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### The Coquette's Fate.

"I do remember it, 'twas such face  
As Guido would have loved to dwell upon;  
But oh! the touches of his pencil never  
Could paint her perfect beauty."

"Turn on the light and poke the grate, so that the fire may burn cheerily. There is so much gloom in my heart to-night, I wish at least my study to appear cheerful. That will do, Thomas."

And my man shuts the door hastily, and hurries to the servants' hall, where the fellow will doubtless be happy enough among his companions, little heeding or caring about his master's mood. I attended two funerals to-day. A very unusual thing for me, as I habitually abstain from such gatherings, save when a relative or a very near friend claims the last sad attention.

The first was a gorgeous affair, too much so, I thought, for the circumstances which called the concourse together. Too much pomp, a dearth of genuine sorrow. Too many gilded turkeys and liveried coach and footmen. Too much obsequiousness on the part of some, too much haughtiness in others. Nothing but hollowing and unreasonality, nothing but mockery in that palace of death, though it did rear its elegant proportions on Madison avenue, with its possessor with millions at his command.

Rhoda Burt was dead—at the age of twenty-eight years; but it was difficult to realize it when gazing at her body as it lay robed in its costly trappings. She looked as if she was scarcely sixteen. The old smile—half laughing, half relenting—was still upon her lips. That perfect beauty which had sent dozens of noble fellows reeling to destruction, lingered over the face, as if death hesitated to mar so bewitching a creation. All the old fascinations seemed to be present, and were it not the lustrous eyes were closed, and the low tones of her voice were stilled forevermore, one might have thought her dreaming.

My next sad visit was to a short, narrow street down town, within a stone's throw of the bustle and turmoil of the business portion of the city. 'Twas a mean looking edifice, inhabited by needy literary drudges, and weary, disappointed women, who are destined to labor unrecompensed until the icy finger of death is laid upon the hearts who have planned and hoped—and failed.

Clark Buford's body lay awaiting interment. Several friends stood ready to follow it to the grave. There was no pomp here. Just enough respectability to make one sensible that he was mingling with men of culture, who had to battle hard for the bare privileges of living. I could not avoid the reflection whether life was worth the struggle.

As I looked upon the wan face of the dead man my thoughts leaped backward a dozen years to the time when Clark Buford was wealthy and courted. In those days he followed Rhoda Burt half over Europe, at times reveling in bliss, at others plunging in sorrow, according to the moods in which he found the girl he adored.

I had been roaming the plains of Lombardy when chance threw John Burt, wife and daughter, and Clark Buford in my way.

Burt was a New York man, well known to the Wall street fraternity. He was immensely wealthy and very popular, for he lavished his money with freedom that bordered upon rashness.

Rhoda was his only child. She might have made a loving and sympathizing woman, for her heart was not vicious after all. I think her parents will some day have a

fearful reckoning. When they threw her into the vortex of pride and fashion she was pure and good. When she died there was scarce a man who would have cared to call her wife.

Her life was a giddy whirl. Vanity and heartlessness she early knew. Day and night she was permitted to dash forward into fashionable follies, while no warning finger was raised to arrest her mad career.

She could have married a score of times. Men with titles, men with the fame of generations clinging to their names, wished to wed her. Statesmen and warriors had done homage at her feet, and a crowned king had pronounced her beauty unsurpassed, deigning at a court reception to make her an object of special attention.

And Clark Buford, what of him? Generous, wealthy and full of hope, he seemed to promise a worthy future. His family were good—better than John Burt's, if pedigree is worth anything. Buford was singularly free from all vices when he met Rhoda Burt, but when he parted from her—well, let the curtain fall there.

It was one of those joyous days when one feels as if he had taken a new lease of life, that the Burts, Buford and myself started from Piedmont to ascend the Pennine Alps, intending to visit St. Bernard. The road to this spot has been so often described that it has become threadbare, and I therefore spare the reader.

Behold us then, at the hospice in the month of June. The weather was pleasant, when one considers that we were more than eight thousand feet above the sea level. It was the day following our arrival that, in company with Rhoda Burt and Buford, we were looking about the building when we met a young monk of the Saint Augustine order, who had lately arrived there to replace one of his brethren prematurely worn out in his work of humanity. He was scarcely more than nineteen years old, and was remarkably handsome. When I glanced at Rhoda Burt's face I read the thoughts that were passing through her heart as if they had been contained in a printed page before my gaze.

Slowly and wearily she raised her eyes until they met the young monk's when, as quick as lightning, one of those electric flashes she knew so well how to discharge, half voluptuous, half pitying, caused him to pause.

I could discern the shudder that passed over his frame, as his cheek grew a shade paler, and his eyes fell to the stone floor, as he passed on his way.

Rhoda Burt smiled as she caught my eye, but she knew I had her secret. Later in the day, when the sun was setting, I was standing in the room usually devoted to postillions, watching Francois, our driver, repair a portion of his harness, when I felt a finger aid on my shoulder, and, on turning about confronted Brother Adolphe.

"I would speak a word with you," he said, "if you would excuse the interruption."

I bowed and stepped after him into the corridor.

"Would you have any objection of retiring to my apartment?" he asked: "I will scarcely detain you a moment."

"Certainly not," I replied.

"They follow me," he rejoined. A few steps, and I was ushered into the monk's room. It was a very contracted affair, with walls of stone, and the light that struggled through the small window barely enabled one to read when seated beneath it. A narrow bed-

stead, with a blue earthen jug beside it. Add a short bench, and you have the entire furniture of the apartment.

"I am about to make a request of you," he began, exhibiting some confusion, "and need scarcely say to you that I would like you to consider it confidential."

I bowed again, and he proceeded:

"The party to whom you belong contains a lady that awakens a singular interest in my mind."

He might have said "heart," but that would not have been proper, considering the garb he wore.

"Would you do me the favor to write her a dross distinctly?"

Here he produced a card, on which I inscribed Rhoda Burt's address. He gazed at it intently, and then added:

"Mademoiselle is very like one I have frequently seen in my dreams."

I smiled, as I replied:

"I perceive a monk's habit cannot bar his heart against beauty."

He colored to the very ears.

"You mistake me," he answered; "it is not mademoiselle's loveliness that awakens my interest—it is simply her resemblance to a face that for ten years has haunted my dreams. I never saw the original until yesterday."

Poor Brother Adolphe! Better far had he dreamed of than met his vision in earthly guise.

The next day we left the hospice, and I have a distinct recollection of getting a glimpse of a purple dress glide past a door of the corridor as I happened to pass by.

Two weeks more, and we were enjoying ourselves in Turin. Clark Buford had learned his fate. He bore up better than I expected he would, but withal, he was suffering great mental anxiety. He came to me and unburthened his heart. It distressed me to see his anguish. By this time I knew the woman who had given him so much misery. When I undertook to reason with him and try and persuade him that Rhoda Burt was a heartless flirt, he would not listen to me.

"Not a word against her," he replied; "it may be as you suspect, but to me she must ever be sacred. I cannot bear to hear her associated with anything that is not good and true."

A little later and Clark Buford went to his own country. After his departure I would have followed him, but John Burt made me promise to continue the tour with them, stating that it would be but a few weeks longer. I have often wished that I had declined.

We were ready to leave Turin, when I one day passed a man upon the street whose face I had seen before. I puzzled myself trying to call it to my mind, but it was not until I went to bed, and between my waking and sleeping moments the fact that I had seen Brother Adolphe flashed on my mind. He must have deserted his post. The thought brought painful reflections, for it such were the case, he would probably be arrested and punished. Of course he had but one motive, and that was not difficult to comprehend. I kept my eyes on Rhoda Burt, and saw her steal out alone in a very suspicious manner; but I never spied her ways, and she quickly returned to the hotel.

In the meantime Clark Buford had sailed for New York. Once landed there, the poor fellow took the downward course very fast. It took him nearly a dozen years (thanks to a powerful constitution) to kill himself, but he accomplished it, nevertheless.

It was a couple of years after our return from Europe, when I was one evening passing by the residence of John Burt, that I observed a servant hastily ejecting a man from

the door steps. I stood still to observe what occurred, when the man caught sight of me. He remained irresolute for a moment and then accosted me:

"Surely I am not mistaken!" he exclaimed, holding out his hand.

"Is it possible that I see Brother Adolphe?"

"Ah, bah!" he cried, "Adolphe Vitry; that is all; never mind the brother. I suppose you saw that villain remove me from the door? Well, I shall have revenge, but not on him. You see a ruined man before you, monsieur."

"Come with me," I said; "I would fain speak with you," and I took him to my house. When we were seated I brought out a bottle of wine, and waited until he had half emptied it, when I said, "Why did you leave the hospice? And why did you not speak to me when I met you in Turin?"

"Monsieur," he replied, "I am the most unhappy man on earth, and ought to be accursed, for I violated my vows and ran away from a self-imposed duty to follow that which I should not have dared even meditate. Do you know she laughed at me when I pleaded my vows; for I did plead, as Heaven is my judge, I did. Well, I suppose she found me willing to listen to her words, and fool enough to worship her beauty. It will not, therefore, be wonderful to you if I state, in answer to your interrogatories, that I left the hospice because I was wicked and a fool, and I did not address you when we met at Turin because I was then a disgraced man, and secrecy was very necessary in all my movements. "Let me see," he continued, reflecting. "Mademoiselle has admitted me several times to her father's house. On the last occasion she bid me depart—me, me," he cried, "who have dishonored myself for her sake. Yes, she absolutely ordered her menials to put me from the house. Ah! we shall have revenge."

"I am very much pained to see and hear all this," I answered. He shrugged his shoulders.

"You will not be offended," I continued, "if I inquire whether you have need of anything? Where are you stopping? Are you well supplied with funds?"

Adolphe Vitry laughed. "Monks do not accumulate much money," he replied. "I scarcely know what it is to handle money."

I put my hand in my pocket and drew out a roll of notes, which I thrust into his hand.

"Thanks, monsieur," he replied; "perhaps I may repay you some day."

A few days after I got a note from Monsieur Vitry, informing me that he was going to leave the country.

Twelve years had passed away and Clark Buford was breathing his last, when a man was observed hovering near the carriage that stood in front of John Burt's residence. By and by the daughter of the millionaire came tripping down the steps. The footman bowed as he opened the carriage door. Just as she was in the act of stepping into the barouche there came the sharp, whip-like report of a pistol, and Rhoda Burt fell forward on her face with a bullet in her heart.

Fleet as a deer bounded away Adolphe Vitry. He did not care to escape, but he desired to gain a shelter ere he concluded the act he meditated.

The populace screamed as they dashed after the murderer, but he at length gained a public house. Leaping through the doorway he seated himself at a table, and before his hand could be arrested, he had applied a pistol to his temple and shot himself through the brains. His death must have been instantaneous, for he never moved after he fell.

### The Whipping-Post: A SCENE IN NEWCASTLE PRISON, DELAWARE—LASHING TWO CONVICTS.

Almost the first words I heard as I entered the prison yard were: "I hope the Sheriff will cut that Joe Smith like the—, for a worse nigger don't live in the State."

"He did it decently last Saturday," rejoiced a defunct specimen of humanity.

"No, he didn't," replied a party next to him, "he only raised the dust on their backs."

"What's the use in having a whipping-post?" said a cold, stern man, who looked for all the world like a country squire; "what's the use of a whipping-post if you don't make 'em feel it?"

At this point the Sheriff came out of the jail, followed by the keeper, who was leading

A STOUTLY-BUILT COLORED MAN, who had a coat thrown loosely over his shoulders. The crowd made a gap, and the prisoner was taken to the post, and his hands fastened in a pair of iron cuffs above his head. The spectators laughed and brutally commented upon the unfortunate wretch. The coat was taken off, and he stood shivering and trembling in the intense cold, and directly in the path of the wind current from the gate. The Sheriff grasped the whip in his right hand, the keeper stood off to the left and folded his arms; the lash was raised and brought down with considerable force across the shoulders of the victim, while the keeper tallied the stroke in a heavy, sonorous voice.

### THE MAN TREMBLED.

And a sharp cry of pain escaped from his lips. The lash had left its mark in several white welts, which quickly filled with blood. The spectators pushed to obtain a position so as to see the naked back, while the blows fell with irregular time upon the poor wretch's flesh. The pain seemed to be growing intense, for the man flinched and bent his body in and out as if each thong as it fell upon him cut like a knife. The twentieth stroke, which was the last, was reached; the keeper cried out "All up," and the wretch was unloosed; he picked up his coat and threw it upon his back and walked off into the jail to spend a year in a cell, while the crowd sent behind him a brutal laugh, and complimented the Sheriff upon the decent way in which he had done it.

### THE SECOND TO BE LASHED.

In a few minutes the keeper brought out the second and last candidate for the lash. His name was Joe Smith, a mulatto, about 39 years of age. He had been sentenced to 20 lashes for having stolen a set of harness from a Newcastle county farmer. He was fastened to the post by the iron cuffs, the coat was pulled from off his shoulders, and he stood trembling in the freezing cold. The crowd pressed closely around the post, the keeper gave the word, the Sheriff raised the lash and brought it down with tremendous force on the victim's back, who flinched and distorted himself in a manner

### PAINFUL TO BEHOLD.

The strokes raised large white welts upon the tender flesh and as soon as the blow was given a deep red blood spot instantly appeared. The victim suffered terribly and at the fifteenth stroke groaned in an audible tone.

"Twenty," tallied the keeper in his heavy voice and the horrid work was ended. The arms were released, while the back of the victim grew as red as a piece of raw meat. He coolly picked up his coat and followed the keeper to his cell to spend the remainder of his sentence.