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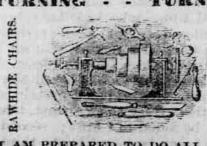
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TWICE WOOMEN; Or, The Unexpected Mee.ing.

"Pools, pools! Phil Morton, I sin-

cerely hope you are not absolutely de-termined to be an old bachelor." And Fred Lacy placked the stump of a eigar from between his teeth, and looked at me half reproachfully half

in juiringly. Then, my dear boy, it is my painful duty to inform you that you have hoped in valo. I reforted, almost

And I turned to the window of the rainway carriage in which we were traveling, to conceal what my face would have otherwise betrayed.

We were follow students, Fred and I, just freed from the confinement we had endured so long; and I, at his urgood request, was accompanying him home to spend the holidays in the beautiful little village where his parents lived. It was the day before Christmas. That evening 'Squire Lacy was to give a grand ball, or soirce, in honor of his son's return; and I, the' for more willing to shun than to court the society of ladies, had, after much urging, consented to make one of the brittiant throng that was expected to crowd the rooms of the wealthy old Squire.

itesides. Fred was to be married on New Year's day, and as I was his old claim and most infinate friend, he chose me in preference to all others for

chief groom man. It was his contemplated marriage that had caused the remarks with which I have chosen to commence my story. He had asked me if I had not yet thought of taking to myself a wife, and I had very emphatically informed him that it was my intention to adhere to confiney through the entire course of my existence, should I live a lamdeed years. And I really meant it at the time I said it.

"You have never loved, Phil," said he, laying his hand on my shoulder. "Have I not." I growled, still looking out through the window at the snow-clad hitts and leatless trees.

"What? Do you mean to say, Phil Morton, that you, who have always, since the time I became acquainted with you appeared to have an averion rather than a penchant for the society of the other sex-do you mean to sny that you-"
"I haven't said any such thing," I

interposed.

riage? Bosh! You are love-sick, old fel-

low. have experienced the power of Cupid, dwelt on every lip, whilst many of you are right; and in one short week I hope to make the lovely object of my affections the wife of my bosom. Which will be of the very best quality. But, even before that mischievous urthought of tramping the stage of life in 'single bles-edness.' You may call me nonsensical, Morton, or what you like, but, honestly, I never hear a man say he has no intention of ever marryvery foolish."

"Thank you for the compliment," I replied drily. "Now don't talk in that way, Phil, for you know I would not rumple that temper of yours for anything. I think I fully understand what I am talking about; and, if you please, sir, I win wager a fine new hat that you

are a married man before you are thirty "I will accept the wager, just to please you," I said, and we struck our am a single man on my thirtieth birthday, you are to give me a fine

mony-cice cerso."
"Correct," returned Fred, with a touch of enthusiasm.

And I turned again to the window cion of the real cause of my resolve never to link my life to that of any woman. He did not suppose that there was a time when I was as ardent as, he in my admiration of female loveliness. And with these thoughts came vivid recollections of that time, long ago, when I lost my young heart, and

had been made wretched. I remembered the proud steamer Victory, and the pleasant hours I spent upon her deck as she ploughed the waters of the broad Atlantic. I remembered, too, the little, golden-haired was affected by her beauty, her innocence, her charming naivette, and her sweetness of disposition. I was only seventeen then, and she only fifteen; but, for all that, we took a fancy to each other, became strongly attached, and in a very short time were hope-

lessly in love. It is said that young love is a delu-sion, and soon over. Such may generally be the case, but I, old goose, am to this day as much under the influence of that intoxicating passion as when I first felt its influence, in the seven-

teenth year of my age. And now, as I sat with my chum beside me on the train, I recalled to memory the sunny days of my boyhood's love, and wished that they would return. I could not prevent a secret wish, too, that my spirit had This it was that caused my surprise. Hown when Lillian's did, that I might There was in that fair face before me.

Lilian. No! I would wait until death and, just five years ago, jumped from forming him why I had no intention would unite me to my golden-haired the burning steamer victory. of ever marrying, and accepting his

frame as the memory of that never-tobe-torgotten night, when the ill-fated stermer succumbed to the withering breath of the tire-king ru-hed over my mind. It was an awful sight; children screaming, women wringing their whose golden hair I had seen floating hands in mental agony, while passen- on the dark waters for a single instant, gers, sailors, and everybody on board. were crying aloud to heaven for mercy; and yet the fiery elements rushed on and wrapped the doomed vessel in a sheet of flame. Poor little Lillian, un- cle in this modera time. able to find her father, came to me for her fears, I almost forgot my own; and saw her again. I can never forget that beautiful face, as she lifted it so trusfully to mine, fighted by the raging fire in the backfighted by the raging fire in the background. It was then and there I told notes, murmuring some jesting word, mine, and said in an earnest, pleading her I loved her; and nest ing her curly head upon my breast, she turst into opposite Fred. Surely, it must be tears and told me that which caused she, and yet how could it be? How me to clasp her in my arms and kiss prefty she was; how sylph-like and be-

of joy. We stood closely together, awaiting the dreadful crists, saying we would die together; and yet, when we sprang overboard locked in each other's and she was gone! Never afterward was I permitted to look upon the dear creature who placed so much confidence in me in that trying hour, and who gave her heart into my keeping ere cruel death forever stopped its beating. How I was saved I can hardly tell. I remember nothing after jumping overboard, till I found myself in a boat with the captain and a portion of the crew, who were rowing rapidly away from the scene of the disaster.

All this was called to memory by the ubject on which Fred and I had been speaking; and, as I continued to think, I felt sure he would lose the wager and what I said, and knew just what I was talking about.

"Pine-dale!" shouted the railway envelop the earth in her sable mantle.

"Come, Phil," said Fred, "we must move our pegs himbly, for we have yet to dress for the party, and I am expected to be there and ready in time to receive the guests."

me, I recained my head wearily upon my hand, and aboved my thoughts to drift over my past life. I was living over again those happy days spent with her upon the sea; I was living over again those brief moments when they heard what had transpired in the conservatory, and that when New Year's day came round, there were two grand weddings instead of one.

And stay! I almost forgot to additionally the conservatory and the conservatory are conservatory and the conservatory

And we jumped out.

"Lifer anything." I exclaimed, stamping my feet impatiently. "For heaven's sake, Fred, let us drop this when Fred and I, arm-in-arm, entersubject, and talk of something more od the fine, spacious drawing rooms, over again, when the cheery voice of they were all aglow with wax can-"What is more sensible than mar-dies, the dresses, smiling faces, and bright eyes. The gay throng assembled there was soon in stience by our entrance, and murmurs of admiration "if you mean by that, Phil, that I and welcome-for Fred, of coursehis old acquaintances came forward to

greet him. "Phil, this is my father-Mr. Morton, father," said my companion; and chin had done the work. I never had a the next instant a jovial looking old gentleman, with gray hair and smiling countenance, was shaking me warmly by the hand.

There seemed to be something familiar in that benevolent face, that ating but I think bim either a liar or tracted my attention, and I could not help scrutinizing it closely for a mo-ment. But I concluded that it was a freak of my imagination inasmuch as it was hardly probable that I had ever before met 'Square Lacy.

After making me acquainted with a few of the chief persons, Fred whispered in my ear:

"There, Phil, rush in among 'em and sceure a partner. I can tell you from their looks, those ladies are waiting anxiously for you to make a selecplease you," I said, and we struck our from among them. Quick, the paims together to make it good. "If quadrilles are already forming."

"No," I returned, shaking my head, "I wish to be alone for a while. I new hat. If previous to that thme I will dance the next set;" and turning find myself in the meshes of matri-, away from him, I repaired to the corner of the room, there to gaze at the different parties the room contained.

From my seat, I watched the handsome form of Fred, as he moved among | with a suppressed sigh, thinking it his happy guests, and wondered which quite evident that Fred had no suspi- of the many fair beings he would seof the many fair beings he would select for a partner in the dance. I was not kept long in doubt.

He led forward a young lady-led her within a few feet of me-to ful the set at the lower extremity of the room; and as my eyes rested upon her, I fairly started and could hardly suppress an exclamation of astonishment.

She was a beautiful woman, not tall and queenly, yet with a form that was faultless in symetry and in motion, a wealth of sitky hair, golden in hue, amid the folds of which was twined a single white lilly, as an adornment to creature I first saw there, and how I the shapely head it covered, whilst the great, yearning eyes, of a soft, ethereal blue reflected in their liquid depths the soul of their owner. The lips, full and pouting, and rivaling in bue the ripe apricot, seemed to invite kisses; and her delicate cheeks were an index to the state of her mind, as the rich carnation surged back and forth beneath the trasparent skin. Her ornaments were few and simple, and her dress was of spotless white, sweeping back in rustling folds from her pretty waist to the gaudy carpet.

But it was not her beauty that caused me to start and almost exclaim with astonishment; it was not that, dear reader, for there were others present, perhaps, who were no less prepossessing than the blond beauty who claimed my attention.

flown when Lillian's did, that I might sleep peacefully beside her far away in her watery grave; and I dropped a tear then, and wondered if I could ever be so fond of another as I had been of that this was Lilian, with whom I whole circumstance, thus in-

ir one.

A cold fremor crept through my could not be, and then I laughed at the idea as periectly ridiculous. How could it be Lilian?—she with whom I parted with years ago, never to meet again in this world—she with whom I leaped into the fathomless sea, and whose golden hair I had seen floating and then disappear beneath the rolling billows? No, it could scarcely be the lost love of my boyhood, unless the told her how I thought she was dead Almighty had seen fit to work a mira-

And yet it must be she! was my protection. In endeavoring to caim next conclusion, as I looked up and she and her father had been cast upon

as it appeared, every time she came her ro chief lips.

And even while death was staring us in the face, I felt a momentary thrill burn with a kind of dry feverish heat, as I continued to gaze, enchanted and bewildered, at the dancing fairy.

Ha! that laugh, that sweet, rippling laugh! it was hers exactly, and if this arms, we somehow became separated, is not Linan of the ill-fated steamer, it must be some near relation. Unable to bear longer the torturing suspense, I turned to a gentleman who sat near me, and asked him if he knew the name of young Lacy's partner?

"I should think that it is Miss Bell Gordon, since they seem so very familiar," said he.

"Ah, Belle Gordon!" I mused. She is Fred's betrothed. She is the adored lady of whom he has so often spoken to me as his future wife, and in praise of whee he had always waxed cloquent."

sleeps beneath the ocean wave! Mayat length be satisfied that I meant just hap tis her sister. I never heard her surname, and consequently could not but my feeble pen cannot do it justice. tell whether it was Gordon or not.

Forgetful of my position, and forwhile the quarter deck was wrapped in flames, when, in the midst of my Fred Lacy aroused me from the profound reverie into which I had fallen. " Miss Gordon, allow me to present

my old friend and schoolmate, Mr. Morton, who is to be our chief groomsman on New Year's day."

Larose half mechanically and confronted my chum and his bethrothed. A small gloved hand was extended to me in acknowledgement of the introduction, and I looked up with the expectation of encountering a pair of soft eyes. What was my surprise on seeing a tall, queenly brunette standing before me, with great, lustrous, black eyes, luxuriant black hair, a rich rosy, olive-tinted complexion.

This was Miss Belle Gordon, Fred's affianced, and was not the charming little fairy whom he had just been whirling through the mazes of the dance.

"And this is the lady of whom you have so often spoken in such highly complimentary terms?" I inquired. "The same," he replied. "Have I praised her too highly?"

"No, indeed; nor have you ever done her justice. But my object in asking, was merely this; I mistook your recent partner in the dance for Miss Gordon. "Why that was my sister, Phil."

"You jest." "True as gospel! Didn't I intro-duce you? Wait here and I will bring her forward." "One moment-please tell me her

name?" I asked, eagerly, laying my hand on his arm. "Her name is Lilian." I sank back on the chair unable to articulate another word. My brain began to whirl, the room swam before my eyes, and I pressed my hand to my

feverish brow with a mighty effort to compose myself. Again I was aroused by the voice of my friend. "Here she is, Phil," he said, "Sis-

of me, with a low smothered cry, leaning heavily on her brother's arm for

support. "What is the matter, my dear sister?" again cried Fred with a puzzled look. She made no reply. Pale and trembling, she turned away, and left the spot with unsteady steps. When she

had gone, Fred cast a piercing look at "Phil Morton," he said, in a low, reproachful voice, "have you ever met her before?"

"I have," I replied, quite calmly.
"When and where?" "Five years ago on the vessel "Vic-

"How did you learn that graceful attitude?" said a gentleman to a fellow learn that you are the youth she and father have so frequently mentioned?" ing at a glass, "was the reply. "I suppose I am the same youth,"

of ever marrying, and accepting his

wager so willingly. When I had told him all I left him. and went to seek his sister Lilian. I found her in the conservatory, among the flowers, herself the fairest of all. She was sitting on a bench, with her head inclined, and her handkerchies pressed to her eyes, weeping tears of

joy, perhaps.

I went and sat down beside her and drew her into conversation. during all the long years that had passed since we parted on the rolling deep; and she, in turn, told me that an island, and subsequently saved by

tone: "And now, Lilian, you remember how we stood together on the burning ship, while the scene around us was ed inevitable, I told you that my heart was yours, and how you nestled your head upon my bosom and wept, and told me that such assurance made you happy. We were young then, Lilian; but, though thinking you dead, I have remained true to you, and cannot re-frain telling you a second time that I love you. Tell me darling, does the assurance make you happy this time?" She blushed, sighed, and leaned more

heavily on my trembling arm. "Are you the same noble Phil of old?" she whispered.

"I am unchanged, darling, save that through love for my lost one, I have shumed female society." "Then take me; I'm forever thine," she murmured; and once more I held How like she is to the one who the little beauty weeping on my breast. I need not prolong this story, reader mine. I like dwelling on the subject May it suffice to say that 'Squire Lacy and Fred were by no means dis-

of Lilian Lacy, I presented a fine hat to Fred, and was only too glad to acknowledge that he had won the wag-

An Incident of the Late War-

The dark horrors of war are relieved by occasional gleams of humanity, which make one feel all the more saddened by the records of strife between men who ought to be brothers. During the investment of Metzit was common for the German sentries at the outposts to leave a portion of their ra-tions for the famished sentries of the besieged army. A day's rations were also willingly given up on the capitu-lation. One of the war correspondents of the London press describes the following scene:

This afternoon I witnessed a very touching seene. A French soldler of the thirty-third line regiment, belonging to the corps of General Frossard; had been made prisoner at the outposts. He is a native of Jouy-aux-Arches, where his wife and children now reside. On his way to Corny, where the head-quarters of the prince are now situated, he asked permission to be allowed to see his wife and children. Need I say that the request was immediately granted? The poor woman, half delirious with joy, asked to be al-allowed to accompany her husband at least to Corny. This was also acceded to; but then came the difficulty about the bairns. The woman was weak and could not carry her baby, and at home there was no one to mind it; as for the little chap of five, he could toddle by his father's side. The difficulty was, however, overcome by a great big Pomeranian soldier, who volunteered to act as nurse. This man had been quartered close to the poor woman's house. and the little ones knew him for he had often played with them. When, therefore, bidding the poor wife be of good cheer, he held out his big, strong arms to the little infant, it came to him immediately, and nestling its tiny head upon his shoulders, seemed per-fectly content. So did the Prussian soldier carry the Frenchman's child.
When I first saw the group the wife
was clasped in her husband's embrace,
the little boy clung to his father's
hand, while the Prussian soldier with ter, allow me to make you acquameet with my old college chum, Phil Morton. But what in the duce is the matthe baby in his arms stalked along by their sides. Then the Frenchwoman their sides. been ill and in want of food, the Prussian soldiers had shared their rations with her, had fetched wood and water, had lit the fire, had helped her in their own rough, kindly way; until at last those two men, who belonged to countries now arrayed against each other in bitterest hate—who, perhaps, a few days since fought the one against the othere—embraced like brothers; while I, like a great big fool, stood by and cried like a baby. But I was not alone in my folly, if folly it be: several Prussian officers and soldiers followed my example—for we all had wives and children in far-off lands.

sectional states but I meet belefighered how managed time !