it isn't of the slightest consequence; we are only at the soup; sit down and be at home.' The gentleman did so, but with a puzzled look at the table. 'Oh!' said Sothern, 'you miss the other gentlemen. They are all here, but for some extraordinary reason, they all got under the table! What they are doing is more than I know.' It is easier to imagine than to describe the variety of expressions upon the faces of the deluded victims as one by one they came crawling sheepishly out from under the table.

A pickpocket works on abstract principles.

A Shrewd Farmer.

A city gentleman, who had just purchased a farm in the country, wished to buy some cattle with which to stock it. He therefore attended an auction where cows were to be sold. One of them, a remarkably fine animal, soon attracted his attention, and he bought her at a fair price. He was examining his purchase, when a farmer, who unfortunately had arrived too late to buy the cow himself, as he intended, drove up, and thus accosted him:

'I say, friend, did you bid off that cow?'

'I did,' was the reply.

'Well, did you know that she had no front teeth on her upper jaw?'

'No,' replied the gentleman indignantly.

'Is that so?'

'You can see for yourself.'

The gentleman examined the mouth of the cow, and, finding no upper teeth, immediately went to the auctioneer and requested him to sell the cow again.

'What's the trouble?' asked the auctioneer.

'She hasn't any upper front teeth,' was the reply.

'Very well,' replied the auctioneer with a smile, 'I'll put her up once more.'

He did so, and the shrewd farmer, who had given the information to the city gentleman, bid her off at the same price.

His Indorsement.

A man with a long overcoat on and a horsewhip in his hand entered the Federal Bank the other day and presented a check calling for $10, which he had received.

'Please indorse it,' said the cashier, as he handed it back.

'I'll indorse it, of course,' replied the man, holding up his right hand as if ready to swear.

'Write your indorsement,' explained the clerk, pointing to the desk outside.

'Oh—oh—that's it, eh?' and he went to the desk and slowly and carefully wrote on the back of the check:

'This is awl rite.'

When the cashier entered into a clearer explanation the man drew down his hat, got red in the face and growled:

'Darn em! They just hate to let a cent go out o' here, and don't you forget it!'

What a School Boy Thinks of Woodchucks.

Woodchucks is a very curious animal. It is made of hair and eyes and has two front teeth, and can see a man with a gun when the eyes are shut and bolted. I have seen a dog shake a woodchuck till both are black in the face. A woodchuck can snivel up his nose, and show his teeth, and look as homely as I can without trying. He sits on one end, and eats with the other. A woodchuck can get home quicker than a gun can shoot. He is round all over, except his feet which are black. When eaten they retain the flavor of their nests and seem to have been cooked without being pared. A fat woodchuck when eaten properly is no laughing matter. They come under the head of domestic animals, and think there ain't no place like home when a dog goes for one of them.

A Too Gallant Conductor.

Conductor B. is always very polite to the ladies. All conductors are polite to ladies, particularly so provided they are young and handsome.

Miss C. was handed on board at the station as carefully as though she was 'glass—to be handled with care.' An extra seat was turned over on the shady side of the car, and the conductor took a seat by her side to do the agreeable, having met Miss C. on the train before.

Presently, as matters were going along smoothly, an old man in his shirt sleeves half threw himself into the seat in front, which the conductor had unlocked and turned over for the benefit of the parties more immediately concerned.

Mr. B. spoke up sharply, "Go away from here."

But the old man didn't go.

Conductor B. says still more sharply, "Go away, or I'll make you."

But still no go, while a vacant, provoking smile sat upon the face of the intruder. Whereupon Conductor B. grasped the old farmer by the nape of the neck.

At the same time the young lady grasped the conductor, exclaiming "Please don't, Mr. B.; this is my father."

Ever since Conductor B. always asks young ladies if they are travelling alone.

Didn't Want Him.

A young fellow from Canada applied to a wholesale house on Jefferson avenue yesterday for a situation as drummer, saying that he had had a good deal of experience.

'What house have you travelled for?' inquired the head of the concern.

'No house.'

'Then you cannot have had much experience.'

'Havn't I? I've been a drummer for sixteen years, and if you can find a man in this town who'll take a snare drum and play with a fife any better'n I can I'll buy him out at two hundred per cent on the dollar!'

Negotiations ended right there.
—*Detroit Free Press.*

Handkerchief Flirtation.

A young lady has sent us the following directions for flirting with the handkerchief, together with a request to publish them: To the mouth, a kiss; over the shoulder, follow me; to the heart, I love none but thee; around the neck, I wish your company; to the right cheek, yes; to the left cheek, no; to the forehead, you are cruel; drop the handkerchief, may I see you home; to the eyes, on thee I have fixed my love; draw it down the left sleeve, I have sent you a valentine; draw it down the right sleeve, I expect one from you; tie your corners, may I skate with you; hold in centre, may I kiss you.'

Reckless Competition.

A couple of stationers, living opposite to each other in a seaside resort, on the south coast of England, recently got at loggerheads. One of them, in order to draw his neighbor's customers, piled his window with shilling packets of note paper, marked at elevenpence. People stared, walked in and purchased. The next morning, when the other man's shutters were taken down, the window was filled with shilling packets of note paper marked eightpence. Day by day this little game went on, one underselling the other until prices gradually dropped to sixpence, fivepence, fourpence, threepence, two pence.

By this time the town saw and enjoyed the joke; and, notwithstanding the efforts made to keep the sales down, by taking at least ten minutes to seal or tie up every purchase, the stationers were heavy sufferers, and every man, woman and child in the town was stocked with enough note paper to last them half a lifetime. However, the fight went on, each man devoutly wishing he had stuck to his legitimate trade, and had not tried to undersell his neighbor. The following morning the "2d." day found the opposite window with the shilling packets 1d. This was too much.

Within ten minutes an enormous placard obscured the windows of the other man, bearing in huge letters, the words: "Go to the fool opposite." But the "fool opposite" had had enough. In a few minutes the penny ticket disappeared and in its place the old price, one shilling. In a twinkling down came the poster bearing the obnoxious words, and an exactly similar placard appeared, announcing that "the price of a shilling packet of note paper is one shilling." And thus the war of extermination ended.

Brown, the other day, while looking at the skeleton of a donkey, made a very natural quotation. 'Ah!' said he, 'we are fearfully and wonderfully made.'

'Do you believe in the use of the rod, my dear Professor?' asked a lady whose children were making life a burden to all the guests in the hotel. 'In some cases, madam,' but there are others,' glancing at her gambling darlings, 'where I prefer the revolver.'

A chipper little miss of three summers was standing before a mirror, inspecting and admiring a new dress, the other day, when she turned to her mother and exclaimed: 'Mamma, I want a dagger!' There is no doubt but what that young laky will keep up with the fashions.

A brakeman on one of the roads running into the city went to the Superintendend for permission to 'lay off' for a day, and made a request for a pass to ride home on. The Superintendent said: 'If you were working for a farmer, and wanted to go home, do you suppose he'd hitch up his team and take you?' 'No,' said the brakeman; 'but if he had a team already hitched up, and was going right past the door, I'd say he was a mighty mean cuss not to take me.' He got his pass.