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# APPLETONS' JOURNAL

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## WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE.

"YOU will go, Aunt Jane?"

"Yes, my dear, I shall enjoy it very much. Niagara River by moonlight will tempt me to brave even the rheumatism, not

"You have seen most of them, I think.

First, there are Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Vanderheyden. Mr. Vanderheyden is decidedly the most agreeable gentleman in the city, intel-

What a pity the young men of our city cannot form themselves after such a model! Our society would then be full of vitality, whereas now it is ineffably commonplace. Do you



DRIFTING DOWN TOWARD THE FALLS.

to speak of the perils of steam-tug navigation."

"Oh, there is no danger, aunt. During the summer we often make these excursions; indeed, they may be called a Buffalo specialty in the way of amusements."

"Do I know the other members of the party, Kate?"

lectual, elegant, accomplished, and, at the same time, devoted to his wife. In these days of incompatibility, it is refreshing to see such a domestic, affectionate husband. You remember him, do you not?"

"Perfectly. They are a handsome couple."

"Mr. Vanderheyden is very handsome.

know, Aunt Jane, I do not think Mrs. Vanderheyden appreciates her husband? There is an icy coldness in those black eyes of hers at times."

"They are beautiful eyes, however, Kate?"

"I don't deny that, aunt. Well—then there are Pearl Brandegee and Nathan Day—



Mary Rathbone—Frank Ronalds—and ourselves. I believe that is all. Oh, no—Alleyn Forsythe."

"The gentleman who was here this morning?"

"Yes.—By-the-way, what do you think of Pearl?"

"Miss Brandegee is the most beautiful young girl I have ever seen."

"I knew you would think so; every one always does."

"Don't you agree with me, then?"

"Oh, I don't go so far as to disagree—Pearl is engaged to Nathan Day, they are to be married in the fall, and I shall be relieved when it is over, for it is difficult for ordinary mortals to breathe the atmosphere of the seventh heaven."

"Mr. Day seemed to me unusually quiet and reticent."

"So he is with everybody but Pearl. He is the Beast, and Beauty has conquered his callous heart. If we could only know that he was to be changed into a gallant young prince at the altar, we should look forward to the wedding with greater æsthetic interest. Poor, homely old Nathan, how he will look by the side of Pearl in all the glories of her bridal lace!"

"A man's looks are of small consequence, Kate."

"Particularly when he happens to be a millionaire! But, in spite of the diamonds, I feel sorry for Pearl. She ought to marry some fresh young heart, ready to do and dare, the soul of a gallant knight under the guise of a modern gentleman—a brave spirit, 'sans peur et sans reproche.'"

"Mr. Alleyn Forsythe, for instance?"

"Yes; some high-hearted, loyal youth like Alleyn. Have you noticed how like he is to the Apollo in Guido's 'Aurora?' To me he always seems a type of the old Greek race, that glorious mental and physical perfection so seldom seen in these degenerate days."

"And the rest of the party?"

"What an unresponsive soul is yours, Aunt Jane! To descend from my Apollo to the two commonplace members of the party, is like dropping from ambrosia to tepid tea. Mary Rathbone is a good, plain sort of a girl, and Frank Ronalds is a Harvard freshman, soft as the white of an egg, and about as insipid."

"And my niece, Miss Kate Keller?"

"A mistake, at your service," replied that young lady, dropping me a profound courtesy; "else why did Dame Nature make me just so near a beauty that the world can never cease lamenting the missing link?—If her nose was only a little longer—'if her mouth was only a trifle smaller'—if her eyes were only a shade darker'—and so on. I would rather be a fright outright than a half-finished mistake."

Now my Kate, in spite of her faults, is no "half-finished mistake" at all, but a bright fascinating girl; an heiress, too, with no more thought of her money than the lilies of the field.

The time for the excursion came. Sailing out of the harbor in the afternoon, we tossed awhile on turbid Lake Erie, and then glided

through the portals into the beautiful river—the broad, rushing Niagara—sweeping onward with tremendous speed, and carrying the compressed tide of four fresh-water seas between its green banks. Our boat—a tug dignified by the title of steam-yacht, and manned by a crew of two men—was a queer little craft, with an open bowl of a cabin in front, an engine behind, *et præterea nihil*. After descending with great difficulty into the bowl, we took our seats upon the cushioned bench which ran around three sides, and, protected by a wooden awning supported on stanchions, rode gayly onward, the little engine sending us along at rapid speed through the deep-blue water. At first, we all talked merrily together.

"So you do not approve of woman suffrage, Mr. Vanderheyden?" said my niece, Kate Keller.

"No, Miss Keller. I do not dispute the keen delicacy of woman's intellect, but I maintain that love is her power, and we love her, not for her mind, but rather for her heart. We do not wish to see her laboring at our severe toil; we do not wish to see her gentle, dependent nature roughened by contact with the hard world; we will neither tear her from her shrine, nor suffer her to slip down thence. That shrine is home, there is her place, and there may you yet find your goddess, my young friends, as I have found mine," said Mr. Vanderheyden, glancing toward his wife with devoted affection shining in his bright brown eyes.

Mrs. Vanderheyden smiled faintly.

"Cold-hearted creature," whispered Kate to me. Then aloud: "Are you not something of a pagan, Mr. Vanderheyden? Would you not carry us back to the buried ideas of the ignorant past?"

"Ignorant past? Glorious past, say I! What have we in this working-day world to compare with the myths of the past? Oh, for the sunny plains, the unknowing, uncaring rest, the dreamy ease, and the happy ignorance of antiquity!"

"O! thou pagan!" said Kate; "have we poor women no champion here?—no red-cross knight to fight our battles?—What say you, Mr. Forsythe?"

"I am inclined to think, Miss Keller, that we are progressing toward a future whose vivid reality will eclipse the shadows of the past. In the intense light of developing aspirations, our souls will recognize their soul-companions, and, in the white heat of idealized intellect, our hearts will blossom with fervid spontaneity. Then will woman reach her apotheosis; then will human intellect, embodied in the clear crystals of woman's mind, rise to its true place, the polar star of infinity, the germ of ante-cosmic vivification."

"Glorious!" exclaimed Kate, with enthusiasm.

"I am sorry, Mr. Forsythe, to hear you advocating any relaxation of the social rules," I said, quietly.

"Miss Jane, you mistake my meaning. But thus it has ever been with the disciples of a higher law. We soar above the clouded atmosphere of this world, and our phrases, suited to the realms of expanded thought, are wrested by the sublunary to their own

destruction.—I trust, Mrs. Vanderheyden, that you, also, did not misunderstand me? that you did not think me other than I am—a student of the emancipated soul?"

"She did not misunderstand you," said the husband, answering for his wife; "but she does not agree with your theory. She is content where she is; and together we would willingly migrate back to your so-called shadowy past, rather than risk our happiness in your progressive future."

And Mr. Vanderheyden drew a shawl closer around his wife, and raised her gloved hand to his lips.

"And you, Miss Keller," said Alleyn Forsythe—"I trust you did not think me a materialist?"

"I fully appreciate and sympathize with your ideas!" exclaimed Kate, her face lighted up with eager interest.

The young man's blue eyes smiled back upon his disciple.

"And you, Miss Brandegee," he continued—"you did not think me a slave to the miserable half-way theories of modern sensationalists?"

"Oh, no!" said Pearl, with one of her rippling laughs, making a prism of dimples, white teeth, bright eyes, and waving curls, as she spoke.

What a beauty she was! Nathan Day's quiet eyes shone with happiness as he gazed on her lovely face; and even Alleyn Forsythe forgot for the moment his tour of investigation. Recovering himself, he turned to the only remaining lady:

"And you, Miss Rathbone—I trust you did not think my idea merely a transmigration from effete antiquity, masquerading under the guise of the spirit of the oversoul?"

"I did not think of it at all," replied Miss Rathbone, quietly.

This was somewhat disconcerting. Kate came to the rescue:

"I believe we have all given our opinions but you two gentlemen.—What do you say, Mr. Day?"

"Women who can obtain power in no other way may vote, if they please. I shall not oppose them. I have no friends belonging to that class."

Pearl cast down her eyes and trifled with her fringes—queen-regnant over all hearts, what cared she for the vote?

"Now, Frank, it is your turn. What do you think of female suffrage?"

"Gammon!" said the freshman, concisely.

The sun sunk beneath the horizon, and reds and yellows flamed in the sky. The evening-star shone with pale light full in the glow of the sunset; and, as twilight came down, the moon threw a veil of enchantment over the scene. The merry party had broken into little groups, and Kate and Alleyn Forsythe stood leaning against the side of the boat, looking off over the water, absorbed in conversation. Their words reached my ear as I sat near by, muffled in shawls. After a long discussion—

"Our life is all a mistake," Alleyn said, earnestly; "we need more enthusiasm, a scorn for the petty restrictions of conventionality, a brave encounter with the iron

dragon of public opinion. It is the old quest of the Sangreal revived—"I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven that often meet me here; I muse on joy that will not cease, pure spaces clothed in living beams, pure lilies of eternal peace, whose odors haunt my dreams; and, stricken by an angel's hand, this mortal armor that I wear, this weight and size, this heart and eyes, are touched, are turned to finest air."

Kate sighed, and her eyes, misty with feeling, were fixed upon the speaker's face. He was gazing dreamily over the water, the quotation having apparently fallen unconsciously from his lips; and, with his tall form and beautiful Greek face, he looked not an unfit representative of Sir Galahad.

"Give me but the chance," he murmured, "and I will crush the dragon yet."

"You will—I know you will," said Kate, earnestly.

"Crown me with the inspiration of your faith and soul-companionship, and together we will climb to infinity. Your purer spirit will carry me into the realms of the unknown, and on this earth I will protect you with my greater strength, a bulwark invincible against all mortal power. Give me this communion, Kate, and henceforth I dare the universe," murmured Alleyne, bending to catch her answer.

But the limited capacity of the cabin-bowl was unfavorable for isolated conversations, and at this moment the freshman broke in upon them with:

"Come, Mr. Forsythe—Miss Brandegée is going to sing."

I was not displeased with the interruption, for, although I was disposed to admire the gallant beauty of the modern knight fully as much as my niece, still I knew that her enthusiastic temperament might carry her further than she intended, under the influence of the moonlight, the rippling water, the low, musical voice, and the beautiful Greek face bending over hers.

Pearl had thrown off her hat, and the moonlight lit up her golden curls like a halo; a white shawl was draped gracefully about her shoulders, her fair ungloved hands toyed with the black ribbons of her hat, and her eyes were fixed on the evening-star. She sung, and we all listened spellbound to her bewitching voice:

"She hides in the depths of the fast-flowing river,  
She peeps at them laughing below the blue tide,  
She tempts them, she blinds them, she beckons on ever,  
And into the rapids the mariners glide;  
They hear not the cry of the hurrying water,  
They hear not the rocks as they mutter "Be-ware!"  
They see but the face of the rainbow's fair daughter,  
The Witch of Niagara, perilous fair.  
They hasten, they fly, o'er the foam-whitened river;  
The thundering cataract yawns at their feet;  
They see it not, hear it not, listening ever  
To the voice from the rainbows, so perilous sweet.  
The waters plunge over, the boat follows after,  
And, as from the brink comes their shriek of despair,  
There melts from the rainbows, with musical laughter,  
The Witch of Niagara, perilous fair."

"She is a witch herself," whispered Kate to me.

And, truly, Pearl Brandegée was as lovely as any fabled siren, whether of the Old World or the New.

All the party joined in a chorus, and then the boat was turned about and headed for home. The harvest-moon shone in vivid brightness, and, as we felt the force of the current, our thoughts and words turned upon the dangers of the river, the few well-known stories of persons who were carried over the falls, the narrative of those who were swept down from the very locality where we were sailing, and of those who clung to the rocks for hours in the sight of crowds on shore, only to be torn away at last, and hurled over the abyss. The fearful fascination of these descriptions absorbed us all.

"How dreadful!" murmured Kate, looking back with a shudder, as if she saw the distant rapids and heard the very roar of the cataract; her intense imagination brought the scenes before her eyes with all the distinctness of reality.

"After all, what does it matter where or how we die?" said Alleyne Forsythe. "Death is but the casting off our chains for a glorious freedom. For brave souls it should have no terrors, but rather should they yearn for their emancipation. And, as regards the manner of our going, what death more ethereal than a plunge over Niagara, and, imprisoned in a crystal shroud, to take our next breath in the atmosphere of infinity? It is ignoble to seek death, but, when my time comes, I ask no fitter medium of translation than this pure water. I would pause on the brink to throw up my arms for joy at the splendor of my death-angel's face among the rainbows."

Kate's eyes beamed with responsive enthusiasm; if they had been alone, I verily believe she would have given in her allegiance then and there.

"Would you be afraid in case of danger, Pearl?" said Nathan Day, in a low voice.

They stood close to my side, so I could not help hearing them.

"Not with you," replied Pearl, lifting her lovely eyes to his with so much trust that his plain face grew almost handsome with happiness.

"I think the subject has grown grisly," said Frank Ronalds. "I am free to say that I don't admire Mors, who venits velociter and rapids us atrociter fast enough without these icy anticipations in addition. For my part, if any thing should happen to the boat, I should give up the ghost with fear in less than a minute.—Shouldn't you, Miss Rathbone?"

"I should certainly be very much frightened," said Mary.

"We two would meet death, if need be, hand in hand, Rosalie," said Mr. Vanderheyden to his wife. "But I have no such longing after the unknown as to give up my assured happiness without a struggle. Trust me, love, I would bear you safely to shore or die in the attempt. Death would have to snap these muscles asunder e'er they would relax their hold!"—and the tall man drew himself up to his full height, and extended

his powerful arms as though already contending with the current.

"I move we sing something," cried Frank Ronalds.—"Miss Brandegée, unless you wish to see us all turn into damp, moist, unpleasant bodies at your feet, start a lively chorus, I beg."

For some time all sung merrily, and I was enjoying the music and the rapid motion of the boat, when I felt a peculiar quiver under my feet, and perceived that our speed was slackening. As the party kept on singing, I had decided that the idea must be the effect of imagination, when, after a moment, I noticed one of the men employed at the engine reaching up, by means of the railing, as if to get something on the roof overhead. At this instant the boat swayed round with a lurch, the man lost his balance, and fell backward into the water.

I sprang to my feet, crying, "A man overboard!" but we had already left the black spot far behind. Nathan Day rushed toward the engine, and Frank Ronalds ran to the wheel, but the black spot had disappeared, and we strained our eyes in vain over the misty water for any sign of life.

"How cruel, how wicked, to leave that man to drown!" exclaimed Kate, in indignation. "The boat is drifting farther and farther away from the poor creature every instant. Can nothing be done?—Mr. Forsythe, pray go to the engine at once. I am sure you know more about it than Nathan Day."

The gentlemen left us to ourselves and crowded together around the engine; the boat was evidently drifting down-stream with the current, and we recognized the landmarks we had passed a short time before. We heard hammering and the clash of metal, but we had no realization of danger until Frank Ronalds came toward us, his face pale in the moonlight, and his boyish voice trembling with agitation.

"We are lost!" he said; "we shall go over the falls."

A shriek from Pearl Brandegée brought her lover to her side.

"Pearl, Pearl, my darling, do not tremble so, we may yet be saved," he cried, holding the frantic girl in his arms.

But she did not heed him; scream after scream rang in our ears, until we were deafened by the shrill sound.

"I shall be drowned, I shall be drowned!" she cried, wrestling herself from his grasp; "how dared you bring me into danger, you selfish man!"

"She is delirious with fear," said Nathan; and, taking her hands, he tried to soothe her with loving words.

"Let me be! Don't touch me! Oh, I shall be drowned and carried over the falls!" and renewed shrieks rang out upon the air.

In the mean time we other women had been asking questions of everybody, and, receiving no coherent answers, had gathered around Nathan Day.

"What is the matter?" "What is it?" "Is there danger?" we asked.

Even Pearl hushed her cries to hear his reply.



"We are in danger; the engine has broken down beyond possibility of repair with the few tools we have, and the engineer, who fell overboard, had with him what we most need. The boat is drifting down with the current, but we are still many miles from the falls, our situation may be noticed from shore, and a tug sent out to our assistance. We have no small boat and no anchor, but we have still many chances of escape," said Nathan, turning his anxious face toward Pearl, as if for a cheering glance.

But Miss Brandegee threw herself down on the floor, and went off into violent hysterics. Kate and I looked at each other in silent terror, Mrs. Vanderheyden sat down and buried her face in her hands, and Mary Rathbone climbed up on the little deck and watched the shores intently.

"There is a light!" she exclaimed; and Nathan left his place by Pearl to look at the beacon.

"It is from the window of a house," he said, "but we must do all we can."

He climbed as high as he could and waved a lantern, the other gentlemen aided him, and for some minutes the signals were kept up, and we watched eagerly for a response.

None came; the light was hidden from view, and the boat drifted on.

Then Kate fancied she saw a gleam, and our signals were renewed, only to end in another disappointment.

We gazed eagerly through the mist in every direction, and my old eyes soon gave out, and I sat down with that resignation that only comes when youth is passed.

Mrs. Vanderheyden had not moved. I touched her shoulder.

"Are you faint?" I asked.

She withdrew her hands, and showed a face calm and cold as ice.

"Not at all," she said, quietly.

"Our fate must be decided before long," I continued; "the boat drifts rapidly."

"It is a matter of perfect indifference to me," she answered; "for years I have not cared whether I lived or died."

I looked at her in astonishment as she resumed her former attitude, thinking that the danger must have affected her brain; but anxiety soon usurped all other feelings, and I forgot every thing but our peril. With closed eyes I prayed silently for some moments. When I looked up again I saw that Mary Rathbone and Kate, Nathan Day and Frank Ronalds, were still keeping the signals aloft, but Alleyne Forsythe and Mr. Vanderheyden had disappeared.

The chilly August mist had thickened into a fog, and the shore gradually vanished under the veil.

Kate left her post and hid her face on my shoulder.

"O auntie! we are lost," she murmured.

The others stepped down and hung the lanterns on the hooks.

"It's of no use," said Frank Ronalds; "the fog has finished us."

Nathan knelt by Pearl's side.

"Come to me, poor child," he said, with infinite pathos in his voice, and, raising the

girl in his arms, he bore her to the cushioned seat.

But, screaming with mingled rage and terror, she wrenched herself away and fell down upon the floor again.

"I shall be drowned! I shall be carried over the falls!" was her piercing cry, mingled with tears and sobs that wrung the heart of her lover worse than the death hanging over him.

Mary Rathbone bent over her with a bottle of salts.

"Pearl, Pearl, do be calm! Take these salts; there is still hope for us all," she said, earnestly.

"Go away, go away all of you!" wailed the voice. "I shall be drowned, I shall be drowned!"

Mary Rathbone turned away and seated herself by my side; we drifted on in silence, and it seemed to us as if the boat was gaining in speed.

Nathan Day finally succeeded in drawing Pearl's head to his shoulder, and, as he listened to her continued cries and lamentations, his face looked old and worn in the faint moonlight.

Presently Mr. Vanderheyden came toward us from the back part of the boat.

"Aha! good people, why so quiet?" he said, with a boisterous laugh. "Let's have a song or a dance.—Come, Rosy," and he seized his wife's hand.

She shook him off as though he had been a reptile.

Kate lifted her face.

"Is he mad?" she cried, indignantly.

"He is drunk," said the wife, coldly; "he is generally drunk in the evening."

"I say, Rosy, let's have a waltz," continued the husband.

"Leave me, wretch!" said his wife, flinging him away with all her strength.

"Cross, eh? Going to bite, eh? Haven't got any thing ready to throw at me, have you?" snarled Oscar Vanderheyden, sinking into a seat. "A nice vixen you are, my lady, but I'll tame you yet," and the intoxicated man began to troll out fragments of a rollicking drinking-song.

"I say, Forsythe, what's the matter with you?" we heard Frank Ronalds say at a little distance.

"Oh, there he is! I've been wondering where he could be! Working at the engine, I suppose—hoping against hope," said Kate, rising and going toward the voices.

I followed her. It had grown dark, as the mist and clouds obscured the moon. "What is that?" I said, as I stumbled over a prostrate form; "is the man dead?"

"Only dead drunk," answered Frank Ronalds, coming to meet us. "It is the assistant-engineer; he and Vanderheyden are about alike, only this fellow got hold of the liquor first."

Leaning against the side of the boat, with his head buried in his arms, we found Alleyne Forsythe.

"O Kate, is it you?" he cried, incoherently. "Isn't it terrible? Isn't it frightful? And there is no hope, no hope!" He trembled visibly, and his face was ashy pale.

"Come, be a man, Forsythe," said Frank Ronalds, shaking him vigorously by the arm.

"It is pure nervous excitement," interposed Kate; "his high-strung nature is more impressionable than ours. He dreads the danger not for himself, but for us all, for—

for me."

"That is it. For you," murmured Alleyne, faintly.

"I knew it," said Kate. "Come, Alleyne, come back with me. Let us at least be together."

"That is it. Together," echoed the trembling man.

At this moment the cries of Pearl Brandegee seemed to increase in violence. "We shall be carried over the falls!" she shrieked over and over again.

"O Kate, I cannot stand it!" groaned Alleyne Forsythe, as these words reached his ear. "O Kate, what shall we do? Is there no hope?" and the tears ran down his pale cheeks. Kate gave him her arm, and together they went forward to the cushioned seats.

"A regular coward!" muttered Frank, contemptuously, as we followed them.

Some time passed, and the mist began to rise a little. I sat listening to the sobs of Pearl Brandegee, the groans of Alleyne Forsythe, and the erratic music of Oscar Vanderheyden—a strange medley, broken only by Kate's endeavors to calm the agitation of her companion, and Nathan Day's words of comfort to the hysterical girl he held so tenderly. Mary Rathbone and Mrs. Vanderheyden sat silently in the shadow, and Frank Ronalds had mounted the bow, and, with the sanguine hope of youth, eagerly watched the rising fog.

"I say, you people, how dull you are! There's plenty of champagne on board, let's all take a drink," drawled Mr. Vanderheyden, trolling out something about "and dies a jolly fellow!"

"It would be a comfort," murmured Alleyne.

"That's right. Let's go right away now and take a good big drink, Al. If we've got to go over the falls, let's have a jolly time of it," said Mr. Vanderheyden, rising unsteadily.

Alleyne made a motion as if to follow him.

"You are not going with that drunken brute!" cried Kate.

"But, Kate, it would be such a comfort—if I've got to die, I'd rather not know it—I can't stand things as you do; my nerves are giving way—I was never strong, from a child—feel my hand, how it trembles!" said the young man, in piteous tones.

But Kate flung the hand away. "Dare you deliberately intoxicate yourself at such a time, Alleyne Forsythe? Dare you leave me for that brute?"

"Come on, old boy!" shouted Mr. Vanderheyden from the stern; "here's whiskey too." And Alleyne went.

Nathan was absorbed in Pearl, but we could hear the clash of breaking bottles and the increasing noise from the stern.

"This is dreadful!" said Mary Rathbone:

"that wine must go overboard.—Mr. Day, Mr. Ronalds, something must be done." She spoke so earnestly that the two followed her advice, and, going to the stern, succeeded in getting rid of the dangerous element of our little feast. As they came back, Alleyne Forsythe followed them. "O Kate!" he said, sinking down by her side, "why did I ever come West? O Kate, what shall we do? O Kate, we have got to die! O Kate, my heart is broken!" and he wept copiously, while his broad shoulders shook with sobs. Kate rose indignantly and crossed to the other side; he did not notice her absence, but continued to sob and cry, lamenting his unhappy fate in maudlin eloquence.

"Island ahead!" shouted Frank, who had resumed his place at the bow. Nathan sprang up, and in another moment a shock told us that we had struck a rock.

The rising wind had lifted the fog sufficiently to enable us to see our position. The tug lay tilted sideways on a reef, at a little distance from a small island; the current swept rapidly by, and every instant we expected to feel her slipping down into the tide again. We all held our breath in suspense; we knew not what to say or do. "There is but one hope," said Nathan Day, after a prolonged survey of our situation; "one of us must swim ashore with a rope and fasten the boat securely."

"Whoever tries it will be a dead man," said Frank Ronalds, looking over into the seething water.

But Pearl had heard Nathan's words. "Go, go!" she cried frantically, seizing him by the arm. "Carry the rope ashore, let yourself down, jump over, swim, any thing, only save me, save me!"

"I will save you, Pearl; never fear," said Nathan, taking off his coat.

"Mr. Day, you shall not go!" cried Kate, impetuously. "It is certain death. Pearl Brandeggee, you are a selfish, heartless girl, and I always knew it."

"Go, go," said Pearl, unheeding these sharp words; "you can swim well, I know you can. Where is the small rope?—Frank Ronalds, where is the rope, I say? Why do you hang back? Give it to me.—Here, Nathan, take it and save me, save me!"

"Mr. Day," said Mary Rathbone, with the sound of tears in her voice, "do not go, I beseech you!"

He grasped her hand warmly.

"I must go. Here is a flask I saved, take it and use it at your judgment, they may all need it," he said. Then, turning to Pearl: "Have you nothing to say to me before I go?" he asked, wistfully.

"Don't step over this side!" shrieked Pearl; "you will drown us all with your nonsense. Don't waste an instant, but jump over as quick as you can. It is the only reprieve you can make for having brought me here. Go, I tell you!—Frank Ronalds, if he hesitates, throw him over."

But, with these words ringing in his ears, Nathan Day had plunged into the water, and was battling with the fierce current. With throbbing hearts, we watched him. The strong wind had blown the fog away, and we could see him in the moonlight; now he sunk,

now he rose again, now he drifted down, now he advanced. It was a hard struggle, more than once apparently hopeless; but at last he reached the shore, and sunk exhausted on the rocks.

"He is dead!" cried Kate.

Mary Rathbone's lips moved in prayer, but Pearl screamed wildly:

"He is not dead!—Wicked, selfish man, why do you lie there, instead of drawing in the rope?"

At this reproach, Nathan arose, and, throwing down the small coil he had carried ashore, began to draw on the heavy rope which Frank threw over the boat's side. A few minutes' hard work, and the cable was landed, and made fast to the rocks and trees.

"You are safe!" shouted Nathan, waving his hand.

"We are sinking!" cried Frank, at the same instant.

It was only too true; the tug was slipping slowly down the reef, and settling in the deeper water.

"We are sinking!" shrieked Pearl, climbing up on the side.—"Nathan, Nathan, come back and carry me ashore!"

"Our only resource is to climb up on the roof," said Mary Rathbone, decidedly, pointing to the wooden awning over our heads.

Pearl was screaming wildly; Alleyne Forsythe was sobbing aloud; Mr. Vanderheyden was asleep; his wife still sat with her face hidden; while Kate and I, paralyzed with terror, stood locked in each other's arms. It seemed a hopeless task, but Mary Rathbone undertook it.

"Frank Ronalds, climb up and be ready to help Miss Jane," she said, issuing her orders in a clear, collected voice.—"Now, Miss Jane, step up here; support yourself by my shoulder. There—steady now—one more effort, and you are safe."

I reached the roof—how, I know not—but in another moment Kate had joined me, and sunk down by my side, weak with excitement. Then came Pearl Brandeggee, helpless with terror, and hanging like a dead weight on Mary's slender arms; then Alleyne Forsythe, sobered for the moment, but helpless still; and, last of all, without one glance downward upon her sleeping husband, came Mrs. Vanderheyden, cold and indifferent as ever.

"Wake up, Mr. Vanderheyden! wake, or you will be drowned!" cried Mary, standing up to her knees in water, and shaking the sleeper with all her strength.

With great difficulty she succeeded in rousing the lethargic man, and convincing him of the peril; but, at length, he clambered heavily up, and the brave girl had barely time to join us when the boat settled still farther, and the water came up on a level with our raft.

"That sailor is still below!" cried Frank, suddenly.

"God's will be done," said Mary, solemnly. "We did all we could; even if we had had time, we could not have lifted him up here."

The tug seemed to have found an abiding-place on the reef; some rock had stayed her downward course; and, held in position by the rope, she no longer yielded to the cur-

rent. The long minutes grew into hours with slow agony; we feared lest our frail support should give way under us; and, as the sharp wind blew down upon our heads, we shivered with cold. Under Providence, Mary Rathbone saved our lives. She made us move apart, so as to equalize our weight; she dealt out small quantities of wine, which seemed like heavenly cordial in our wet and exhausted state; she talked cheerfully to us; she soothed Pearl, and watched over Oscar Vanderheyden, who had fallen asleep again. From time to time, she called out answers to the anxious questions of Nathan Day on shore—bulletins from the wreck—and her brave spirit infused life into us as the long night slowly wore on. Once only did Pearl Brandeggee rouse herself from her moaning lethargy. This was when she heard Nathan proposing to swim back to the reef.

"I would rather be with all of you," he said.

Then Pearl rose to her knees.

"Nathan Day, don't dare to do it!" she cried; "the weight of another person might crush in the roof and drown me. Don't dare to do it—I'll push you off if you come!"

"Don't try it, Mr. Day," cried Mary Rathbone, in her turn. "You might be swept down; you are safe where you are."

The night wore on. The wind had increased, and, although partly protected by the island, we could feel its force, while the little waves drenched our clothes with spray. At length, the gray dawn stole up the eastern sky, and our courage revived.

"A tug!" cried Frank Ronalds.

It was, indeed, a tug, sent out by anxious friends in search of our party. Watching eyes soon discovered us; and, after some difficulty, she ranged up alongside, and, one by one, we were lifted up into life and hope again.

"And now for Mr. Day," said Mary Rathbone.

The wind had grown to a gale, blowing directly down-stream; the river was roughened with waves, and the sailors hesitated what to do.

"We're pretty far down," they said; "but the Comet's a staver to work, she is, and I guess we're safe enough. We shall have to drop down a little way, and take the gentleman off that big rock yonder."

"Don't you try to do any thing of the kind!" cried Pearl; "the gentleman can wait until the wind goes down; he is quite safe and comfortable where he is. When we get back to Buffalo we can send another boat after him. Don't risk my life, after all I have gone through, just for the sake of taking him on board now."

Nathan caught something of the discussion. "Go on!" he shouted, waving his hand in token to proceed.

Kate was too much exhausted to speak, but Mary Rathbone interposed. "Go on?" she cried, with a vivid red spot in each pale cheek, "that they shall not!—Go back, men, and take up that gentleman, as you said. Pay no attention to this lady—she has lost her senses."

"She never had any," murmured Kate.

After some delay the manœuvre was safely



accomplished, and Nathan Day joined our little group. The Comet sped sturdily back against the wind, leaving behind her the wreck, the island, and all our terrors. We were safe at last.

Pearl recurred her hair, and resumed her serenity. "How wet you are, dear!" she said, touching Nathan's wet clothes.

He did not answer, but walked away, his pale face set and stern.

As we came in sight of the piers, Mary Rathbone astonished us by fainting dead away and falling to the floor. Nathan had lifted her before any one else could reach her, and Frank Ronalds sprang forward to chafe her cold hands.

"The pluckiest little woman in the world," he said, enthusiastically; "I'm afraid to think what would have become of us if it had not been for her sense and courage. She's a regular trump, if ever there was one."

It was a dark day, with that raw wind that belongs to the Western lake-towns. On the dock stood Mrs. Brandegee, her silvery curls contrasting artistically with her black attire, her face a picture of maternal solicitude. In another instant she had Pearl in her arms. "My darling, how do you feel? Are you ill? Are you faint? My angel, what have I not suffered? My heart has been torn with suspense! How have you endured the night? Have you taken cold, my own one? You have no idea what terrible anxiety has been felt for you all over the city, my sweet child!" cried the mother, covering Pearl with graceful caresses.

Frank Ronalds helped Kate and myself into a carriage; Mr. and Mrs. Vanderheyden rode off together—he sobered and surly, she cold and calm as ever; and Alleyne Forsythe, after vainly endeavoring to break through the scornful reserve which Kate made no effort to conceal, walked away by himself, his Greek face somewhat overclouded.

Mrs. Rathbone, a quiet little woman, who was on the dock when the boat arrived, was helping her pale daughter into a carriage, when Nathan Day stepped forward to assist her. Miss Brandegee paused at her carriage-door. "Mr. Day—Nathan—we are ready to go—we are waiting for you," she said, with her bewitching smile. Nathan Day came forward, bowed profoundly, assisted her into the carriage, and closed the door. Then he returned, said a few words to Mary and her mother, and, entering their carriage, rode away with them.

"I am glad of it," said Kate, as they passed us. "Nathan Day is a noble-hearted man, and Mary is an angel! They are worthy of each other, and last night's experience revealed them as they are. God bless them both!—But oh, aunt, think of that heartless Pearl Brandegee! Think of the Vanderheydens! And, worse than all, think of that— that contemptible, cowardly, detestable Alleyne Forsythe!"

"Yes. In the danger of death the masks fell off. For once the true character came to the surface. It was as though they were weighed in the balance—"

"And found wanting."

CONSTANCE F. WOOLSON.

## LADY SWEETAPPLE; OR, THREE TO ONE.

### CHAPTER XXXIV.

EDITH PRICE PUTS IN AN ADVERTISEMENT.

Now we must go back to Edith Price, whom we left almost in despair after that interview with Mrs. Boffin. She had wasted a whole day, and was still unable to communicate with Harry Fortescue.

As soon as she got to No. — Lupus Street, she went to the bedroom which she and Mary occupied; for she was afraid to make her mother more ill by telling her unpleasant news. But the walls of lodging-houses are thin; their ill-fitted stairs creak and groan; and sounds, however slight, are heard all over them. Besides this, the ears of invalids are sharp, and Mrs. Price was anxious about Edith and her mission. It was not long, therefore, before Edith Price heard her mother's faint voice asking for her.

Of course all of you have been shocked at the notion of a pretty young girl like Edith Price running over half the town to a young gentleman's chambers, pursuing him to his club and his lodgings, and exposing herself to all kinds of risks, imputations, and temptations. It is the sort of thing, you say, you never wish to see your daughters doing. We reëcho your wish, and fervently pray that none of your daughters may ever be placed in a like position. All we add is, that if they are, we trust they may come as well out of their trials as Edith Price. And here let us ask, what else could she have done? She had no one to send, so she had to go herself. Of course you would have sent off a messenger, a running footman, a commissionnaire, to do your bidding; but it must be remembered that Edith Price had no messenger; after she had paid for the steamer she had but sixpence in her pocket, and that would not go very far either in cabs or commissionnaires. Nor do you—you people who roll about in your carriages, protected by tall footmen—know how very often the rest of the world, and especially of the world of women, find themselves just in the same position as Edith Price. They have no one to do what they want done, and so they are obliged to do it themselves. Many "young persons," as Mrs. Boffin said, come to degradation and disgrace in the process, the more shame on those who drag them down; but there are thousands of others who can walk through the streets as proudly and as pure as Edith Price, to whom the very knowledge that they have work to do is at once a motive and shield. To all you good people, therefore, who have been expecting something dreadful to happen to Edith Price on her long and lonely walk, it must be a great consolation to find that her troubles were not increased by any indiscretion of her own. She had not succeeded in her object, and that was the only point in which she was worse off when she returned than when she left Lupus Street.

"Did you find the address, Edith dear?" said her mother.

"No, mother," said Edith, "all my trouble was in vain. I could not find Mr. Fortescue's address at his chambers, his club, or his lodgings."

It was no use, Edith thought, to vex her mother by telling her more precisely what had happened, and least of all by saying any thing of the insulting behavior of Mrs. Boffin.

"It is very provoking," said Mrs. Price.

"That's just what I said ever so many times," said Edith. "But I am tired of saying it any more. Let us now think what is best to be done."

"I cannot bear to let to-morrow night pass without paying the rent," said Mrs. Price, "to say nothing of the weekly bills."

"I think I had better ask Mrs. Nicholson what is best to be done," said Edith; "she is a good, kind-hearted woman, and, if it was not for her husband, she would care nothing for the rent."

"Yes," said her mother, "but I am too proud to go on running in debt with her. It is bad enough to feel that we owe so much to Mr. Fortescue and Mr. Vernon."

"He says it is a pleasure and an honor, and so does Mr. Vernon," said Edith.

"A pleasure and an honor, but not to us, Edith," said Mrs. Price. "Our only excuse is that, for the present, we have no other refuge but those two young men."

"It is no misfortune to be poor," said Edith.

"The greatest of all," said Mrs. Price.

"Well, mother," said Edith, unwilling to prolong the discussion, "you try and sleep while I go down and get some tea, and after that I'll speak about it to Mrs. Nicholson."

So Edith went down into their sitting-room, a back room on the drawing-room floor, and then she sat down on the dingy sofa and rang the bell with the dusty, tawdry bell-rope, and in a moment or two Mrs. Nicholson appeared.

"Can I do any thing for you, Miss Edith?"

Observe the "Miss Edith," which was a term of respect so very different from the "my dear" of Martha Briggs, or the plain "miss" of Mrs. Boffin.

"If you could give me a cup of tea and some bread-and-butter I should be so much obliged, for I have had nothing to eat since breakfast."

"Nothing since breakfast, and it's now past five! Dear heart, you must be almost famished. I'll bring you a cup of tea in two minutes. We've just had ours down in the kitchen."

"Thank you so much, Mrs. Nicholson," said Edith, as the good woman vanished, full of alacrity to bring up the tea.

"Dear woman!" said Edith, "so very different from Mrs. Boffin. I wonder how it is that women are so different."

In two minutes—yes, certainly, in less than two minutes—Mrs. Nicholson reappeared with a tray, on which was not a cup of tea, but a whole teapot, a loaf and butter, and the inevitable little jug of London particular sky-blue.

It was not a magnificent repast, but it had, in the way in which it was brought, all the