PARTED BY GOLD

She sighed, and the sigh was echoed by the maid who had come to dress her, for it is a difficult thing to affix gauze wings and arrange the hair if a fairy who hangs her head when she should lift it up, and sighs at her fate when she should be casting self-admiring glances at the mirror.

"Would you mind sitting a little around, Miss Montague?" said the patient dresser, and Miss Montague, with a reproachful start, did as she was requested, saying:

"I am giving you a deal of trouble, Miss Morris, but I will sit still now. Will that do?"

"Thank you, miss, don't you mention it," said the dresser. "Won't you have any powder, miss?"

"No, no powder," said Mary, and in truth, she was quite pale enough.

Away went the dresser, and Mary, wand in hand, sat waiting her call.

Presently a tap came to the door, and, opening it, she saw her father dressed as the pirate, standing there.

"Mary, my dear," he said, wiping his brow and looking anxious, "what has happened in the greenroom? I left as Mr. Anderson came in, and—and—and something seems to have put him out."

She colored faintly.

"Don't look so anxious, dear," she said, laying her hand upon his arm. "It was nothing to trouble about. Mr. Tubbs and he were—were quarreling, and I—well, I parted them. Oh, papa, is it not a shame?" and the tears were ready to fall again.

"Er—er——" He hesitated, coloring with her. "Oh, my Mary, Mary, this is no place for you."

"Hush," she said, hurriedly. "We are never to think of that any more, dear. But how tired you look. Ah, there is something else. What did you come to say, dear?"

"I—nothing—that is, Mary, that gentleman is at the wings again."

"Well?" she said, stooping to arrange the folds of her dress.

"Well," he said, then stopped. Her face was bent down, and did not, as it usually did, help him.

"Mary," he said, suddenly, "don't go on from this side to-night, my darling; it doesn't matter, pass around."

"Yes, dear," she said, obediently. "But why—"

"I can't stop," he said, hurriedly. "There's the call. Mind, the other side."

She looked after him and sighed.

Poor, weak, loving heart! he could not even trust her, the life of his life, and the stay of his existence.

With a tiny little feeling of disappointment at her heart, when her name was called, she passed around and entered the stage from the opposite side.

But circumstances are capricious sometimes, and it happened that Mr. Montague's precautions were thrown away. Five minutes before the fairy's entrance the gentleman, who was so much to be shunned, had an attack of love-nervousness; and he crossed around from the side which she usually passed and so was actually brushed by her dress at the opposite wings.

His eyes brightened and he smiled. Not so those of the Spirit of the Deep, for, as the Fairy Queen approached him, his face darkened, and his eyes sparkled angrily.

"What did you come from that side for?" he muttered under his breath, and Mary faltered a moment in her open speech, looked back toward the wing, and, seeing for the first time the handsome face there, colored brightly.

At this fresh sign Anderson's face darkened still more, and his jealousy almost stopped his utterance.

"Speak up!" shouted the gallery, "Speak up!"

He uttered an oath and did speak up, with such a passionate, savage tone that the pit applauded noisily, and the young girl at his side shrank a little away, and, when her part was done, ran with a scared look to her room. Anderson strode off and walked straight up to the place where Jack had been standing.

"I'll have no hangers about here," he muttered, wrathfully. "If she wants any of her fine gentlemen let her dangle them at her apron strings outside or at home."

But though thoroughly fired up with angry jealousy, when he found himself face to face with the high-bred aristocrat, he quailed and quieted beneath his calm, tranquil gaze, and muttering a surly "Good-evening" to Jack's pleasant, open-hearted salutation, slunk off, bullying the carpenters and the imps as he went.

Jack mingled with the many-colored crowd, and moving with them, found himself at the other side again and looking at the house.

Presently a voice—Mr. Montague's—spoke just at his ear, in answer to a question of one of the actors.

"I do not know, I am sure. Mr. Anderson could tell you, perhaps. Kept the curtains carefully closed, eh? Ah, just so; person of distinction, no doubt. I hear the 'Pirate's Gorge' has caused some sensation even in the West," and with a modest cough the pirate looked up mildly at the private box with the closed curtains.

Jack turned and held out his hand. "Good-evening," he said, "I am here in the mimic world again, you see."

"Yes, sir," said Montague, but coldly. "I see you are. I have noticed you in the front several times lately."

Jack nodded candidly.

"Yes," he said, with something like a sigh. "I am fond of the theatres."

"Of one theatre," corrected Mr. Montague, eyeing him suspiciously.

"Well, of one," said Jack, pained at the old man's suspicions, yet ready to acknowledge that, though unfounded, they were excusable. "Yes, I am fond of the Signet. I could see the extravaganza a hundred times, and the 'Pirate's Gorge,' too. But I am here to-night for a double purpose; to make restitution——"

"Indeed!" said Mr. Montague. "Ah, Jones, that is a lady in the box yonder. I thought it would be. I saw the edge of her dress."

"Indeed, sir?" said Jones, eagerly. "Don't know who she is. The duchess, perhaps, or Lady Twittleton. Signet's looking up, Mr. Montague."

Jack handed the lorgnette to the pirate.

"Thank you," said Mr. Montague, with a simple bow. "I am curious to see the occupant of that box. Did you notice her when you came in?"

"I came in," said Jack, by the stage entrance. I want to return to Miss Mon—"

"Mr. Montague," called some one, "Miss Montague wishes to speak to you," and Mr. Montague, with a hurried excuse, hastened away.

Jack sighed.

"This handkerchief has a fatality with it. It seems we are not to part unless I break the charm by returning it to the hands of the rightful owner."

Presently the rightful owner came tripping along. He stepped back to let her pass, and bowed with as much respect as that with which he would have saluted a duchess.

The fairy shot a glance at him and just inclined her head.

An imp rushed by and knocked her wand from her hand.

Jack stooped, recovered it and handed it to her.

"I have something else belonging to you," he said. "May I return it when you come back?"

"Yes," she said, faintly, and with a blush, ran on the stage.

Jack turned, his heart beating, but his face calm, and confronted Mr. Anderson.

"I hope I am not in your way," he said.

"No, oh no," replied Anderson, meaning "Yes," very much," and followed the Fairy Queen on.

Jack took up his position at the wing again, and waited impatiently till Miss Montague came off, which she did presently, and looking timidly before her and stopping at his side for that possession of hers he had mentioned.

Jack took the handkerchief from his pocket and held it out half reluctantly.

"That is it," he said, "not very valuable, but he who steals a pin commits a sin, you know, and—"

"Thank you," she said, taking it with evident embarrassment. "I missed it, but did not know I had dropped it in the theatre. It was very kind of you to come on purpose to return it."

"And yet," said Jack, "you are angry with me for coming."

He spoke so respectfully, with such a touch of earnestness in his voice, that was dangerously musical also, that Mary Montague felt she must answer.

"No, not angry," she said, keeping her eyes down, "but—no, not angry."

"You make me almost happy," said Jack. "Will you not take the 'but' away? You avoided me the other night. Are you agraid of me?"

"I——" she stopped and looked around.

"You have cause," said Jack, hurrying on and feeling the embarrassment of her position. "Miss Montague, you will forgive me, if I seem presumptuous, even rude, but I have for you nothing but good will and respect. If I sought to do him you love best in the world a service would you refuse to help me because you know nothing of me more than that I am a stranger and forward enough to speak to you thus?"

It was a strange speech, but to Mary, spoken in the gentle, musical and reverential voice, it was sweet.

She raised her fine, thoughtful eyes and examined his face.

"You would help my father?" she asked, gently. "How?"

"By placing him in a position where his talents would be recognized," said Jack, eagerly. "Miss Montague, I have some influence. I can exert it in his behalf, but I cannot do so unless you will help and trust me."

She looked at him again and sighed.

"I will trust you," she said. "Your face looks kind, your voice sounds true, and you say you can help my dear father. Oh, sir—"

She stopped, and Jack, his whole attitude one of reverential attention, turned to follow her glance toward the greenroom.

"He is so tired, so weary of this life; it hurts him, is killing him. If you can help him to get away from it, to rest quietly—"

She stopped suddenly and put her hand to her bosom.

There was a sob choking there.

Jack's lips trembled.

He was unused to feminine emotion. The creed of his set was, "Die and speak not." The stifled outburst moved him.

"Hush," he said. "I—I am very sorry—I did not mean to—pray do not cry. I shall never forgive myself. But you, yourself, do not dislike this life? Are you weary and tired of it, and do you not long for quiet and rest?"

A wistful smile crossed her fair face for a moment, but it had melted into a calm one of resignation as she looked up into his.

"I do not mind for myself," she replied, "only for him—only for him. But you do not know him. Why——"

He caught up the thread with a hightened color.

"Why do I interest myself? you would ask. May I reply truthfully?"

"Yes, if at all," she replied, in a low voice.

"Then, because he is your father, Miss Montague. Do not look so alarmed, I implore you. You said I was to speak truthfully, and indeed I should have done so in any case. You think I am wrong in coming here night after night to get a word with you, but you do not think it wicked to love the flowers, I saw you kiss them the other night."

She looked up in her startled embarrassment, and said, quickly:

"Your flowers. How could you be so deceitful, sir?"

"Because I would not offend you," he said, boldly. "You would not have picked it up if I had thrown them, but you kissed them when they came from a child."

She nodded.

"You must never throw me any more," she said, quickly, but with a touch of sadness.

"Why not?" he said, but added quickly: "I will not if you do not wish it, if you will only say you forgive me for sending those."

"I forgive you," she said, "if there is anything to forgive. And father—you will help him? Can I trust you, sir? Forgive me, but it seems so strange, so untrue, that you a——"

"A stranger," he said.

"A stranger," she continued, "should be so kind. I cannot understand it."

"Nor I," she said, almost woefully. "Do not let us try. Enough that I feel that I could go to the end of the world for you—you believe me, I know—and that you will let me show how much you trust me by helping your father."

She looked at him and sighed.

"Am I doing wrong?" she said, half audibly.

"No," he said, stoutly. "And now tell me, where is your home?"

She looked around at her father, sitting in a chair, with his tired, weary face turned toward the fire in the greenroom, and replied, in a low voice:

"In Harleigh street."

Jack repeated it, eagerly.

"I shall not forget it," he said; "and now will you show your trust in me still further?"

"In what way?" she asked, timidly.

"By allowing me to send you home in my cab. I can walk," he continued, eagerly, as she shook her head. "I am younger, stronger than he is. Pray let me, it is not much to grant, and it would make me so happy."

Before she could reply the callboy cried her name. She started and turned from him to the triumphal car, in which she ascended to the realms of bliss.

Jack walked over to Mr. Montague and laid his arm on his shoulder. The old man started and turned his face up, and Jack saw that the daughter had spoken truly when she called it a weary, tired one.

"I have taken the liberty of placing my cab at your disposal to-night, sir; you are tired, I can see, and no wonder, for your part is a heavy one. You will not refuse me?"

Mr. Montague looked at him a moment in silence.

The tired blue eyes met his unflinchingly. The face looked incapable of falsehood.

"I thank you, sir," he said, simply. "I do not know, why you should put yourself out of the way for me and mine."

"Sir," said Jack, as simply, "my father taught me to respect age."

At this speech, surely as unsophisticated a one as was ever heard behind the scenes of a theatre, Mr. Montague started. But, strange to say, not so much at the speech as at the voice.

"Er—er," he said, in his nervous way, scanning the young man's face keenly. "I accept sir, and thank you. Er—will you tell me your name?"

"My name is Hamilton, John, though no one calls me so—Jack Hamilton."

Mr. Montague nodded with an air almost of disappointment.

"Hamilton," he repeated, thoughtfully. "No, I know no one by the name of Hamilton."

The last burst of applause for the night announced that the curtain was down, and Mr. Montague ran with a flash of interest to meet his daughter.

She came off with the Spirit of the Deep at her side, and blushed as she saw Jack standing beside her father.

Anderson pushed forward.

"Clear the way, you fellows," he said, not with a great show of politeness, "make way for Mary to go to her dressing-room."

Then he returned and stood hovering about Jack, who, if not unconscious of his presence, looked so.

Jack stood talking to Mr. Montague during the few minutes taken up by Mary in changing her costume for one more suitable to the climate, and when she reappeared dressed in the utmost simplicity, fairy still, in dark brown and gray, he stood back and did not offer his arm, which he knew beloved one of the old man, but he would have been refused for the well-followed them, and when they reached the stage door called his cab.

"Snowing," he said, and with quiet self-possession put up an umbrella to shield them from the flickering flakes.

Mary, still clinging to her father's arm, gave him her right hand, and he helped her into the brougham with his head uncovered.

Then, giving the direction to the coachman, he lifted his hat and watched it as it rolled off noiselessly, for the snow was thick.

When he turned he saw that another brougham had been lingering in the street, and that Anderson, the stage manager, was standing in the entrance watching him with angry and malicious eyes.

He just glanced at him, buttoned up his coat and walked with long strides homeward.

Directly his back was turned the young actor's face went livid, his clinched fist was raised and shaken after him, and a loud and audible curse hust from the jealous, writhing lips.

The ugly expression might have been seen very plainly by the occupant of the loitering brougham—perhaps it it was, for the vehicle crossed suddenly and stopped exactly opposite the stage door.

Anderson, who was about to re-enter the theatre, bowed angrily.

"Another confounded swell," he snarled; "the place is alive with them."

He stopped suddenly as the window was dropped and a voice, a lady's, said, in highbred accents:

"May I speak with you?"

Anderson came up to the carriage and raised his hat sullenly.

"Be good enough to walk to the end of the street," said the voice, "my coachman shall drive me down there."

(To be continued.)

Shortest Railroad.

You have heard of shortest railroads before. Always they're the most abbreviated ever. But off-hand one would grant the prize to Missoula, Mont. It has a railroad only 100 feet long. It connect the Northern Pacific with the C., M. & St. P., and is used as a transfer. It has no equipment, no employees, and no stations, yet the company that owns it gets 50 cents for every car that passes over its rails. Sixteen thousand have done so thus far. Think of it.—Popular Science Monthly.

Some of Her Fads.

Whatever else she wears, she finishes her costume with a string of beads, a quaint necklace or a silver sautoir. This last is the newest fashion, and it is a silver chain, set with rhinestones or pearls, on the end of which she fastens a tiny watch or locket. And lockets are quite the fad again, also.

Modesty prices are the newest bits of neckwear. They are those straight-topped pieces which Madame slips inside her blouse or bodice to give the new line. They are of sheer and snowy white stuffs, like null or organdie, these new modesty pieces, and are finely tucked or lace-trimmed.

Though she may choose the quietest color for her new spring tailleur, she brightens that same suit by a very gay lining of soft flowered silk or crepe, and then adds a piquant touch by slipping in a gay vest of gorgeous brocade or gleaming satin in a bright color.

German Subterfuge.

The Almanach de Gotha, annually "made in Germany," was well known before the war as the social register of Europe, a kind of "Burke's Peerage" of the continent. Naturally it has been ostracized for some time from the best allied society, and now it is entirely superseded by the Almanach de Bruxelles, which, in a first edition, has recently met a warm welcome in France. The German publication, it appears, has been a powerful channel of espionage. Officials of every country in the world have innocently supplied it with information about prominent people, family trees, armies, navies, and what not. Some of this information was ostentatiously paraded on the pages of the Almanach, but one would like to know how much of it went privately into the files of the German intelligence department.

Dangerous Cargoes.

At first thought it would seem that dynamite was a cargo to be carefully avoided. But from a sailor's point of view there are far more dangerous cargoes. He dreads, for instance, a cargo of sugar! Put hundreds of tons of cane sugar in casks in the hold of a vessel and let the ship steam through a spell of hot weather. The odor is sickening. The sailors cannot get the sweet taste out of their mouths and crave vinegar or lemon juice—anything sour. They lose their appetites and are always glad when a voyage on which the cargo was sugar is over. Coffee is as diragreeable as sugar, in addition being very dangerous.

Cotton is a really dangerous cargo, if a little oil happens to touch raw cotton the result is spontaneous combustion. A single bale of cotton saturated with such an oil as boiled linseed and lying at the bottom of a hold can be constantly given off if the product is exposed to air.

Shipmasters dislike to carry drums of acid where they can be reached easily. A Chilean ship recently put in at the Falkland Islands leaking badly. Her cargo was made up of drums of acid and chalk. The acid had leaked from the drums and mixed with the chalk, forming carbonic acid gas in the hold. This gas is deadly and the crew could not make repairs. Meanwhile, the acid had gathered in the bottom of the hold and eaten away the iron frames of the ship.

Worth Knowing.

String any spare buttons you may have on a cord, that they may be easy to go when you want them.

You can have onion tops green all winter, ready for salads, soups, etc., by putting an onion into top (only touching the water a little) of a vase filled with water.

When baking potatoes, grease them first with a little butter, and when cooked they will be beautifully brown and crisp, with the glazed appearance that makes them so appetizing.

If the house is infested with ants, dip a sponge, into sweetened water and lay it where they can get at it. They will soon cluster upon it and the sponge can then be dipped in hot water.

Before applying black lead as a polish make a pad of old cloth and rub soot from the back of the grate or from the flue on all the greasy parts. The grate will then take the polish with much less labor than usual.