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WHEN MALLOWS ARE IN BLOOM.

We'll wander down the beach again,
When mallows are in bloom;
Through verdant wood and flowery lane,
When mallows are in bloom;
We'll talk of summers long ago,
Of joys and hopes we used to know,
And set the old time free again,
When mallows are in bloom.

'Twas here we met each other first,
When mallows were in bloom;
And here our youthful fancies nursed,
When mallows were in bloom;
And now they seem in Nature's bower
For evermore to mark the hour
For love attached its perfect flower
When mallows were in bloom.

The meadows seem with jewels set,
When mallows are in bloom;
The ocean seems a carcanet,
When mallows are in bloom;
The husbandman his sickle wields,
Each breeze a thousand perfumes yields,
And we are in Elysian fields,
When mallows are in bloom.

Lost visions are restored to us,
When mallows are in bloom;
And we, renewed, exalted thus,
When mallows are in bloom,
Forget the present grief and pain,
And down the beach and through the lane,
Like two young lovers, stroll again,
When mallows are in bloom.

—New York Ledger.

THE STOLEN PASSPORTS.

I was just settling down for a quiet evening by the stove when an orderly threw the door open and rushed into the room.

"Capt. Sasha, a dispatch!" he cried, handing me one of those little official envelopes which I knew so well.

I tore it open and read the contents:

To Capt. Sasha, Commander of Frontier Station on the Vistula.

Detain Ivan Brosky and Vladimir Pogrom. They will reach you shortly. Gen. Jorka.

"A bad night for travelers to be on the road," I could not help thinking, for the rain was falling in torrents.

I was commander of the Russian frontier station at Dama, which lies on the great high road between Russia and the Austrian city of Cracow, and only a half mile distant was the river Vistula, which divides the dominions of the Emperor Francis-Joseph and the dominions of the czar.

It was my duty to examine the passports of all travelers coming either way, and to scrutinize their luggage, to see that no Russian products were smuggled into Austria, or vice versa.

For the last few days there had been little to do. Warm weather—unusual at this time of year—had set in, and the roads were in bad condition for traveling.

The dispatch I had just received had been brought on horseback from the nearest telegraph station, nearly five miles distant, and from the signature at the bottom I knew it must be a matter of some importance, for Gen. Jorka was the minister of police and his very name a terror to evil doers.

I instructed my men to watch the roads with extra care.

The evening wore on slowly and at midnight no one had arrived. I came to the conclusion that the expected travelers had either been apprehended before they reached the frontier or had postponed their journey on account of the bad weather, so I determined to go to bed and enjoy a good night's rest.

The wind and rain kept me awake a long while, and just as I was about dropping off into slumber the sound of sleigh bells woke me up again, and in a moment or two a sharp tap at the door summoned me down stairs. I dressed and went down.

Two travelers were waiting to see me, two big, powerful fellows, wrapped up in furs and greatcoats, which they kept closely buttoned, for the fire had gone out. I judged at once that these were the men I wanted, for though their clothes and furs gave evidence of wealth and refinement their faces hardly seemed to accord.

But a surprise was in store for me. When they handed over their passports I found, to my consternation, that they bore the names of Alexis Zamose and Sergius Melikoff, and were properly stamped and signed.

To hide my confusion I made some inquiries, and they very frankly informed me that they were merchants of St. Petersburg, who were going to Cracow on business.

"Had they met any person on the road?" I inquired.

"Yes," said the smooth faced man, "they had passed two men early in the evening, but their horses seemed to be lame, and they were moving very slowly."

I hesitated a moment, and then ordered an examination to be made of their baggage—a proceeding to which they offered no objection. Everything in their valises, however, was all right, and their linen and toilet cases were stamped with their initials.

I felt that I had no authority to detain them, and yet I hated to see them go, for I had a presentiment that all was not right. To add to my suspicions the man with the beard was nervous and

agitated, a fact which he did his utmost to conceal.

I knew too well, however, what would be the result of a blunder committed through excess of authority, so I determined to be on the safe side; and after a delay, which I stretched out as far as possible, I told them they were free to proceed.

I escorted them to the door, where a low, one seated sleigh awaited them; drawn by a pair of horses which I saw at a glance had been hard driven.

At the last moment I had half made up my mind to detain them, but with a hasty salute they stepped into the sleigh and drove rapidly eastward, where dawn was already dappling the sky.

There was no use in going back to bed, so I went in and stirred up the fire and sat down to smoke a cigar and wait for daylight.

Now that it was too late I felt sorry I had let the men go, for the more I thought over it the more certain I felt that there was something wrong about them. It had stopped raining and began to blow up cold, and I saw that it would probably be a busy day.

I had already finished breakfast when a tramping of horses and a tinkling of bells drew me to the door, and to my surprise, I saw bearing rapidly down upon the station a small detachment of mounted cossacks, surrounding a sleigh with two men in it, who I made sure were the parties I was looking for, an opinion which seemed to be verified when they drew up, for the men were rather rough looking fellows, and wore heavy cloaks of coarse material, and great astrakhan caps, that came forward over their ears. I was soon undeceived.

"These travelers claim to have been robbed, captain," said the cossack officer, saluting. "They will tell you their story, and, meantime, we await your orders." The travelers hurried inside, and I followed with a sinking heart.

"We are the victims of an infamous outrage, sir," said one of them. "My name is Alexis Zamose, and this is my friend, Sergius Melikoff. We were journeying to Cracow, and while passing through the forest last evening two armed strangers in a sleigh overtook us, and, overpowering us, they took all our possessions, made us give up our furs in exchange for these wretched garments and stole our passports, and then cutting our horses loose they drove him off in the darkness and took flight. On foot we made our way back to the nearest village, and were so fortunate as to fall in with these brave soldiers, who procured us a horse and accompanied us thus far on our journey."

With inward rage I listened to this strange tale, realizing only too clearly the mistake I had made, and my feelings may be imagined when the man handed me two folded papers, saying: "These, sir, are the passports the villains were so considerate as to give us in exchange for our own."

I tore them open. They were made out to Ivan Brosky and Vladimir Pogrom.

"The rascals have escaped!" I cried angrily. "They passed through not two hours ago, and I dared not detain them."

"And is it too late to overtake them," cried Alexis Zamose.

"Too late. They have crossed the Vistula an hour ago."

"The government shall atone for this," the two men cried out together. They would see if travelers were to be robbed with impunity on the czar's high road.

I was vainly endeavoring to pacify them, when a soldier entered the room. "Captain," he said, "the Vistula has risen. The bridge was carried away at daybreak."

"Those two travelers!" I demanded eagerly. "Did they get across in time?"

"No, captain. They started for the upper bridge."

"Then we'll have them yet!" I cried. "Call out the guard at once. Don't lose a second."

I buckled on my sword, seized my cloak and hat, and rushed to the door, where my horse already awaited me.

My own men were mounting in haste and the Cossacks sat motionless in their saddles.

A moment more would have seen us off, when a solitary rider came in sight far up the road, and presently reined up before us, panting and breathless.

"Orders from the czar!" he cried, vaulting from the saddle. "Have Ivan Brosky and Vladimir Pogrom passed this station?"

I briefly explained the situation.

"They must be arrested at all hazards!" he cried. "They left St. Petersburg with forged passports. It was discovered only yesterday."

"And who are these men?" I asked.

"They are Shamurin and Kharkoff," replied the messenger, "the assassins of Gen. Orloy."

It was of grave importance, indeed, that they should be captured, and mounting in haste we dashed away at full speed, leaving the czar's messenger to enjoy the comforts of the station for he had been riding all night and badly needed rest.

Our course led eastward to the Vistula and then turned off to the south, following a rugged and little traveled road through the hills, which led eventually to another bridge over the Vistula, some twenty miles further down the stream. It was bad enough for a horseman; for a sleigh it was terrible.

I rode in advance, side by side with Capt. Karaman, the commander of the Cossacks.

We thundered at headlong speed over the frozen ground, sure of our prey—for on the road before us, fast freezing up in the morning air, were the tracks of hoof and runner imprinted in the slush. At intervals through the hill gaps we caught sight of the Vistula, a turbid, yellow mass, swirling past with its burden of floating ice.

We must travel still faster. The upper bridge was a heavier, more solid structure, little likely to be carried off by even such a flood as this. We must overtake them before they reached it.

We drove the spurs into our panting horses and the forest and barren hill-sides shot past us in one flying panorama as we galloped like the wind over the frozen ground, rounding bend after bend, only to see the same empty, glittering stretch of road fading in mockery into the frosty atmosphere.

Furlong on furlong, mile after mile, and still they kept ahead with a speed that seemed incredible.

"Look!" cried Capt. Karaman under his frosted beard. "The tracks are still soft. We shall soon see them."

Straggling houses came in sight, and the people ran to their doors in wonder as we swept past like a whirlwind—Karaman's Cossacks of the Volga, somber and stern in their great black cloaks and shakos; my dragoons a trifle more picturesque, with their green uniforms and waving plumes.

We galloped through the little village of Kaban—only five miles now to the bridge—and as we swept round the brow of a hill in the distance we saw a black speck on the frozen road.

Even as Karaman pointed it out it vanished over a ridge. We thundered on in hot pursuit, losing sight of it sometimes, but all the while steadily gaining, until, from a vague dark object, it assumed shape and form, and we could plainly make out a sleigh and two horses.

With fierce joy I saw it drawing closer and closer. They were lashing the horses with furious desperation, but the poor brutes were fast giving out.

Barely a quarter of a mile lay between us now, and that distance was diminishing very rapidly. We were going down a gentle slope, when suddenly Capt. Karaman cried: "The bridge! Do you see the bridge?"

Crossing the road far ahead of us was a gleaming bit of water spanned by a narrow wooden bridge. It was not the Vistula, but a puny mountain stream—one of the tributaries of the Vistula whose existence I had forgotten.

It was possible, I thought, to overtake the assassins before they could reach it; and even if we failed it mattered little, for the Vistula was still a mile or more away. We swept over the icy ground at a dangerous speed, and I felt like shouting out with triumph, for the sleigh was running slower and slower and the capture of the men seemed certain.

I called to them to surrender, but they made no reply, though they must have seen how hopeless their situation was.

The bridge was very close now, and I saw at a glance that it was giving way, for the stream was high and swollen, and great cakes of ice were crushing against the wooden piles.

"Look out, they are going to fire," cried Karaman, suddenly. And as he spoke the smooth faced man half rose in his seat and, turning round, pointed a gun directly at us. I heard the report and felt the whiz of the bullet past my ear. Then came a puff of white smoke and a second shot; and with a cry of pain the Cossack behind me sprang up from his saddle and rolled down on the icy road, while his riderless horse reared with fright.

"The scoundrel!" hissed Karaman through his set teeth. "If we only dared fire on them!"

But this was exactly what we dared not do. They must be taken alive at all hazards. In the excitement I had forgotten all about the bridge, and closing up we dashed on in rapid pursuit.

The assassins had nearly reached the edge of the stream now. The bearded man was plying the whip savagely, and his companion was standing, gun in hand, holding his fire apparently until we should come a little nearer.

Easter and faster—and now the stream was before us, a raging, roaring torrent, flashing by with terrible velocity, and still the fugitives madly lashed their jaded horses.

An instant more and the panic stricken brutes dashed upon the swaying, trembling structure; and then, with a mighty crash and blinding cloud of spray and snow, bridge, sleigh and all crumbled into the torrent, and with a splash the assassins were gone.

horses on the very brink.

For a moment I could see nothing, and then Karaman pointed out the assassins huddled together on a cake of ice that was whirling rapidly down the stream. The horses and sleigh were nowhere to be seen.

A peasant was speedily found who led us through the forest to the shores of the Vistula, at a point close to the mouth of the tributary stream.

On the other side rose the Austrian military station, but no trace of the assassins could be discovered; and, from the swollen condition of the river, believed it impossible that they could have been saved. Capt. Karaman was of the same opinion, so we gave up the search, and rode back to the station. The cossack who had been shot was not fatally injured, and gave promise of recovering in a few weeks.

I made out my report and forwarded it to headquarters, and a fortnight later I was exonerated from all blame, much to my relief, for very unjust and arbitrary decisions are sometimes made in such cases.

What their fate was I never certainly knew. Long afterward an Austrian traveling to St. Petersburg informed me that Shamurin and Kharkoff had been seen in Vienna, and were supposed to be editing a revolutionist journal; but I have grave doubts of the Austrian's veracity, and in my opinion the two assassins perished in the icy waters of the Vistula. New York World.

Cultivation of the Affections.

It is a common remark in extenuation of the inconvenience of not having very much money that people of ordinary fortune can eat as much as millionaires; and if we find that we can love as easily and as extensively on small incomes as on greater ones, we may safely consider that we have the better of the rich again. Perhaps we can; wealth offers so many diversions that sometimes the pleasure there is in loving is overlooked.

The impression certainly exists that great riches have a tendency to clog the affections; and great inequalities of fortune are a barrier between man and man, not insurmountable but appreciable. Love is personal, and very great possessions almost inevitably throw personal qualities into shadow. We love men for what they are, not what they represent.

We cultivate the muscles because it is fun to use them, and because it brings us the happiness that comes of health. For like reasons we make a business of the cultivation of our minds. How simple it is of us to neglect to the extent that most of us do the systematic cultivation of our hearts.—Scribner's.

Two Veteran Merchants.

Mr. Horace G. Tucker, senior member of the firm of J. L. Fairbanks & Co., who is still in active business, has been in the same store for fifty-four years. N. P. H. Willis has been sixty-two years in one store, 63 and 64 North Market street. Mr. Willis began there in the summer of 1838.—Boston Journal.

"But There Are Things."

"Never cry over spilt milk, dearest." Penelope—But if the milk happens to be condensed and you get a cold slab of two on your new skirt?—American Grocer.

Mlle. Louise Michel says she looks back with much pleasure upon many of the days she spent in prison. "They are, in fact," she adds, "among the happiest days of my life."

An Iron Hand.

A pilgrim appeared at Allahabad, India, called a crowd about him and asked if the time had not come when the hated English should go. He was in jail in less than twenty minutes, was arraigned in court within an hour and in less than two had been sentenced to five years imprisonment. The English don't intend to let India get the start of her again, and the pilgrim who has any questions to ask had better talk to himself.—Detroit Free Press.

That's Right.

A Texas paper told a story about four people on horseback being carried into the clouds by a cyclone. A citizen doubted it and a reporter made affidavit to the facts. He was arrested for perjury, had to own up to the sensation when put on trial, and will now get a term in state prison for his funny business.—Detroit Free Press.

The Summer of '89.

Brown—We're going to have a hot summer.
Merritt—Of course. We'll then be in the nineties.—Epoch.

A Rapid Boat.

The little torpedo boat Chaffinch is still here, and daily astonishes the people by scampering up and down the Potomac at the rate of thirty miles an hour. Her officers have all become amphibious, as she looks up such a spray when she is racing that nothing is dry above her hatch ways, and the officers and men live as much in the water as out of it.—Washington Post.