

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Defoe Abbot Stoker Wilde Carroll Christie Maupassant Byron Molière Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Goethe Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle Hall
Baum Cotton Henry Flaubert Turgenev Balzac Willis
Leslie Dumas Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Thoreau Twain Scott
Potter Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato
Kant Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Burton Harte
London Descartes Cervantes Voltaire Hesse
Poe Aristotle Wells James Hastings Cooke
Bunner Shakespeare Chambers Irving
Richter Chekhov da Shaw Wodehouse
Doré Dante Pushkin Alcott
Swift Chekhov Newton



tredition®

tredition was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, tredition offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. tredition is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: www.tredition.com

TREDITION CLASSICS

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series. The creators of this series are united by passion for literature and driven by the intention of making all public domain books available in printed format again - worldwide. Most TREDITION CLASSICS titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades. At tredition we believe that a great book never goes out of style and that its value is eternal. Several mostly non-profit literature projects provide content to tredition. To support their good work, tredition donates a portion of the proceeds from each sold copy. As a reader of a TREDITION CLASSICS book, you support our mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion. See all available books at www.tredition.com.



Project Gutenberg

The content for this book has been graciously provided by Project Gutenberg. Project Gutenberg is a non-profit organization founded by Michael Hart in 1971 at the University of Illinois. The mission of Project Gutenberg is simple: To encourage the creation and distribution of eBooks. Project Gutenberg is the first and largest collection of public domain eBooks.

Greatheart

Ethel M. (Ethel May) Dell

Imprint

This book is part of TREDITION CLASSICS

Author: Ethel M. (Ethel May) Dell
Cover design: Buchgut, Berlin - Germany

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg - Germany
ISBN: 978-3-8424-7346-1

www.tredition.com
www.tredition.de

Copyright:
The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations, such as Project Gutenberg, worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.

I Dedicate This Book to A. G. C.
Friend of My Heart and to the Memory of All the Happy Days
We have Spent Together.

CONTENTS

PART I

- I. The Wanderer
- II. The Looker-On
- III. The Search
- IV. The Magician
- V. Apollo
- VI. Cinderella
- VII. The Broken Spell
- VIII. Mr. Greatheart
- IX. The Runaway Colt.
- X. The House of Bondage
- XI. Olympus
- XII. The Wine of the Gods
- XIII. Friendship in the Desert
- XIV. The Purple Empress
- XV. The Mountain Crest
- XVI. The Second Draught
- XVII. The Unknown Force
- XVIII. The Escape of the Prisoner
- XIX. The Cup of Bitterness
- XX. The Vision of Greatheart
- XXI. The Return
- XXII. The Valley of the Shadow
- XXIII. The Way Back
- XXIV. The Lights of a City
- XXV. The True Gold
- XXVI. The Call of Apollo
- XXVII. The Golden Maze
- XXVIII. The Lesson
- XXIX. The Captive
- XXX. The Second Summons

PART II

- I. Cinderella's Prince
- II. Wedding Arrangements
- III. Despair
- IV. The New Home
- V. The Watcher
- VI. The Wrong Road
- VII. Doubting Castle
- VIII. THE VICTORY
- IX. THE BURDEN
- X. THE HOURS OF DARKNESS
- XI. THE NET
- XII. THE DIVINE SPARK
- XIII. THE BROKEN HEART
- XIV. THE WRATH OF THE GODS
- XV. THE SAPPHIRE FOR FRIENDSHIP
- XVI. THE OPEN DOOR
- XVII. THE LION IN THE PATH
- XVIII. THE TRUTH
- XIX. THE FURNACE
- XX. THE COMING OF GREATHEART
- XXI. THE VALLEY OF HUMILIATION
- XXII. SPOKEN IN JEST
- XXIII. THE KNIGHT IN DISGUISE
- XXIV. THE MOUNTAIN SIDE
- XXV. THE TRUSTY FRIEND
- XXVI. THE LAST SUMMONS
- XXVII. THE MOUNTAIN-TOP
- XXVIII. CONSOLATION
- XXIX. THE SEVENTH HEAVEN

PART I

CHAPTER I

THE WANDERER.

Biddy Maloney stood at the window of her mistress's bedroom, and surveyed the world with eyes of stern disapproval. There was nothing of the smart lady's maid about Biddy. She abominated smart lady's maids. A flyaway French cap and an apron barely reaching to the knees were to her the very essence of flighty impropriety. There was just such a creature in attendance upon Lady Grace de Vigne who occupied the best suite of rooms in the hotel, and Biddy very strongly resented her existence. In her own mind she despised her as a shameless hussy wholly devoid of all ideas of "dacency." Her resentment was partly due to the fact that the indecent one belonged to the party in possession of the best suite, which they had occupied some three weeks before Biddy and her party had appeared on the scene.

It was all Master Scott's fault, of course. He ought to have written to engage rooms sooner, but then to be sure the decision to migrate to this winter paradise in the Alps had been a sudden one. That had been Sir Eustace's fault. He was always so sudden in his ways.

Biddy sighed impatiently. Sir Eustace had always been hard to manage. She had never really conquered him even in the days when she had made him stand in the corner and go without sugar in his tea. She well remembered the shocking occasion on which he had flung sugar and basin together into the fire so that the others might be made to share his enforced abstinence. She believed he was equal to committing a similar act of violence if baulked even now. But he

never was balked. At thirty-five he reigned supreme in his own world. No one ever crossed him, unless it were Master Scott, and of course no one could be seriously angry with him, poor dear young man! He was so gentle and kind. A faint, maternal smile relaxed Bidley's grim lips. She became aware that the white world below was a-flood with sunshine.

The snowy mountains that rose against the vivid blue were dream-like in their beauty. Where the sun shone upon them, their purity was almost too dazzling to behold. It was a relief to rest the eyes upon the great patches of pine-woods that clothed some of the slopes.

"I wonder if Miss Isabel will be happy here," mused Bidley.

That to her mind was the only thing on earth that really mattered, practically the only thing for which she ever troubled her Maker. Her own wants were all amalgamated in this one great desire of her heart—that her darling's poor torn spirit should be made happy. She had wholly ceased to remember that she had ever wanted anything else. It was for Miss Isabel that she desired the best rooms, the best carriages, the best of everything. Even her love for Master Scott—poor dear young man!—depended largely upon the faculty he possessed for consoling and interesting Miss Isabel. Anyone who did that earned Bidley's undying respect and gratitude. Of the rest of the world—save for a passing disapproval—she was scarcely aware. Nothing else mattered in the same way. In fact nothing else really mattered at all.

Ah! A movement from the bed at last! Her quick ears, ever on the alert, warned her on the instant. She turned from the window with such mother-love shining in her old brown face under its severe white cap as made it as beautiful in its way as the paradise without.

"Why, Miss Isabel darlint, how you've slept then!" she said, in the soft, crooning voice which was kept for this one beloved being alone.

Two white arms were stretched wide outside the bed. Two dark eyes, mysteriously shadowed and sunken, looked up to hers.

"Has he gone already, Bidley?" a low voice asked.

"Only a little way, darlint. He's just round the corner," said Biddy tenderly. "Will ye wait a minute while I give ye your tay?"

There was a spirit-kettle singing merrily in the room. She busied herself about it, her withered face intent over the task.

The white arms fell upon the blue travelling-rug that Biddy had spread with loving care outside the bed the night before to add to her mistress's comfort. "When did he go, Biddy?" the low voice asked, and there was a furtive quality in the question as if it were designed for none but Biddy's ears. "Did he—did he leave no message?"

"Ah, to be sure!" said Biddy, turning her face for a moment. "And the likes of me to have forgotten it! He sent ye his best love, darlint, and ye were to eat a fine breakfast before ye went out."

The sad eyes smiled at her from the bed, half-gratified, half-incredulous, like the eyes of a lonely child who listens to a fairy-tale. "It was like him to think of that, Biddy. But—I wish he had stayed a little longer. I must get up and go and find him."

"Hasn't he been with ye through the night?" asked Biddy, bent again to her task.

"Nearly all night long!" The answer came on a note of triumph, yet there was also a note of challenge in it also.

"Then what more would ye have?" said Biddy wisely. "Leave him alone for a bit, darlint! Husbands are better without their wives sometimes."

A low laugh came from the bed. "Oh, Biddy, I must tell him that! He would love your *bon-mots*. Did he—did he say when he would be back?"

"That he did not," said Biddy, still absorbed over the kettle. "But there's nothing in that at all. Ye can't be always expecting a man to give account of himself. Now, mavourneen, I'll give ye your tay, and ye'll be able to get up when ye feel like it. Ah! There's Master Scott! And would ye like him to come in and have a cup with ye?"

Three soft knocks had sounded on the door. The woman in the bed raised herself, and her hair fell in glory around her, hair that at

twenty-five had been raven-black, hair that at thirty-two was white as the snow outside the window.

"Is that you, Stumpy dear? Come in! Come in!" she called.

Her voice was hollow and deep. She turned her face to the door — a beautiful, wasted face with hungry eyes that watched and waited perpetually.

The door opened very quietly and unobtrusively, and a small, insignificant man came in. He was about the size of the average schoolboy of fifteen, and he walked with a slight limp, one leg being a trifle shorter than the other. Notwithstanding this defect, his general appearance was one of extreme neatness, from his colourless but carefully trained moustache and small trim beard to his well-shod feet. His clothes — like his beard — fitted him perfectly.

His close-cropped hair was also colourless and grew somewhat far back on his forehead. His pale grey eyes had a tired expression, as if they had looked too long or too earnestly upon the turmoil of life.

He came to the bedside and took the thin white hand outstretched to him on which a wedding ring hung loose. He walked without awkwardness; there was even dignity in his carriage.

He bent to kiss the uplifted face. "Have you slept well, dear?"

Her arms reached up and clasped his neck. "Oh, Stumpy, yes! I have had a lovely night. Basil has been with me. He has gone out now; but I am going to look for him presently."

"Many happy returns of the day to ye, Master Scott!" put in Bidley rather pointedly.

"Ah yes. It is your birthday. I had forgotten. Forgive me, Stumpy darling! You know I wish you always the very, very best." The clinging arms held him more closely,

"Thank you, Isabel." Scott's voice was as tired as his eyes, and yet it had a certain quality of strength. "Of course it's a very important occasion. How are we going to celebrate it?"

"I have a present for you somewhere. Bidley, where is it?" Isabel's voice had a note of impatience in it.

"It's here, darlint! It's here!" Bidly bustled up to the bed with a parcel.

Isabel took it from her and turned to Scott. "It's only a silly old cigarette-case, dear, but I thought of it all myself. How old are you now, Stumpy?"

"I am thirty," he answered, smiling. "Thank you very much, dear. It's just the thing I wanted – only too good!"

"As if anything could be too good for you!" his sister said tenderly. "Has Eustace remembered?"

"Oh yes. Eustace has given me a saddle, but as he didn't think I should want it here, it is to be presented when we get home again." He sat down on the side of the bed, still inspecting the birthday offering.

"Haven't you had anything from anyone else?" Isabel asked, after a moment.

He shook his head. "Who else is there to bother about a minnow like me?"

"You're not a minnow, Scott. And didn't – didn't Basil give you anything?"

Scott's tired eyes looked at her with a sudden fixity. He said nothing; but a piteous look came into Isabel's face under his steady gaze, and she dropped her own as if ashamed.

"Whisht, Master Scott darlint, for the Lord's sake, don't ye go upsetting her!" warned Bidly in a sibilant whisper. "I had trouble enough last night. If it hadn't been for the draught, she wouldn't have slept at all, at all."

Scott did not look at her. "You should have called me," he said, and leaning forward took his sister's hand. "Isabel, wouldn't you like to come out and see the skaters? There is some wonderful lugging going on too."

She did not raise her eyes; her whole demeanour had changed. She seemed to droop as if all animation had gone; "I don't know," she said listlessly. "I think I would almost as soon stay here."

"Have your tay, darlint!" coaxed Bidly, on her other side.

"Eustace will be coming to look for you if you don't," said Scott.

She started at that, and gave a quick shiver. "Oh no, I don't want Eustace! Don't let him come here, Stumpy, will you?"

"Shall I go and tell him you are coming then?" asked Scott, his eyes still steadily watching her.

She nodded. "Yes, yes. But I don't want to be made. Basil never made me do things."

Scott rose. "I will wait for you downstairs. Thank you, Bidly. Yes, I'll drink that first. No tea in the world ever tastes like your brew."

"Get along with your blarney, Master Scott!" protested Bidly. "And you and Sir Eustace mustn't tire Miss Isabel out. Remember, she's just come a long journey, and it's not wonderful at all that she don't feel like exerting herself."

A red fire of resentment smouldered in the old woman's eyes, but Scott paid no attention to it. "You'd better get some sleep yourself, Bidly, if you can," he said. "No more, thanks. You will be out in an hour then, Isabel?"

"Perhaps," she said.

He paused, standing beside her. "If you are not out in an hour I shall come and fetch you," he said.

She put forth an appealing hand like a child. "I will come out, Stumpy. I will come out," she said tremulously.

He pressed the hand for a moment. "In an hour then, I want to show you everything. There is plenty to be seen."

He turned to the door, looked back with a parting smile, and went out.

Isabel did not see the smile. She was staring moodily downwards with eyes that only looked within.

CHAPTER II

THE LOOKER-ON

Down on the skating-rink below the hotel, a crowd of people were making merry. The ice was in splendid condition. It sparkled in the sun like a sheet of frosted glass, and over it the skaters glided with much mirth and laughter.

Scott stood on the road above and watched them. There were a good many accomplished performers among them, and there were also several beginners. But all seemed alike infected with the gaiety of the place. There was not one face that did not wear a smile.

It was an invigorating scene. From a slope of the white mountain-side beyond the rink the shouts and laughter of higers came through the crystal air. A string of luges was shooting down the run, and even as Scott caught sight of it the foremost came to grief, and a dozen people rolled ignominiously in the snow. He smiled involuntarily. He seemed to have stepped into an atmosphere of irresponsible youth. The air was full of the magic fluid. It stirred his pulses like a draught of champagne.

Then his eyes returned to the rink, and almost immediately singled out the best skater there. A man in a white sweater, dark, handsome, magnificently made, supremely sure of himself, darted with the swift grace of a swallow through the throng. His absolute confidence and splendid physique made him conspicuous. He executed elaborate figures with such perfect ease and certainty of movement that many turned to look at him in astonished admiration.

"Great Scott!" said a cracked voice at Scott's shoulder.

He turned sharply, and met the frank regard of a rosy-faced schoolboy a little shorter than himself.

"Look at that bloomin' swell!" said the new-comer in tones of deep disgust. "He seems to have sprouted in the night. I've no use for these star skaters myself. They're all so beastly sidey."

He addressed Scott as an equal, and as an equal Scott made reply. "P'raps when you're a star skater yourself, you'll change your mind about 'em."

The boy grinned. "Ah! P'raps! You're a new chum, aren't you?"

"Very new," said Scott.

"Can you skate?" asked the lad. "But of course you can. I suppose you're another dark horse. It's too bad, you know; just as Dinah and I are beginning to fancy ourselves at it. We began right at the beginning too."

"Consider yourself lucky!" said Scott rather briefly.

"What do you mean?" The boy's eyes flashed over him intelligently, green eyes humorously alert.

Scott glanced downwards. "I mean my legs are not a pair, so I can't even begin."

"Oh, bad luck, sir!" The equality vanished from the boy's voice. He became suddenly almost deferential, and Scott realized that he was no longer regarded as a comrade. "Still"—he hesitated—"you can luge, I suppose?"

"I don't quite see myself," said Scott, looking across once more to the merry group on the distant run.

"Any idiot can do that," the boy protested, then turned suddenly a deep red. "Oh, lor, I didn't mean that! Hi, Dinah!" He turned to cover his embarrassment and sent a deafening yell at the sun-bathed *façade* of the hotel. "Are you never coming, you cuckoo? Half the morning's gone already!"

"Coming, Billy!" at once a clear gay voice made answer, and the merriest face that Scott had ever seen made a sudden appearance at an open window. "Darling Billy, do keep your hair on for just two minutes longer! Yvonne has been trying on my fancy dress, but she's nearly done."

The neck and shoulders below the laughing face were bare and a bare arm waved in a propitiatory fashion ere it vanished.

"Looks as if the fancy dress is a minus quantity," observed Billy to his companion with a grin. "I didn't see any of it, did you?"

Scott tried not to laugh. "Your sister?" he asked.

Billy nodded affirmation. "She ain't a bad urchin," he observed, "as sisters go. We're staying here along with the de Vignes. Ever met 'em? Lady Grace is a holy terror. Her husband is a horrible stuck-up bore of an Anglo-Indian, — thinks himself everybody, and tells the most awful howlers. Rose — that's the daughter — is by way of being very beautiful. There she goes now; see? That golden-haired girl in red! She's another of your beastly star skaters. I'll bet she'll have that big bouncer cutting capers with her before the day's out."

"Think so?" said Scott.

Billy nodded again. "I suppose he's a prince at least. My word, doesn't he fancy himself? Look at that now? Side — sheer side!"

The skater under discussion had just executed a most intricate figure not far from them. Having accomplished it with that unerring and somewhat blatant confidence that so revolted Billy's schoolboy soul, he straightened his tall figure, and darted in a straight line for the end of the rink above which they stood. His hands were in his pockets. His bearing was superb. He described a complete circle below them before he brought himself to a stand. Then he lifted his dark arrogant face. He wore a short clipped moustache which by no means hid the strength of a well-modelled though slightly sneering mouth. His eyes were somewhat deeply set, and shone extraordinarily blue under straight black brows that met. The man's whole expression was one of dominant self-assertion. He bore himself like a king.

"Well, Stumpy," he said, "where's Isabel?"

Scott's companion jumped, and beat a swift retreat. Scott smiled a little as he made reply.

"I have been up to see her. She will be out presently. Bidy had to give her a sleeping-draught last night."

"Damn!" said the other in a fierce undertone. "Did she call you first?"

"No."

"Then why the devil didn't she? I shall sack that woman. Isabel hasn't a chance to get well with a mischievous old hag like that always with her."

"I think Isabel would probably die without her," Stumpy responded in his quiet voice which presented a vivid contrast to his brother's stormy utterance. "And Bidy would probably die too—if she consented to go, which I doubt."

"Oh, damn Bidy! The sooner she dies the better. She's nothing but a perpetual nuisance. What is Isabel like this morning?"

Scott hesitated, and his brother frowned.

"That's enough. What else could any one expect? Look here, Scott! This thing has got to end. I shall take that sleeping-stuff away."

"If you can get hold of it," put in Scott drily.

"You must get hold of it. You have ample opportunity. It's all very well to preach patience, but she has been taking slow poison for seven years. I am certain of it. It's ridiculous! It's monstrous! It's got to end." He spoke with impatient finality, his blue eyes challenging remonstrance.

Scott made none. Only after a moment he said, "If you take away one prop, old chap, you must provide another. A broken thing can't stand alone. But need we discuss it now? As I told you, she is coming out presently, and this glorious air is bound to make a difference to her. It tastes like wine."

It was at this point that the golden-haired girl in red suddenly glided up and sat down on the bank a few yards away to adjust a skate.

Sir Eustace turned his head, and a sparkle came into his eyes. He watched her for a moment, then left his brother without further words.

"Can I do that for you?" he asked.