

## LITERATURE.

## THOU DOST NOT LOVE ME.

Thou dost not love me! take away  
Those arms that twine around me;  
I thought thee true as tongue can say:  
I think thee—what I've found thee.  
Go, take to other maids thy kiss,  
Nor deem of me so lowly,  
That I could stoop my heart to this,  
A love so false, unholy.

I will not have thine arm so fond,  
Nor hear thy tongue's deceiving:  
Oh, what are words when all beyond  
Is full of deepest grieving!  
Take, take thy false, false kiss away,  
Those eyes, those looks, that chill me;  
I cannot, will not, dare not stay—  
Thy falsehood else will kill me!

## THE FATAL BRIDE.

BEING A CONTRIBUTION FROM THE REMINISCENCES  
OF A BACHELOR.

(Founded on an event which actually occurred.)

(Continued.)

If fortune had condemned Captain Jennings to the torments of love, she was, at all events, resolved to grant him every reasonable mitigation in his distressed condition. For upwards of a month, during that summer, he had the happiness of being a guest at Lord ——'s, where Miss Chadleigh and her brother were also visitors; whether he had succeeded or not, in making any impression upon the young lady's heart, was not then known; but as his attentions were, if possible, more marked and devoted than ever, the affair began to be talked of, and, soon after their visit terminated, was mentioned by a friend to Sir Arthur himself.

The baronet forthwith instituted inquiries respecting Captain Jennings' ways and means—the result was unsatisfactory—and, one day, as the gay young gentleman sat chatting at an early visit, with Chadleigh and his fair sister, the old baronet hobbled into the room, and sat himself beside one of the party—a procedure quite contrary to his ordinary habits. There was nothing ominous in his countenance and bearing, however; on the contrary, he seemed more than usually frank and good humoured, shook Jennings more heartily by the hand, and laughed more boisterously at all his jokes and stories than ever he had done before. Chadleigh had already gone, and Sir Arthur having dispatched Mary to superintend some customary arrangements affecting his own comforts, the door was closed upon him and Captain Jennings.

'Jennings,' said the baronet.

'Well, sir.'

'You're a devilish good fellow—Jennings, a devilish pleasant fellow,' said the baronet, 'and I've no doubt will get on in the world—with prudence, that is, with prudence.'

Jennings bowed his acknowledgements, and looked a little surprised.

'And, as it strikes me, Jennings, my boy,' continued the baronet, in the same jolly tone—'about the most imprudent thing you could possibly do, at the outset, would be to marry; and marriage being out of the question—I should not, you understand me, like to have Miss Chadleigh, my daughter, talked of in connexion with such an absurdity.'

'Really, Sir Arthur,' interrupted Jennings, changing colour slightly, and affecting a cool *hauteur*, which he was far from feeling—I don't precisely know to what particular circumstances you are pleased to allude.'

'Come, come, my dear fellow,' said Sir Arthur, in the same tone of rough good humour, which in all his dealings, alike with friend or foe, whether with the dice-box or the pistol, he had ever maintained—'we are, both of us, men of the world—eh? I an old, and you a young one; but both of us unquestionably men of the world, and perfectly wide awake. You know just as well as I, and I as well as you, what is usually termed, *paying attentions to a young lady*—let us have no shamming at either side—we both of us know this; and I don't approve of Miss Chadleigh's receiving any such distinction from you, my dear Jennings; and now I hope I have made myself perfectly intelligible.'

Jennings bowed stiffly, and the baronet continued—

'A set of meddling old women have begun to talk, you see, and I took this, the earliest opportunity, of putting you on your guard—for, of course, it would not answer your cards either, to have such nonsense put about, and so without anything abrupt or remarkable, your acquaintance must become cooler, and—and—more distant; and, in short, when you do happen to meet in society, the less you are thrown together, the better; in a word, my dear Jennings, your coolness must effectually give the lie to this ridiculous piece of gossip.'

As Sir Arthur concluded, he was slowly rising from his seat, and having, just at its termination, established his ponderous and gouty person in an erect position, he took Jennings' hands in both his, and shaking them very cordially said, in precisely the tone which might have conveyed a hospitable and pressing invitation—

'And, by the way, my dear Jennings, I think it would be very wise to, don't you, by way of a beginning, to

put an immediate stop to these little visits—these foolish little morning calls, which make people talk, and serve no possible purpose, as matters stand, except as a very unnecessary tax upon your time; so, for the future—here he renewed the shaking with increasing warmth—'when we do meet, let it be abroad, my dear Jennings, and not here; you understand me, not on any account here; in society, of course, I shall always be delighted to meet you; we shall there, of course, be the best possible friends; and now, my dear Jennings, I think we perfectly understand one another, and I'll not waste any more of your time, for, of course, you have many more amusing ways of employing it. Good morning, Jennings, my boy—farewell.'

The perfect radiation of cordiality and good humour with which this very peremptory dismissal was conveyed, was so incongruously disconcerting, that Jennings felt totally unable to resent the procedure as he felt disposed to do—for, truth to say, he was more nettled than he cared to confess even to himself. Returning the old gentleman's salutation, therefore, stiffly and coldly enough, he withdrew, and had walked nearly half way along the side of St. Stephen's green (in the immediate neighbourhood of which Sir Arthur resided) before he began to recover the angry confusion of this affronting *conge*. Slackening his pace, however, he began to revolve the occurrences in his mind, and, with the resignation of necessity, began to discover many things to be grateful for among the consequences of this explanation, *brusque* and unexpected as it undoubtedly was.

'Well, well,' he muttered, 'it is, perhaps, much better as it is. She is a devilish fine girl, to be sure, and I do believe, had well nigh turned my head; but, egad, I was acting like a fool—a fool, to follow her about, and get myself entangled at all—heaven knows what an infernal piece of mischief it might have ended in, if I had been left to my own foolish fancies—I'm a deuced deal a happier man, as matters stand—a safer one, at all events.'

Jennings was a singularly handsome young man, as we have said—very vain and very selfish; he knew no control except that involved in a punctilious subservience to the code of fashionable society in which he lived; and, without any one grain of positive malevolence in his disposition, he had about him a great deal of the raw material out of which circumstances and opportunity might eventually fabricate a villain; an inconsiderate impetuosity, too often mistaken for generosity and impulsive candour; an exacting and ambitious vanity, which, ever seeking for new homage, inspired a constant desire to please—and, with the desire, stimulated the constant practice, too, of all the little arts of pleasing—and which, however despicable a passion in itself, was yet in its effects, the prime cause of his popularity—these, combined with a constitutional selfishness which instinctively governed all his views and actions, were the leading attributes of a character—unfortunately for the dignity of human nature—commonplace enough. Externally, however, he was a very fascinating person—accomplished, elegant, agreeable, and blessed with an inexhaustible flow of gay and sparkling spirits.

Of course it was to be presumed that Sir Arthur had conveyed to Miss Chadleigh his views respecting Jennings' attention; and the baronet's stern and implacable severity in punishing disobedience, and enforcing compliance with his commands, was so thoroughly known and understood, that not one of his children dared openly to disobey his lightest order. Mary Chadleigh and Jennings, however, were destined often to meet—indeed it could not be otherwise, unless one or other of them had withdrawn from that gay society in which both of them mixed so freely. There was, however, a very marked change in their mutual demeanour. There was an obvious reserve on her part; though ill-natured people observed that her eyes were oftener seen following his movements in the crowded saloons than was either to be accounted for by pure accident, or altogether reconcilable with the show of coldness with which she now habitually met him. On his part, the change was also marked; instead of devoting his attentions and his time, as heretofore, whenever fortune brought them together, all but exclusively to her, he now scarcely ever exchanged a dozen sentences with her: in short, though the female world good-naturedly persisted in believing Miss Chadleigh a very ill-used, and, in spite of her assumed indifference, a very devoted damsel—yet all were agreed that this affair was totally and finally at an end.

It was not very long until gossip began to busy itself once more with this young lady's name—a new suitor began to be suspected. Young Lord Dugdarret, with a coronet and twelve thousand a year at his disposal, was evidently smitten, and to such a degree, that Miss Chadleigh became ten degrees more ugly than ever in the eyes of the female world of Dublin. While matters were in this state, however, it happened that one day, as Sir Arthur sat in his chamber, damning his old enemy, the gout, in solitary suffering and ill-temper, somebody hesitatingly knocked at his chamber door.

'Come in—well?' he exclaimed, turning his mottled and gloomy visage full on the intruder.

The person who entered was old Martha, a privileged domestic of some three score years, who had been the nurse and was now the attendant of Mary Chadleigh, whom she absolutely idolized. 'I'm come, sir, about the young mistress,' she said, approaching; 'for, indeed, I'm afraid she's very bad—she's very sick, sir, and I would not be easy without the doctor seeing her.'

'Sick—is she?' said the baronet; 'young ladies are

always ailing—it's interesting, and nurses always croaking—they have nothing else to do; I wish she had half a day's experience of my gout—curse it—and she'd know what pain is like.'

'Why, then, indeed, sir, she really is bad, and very bad, I'm afraid, this time,' said the woman, with dignified emphasis. 'It is not, of course, for an old woman like me, that's nothing to the darling young lady, more than just nursing her and taking care of her, to be dictating to her own father, that, of course, has more feeling for his own child than the likes of me 'id have; but all I say is, she is really bad, and —'

'Well, well, well—send for the doctor, to be sure, and don't plague me any more; and just tell him,' he ended, as the old woman reached the door, 'if he finds anything seriously amiss, that I will feel much obliged by his looking in here, and telling me what he thinks of her—do you hear?'

In obedience to the summons, accordingly dispatched, Dr. Robertson, as I shall call him, then in extensive practice in Dublin, and who had been for twenty years the physician in attendance upon the family, arrived late in the evening. He was a large, good natured man, with a rough voice, emphatic delivery and a *brusque* and decisive manner—clear-headed and rapid—with a thorough knowledge of the world, as well as a consummate skill in his profession. With a very rough exterior, and an occasional coarseness and even severity of expression, Dr. Robertson was, nevertheless, a kind and tender-hearted man; and these sterling qualities had served to secure him a vested interest in the practice to which his reputation had once introduced him.

It was as I have said, late in the evening, when a peremptory double knock at the door announced the arrival of the physician. With brisk and creaking steps he followed the servant, who conducted him directly to the young lady's chamber. The house was a vast and handsome mansion: and after ascending a steeple staircase, and passing a handsome lobby, he found himself in a kind of antechamber, from which the young lady's sleeping apartment opened. Here he remained for a moment, while old Martha went in to prepare her young mistress for the visit. After about a minute, she returned, and intimated that Miss Chadleigh was ready.

Doctor Robertson accordingly entered. The young lady was lying upon her bed, her face deadly pale, except where two bright spots of hectic crimson glowed with unnatural warmth; her eyes were swollen with tears, and as the physician approached, she turned away from his well-known, good-natured countenance, and hid her face in the bed-clothes.

'Well, well, my dear, what is all this? Come, come, we'll make a cure of you in no time—don't fret—we'll have you well in a day or two.'

Thus saying, in rough and kindly tones, he took her hand, and as he felt her pulse, continued—

'And tell me where you feel amiss—there's a good child—don't sob—don't cry—I promise you it won't signify.'

'Oh, doctor,' she said, with her face still averted, 'I am very ill, and—and—in such wretched spirits.'

Here the poor girl again burst into tears; and while she was weeping, the old nurse stole noiselessly out of the chamber, and closing the door, walked restlessly from one spot to another in the outer room we have described; now arranging a screen, now replacing a chair by the wall, now stirring the fire, but with an abstracted and miserable look, and wringing her withered hands ever and anon in the intervals. This had gone on with little variation, except that the old woman occasionally looked with an expression of intense anxiety and even horror, at the door which concealed her young mistress and her professional visitor from view, when at last it opened, and Doctor Robertson came out buried, as it seemed, in profound and painful thought, and looking unusually pale and agitated; he walked by two or three steps at a time, pausing, and occasionally shaking his head gloomily in the intervals, and sat himself down in silence before the fire, and ruminated for some minutes. At last he stood up briskly, turned his back to the fire, beckoned to the old woman, and as she approached, raised the candle so that its light fell full upon her face.

'Where do you sleep, Martha?' he asked, abruptly.

'Where—where do I sleep?' she echoed, stammering.

'Ay, ma'am, where?' he repeated, sternly.

'Why—why here, sir, here in this room,' she answered, with some confusion.

He fixed his eyes upon her sharply for a few seconds, and then as abruptly said—

'And how does your mistress rest at night, pray?'

'She rests—she rests—why, sir, she rests pretty well, sir; but why do you ask me?'

He continued to regard the old woman with the same steady scrutiny of some seconds; at last she said, with an affronted air, and rather an effort, for she was, whatever the cause might be, very much disconcerted—

'I'm sure I don't know, sir, what you're looking at me that way for; a body 'id think I was took for a thief.'

'There—there—never mind,' he said, putting down the candle: 'no offence, nurse, no offence—go in to your young mistress. Is there—ay, there's pen and ink here—very well—just go in, and I'll call you when I want you.'

Accordingly, the old woman, muttering and snuffing, hobbled into the adjoining room, and closed the door, unaccountably, as it seemed, both irritated and shocked.