TRIED.

Lisle Mercur went home early this evening. Little Pet had said good-bye, after dinner, with heavy eyes that followed him all the way to the bank, and kept reminding him of some they had once closed in death in the same household.

Willie was just buried three years ago to-morrow. The father went lightly up the stairs, straight on his way to the nursery. As he turned at the head of the stair-case, Mrs. Mercur stepped out of the dressing-room door into the blaze of the hall lights, elegantly arrayed for an evening party. She paused in surprise at seeing her husband home so early. Pretty and piquant as she stood before him, her delicate beauty, as soft and ethereal as the dress she wore, quite dispelled the the stern expression on his lips, and the reproach in his tones died down to simple surprise, as he asked: "Are you going out to-night, Fanny?"

"Yes. Why not?" she inquired, in her fluttering, girlish way.

"Your baby, dear," the husband said, in a sad, reproving style.

"Pshaw, Lisle, she's only a little unwell; and Lette will sit by her. She says the child is fond of her, and begs of me to go and enjoy myself. She is thoughtful of me," the young wife added, casting a reproachful glance at the earnest face, looking with sare, disappointed inquiry into hers. "She says I must not shut up like a nun."

"Do you think your French maid cares more for you than I do, Fanny?"

The small hands worked uneasily, opening and shutting her fan. She was always lost when this strong man's love spoke to her in this twofold, unappealable way. So she ignorantly pushed aside the steadying hand that would have guided her into beautiful womanhood, and said the least bit peevishly: "Come, Lisle, don't be always making me solemn. Say good-night and kiss me and tell me to go and be happy."

The husband bent over and kissed the red lips held up coaxingly to his, and, encircling the slight waist for a moment with his arm, said in his deep, sad way: "Go and be happy, Fanny."

She glided down the stairs and sprang into the carriage waiting for her at the door, but could not shake off the strange feeling that her husband's manner had inspired, until fairly launched into the whirl of giddy enjoyment at Mrs. Grange's. Lisle Mercur watched her graceful, retreating figure until it went out of sight. As the front door closed after her her he turned heavily, with the great want his beautiful wife so lightly comprehended, and walked to the nursery door. It stood slightly ajar. A little querulous voice kept repeating.

"No, no; Pet wants Flynn."

"Sh! sh! Lette's here. Lette's better than Flynn.

Pet turned on the pillow and looked at the fussy French girl with childish incredulity.

"Pet wants Flynn."

Lette was becoming annoyed at the child's persistency, and pushed back her chair impatiently.

Mr. Mercur was about to open the door and go in, when he heard a rustle at the foot of Pet's bed, and a pale, weary-faced woman glided in from a room adjoining the nursery, and stooped over the restless child. Her lips touched the hot cheek, and two fat arms went round her neck, like love-chains from an angel's heart. Pet was quiet now. She needed no hushing. The touch of Flynn's cool hand was always enough for her. Lette went bustling through the door at the foot of the crib. After a while Flynn unlocked the fingers clasped about her neck and holding them in her own, sat down by the bedside and looked at the head nestled on the dainty pillow. Her white illegible face was partially turned toward the hall door, where Lisle Mercur stood with a father's pardonable curiosity. He always regarded his young sister's governess as a calm, gentle woman, with soul enough for her position. To-night he caught a glimpse of something more. That strange power toward which childhood leaps instinctively, watched, unslumbering, selfguard under steady gaze, thrilled in the low sure utterance of her conscious words; asserted itself in her lightest touch. Lisle saw why his child wanted Flynn. She was one of those women who, when one once knows them, breathe poetry to the very elements, even though they shrink from talking or singing it. To such, it must not go through many hands, all dabbing at its freshness. So she took to this fair child, and whispered her sweet thoughts to her. And they grew so quietly and naturally together, that even the close-sighted father never knew of the union until the night when accident showed him Pet's companionship. And his pretty wife flashed back in his face the truth that as for spiritual communion he was alone.

Pet lay so still he thought she must be falling asleep. Then he heard her say, softly:

"Mamma's gone, Flynn."

Flynn smiled.

"Mamma was pretty."

"Why didn't God make Flynn prettier?"

"God knew," Flynn said, reverently; and the child raised her eyes as she did in prayer. They came back brightly again.

"Mamma wore beautiful flowers!"

"Where?" asked Flyn.

"Here." And the little hands went together over Pet's bosom.

"Pet's Flynn's flower."

The sweet face brightened with a mischievous smile.

"Wear yours where mamma wears hers."

Flynn understood. She gathered the little form up in her arms, and pressed it close to her loving woman's heart. This bud she was nurturing would open one day into Flynn's beautiful blossom—not mamma's.

So thought papa as he walked outside the door, while the pale governess walked the nursery floor with the burden on her breast, and at last laid it down sleeping on the bed. Then he went back to his room and waited for mamma. She came home long after midnight and slept late in the morning. When she met her husband at dinner she said in her childish way, quite exultingly, "I knew Pet would be well enough off. Lette said she was quiet and slept well."

The father thought of weary feet going to and fro in the nursery, and the low lullaby hummed softly in his baby's ear. Thinking of the subtle music of this woman's voice, he forgot what mamma was saying, or that she was there. So no revelation was made.

Mrs. Mercur grew feverishly fond of excitement and party going. Her husband's remonstrances were unheeded; and at last, growing weary of her weak accusations and insinuating comparisons of his conduct and Lette's, he gave up the attempt of restraining her, until he saw that her health was rapidly giving way. Then he plead with her, gently but earnestly. She laughed at his fears, and turned to the pleasures she was madly pursuing with renewed eagerness. Duty urged him to more decided action. He led her to her mirror one morning after a night of dissipation, and bade her confront the sunken cheeks and glassy eyes staring back in her face like a solemn warning. She gazed for a moment like one transfixed, and the truth fastened slowly on her unwilling consciousness. She could not bear it. She turned fiercely toward him, and with a wild gesture, almost shrieked: "Stop your idle prating. I will live while I do live."

The end of her race was reached at last, and she lay down to die. It was a grim place she was verging on. The phantoms and shadows were all passed. The real chasm, the genuine gloom, were just outside. Should she go back, seeking aid of the pleasure-hunters, through this place they had led her to? Ah! they were cheerless guides now.

"I am dying, Lisle," she whispered. He gathered her cold hands in his warm ones, but he could not remove the chill.

"I am dying, Lisle!" she shrieked, piteously. He bowed his head over her pillow till his lips touched her damp forehead, but they had no comfort for her here.

"Help me, husband!"

He could have helped her once. He could only turn, in his deep distress, and groan now. A quick thought flashed through him hopefully. "Shall I call Flynn?"

The dying eyes looked up imploringly. She came white and marble-like, as she who lay there in her agony would be soon. Lisle could not see the hope which belonged to read if there were hope of life in his wife, the lids lay down so heavily on her eyes.

Fanny turned to her, with a wild plea in every lineament of her suffering face.

"Help me, Flynn!"

"God must do that," said a firm, sustaining voice, close in her failing ear.

"Where is He?" gasped the whitening lips.

"Here, Fanny, closer than I can come to you."

"If I could see Him! If I could feel Him!" she cried clingingly, as if reaching out in the dark.

"Call Him as you me. Ask him to help you as you ask me. He loves better than I, Fanny. He can go further than I. He is right here. Can't you see Him—can't you feel Him—said the low voice in tones that thrilled one with the consciousness of an invisible presence.

The look of terror went from the ghastly face, and the faint shadow of a coming smile paused on the dying lips that only had breath to say:

"Y—e—s."

She was gone where they could do no more for her.

Lisle Mercur left Pet with Flynn, and went abroad. Two years passed, and he did not return. Then came a letter, saying he would sail in two days more, in the Solitaire.

Toward the close of summer, just at twilight one evening, they two sat alone in the window seat of the library, looking at the old lighthouse far up the beach on the Rocky Point.

"It looks ugly, don't it, Flynn?"

"Yes," said Flynn, thoughtfully. "It looks lonely and bare and grim in the daylight; but how was it last night?"

Pet remembered how the storm raged and the sea roared all night, and how she clung to Flynn, wild with fear lest they should all, home, sea and winds, be whirled together in terrible destruction. Then, shining in through the chamber window, gleamed that solitary light from the old tower, and Flynn said: "Look, child, what is it like?"

"Like a star of hope, isn't it, Flynn?"

Flynn said: "Yes," and hoped it might be such to those at sea. She did not whisper the dreadful fear she had in her heart—that a vessel, homeward bound, might go down that dismal night. She smoothed the little head that might be fatherless, and wove that in her prayers.

Later in the evening came a messenger saying that the Solitaire had foundered in the storm the night before, and it was reliably reported that all on board had perished. Almost within sight of home! Flynn had learned to fear cruel tidings. So no one knew how she felt. The servants gathered, whispering in the hall. She went out, and bade them disperse, in a husky voice, until Pet was asleep. The lamps were not lighted, and they could not see her pallid face.

She took the child to her chamber and sat beside her until she was asleep. Then she moved like a statue down the stairs into the presence of the cowering servants, who were waiting as if by instinct for her commands.

"We will have no lights to-night," she said in a voice that thrilled through darkness. "Let all retire and the house be quiet; to-morrow will be soon enough." There was no need to say for what it would be soon enough, and they went from her presence awe stricken and oppressed with gloom. When they were all gone she went back to the window seat in the library, where she had been sitting with Pet, and, kneeling down, buried her face in the cushions. The murmur of the waves breaking softly on the beach came in at the open window.

Lisle Mercur sailed a week in advance of the Solitaire, contrary to his expectation when he wrote. When the news of that vessel's wreck reached his family he was already impatiently moving toward home. It was still comparatively early in the evening when he alighted from the coach in front of his own house. Surprised at finding it closed and dark, he went around toward the back part of the premises, intending to arouse one of the servants. As he passed the library window he observed that it was open, and, springing to the low balcony, he was going in when something suddenly arrested his attention. Stooping over to examine more closely, he was startled by the sight of a human face half buried in the crimson cushions. Just then the moon came from under a cloud and shone full upon the object at which he stood gazing with deep perplexity. He saw now that it was Flynn, half kneeling, half reclining, as if she had fallen asleep in the midst of prayer.

He called her softly by name, but she did not move. Then he spoke in a louder voice, almost roughly, but there came no response. He grew alarmed. The strong man shook like an aspen. He raised her head reverently and tenderly, and laid it against his bosom, smoothing back the hair and gazing fondly into the face he had looked upon ignorantly unappreciatingly, times without number. How precious it seemed to him then, as he groaned aloud: "Great God! I have come back for this?" He thought she was dead—that a new and deeper desolation than he had yet known was upon him.

As he gazed the nostrils slowly dilated, the thin lips parted, and those dark mysterious eyes opened full on his. The sea breeze, the murmur of the waves, were the strange music he heard; the moonlight coming in at the open window, all this was real, but this face with its passionate energy, this breast against which she was held so tightly—what did it mean? She would see what it meant; so she made a strong effort, and sat upright. She had passed through a great agony, and she had dreamed a short, sweet dream. It was over now, and she must go back to her self-sustenance. In a moment of mutual silence she called up her old habit of calmness, and said as firmly as her weakness would permit her to:

"We feared you were drowned."

"I knew you would, and hurried home on that account."

"The servants are horror-stricken, but, thank heaven, Pet is spared what I feared she must know soon."

"Flynn"—the pale face turned so that the moonlight would not strike it so broadly—"did any one else grieve for me?"

She trembled visibly, and tried to say something verging close on propriety.

"Spare me this, Flynn," he said, pleading. "Come down from this distance at which I have viewed you, and tell me at once what I ask."

"How far would you have me come?" she asked, with a quiet significance that he understood at once.

"Not beyond the borders of female delicacy. I forgot in the intensity of the moment that I had not met you there with a broad avowal of my love—love such as men seldom give to a woman, Flynn."

She looked at him as if to comprehend his meaning, and said, musingly: "I have wandered so long I am lost now."

"Come home, Flynn, he said, reaching out his arms to her. "Lay your head where it lay helplessly a moment since. Trust me. It is mine."

Her head dropped where it was to rest henceforth.

"Tell me why you knelt here like one dead?"

"For you," she said, shivering. "I thought you were dead."

"Then you love me?"

"Oh, Lisle!" the fervor of her words thrilled through his soul.

"How long has this been, Flynn?"

"Since I came here as your sister's governess.'

He started suddenly.

"Before Fanny?"

"Yes," said a voice, tinged with long borne sorrow.

"Flynn, Flynn, you have suffered!"

She smiled a smile borne of deep soul struggles.

"It has not been in vain." The mask was all off now. Lisle Mercur saw the loving, purified character shining through the face he held to his lips.

"You shall suffer no more alone, darling."

House-Cleaning.—Mrs. J. D. S. writes: "I find washing soda better than ammonia or soap for cleaning house. It should be kept air tight when not in use. I keep mine in a self-sealing jar. A little of it is a great help on dirty paint and oil cloths. I think, too, there is less danger of the paint being left 'streaked' if one begins at the bottom of doors and windows rather than at the top."

A LUCKY DIE.

What the deuce ails me? Where am I, anyhow? Wherever I am, springs and mattresses must be scarce, for I know I am laid out on some mighty hard substance. Wonder if I'm dead? I feel mighty like it. Maybe I am stretched out ready for the doctors to carve me.

These were my first thoughts, very cheerful, indeed, as I became conscious. I could neither speak, nor move; but I soon learned that I could hear.

A door opened, footsteps approached. I felt a cloth removed from my face, and a voice, which I recognized as that of my intended father-in-law, said:

"He hasn't changed much," and his companion, whose voice I recognized as Sowerby's, the undertaker, said lightly:

"Here's is just where you are mistaken, Mr. Muffins; he looks a cussed sight better dead than alive, but how does Priscilla feel about it? Take on much, eh?"

"Oh! no just enough to appear well," said the father of my affianced, with a chuckle. "She never cared much for Smith; 'twas his stamps that she fancied. My Priscilla is a practical girl and went in for his dimes, his carriage and greys, although at the same time I must own she was spooney on bald-pated Howard, the artist, but he's poor as Job's turkey, as the saying is."

"Well, she can have him now for all this poor cuss, can't she?" said Sowerby beating a tattoo with his digits on my chest.

"I presume so, but she will wait till the year is up, for fear of gossip, you know."

"But who gets his money, seeing the poor cuss has no relations?" queried the undertaker.

"Oh! that's all right. You see, my Priscilla is a sensible girl. Before she promised to marry him she had him make his will in her favor. Poor Smith was rather sappy, you know; had nothing against him, however, although he was deadedly homely, and such a barn-door of a mouth, always open."

"Well, said the cheerful voice of the undertaker, "his mouth is shut tight enough now, I reckon; he'll never open it in this world again. I reckon his immortal part is now with the angels."

And my mortal part is also with the angels, thought I—a fine pair of angels! I felt indignant at their clumsy ridicule. I tried to shut my fist, but the devil a bit was to it. I could do nothing but listen. He then began to measure me for my coffin. I had heard that undertakers whistled joyfully when they got a measure. I believed it to be only a joke on the craft; but Sowerby actually struck up the air "Pull Down the Blinds," in a subdued trilling whistle while he measured me.

"A nobby casket and 100 hacks, eh, Mr. Muffins? Must make a big thing of it. The cuss left lots of money, and remember he was to be your Priscilla's husband. Must have a splurge, Mr. Muffins," said the worthy undertakey, with an eye to his own pocket.

"Well, I don't mind if the coffin is a little nobby looking; but 100 hacks! The deuce! Just send one or two for the mourners, and the rest who come to attend the funeral can furnish their own rigs or hoof it, whichever suits them."

They covered my face again and left me to my own reflections. I had often heard it remarked that meditation was good for the soul, and this was the best chance I ever had of trying it.

An hour must have passed and the door was again opened, and two persons came, whispering along, to where I lay, and the voice of my promised wife fell on my ear.

"Dread to look at him, Mr. Howard; he was so homely when living, he must be frightful when dead."

I ground my teeth in rage as I remembered how often she had gone into raptures, or pretended to, over my noble brow and expressive mouth, and would solemnly declare that if I were taken from her she would enter a convent, take the black veil and never more behold the sun.

One of them raised the cloth, I knew they were looking at me. Howard was the chap she was spooney on, whom her father had mentioned.

"Seems to me you don't feel very bad about his dying, Miss Muffins," exclaimed Howard, deliberately.

"Well, to tell the truth," said my betrothed "I don't care very much about it. If he had lived I suppose I should have married him, because he was rich; but I was getting almost sick of my bargain, for I know I should always be ashamed of him."

"But you loved him," remarked Howard.

"No, I didn't! My affections were wasted long ago on one who never returned my love." And my fast-fading idol sighed heavily. They had now covered my face again, and were standing within a few feet of where I lay.

"About how long ago, Miss Muffins?" asked Howard.

"Oh, about a year or so," with another sigh.

"About the time I went away?" interrupted the cautious Howard, coughing a little.

"Well, yes, about that length of time," assented my dear affianced.

"Now, Miss Mu-Muf-Muffins—you—oh! you don't meant to insinuate that I I-I, oh! oh! oh! too much bliss—am the lucky—"

"I don't mean to insinuate anything, Mr. Howard;" and the angelic sweetness of her voice became somewhat metallic.

"Now, see here—Pris-Pris-cilla—oh! let me call you by that melodious name. See here! I always loved you, not for your beauty, God knows, but for your artlessness; 'pon my soul I did, and would have proposed to you only I heard you were engaged to the chap that is stretched there."

"Oh! Mr. Howard!" said Mrs. Smith that was to be, giving a little squeal.

"Don't Mr. Howard me. If you return my affection you must call me by some pet names. Call me Harry—call me Lorey—but for Heaven's sake don't Mr. Howard me, my own Priscilla!" said Howard, in a quivering voice. Then I heard a movement of feet, accompanied by a loud lip explosion. Moses! how mad I got! I tried to kick or grate my teeth, but the devil a kick or grate could I raise. I was obliged to grin and bear it. Bear it I had to; but grin I couldn't.

Soon my company left, and I was again entertained by my own pleasant thoughts, until I again felt the cloth gently removed from my face. A soft, warm palm was laid on my forehead, and the low, sweet voice of Minnie Rivers whispered—well, no matter what.

Night came—so did the neighbors to my wake; and from two old crones who sat near me I learned to my horror that I was to be buried next day.

"Of course you are coming to the funeral to-morrow, Mrs. Frizzlebaum?" said one of them.

"Oh! dear, yes, surely. I hope it may turn out a fine day, for I want to enjoy the ride to the cemetery."

I then lost consciousness, and the next I heard were the grating voices of Priscilla, my fiancee, and her mother. Apparently they were brushing, dusting and giving the room a general slicking up before the funeral.

"Is Howard to be one of the pall-bearers?" asked the voice of my mother-in-law that might have been.

"He would be, gladly, but he hasn't a suit of black clothes," said my sweetest.

"Why, Priscilla! my child, don't you remember Smith's black broadcloth; the suit is brand new. I know it will fit Howard. Call him in—he's sitting in the kitchen—and let him try them on."

Now, this black suit was a particular favorite of mine, a perfect fit, that set my person off to great advantage, and it made my blood boil to hear them talk so coolly of transferring it to my rival, to be worn at my funeral. I was getting very mad now. I felt the crisis was near, and that I should either die or explode if they meddled with my black suit. Priscilla took it down from the peg—I knew it, for I heard the buckles jingle—and made for the door. I tried to shake my fist, and yell at her, but all in vain, and there I lay, outwardly calm as a lamb, my inwards boiling with wrath. It was too much! The deepest trance could not have held out against that suit; with a power of effort I sprung up and howled. Priscilla dropped my clothes, her mother the duster, and both bounded out of the room squealing like shot rabbits. With difficulty I managed to get my clothes on, and had just got inside my pants when Mrs. Muffins and her daughter, headed by the undertaker, peered in at the door; a motley company of women and smutty-faced children stood in their rear. Such scared-looking owls; enough to amuse a dead man. So I laughed. It was not very becoming; but I laughed peal after peal till my sides began to ache. Then the undertaker ventured near me, saying, rather dubiously:

"So you are not dead yet, Mr. Smith?"

"Well, no, not exactly; sorry to disappoint my friends about the funeral, however."

"Yes," he assented absently: "bad, rather—that is—ahem!"

Fooled out of the dimes, carriage and greys, my gal, thought I, as I looked at Priscilla.

"Go speak with him," said her father, in an undertone; "act your part well."

They now began to gather around me and to congratulate me on my narrow escape. I noticed they cried a great deal more than when I was dead. Priscilla came and hung on my neck, sniveling desperately. I gave her a not over-gentle push from me, and told her to wait next time till I was safely buried before she meddled with my clothes.

"Oh! I am so glad!" she said, sweetly, without appearing to notice what I said about my clothes, "that you are not dead, dear. My heart seemed withered and broken to see you lying so cold and white. I wept bitterly over your poor, angelic face, my darling."

"Oh, yes, you did. I heard you and Howard take on as a furious rate. It was a very lucky day for me, my ducky."

"Could you hear," she gasped

"I rather think I could," I replied. "So good-by, my noble girl; you can have the pleasure of calling Howard all the pet names you can lay you tongue to." She made a bee-line for the open door, and her pull-back was the last I ever saw of her. Howard never married her, and I hear she still lives a life of single blessedness. As I am writing this piece a quiet little figure steals to my side, and a soft, white hand, which sends a thrill of pleasure to my heart, is laid lovingly on my shoulder; yes, the hand of Minnie Rivers, now Minnie Smith, my wife.

Mouth Disinfectant.—A lady asks us to name some harmless mouth disinfectant. It is not a good sign to have a mouth that needs disinfecting. There must be some fault with the stomach, or liver, or bowels. The first remedy should be to regulate the diet and other habits, so that the functions of excretion shall be perfectly established. Then if the mouth requires clensing with anything more than pure soft water, a harmless lozenge may be made by rubbing 24 grains each of permaganate of potash and hyperoxydate of barium into a mass with sugar and glycerine, and dividing it into 14 parts. A very ill-smelling mouth will be thoroughly disinfected by its occasional use.—[Herald of Health.