

"Milly, we must give him a fright. To see him shuffle off in a hurry will make you laugh."

So saying, he hurled the stone at the seal. As it flew from his hand, the slab we stood on rocked. I clung terrified to Harry; but in an instant, before we could move or feel our danger, the ground gave way beneath us, and we fell in a cloud of dust and earth down, down, into the cove below.

I remember nothing further. Certainly I felt no shock, no pain. My first conscious sensation was looking at the sky above me, and idly thinking how very blue it was; then, as a hovering sea-bird crossed my line of vision, my torpid brain stirred sufficiently to cause me to wonder how it came there; then, how I came there myself; next, what I was holding—something cold and limp. I raised myself on my elbow, and found I was still grasping Harry's nerveless hand.

In one instant I remembered. I sprang to my feet, feeling a horrid stab of pain shoot through my left ankle as I did so; but I passed it by, and stooped anxiously over Harry, who, with his white, death-like face upturned, lay with his feet towards the cliffs, and his head and part of his body covered with a heap of mould and small stones.

Was he dead? I did not think it. When young we are slow to admit the idea of death; above all, sudden death.

I laid my hand on his heart; it beat faintly. Pulling off my coat, I made of it a pillow to raise his head; and then, taking up his straw hat, which lay near him, I went to look for water. After searching awhile, I found a little streamlet trickling from the cliff. Having collected some of the water I returned, conscious that walking gave me pain, but too much absorbed to attend to it.

Harry lay as I had left him, but when I had sprinkled his brow, moistened his lips, and rubbed his cold hands, he suddenly opened his eyes, and apparently recalling all that had happened before his lips could frame the words distinctly, exclaimed, "Thank Heaven! Milly you are safe!" "And you, Harry?" I whispered, dreading what he might reply.

"Oh, I feel all right. I believe I am not hurt. If I only could move, but I cannot."

I almost laughed, such relief did his words give me, as I replied, "Get up? I should think not indeed, with a load of rubbish on your legs! Wait till I clear it away, and you will get up fast enough."

He smiled, and, after a moment's thought, said, "It seems to me, Milly dear, that your wisest course would be to leave the cove and look for help; you need not be long absent. I can wait here comfortably. You see, without tools you may be a long time removing all this earth, and even then I may be injured, and unable to dispense with help. Will you go?"

I knew he was right, and though I hated to leave him, I obeyed at once, and setting out, made the circuit of the cove looking for an opening. The space was not extensive, I soon walked round it; but, strange to say, I could find no outlet. I retraced my steps, examining every likely spot with growing anxiety, but no opening existed; on the contrary, the banks round the little bay were hollowed out, and as I stood looking up, the cliffs all overhung my head, making egress impossible.

What was to be done? Unaided, we could not leave the cove. I thought awhile. There seemed no course open but to wait till we could attract the notice of some passers-by—luckily the path along the cliffs was commonly used—and meanwhile I could free Harry in a great degree from his oppressive burden.

Before going back I cast a keen glance over these forbidding walls. My eyes fell on a dark patch on the cliff. I stooped to examine it, and found it to be a plant of seaweed rooted to the rock.

You can understand what this meant? Seaweed grows only where the sea-water comes. This tall-tale plant was flourishing at the point furthest from the sea, whilst Harry, who had been carried some distance by the falling earth, lay much nearer to it. With this new terror filling my mind, I looked to the mouth of the cove. The sands lay dry and bare to the very entrance. The tide was low, had it yet turned? And if it had turned, how long would it be before those playful, sparkling waves would become deep waters to engulf us? How long? How long?

I thought and thought. There seemed nothing—absolutely nothing better than to carry out the plan I had already formed. I turned back, feeling as if, in this short time, I had changed from a thoughtless girl into a careworn woman.

Assuming a careless manner, I told Harry that I found the rocks too steep to climb, therefore, if he would watch the path and tell me of anyone passing, I would at once begin to remove the débris.

Without waiting for an answer, I fell to work and gradually cleared off a quantity of earth-clods and stones. I found I must proceed more carefully, as any sudden movement or misplacement might precipitate the weight of what remained upon Harry.

He did not speak, but watched me with such a wistful, loving look that, each time I caught it, I felt nerved to greater exertions.

Half an hour—an hour passed, then Harry said, "Rest awhile, Milly; you are over-doing yourself; you will work better for a little rest now."

I rose, stretched my cramped limbs, and eased my foot, which ached sorely, at the same time stealing a look towards the sea. Surely the tide was flowing!

The sands were covered where they had been dry when I began to work. I noticed two flattish rocks some yards from the water, and taking them as my tide mark, with a cheering word to Harry, turned to resume my labour, when he called out, "Look, Milly, look!"

I looked up, and, joyful sight! on the cliff over us saw a man standing—a man well-known to us, and who himself knew every rock and inlet of this coast. He seemed to have been watching us. At all events, he understood, for merely pausing to call out to me to work on, that he would have a boat in the cove within an hour, he sped away rapidly.

My heart throbbed with hope, the weight of dread seemed lifted from me. Nodding and smiling at Harry, I resumed my work.

An hour, he said—an hour! Where would the tide be then? A stolen glance at my rocks showed me the glittering waves kissing their feet, and pouring little cascades through their fissures. An hour! We should be surrounded ere then, unless I could free Harry and retreat with him higher up the cove. I worked desperately but hopefully. It might be done, it should be done!

Harry spoke.

"Milly, where is the tide now?" He knew the danger then, and yet there was no tremor in his voice, nor fear in his peaceful, smiling face. I made no answer. He understood my silence, and said no more.

The mound of débris was now greatly diminished; surely I could clear it away completely within the time! I began to breathe easier. Just then my groping hand felt the outline of a stone larger than any I had met before. Cautiously I removed the earth and pebbles. How large it was! Little by little I bared it, and found it was a solid slab of rock lying directly upon Harry's legs—a slab which would have needed the strength of several men to remove, and which defied every effort of mine. I think now that it was the very boulder on which we had stepped to look at the seal. Then I thought of nothing, nothing; the rock seemed to have crushed me also!

I heard Harry say, "My poor Milly!" But I stood stupidly staring at the stone. But when I heard him say "Come here, dear," I moved to his side and waited, stunned and bewildered. "My poor Milly!" he repeated, and, holding out his hand, drew me down beside him, and went on, "Yes, dear, there is no escape for me; but you—thank Heaven!—you will be saved."

I made no reply; my own safety did not seem to interest me, or to be of any moment. But that he, so young, clever, good, and oh, so dear to me! should lie there, held down by what a couple of men with a crowbar could easily remove, for the creeping, cruel water to steal over and kill, whilst I stood by—I, who would give my life for him—useless, helpless! I thought I should go mad!

Harry spoke again.

"I have suspected the truth for some time," he said. "I knew you were working vainly, but I also knew that it would be better for you to see and realize this for yourself—that you should feel you had done your utmost for me. Even were this rock removed, the boat in waiting, I could not live, darling; a strange numbness is creeping up and up. Do not grieve. Let us not waste our few precious minutes in grieving."

Still I made no answer, but rising, with the strength of despair, made one desperate effort to move the rock, but all in vain—utterly in vain. Then I seated myself by Harry, and took his powerless hand in mine. I remember that I did not weep or sob, but I shook all over. Harry's face looked strangely pinched and wan.

For some short time we were silent, then he murmured, "How blue the sky is!"

Did he wander? No; he continued, slowly, and with increasing difficulty, "Yes, lovely, lovely! Life beyond it will be lovely, too, and all that life is love, Milly. We love one another. We shall be together there!"

He ceased, his eyelids dropped heavily, and lifted again like those of a weary child. He smiled lovingly at me. I cast a despairing glance seawards, and surely—yes, surely—saw a dark object outlined against the sky—a boat; yes, the boat, still distant, but coming swiftly, strongly towards us. The boat would soon reach us, but not as soon as the waves; its slender fringe of foam was almost upon us. At this moment a sharp, cool puff of wind wailed past, clouds scurried up and covered the sky, and the surf broke noisily on the distant rocks.

I rose, and, drawing Harry's head upon my knees, interposed myself between him and the advancing tide. As I seated myself, a little stream of water poured along each side of me, then a wave broke close behind—another, and another. At last a larger one, while dashing against my back, threw its cold spray over Harry's face. At the shock of the water, he opened his eyes, which had been closed, and looked into my eyes. I bent forward, and just heard him whisper, "My love!" and he was gone—gone! And not too soon; the next wave deluged me, and covered his placid face, but without the power of startling or changing its quiet peace.

They found me sitting waist-deep in the waters, still holding Harry's dead head upon my knee. They bore me home. I was ill for a long time with what they called rheumatic fever. My ankle had been injured in the fall, and has never been strong since.

Here Aunt Milly paused.

"And Harry?" I whispered, softly.

"Harry! we never saw him again. The storm which was rising when we left the cove became very violent, and when, after a day or two, they succeeded in entering the cove, it was empty; even the boulder which had crushed Harry had been swept away. No trace of him was ever found, but the little coat, the coat on which his head had rested, was washed ashore, and brought to me. I have it still."

SPADEVILLE.

FASHION IN MOURNING.

AT first sight fashion would seem to have as little to do with mourning as it has with grief, but as those who wear the garb of woe are not invariably mourners in the strict sense of the term, fashion influences this form of dress very appreciably. Of late years the periods for wearing it have been very much abbreviated, and many other changes have taken place in what may be called, for want of a better word, the etiquette of mourning.

It used, for instance, to be a strictly observed rule that no member of the family who had just sustained a bereavement should put on deep mourning until a week after the death. The reason of this was that doing so would imply that the dresses had been prepared in advance in expectation of a death which might, after all, not have taken place. This would be a cold-blooded course of conduct which very few would be likely to adopt; but now this old-fashioned prohibition is extinct.

The making of mourning dresses is now conducted with such speed, as compared with the deliberate and leisurely mode of procedure of long ago, and money is so much more freely spent now-a-days than it was in the thriffter times of our grandparents, that such a rule is now naturally obsolete.

The great houses that make a speciality of mourning costumes have every detail so well in hand that a few hours suffice to provide all that can be needed at the moment for the complete equipment of the mourners. Besides, black dresses are so very much worn in ordinary circumstances just now that there is generally some available compromise in the wardrobe. In the old days, when the above-mentioned rule held good, very few people wore black gowns unless they were in mourning, or were widows well on in years.

All deep mourning dresses are in woollen materials, many of which are manufactured with a view to making them resemble the texture of crape as nearly as possible. The severity of outline that once characterized deep mourning dress is now replaced by a degree of elegance that would once have been considered inconsistent with the garb of grief.

An idea of ultra smartness is conveyed by new mourning, even that worn by widows in the first twelvemonth of their widowhood. Their dresses are made in the very height of the reigning fashion, and the widow's caps of to-day are but the light and airy descendants of the uncompromisingly large and heavily built ones of thirty years ago.

In those days a long black shawl was indispensable in the first days of deep mourning, and is even now used during the first weeks of bereavement by those who cling to old customs; but among the more advanced in the century-end ideas, it is replaced by smartly-cut capes or coats heavily trimmed with crape. In fact, so very fashionable and elegant is modern mourning that the lavish use of crape in its initial stages is an absolute necessity in order to distinguish it from an ordinary black costume, such as may be seen by the score in an hour's turn in the park on a summer morning.

The head-gear remains distinctive, but far less so than it used to be when bonnets were crowded over with loops and quillings of crape and sprays of flowers made of the same material, with occasionally a floral interlude, if so it may be called, of black grapes composed apparently of blow-glass in its most fragile form.

It used to be an article of faith that widows should wear black woollen gloves during the whole of the first year after the husband's death; but that was in the days when suede gloves had not been invented. The gloss of French kid would have been considered incompatible with the dull blacks that custom laid down as indispensable. Now suèdes and silk gloves are permitted, and in a couple of months are succeeded by French kid.

It is only within the last twenty years that it has been permitted to widows to lighten the intensity of their weeds by the addition of collar and cuffs of white batiste. Formerly folds of black crape were the only wear at the neck and wrists, embroidered with jet after the first few weeks, and not allowed to give place to linen collars and cuffs until six months had elapsed.

It is now by no means unusual to see widows wearing linen collars a month after their bereavement. It is an age of unconventionality in many ways, and when old customs begin to be modified or rejected there are always those who take advantage of transition periods, and commit flagrant errors in taste. Not long ago a widow in deepest weeds was present at a wedding, contravening all the laws of good manners by so doing.

These rules may seem trivial to many, but they are a crystallization in externals of kind-heartedness and those good manners that are "the fruit of noble minds," and are worthy of consideration. It is the bridegroom who might feel aggrieved at the association of ideas caused by the presence of a widow in weeds at his marriage. There are thousands of men who can view the prospect of death with serenity and calm, but there are few who on their wedding morning care to contemplate their bride in the character of a widow and themselves as inhabiting an early tomb.

In the periods of duration of mourning there have of late been radical changes. Widow's weeds used to be worn for a year and six months. It was then reduced to a year and a month, the vulgar reading of which was a year and a day.

During the last few years deep crape and distinctive headgear have been dropped at the end of six months, the period known technically as "black silk" then setting in, this lasting for six months instead of three, as used to be the case when the very deep weeds were worn for a year. It is followed by three months of half-mourning, the changes in which are quite as radical as those of previous periods.

In old days only gray, white, lavender, and a certain shade of violet were permissible, but now the introduction of mixed tints so numerous, and possessing such subtle affinities with each other, has led to a state of things when practically almost any colour, save green, blue, and brown, may be worn with a black gown. Things seem tending towards the gradual elimination of what has always been called half-mourning, so closely has it approached of late to the character of the second period of Court mourning, regulated by the Queen, in which coloured ribbons, fans, flowers, and feathers are admissible with black dresses.

Another change perceptible of late is in the type of dress worn by widows on their re-marriage. In England, white used to be forbidden to them, as it has been for time immemorial among the bourgeoisie of France, brides of higher rank in

that country wearing on re-marriage a simply-made white dress with a long black lace veil falling over the face and covering the greater part of the back of the dress. An English widow of position, who recently re-married, wore white satin hemmed with sable, and a white velvet bonnet trimmed with the same fur.

A mourning dress worn by a very great lady for the late Czar is in black crape cloth, the bodice composed of folds of black crape over white silk, and the skirt trimmed with three rows of wide woollen braid. The introduction of white silk, almost hidden though it be under close folds of crape, is a new departure, but it is in this instance strictly in accordance with etiquette, Russian mourning being a mixture of black and white.

There are those who advocate the abandonment of crape in deep mourning, pointing, as an example, to a royal lady, who refused to wear it when suffering bereavement some time ago. This is no valid argument so far as the general public are concerned. The use of crape is to announce to friends and acquaintances and others that our loss is so recent and our grief so acute that we must be excused from ordinary conversation or bearing our part as usual in the social or business world. It is the accepted sign of mourning, and its absence exposes the true mourner to inquiries and remarks that probe the heart to its very depths.

In the case of the royal lady in question, every soul in the kingdom knew of her loss, and felt deepest sympathy with her. Humbler mothers feel grief as deep, though only a few of their immediate circle may be acquainted with the circumstance, and for them the wearing of crape is a necessary protection when they begin to go forth into the world again after a short period of necessary seclusion.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

TOWARDS the close of the eighteenth century there lived at Argentan a gentleman, Jacques Francois de Corday d'Armont, who belonged to the aristocracy, but whose fortunes were so reduced by a ruinous lawsuit that he was compelled to distribute his children among his wealthy relatives to be reared and educated.

He was the father of Charlotte Corday, destined to play such a terrible rôle in the Revolution so soon to overwhelm France.

Her mother died when she was fourteen, and after a few months in a convent, the young girl was forced to seek a new asylum with a cousin, Madame de Bretteville, who lived in a gloomy old house called the Grand Manoir, at Caen.

She was a very beautiful young woman at twenty-four years of age. She was a fine musician, sketched cleverly, and conversed with remarkable ease and brilliancy. She has been described as "strong yet graceful, elegant, natural, modest above all, and still of a compelling presence. Her hair was of a beautiful chestnut tinge, which escaped from the laces of her Normandy cap and fell in torrents on the white kerchief above her shoulders. Her eyes were gray and somewhat sad, shaded by dark lashes. Her brows were finely arched, her face a perfect oval, and her complexion marvellously brilliant. She blushed very readily, and that to her admirers was a great attraction. Add to these a strangely musical voice, singularly silvery and childlike, and an expression of ineffable sweetness, and you may conceive something of that Charlotte Corday men loved at Caen."

The proscribed Girondists lodged at the departmental mansion in Caen, and "in the lobby," says Carlyle, "where busy deputies are coming and going, a young lady with an aged valet is to be seen. She is a stately Norman figure, and a beautiful still countenance. She emerges from her secluded stillness suddenly like a star—cruel, lovely, with half-angelic, half-demoniac splendour."

Strange, indeed, was the destiny which forced a dagger into the hands of this gentle French girl, and bade her plunge it into the heart of that bloodthirsty, dwarfed half-maniac, who is so infamous in history—Marat, one of the triumvirate of the Reign of Terror.

Mademoiselle de Corday left Caen on the ninth of July. She made all her preparations with the greatest calmness and deliberation, bade adieu to her friends, and disposed of all her possessions. She gave away all her books except one volume of Plutarch, which she took with her.

In taking leave of one family, she called to her one of the sons, a boy of sixteen, whom she loved very tenderly, and kissed him. Many years afterwards, when this boy was an old man, he would

recall with emotion this parting, when he received the last kiss that Charlotte Corday ever gave on earth.

She arrived in Paris on the eleventh of July. On the following day, she called on Duperret, a member of the Convention, for whom she had a letter. He promised to take her on the following day to the Home Office, where she said she wished to solicit some favour for her convent friend, Mademoiselle de Forbin. She wrote a note to Marat, asking for an interview. Marat was ill. For some time, he had not attended the sittings of the Convention.

It seems to have been Charlotte Corday's original idea to strike him in the very assembly of which he was a member, but his illness compelled her to alter her plans. She called at his house, and was denied admittance; but, returning the same evening and insisting that her business was of a most pressing nature, she was allowed to come in.

The "friend of the people," as Marat was styled, was in his bath. A large board was placed in front of him, which he used as a desk. He had read her note, and bade the servant to admit the person who desired an interview. There entered a tall, beautiful young woman, wearing a dark hat trimmed with green ribbons, carrying a fan in her hand.

Marat listened eagerly to the news from Caen; he questioned his visitor closely, and wrote down, as she called them over, the names of the Girondists at Caen.

"It is well," he said, with fiendish satisfaction; "in a few days, I shall send every one of them to the guillotine."

At that moment Charlotte Corday approached Marat, and, leaning over, she struck with a knife with such force that the weapon entered his bosom up to the handle. Marat uttered one shriek for help, and expired. His servant rushed in. Charlotte Corday was standing near the window, perfectly calm, and made no effort to escape. The servant knocked her down with a chair. A number of National Guards came up, and she was arrested.

The news spread rapidly, and all Paris was in an uproar. A crowd surrounded Marat's house, clamouring for the head of his assassin. Charlotte was taken to the Prison de l'Abbaye, where the members of the Committee of Public Safety interrogated her.

She answered all questions with a calmness and dignity that never forsook her. She appeared before the revolutionary tribunal on July 16th, where she displayed the same unshrinking courage and firmness.

The form of a defence was gone through, but her death was a foregone conclusion. After her sentence was pronounced, she begged the gendarmes to take her to Monsieur Chaveau de la Garde, whom she warmly thanked for his services in defending her.

During her trial she had noticed a young man sketching her, and courteously turned her face towards him. This was Jacques Haner, an officer of the National Guard. At soon as she returned to prison she expressed a wish to see him. The painter came. She conversed with him for some time, and begged him to finish her portrait for her friends. She cut off a long lock of her beautiful chestnut hair and offered it to Jacques Haner, regretting that she had nothing else to give him.

Before the portrait was finished, the door of her cell was again thrown open, to admit the clerks of the court and the executioner. The latter had brought the red shirt reserved for parricides, which Charlotte Corday was to wear on her way to the scaffold. The crimson garment seemed to invest her with such strange, unearthly beauty that the artist put it in his picture, but it was afterwards painted out.

Sanson, the Paris executioner, kept a diary of each day's ghastly work of the guillotine. He has left a curiously circumstantial account of Charlotte Corday's execution.

So died Charlotte Corday, at the age of twenty-four years. She was buried in the Madeleine, and her remains were afterwards removed to the cemetery of Montparnasse.

MRS. BENDIX: "Yes, my husband is a somnambulist." Mrs. Kawler: "How dreadful." Mrs. Bendix: "Not at all. You see, when he gets up in the night and walks about the room, I put the baby in his arms and he never knows it."

MOTHER: "It won't do to take our daughter to the theatre so often. I am afraid she already imagines herself an actress." FATHER: "Has she taken to studying Shakspeare?" MOTHER: "N-o; but within the last six weeks she has been engaged to half a dozen different men."