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AN HOUR OF TERROR.

I found myself on the following morning looking into the mirror to see whether or not my hair had turned white, and I have often wondered since how I ever managed to come through it safely; but I did it somehow, and am here now to tell you about it, if you will be patient and listen.

I was just sixteen years of age, and the youngest of a large family, all of whom had married and left home except myself. We were residing in the country and I had never wished to leave my quiet home until after that eventful night of which I am about to tell you.

My mother used to call me her "tomboy" daughter, and indeed, if it had not been for my accomplishments in this direction, I hardly know how I should have taken care of myself on that night—as you will observe when I have finished.

My father was a physician, and had been called to the bedside of a patient who was expected to die every moment, consequently we did not expect him back until some time the next day.

My mother had dismissed all the servants for the night and locked the doors. It was past our usual bedtime, but we were both deeply absorbed in our new books, and seemed indisposed to retire.

At last, however, mother closed her book, and said it was time we were in bed, as we were expecting my brother and his wife to arrive the next morning at about three o'clock, and would be called up to meet them.

I placed my novel on the table, and was leaning back to enjoy a huge yawn, when the front gate opened and some one came rapidly up the walk to the porch. The next moment there was a loud knock at the door, and mother and I looked at each other a moment, as if wondering who could be coming at such a late hour.

"Some one has sent for your father, I guess," said mother, going to her room door which opened into the hall. "Who's there?" she inquired; and I must confess I felt somewhat relieved when I heard the voice of my brother-in-law, who lived about a mile from us, saying that his wife was unwell, and he had come for father.

Of course I was sorry for my sister's illness, but at the same time was glad that the caller was not an intruder, as I had feared. When mother informed him that father was away, he asked her if she would not return home with him, as she might be able to render my sister some relief.

Of course she could not refuse, and so I was to be left alone, for I could not possibly leave home alone, on account of my brother and his wife, whom I should be compelled to remain at home to receive.

Perhaps I was more easily frightened than most girls of my age, but the fact that I was "the baby of the family," and had never been left alone at night, I think quite a sufficient reason for my ailing.

After seeing mother safely off I fastened the door, and taking my book, went up stairs to my own room, where I determined to spend the remainder of the night reading—at least until my brother and his wife came at three.

A door opened from my room upon a little balcony, into which one from the hall also opened. This I left ajar to admit fresh air, as I knew there would be no possible means of reaching it from the porch below, except by a long ladder.

I could not center my thoughts upon the words before me, although I had been very much interested before mother left. I would start and listen at the least sound I heard. Once I laid aside my book, and going to the back window, looked down towards the servants' houses to see if they had all retired.

Everything was dark and still, and I again decided to be as brave as possible, and forget all about robbers and ghosts; and so, after satisfying myself once more that there was no one in the closet or wardrobe, or under the bed, I took possession of my book and sat down to read.

I managed to read a chapter or two, and again I found myself peering out of the window down into the garden, and trying to form the dancing shadows there into human forms making their stealthy way through the shrubbery.

I was about to turn my eyes to my book once more when I saw something that caused me to start and look more closely. Yes, it was indeed a creeping thing, cautiously along behind the hedge toward the servants' houses. Who could it be? The servant's said nothing the night before about leaving, and it was something unusual for one of them to keep such things a secret, as they seemed to take a delight in making known their pleasure trips to us for several days before they were to take place.

Even if it was one of them, why place me in such a position? And why had he come in through the garden instead of the lane?

I watched him until he reached the garden gate, and, opening it, stepped into the back yard. He paused and looked about in every direction, and I saw him peering up through the branches of the trees toward the window near which I stood. Shading my eyes, I looked more closely to see if I could tell who it was, but could not. He wore a large, broad-brimmed black hat and a long coat. He seemed to be gazing up at my window for a full minute, and then he stepped hastily across the yard and disappeared around the house. I hurried to the back window in time to see him enter the house of Uncle Ben, our old gardener.

"Pshaw!" I said to myself. "It's nobody but Uncle Ben, after all. Been over to see some neighbors and come home late."

But still I was not exactly satisfied, for I kept on thinking about the manner in which he had come to the house. It was just half past twelve. Mercy! what was I to do with the remainder of the time till three o'clock came?

When the excitement occasioned by the appearance of the figure in the garden had subsided a little, my eyelids began to get heavy, and almost before I knew it, my chin rested on my chest, and I was fast asleep.

When I awoke, it was with a sudden start, and I almost sprang to my feet. I wondered why I had been aroused so suddenly, and listened intently to see if the sound or whatever it was would be repeated.

All was still as death. Nothing to meet my listening ear save the mournful breeze as it gently rustled the leaves outside my window, and the faint tick-tick of a large clock in the hall down stairs. Yes, a cricket was chirping from the hearth, and I could hear the weird, lonely hoot of an owl from the neighboring wood.

A thrill ran through me. Everything seemed so completely forsaken—so quiet and desolate. Looking at my watch, I discovered that it was exactly two o'clock, and indeed was surprised to learn that I had been asleep so long. Another hour before my brother would come. I thought it would never do to allow myself to fall asleep again, and remembering that there were some apples in the closet, I started to get one, hoping it would assist to keep me awake. I had just stooped over the basket, when I heard a strange grinding, cutting sound, very low, but distinct. I turned to listen, and it came to my ears louder than before.

I asked myself if it could be a huge rat cutting his way into the pantry below, but the next instant this hope was driven from me, for the noise was evidently made by something larger than a rat. Some one was trying to affect an entrance.

Oh, Heaven, what could I do? Suppose it was a robber attempting to make an entrance into the house? What would become of me? I shuddered and stood like one riveted to the floor. I felt the perspiration stealing out upon my forehead in great, hot beads, and almost heard my heart beating. Again I listened in breathless suspense. The sound was unmistakable this time, and that it was an intruder I did not doubt, trying to cut his way through some of the blinds below.

There were guns in the house, and I could handle one about as well as any country girl; but the fact was they were all down stairs in the pantry, and if I attempted to go after one I might rush into the very arms of the burglar. Besides, I did not know where the pantry key was. Perhaps it was in the sitting room, where mother sometimes kept it, or perhaps in her room; but in what exact place? Alas! may be she had taken it away in her pocket! So there was no hope of obtaining a gun, and the only thing remaining for me to do was to try to make my escape. But how?

The thought struck me that I might extinguish the light and hide myself; but then I should run the risk of being discovered and perhaps killed.

I was indeed in a state of perplexity, and asked myself what I must do. The sound still grew louder. Wherever he was, he was certainly getting bolder.

I unfastened my shoes and carefully slipped them off, then blew out the light, and cautiously making my way to the door which opened into the balcony, stood just inside and listened. Yes, it must certainly be at a front window. Lying down on the floor, I crawled to the edge of the balcony and peeped carefully over at the windows of my mother's room.

I could see no one, but could hear the noise much plainer. I then made my way to the other end of the balcony, and looked over in the same manner. To my inexpressible horror, I saw the dark figure of a man at one of the parlor windows. If he once managed to get in, he could go all through the house except in the pantry.

I saw in an instant that it was the same man whom I had seen in the yard. Could it be that our old gardener had learned of father's and mother's absence and meant to take advantage of it to rob our house? I could scarcely believe it, for we had always reposed such confidence in Uncle Ben that I did not believe him capable of such a deed.

The noise ceased for a moment, and looking closely I saw him thrust his hand in through the hole he had cut and unfasten the blinds. Opening them, he tried the window, but fortunately it could not be lifted from the outside. He then set to work with his knife again to cut out the sash.

How I shuddered! He would soon be in, and what would become of me? Could I make my way down stairs and out the back door before he cut through? Was there nothing I could do to prevent him from taking away mother's valuables? There were several handsome articles of silver in the parlor, beside the table silver on the sideboard in the hall. If I could only get out, I might send for help before he had sufficient time to make away with the stolen property.

I spent little time, however, in planning for their safety, for I was wondering how I was to take care of myself.

I had crept back to my room door, and stood looking around for some means of escape. The noise had ceased altogether now, and stepping back to the edge of the balcony I looked over—and the man had disappeared. He had succeeded in entering the parlor window!

There was no possible means of getting out at the parlor door, and I could not escape being seen should I attempt to descend. I almost made up my mind to jump from the balcony into the porch, but it was a foolish thought, for it was entirely too high, and I would be sure to break a limb, or sprain my ankle, and thus throw myself into the villain's power.

One more I turned into my room, and my brain was in such a whirl that I could think of no course to pursue—nothing but to stand and listen. My heart fluttered. I heard a soft step on the stair, and the next moment saw a light thrown upon the wall in the entry. He was coming!

I swung my hands and glanced hurriedly about. Must I hide myself between the feather-bed and mattress? Good Heavens! I hadn't time for that, for he was half way up the stairs.

The closet door stood open, and springing to it I took out the key, and stepping in, closed the door, locking it on the inside. Peeping through a knot-hole I saw the dark form of a man stepping across the hall to my room, holding a small lantern in his hand. When he stood on the threshold, he threw the light in and peered anxiously around. Coming into the room he examined the bed—he even looked under it, then turned to the table and stood looking at my book and the lamp, as if trying to solve some mystery. He turned over my shoes with his foot and glanced up at the open door.

Mercy! could it be that he was searching for me? If so he would not fail to examine the closet, and if he should succeed in opening it—alas! I pressed my hand to my heart to quiet its wild throbbing.

"Well," I heard him mutter from beneath his mask, "I am sure I heard a noise as I was coming up. She must be here somewhere, for there was a light burning in here. If I could only find her—but it may be that—"

Again he glanced up at the door. In my anxiety to watch his movements I rubbed against the key, and it fell to the floor with a loud ring. Instantly his gaze was riveted upon the closet door as he came slowly toward it. He took hold of the bolt and shook it gently, and then stood very quiet for some time, as if listening.

"Yes," he said at length, "I saw a bunch of keys down stairs somewhere, and I guess I can find one to fit this lock; if I don't I can make use of these tools on it."

So saying, he turned away, and as he went into the hall, I heard him shut my room door and lock it on the outside. I felt for the key on the floor and hastily opened the closet, stood and listened with breathless suspense. With a bold, heavy step he descended into the hall, and although I had not recognized him as such, I now firmly believed him to be no other than our gardener, for he seemed to be aware that I was in the room, and he seemed to believe that he had securely locked me in my room; but, strange to say, he had forgotten the door opening into the balcony, and stepping out, I again looked about for some means of escape.

I tried the front hall door and to my delight I found it unlocked. From it I made a dash for the stairs, and up into a room on the roof, where there were two dormer windows.

Hastening up these steps, I raised one of the windows and stepped out upon the roof, lowering the sash after me. The moon was shining brilliantly, and I looked up and down the road to see if I could detect the burglar. No object could I discern among the bushes and shadows.

Once more I listened and heard the intruder coming up the first stairway, and knew he was coming to break into the closet. I had been thoughtful enough to look where he came out, and I was in time to see him as he came out, as possible, hoping aid might arrive before he was gone.

He completed his task at the lock with remarkable quickness, for I heard him come into the hall with a distinct creak, and start to come up the second flight of stairs.

Dear me! Would he suspect what I had done, and come out on the roof to look for me? Perhaps he had heard me raise the window!

Running to the far end of the house, I saw the limb of a tree extending out quite near the edge of the roof, and thought perhaps I might swing down by it. It was very small and weak, and I was afraid to risk it; but perhaps it would sustain my weight until I could reach another limb. But suppose it should break? The fall would be quite sure to kill me.

I was almost ready to abandon the idea, and make myself content upon the roof until my brother came, allowing the robber to carry away everything in the house if he chose, when a loud rattle in the dormer window aroused me, and without even thinking any further of the consequences, I took hold of the limb and stepped off the roof, swinging far out over the yard.

As I looked down I grew faint, and came near letting go my hold. There I was hanging high in the air, supported by a frail limb, and to fall would be certain death.

Climbing hand over hand, I soon reached the trunk of the tree, where I let go my hold and caught on a large limb. Lowering myself from one branch to another, I reached the lowest limb, I stood for a moment, and looking back up at the roof, listened, to ascertain whether or not I was being pursued.

I could hear nothing, however, and climbing carefully out to the smallest end of the limb, I bent it down, and swinging off by my hands, reached the ground in safety.

The next thought was to seek assistance, so that the robber might be captured and our valuables recovered. I ran hastily to the house of our gardener, and finding the door slightly ajar, pushed it open and looked in at the bed. By the light of the moon falling full upon it I saw that it was unoccupied, and had not even been disturbed. I had hoped that he was innocent, and that I should find him in his bed asleep; but I saw plainly now that my hopes were in vain.

I then went to our cook's room and called her. She sprang out of bed with a frightened exclamation and ran to the door to know what I wanted. I told her in as few words as possible, asking her to go for our nearest neighbor, who lived about half a mile away from us.

Of course she would, and while she drew on her clothes I took up an old gun from a corner of the room, and finding that it was loaded, hastened back to the house.

I stationed myself at the end of the porch, behind a clump of vines, and stood with my gun ready to shoot at the shortest notice. I could hear the intruder in the house going up and down stairs, turning over chairs and keeping up a general racket. At last he appeared at the window, and stepping out upon the porch, stood looking up the road.

"Guess I'd better be getting away from here," he said, "because that young miss has got out, and first thing I know somebody'll be comin' in here to eat me up, skin and bone. I've got the money, anyway, and that's all I wanted, 'cept missus' watch and chain; but I'll git it some day."

He turned as if to leave, and I let him have a load from my gun in one of his legs. He fell to the floor with a terrible yell, and I kept quiet. I thought if I could keep him there until help came without taking his life, I should be satisfied.

Raising himself on his elbow with a moan he looked about and said—"Oh, I am shot! I'm killed! Please don't shoot me any more, and I'll give the money all back—every cent!"

I did not show myself, but prepared the other barrel to shoot, if it should become necessary. It did not, however, for it was not long before the cook returned, accompanied by our neighbor and his two sons, who took possession of the gentleman, and relieved me of my watching.

A few moments later my brother and his wife arrived, and I discovered that it had been exactly one hour since I was aroused from my slumber in my room.

The robber was no other than the old gardener, who after having confessed he knew father was not at home, and saw mother when she went away with my brother. He was very much in need of the money, he said, and determined to take advantage of the opportunity to go into the house and search for some.

He also said he meant to force me to tell him where the whereabouts of father's money, but he said nothing about intending to take my watch.

When I saw him come through the garden into the yard, he had been off to borrow the hat and coat from his brother, with whom he promised to divide the proceeds of the night.

The mask he formed himself of a piece of black cloth, and indeed, had I not seen him enter his own house, I never should have known him, for the disguise was perfect.

Rest assured that I have never since remained in a large house alone at night.

The Pot-Luck Club.
At a meeting of the Pot-Luck Club each male member according to promise, contributed a specimen of his handiwork in the culinary art, and the result was quite novel.

"Here," said the artist sketching the twentieth letter of the alphabet, "is a drawing of 'T.' His contribution was highly esteemed.

"And here," said the printer, producing a handful of type, "is some 'pi' of my own making." He said this in a crusty tone.

"And I've brought a hot goose," said the tailor, dropping his iron on the table. He was greeted with hisses.

"And I," said the poet, with a Milesian accent, proffering a manuscript, "have here some tender-loins." His offering was voted very heating.

"And I hope," said a sad and timid-looking member, presenting his wife, "you will relish this 'rib.' And then he added in a stage whisper: "I can spare her, therefore she is a spare rib."

The carpenter now stepped forward and said he had prepared "a little plane board,"—placing the board on the table as he spoke.

The shoemaker said he thought some of the members needed a little brain food, therefore he had brought a "sole," also a "tongue." The former was pretty "scaly."

"And here," said a smart young man, with a goatee in his voice, introducing his "best girl," "is a little 'trunk.' He pronounced "too fresh," and his girl gave him the cold shoulder all the rest of the evening.

Then a newspaper humorist cast his eyes over the assemblage, called it a "rare meet" poured some gritty substance out of a cone-shaped piece of paper, and made Joe Miller turn over in his grave by remarking: "The best I can do in the culinary line is the sand—which is here."

The club immediately adjourned out of respect of his gray-haired pun, saying that they didn't want any "laffy" in their dessert. —[The Judge.]

Frank James' surrender will preclude the necessity on Governor Crittenden's part of hiring assassins to do what the authorities of the State have always been powerless to accomplish. Colonel James ought to be hung, but his kindness in surrendering will probably save his neck. —[Denver Tribune.]

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An Affair of Taste.

If the fond lover of sixty chooses to marry sweet sixteen, there is little or no fault found, as a general thing; it is merely suggested that perhaps when she is beginning to shine in society he will have had enough of it; but otherwise it is considered quite a suitable affair, on the whole, by a majority of people. "So the whole," they say, "to prefer experience and bonds to callow youth and nonsense and ignorance; so much better to be an old man's darling than a young man's slave," as if old men were not as tyrannical as their juniors. But let a woman dare to marry a man younger than herself, and even her friends wonder at her temerity, and predict all manner of misfortunes. Of course he will get tired of her after the glamour is past, they assert, as if only youth add beauty would command constancy; she will pass for his aunt, they add, and his youthful pleasures will fall to harmonize with her sober amusements. But if we look among our acquaintances who have contracted marriages of this kind, we will find that they seem to be more successful than otherwise. Perhaps the knowledge that a disadvantage makes the wife more alert to render herself attractive, where another woman's pores secure in her position fails through negligence; and perhaps even her added years give her some advantage; she has felt and seen and read, and perhaps understood and suffered more than a younger woman, and therefore has greater resources. Her younger sister exacts admiration; she renders it. The one believes in the power of her youth and beauty, and often neglects the things which may enhance them; her senior knows that youth and beauty are not immortal. It is a poor rule which will not work both ways. Why might it not be given with equal propriety that sweet sixteen will grow out of conceit, and gaily sixty? We do not advocate such marriages, but when two people love each other and have reached maturity, a few years' difference on either side seems of small consequence; and the least sentimental will concede that there is more in common, more chance of happiness between the wife of forty and the husband of thirty, than between the young matron and the old husband.

Dr. Johnson never regretted the choice of a bride double his age, it would seem, though she was neither comely nor intellectual, and Beaconsfield was happy in spite of his wife's seniority. All the world knows that Anne Hathaway was older than Shakespeare, notwithstanding his wise injunction on the subject, which some cynic may insist was the result of blighting experience. But the feeling on the matter has changed more or less within a decade, that which would have filled our prudish grandmothers with holy horror, their grandchildren are not so sure about; and perhaps this is due to the fact that so many distinguished men and women, literary and otherwise, have lent their countenance and example to marriages where the seniority is on the wrong side. —[Harper's Bazar.]

Unparalleled in Railroad History.
A curious accident occurred recently on the Northern Wisconsin division of the Chicago and Northwestern railway, one mile south of Oconto, and which is the most extraordinary in railroad history. The north bound passenger train, with a very large number of passengers, was running along at not less than 25 miles an hour, when her locomotive exploded with gigantic force.

"I was in the smoking car," said John F. Ferrard, a passenger, "and knew by the loud report and the heavy shock to the train what had happened. I was talking at the time with Mr. Whitney of Pensaukee, and springing up, I said, 'The boiler has exploded,' and I expected in the next instant that the train would be smashed into kindling wood. At almost the same moment a mass of rubbish from the explosion fell upon the top of the car, which rattled loudly, but did no other damage. Of course, in a moment the sensation of danger was passed, as the train ran smoothly along, except a peculiar and unnatural sound from the front of the train, which seemed to move along without any perceptible diminution of speed. I concluded that my impression that the boiler had exploded was erroneous, as everything seemed then to be all right, and a gentleman remarked that a torpedo had probably been exploded under the train with a view to mischief. By this time the train had run down and crossed the bridge across the Oconto river, when the brakeman suddenly set the brakes with great exertion, and brought the train to a halt.

Up to this moment no one on the train knew what the actual situation was except the mail agent and the baggage men, and they were unable for some reason to put on the brakes to stop the train. The train was finally brought to a standstill. It was then found that the four forward trucks of the engine were loaded handsomely upon the tender, which was intact. It was evident that not an individual on the train, and not a single passenger, was injured, and the majority of the passengers did not know anything had occurred until they were told, as the report was not heard very far back and many were asleep. But the engineer and fireman—there was but one voice, "they are dead."

Some of the passengers and the train men ran back and were utterly amazed to find them standing by the wrecked engine but little the worse for the dreadful shaking up. After a careful examination of the whole ground the following conclusions were reached by me and many others: First, that the explosion had been most terrific, that at the time of its occurrence the engine was

lifted from its connection with the tender and violently wrenched clear of it; that at the same moment the cow-catcher was thrown downward as a matter of course, and as was shown by three ties being rooted up and broken in two nearly in the center, and at the same point by the side of the track lay the nose of the badly demoralized cow-catcher. This must have occurred, as the engine was thrown forward into the air with the most terrific force, as was fully established by its being hurled 180 feet forward and along a little to the right of the track before it struck the ground, where it buried itself half out of sight in the mud. Of course this thirty-ton mass of iron must have turned a complete somersault in the air, at which time the forward trucks were dropped upon the tender, where they are now lying. The grasses and bushes are blackened and dead by the escaping steam underneath the track where the engine flew through the air.

The huge machine took itself and all its immense rubbish, the result of the explosion, absolutely out of the way, and left a clean track for the train to pass along, and, strange to say, the railroad point of the broken ties were scarcely disturbed. But the firemen and engineer were carried along in the cab and landed with it, or very near. One pair of trucks on the mail car jumped the track at the point where the explosion occurred and ran in that situation, one mile, passing over the bridge at the Oconto river in that way, and another

old freck, passing a switch a moment before the train was stopped, they ran on again, and no great damage was done except to wear off the heads of the spikes from one side of the rail for the whole distance, breaking nearly all the bolts which connect the ends of the rails together, all this without one life being lost or any one seriously injured. Who can cite anything like it in railroad history?

Edible Locusts.
Not a few commentators have stumbled over the statement that John the Baptist "did eat locusts." Not knowing that in the East locusts are eaten, even in these days, they have suggested that some sort of bean was meant.

There is a bean, which may be found at some drug stores, known as the "St. John Bean," the name, doubtless, being given from the mistaken notion that it represented the "locusts" referred to. The following extract from Lady Blunt's "Pilgrimage to Nejd" sets the matter at rest, by showing that locusts are eaten to-day in Arabia:

Locusts are now a popular portion of the day's provision with us, and are really an excellent article of diet. After trying them in several ways, we have come to the conclusion that they are best plain boiled.

The long, hopping legs must be pulled off and the locusts held by the wing, dipped into salt and eaten. As to flavor, this insect tastes of vegetable rather than of fish or flesh, not unlike green wheat, and to us supplies the place of vegetables, of which we are much in need.

The red locust is better eating than the green one. Red is said to be the female and green the male, and some say all are green at first and become red afterward.

For catching locusts, the morning is the time, when they are half benumbed by the cold and their wings are damp with the dew, so that they cannot fly. They may then be found clustered in hundreds under the desert bushes, and can be gathered without trouble by being shoveled into a bag or basket. Later on the sun dries their wings and they are difficult to capture, having intelligence enough to keep just out of reach when pursued. Flying, they look extremely like May flies, being carried about on to the river, where they scatter themselves about as much as flying-fish do, and can alight when they like. In fact, they seldom let themselves be drifted against men or camels, and seem able to calculate exactly the reach of a stick.

They devour everything vegetable, and are devoured by everything animal, desert larks and bustards, ravens, hawks and buzzards. The camels munch them in with their food, the grey-hounds run snapping after them all day long, eating as many as they can catch. The Bedouins often give them to their horses, and Amward says that this year many tribes have nothing to eat just now but locusts and camel's milk.

OF CLASSIC ORIGIN.—Few ladies who wear polka dots have any knowledge of their classic