

est and noblest in the works about her. The free, undulating movement of the lithe limbs betokened active, out-door exercise, and consequent vigorous health; while the fine, supple grace of the slender figure, clad from sunny head to shapely foot, in soft, gray plush, drew the attention of more than one pair of eyes, for the gallery was beginning to rapidly fill up. As she seemed to glide rather than walk, she looked, in the tender, mellow light, like some lovely "maid of the mist."

So thought Paul Renfrew, as he leisurely strolled behind her. Suddenly she stopped in front of his own production, and—could he believe his

own ears? He certainly heard a smothered cry! Did his eyes deceive him? The slight form seemed to totter and reel. The hands were outstretched and convulsively clasped together. He sprang to her side. Her eyes were riveted on the picture as if held by some basilisk spell. Possessing the chivalry of a true knight, he at once accosted her—

"Madam, are you ill? Can I be of service?"

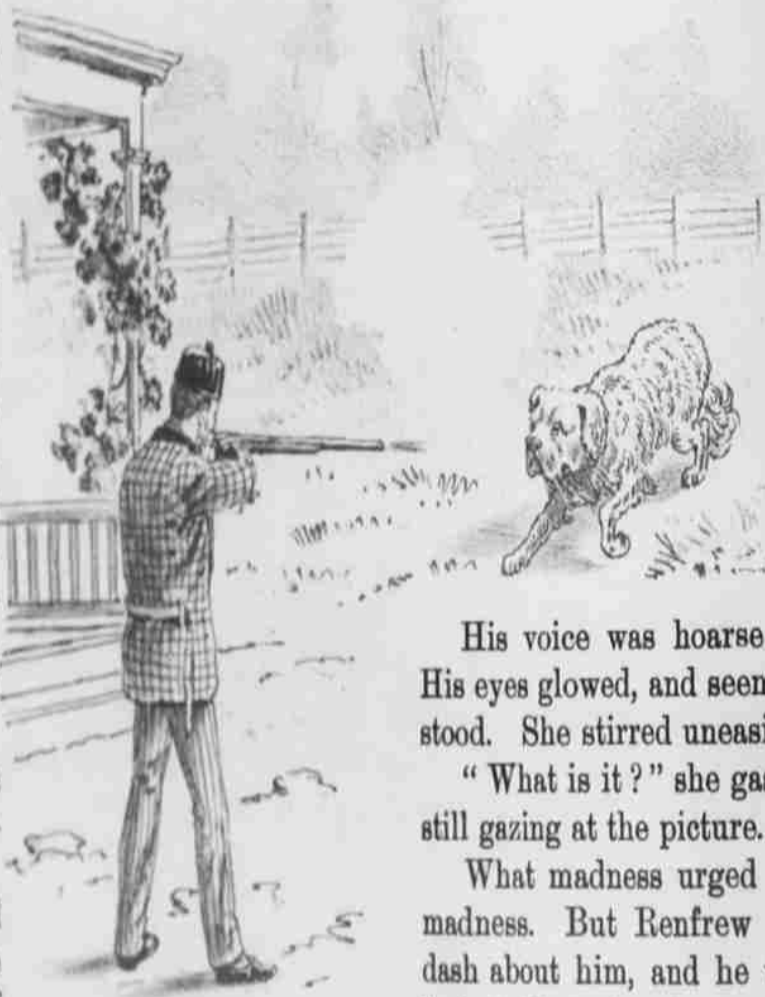
She slowly turned toward him a white face and a pair of sapphire eyes, with a look in them that bordered on terror. The face had the same pure, oval outlines, the same sweet, angelic expression, and soft radiance of the eyes, that looked out at him from the locket. He staggered back a pace, then gasped in utter astonishment—

"You—are—Violet Brockton!"

English reserve took alarm at American freedom, however chivalrously presented. She recovered herself with an effort, and drew herself up with flashing eyes.

"And you, Sir?" with pointed intonation, "I have not the honor—"

"Beg pardon, Madam; I am Paul Renfrew, the artist. While in the Sierra mountains this summer, I had the good fortune to hear the story of a noble dog and his little mistress, which was the inspiration of the picture before you."



The eyes were swimming now, and the voice was a half sob, as she murmured, looking straight into the eyes of the dog—

"Dear old Zeke! What would I not give to see thee again alive—alive as of old!"

Renfrew reserved the right of keeping that knowledge for a future happy surprise. She turned impulsively toward him and held out one small, jeweled hand.

"I thank you, sir, more than you may ever know."

Fingers touched for one brief second, and an electric thrill swept over each. Blue eyes looked into ardent brown ones, and trembled at the swift internal upheaval. A moment later she said, looking away from him and at the picture—

"Would you part with the painting, Mr. Renfrew? I would take it on your own terms."

A red flame swept to his cheek. "Money can not purchase it, and there is but one thing in the whole world that I would accept in exchange for it."

His voice was hoarse with suppressed passion. His eyes glowed, and seemed to reach her where she stood. She stirred uneasily.

"What is it?" she gasped, under her breath, and still gazing at the picture.

What madness urged him on? It certainly was madness. But Renfrew had a reckless, Bohemian dash about him, and he would dare it, even though he lost. He took a step nearer, and whispered through his teeth, while the surging crowd jostled by—

"Miss Brockton—"

She trembled visibly and put up one hand as if to ward off the expected words.

"Oh, hush! You *must* not—"

"By Heaven, I *will*, and you *shall* hear me. It is—it is—*yourself!*"

Without even a glance toward him, she turned like a frightened doe and fled to the safe shelter of the Lady Margaret. In the hours of cool reflection that followed, Renfrew had the satisfaction of calling himself an ass many times that day, and many days thereafter. Did he play a losing game? The writer of this story takes great pleasure in chronicling, and I trust my readers will in perusing, that, about the holidays, the Lady Margaret Fanshawe returned to Lambeth Place alone. She declared herself most shamefully