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The Water Lady—A Legend.

There is a mystery in these sombre shades,  
A secret horror in this dark deep flood.

It seems as if beings of another race  
Here lurk invisible, except what time

Eve's dusky hour, and night's congenial gloom,  
Permit them show themselves in human guise—

Men say that fays, and elves, and water spirits,  
Affect such haunts—and this is surely one.

On the banks of one of the streams falling into the Inn, are the remains of an old castle not far from a narrow defile or den, where the waters being hemmed in, rush with impetuosity through the fragments of rock impending their course. Of these, the following legend is related.

The last possessor of the castle, which had not been inhabited for several centuries, was Count Albert, a youthful nobleman, descended from an illustrious ancestry; daring, enthusiastic, and addicted to study; but his studies were of such a nature that they incurred for him, among his credulous dependants, the imputation of holding unhallowed intercourse with supernatural beings.

Independently, however, of the censures his conduct occasioned in this respect, he was admired by all for possessing, in an eminent degree, personal courage and prowess, qualities so necessary, and therefore so highly prized, in those ages.

Yet even those who were most forward to commend his undauntedness could not forbear blaming the indiscretions of his curiosity, which led him to venture into scenes that would, by the fancied horror attached to them, have appalled the bravest of his followers.

During the most stormy weather, when the spirits of the air were supposed to be wreaking their fury on the elements in the depth of night, at what hour the departed were supposed to revisit the earth, and forms obscure and terrific to appear to the unfortunate traveller who should be bewildered on his way—even at such seasons would Albert venture into the recesses of the woods, enjoy the conflict of nature on the blasted heath, and explore the wildest solitude around his domain.

Such practices occasioned much conjecture and rumour—and many prophesied that some terrible visitation would overtake the man, who, if not actually leagued with the powers of darkness, delighted in all that was terrific and appalling; nor did the less scrupulous or the more imaginative hesitate to relate, with particular circumstance and detail, the dreadful mysteries he was reported, at such times, to have witnessed.

In the defile, which, as has been stated, was in the immediate vicinity of the castle, it was said that a fairy, or spirit, named by the peasantry the Water Lady, had been heard by night, singing within a cave hollowed in the rock, just above the most dangerous part of the current.

Albert was determined to ascertain the truth, and, if possible, obtain an interview with the supernatural inhabitant of the Black Water Vault.—Such a daring project excited the horror of all who heard it; since many were the tales respecting persons having been enticed to listen to the strains of the spirit, and afterwards perishing in the foaming waters; for she was said to delight in attracting the unwary, and the curious. But though the design of the young Count appeared so fraught with danger, and obstinate temerity, nothing could induce him to abandon the enterprise, neither the entreaties of his friends, or those of Bertha, his betrothed bride, whom he was shortly to conduct to the altar; it rather seemed as if all obstacles and dissuaves did but irritate his unbalanced curiosity. One evening, the third of

the new moon, the count, attended by two companions, whom he had prevailed upon to assist him in rowing his boat, and steering it among the eddies of the torrent, departed for the scene of research. They proceeded in silence, for Albert was buried in thought, the others were mute from apprehension. No sooner did they approach the narrow pass where the foaming and congregated waters dash furiously through the contracted channel, than was heard the voice of one within the current.

The music was so strangely sweet and fascinating, that, although struck with awe at the supernatural sounds, they were induced to advance. A form was soon dimly descried; it was that of a female arrayed in floating drapery, but her features they might not discern, as she wore a thick veil. They continued to approach the spot so as to be able to catch distinctly the following words, which were chanted in a tone of solemn adjuration:

By the treasures of my cave,  
More than avarice can crave,  
More than Fortune yet e'er gave,  
I charge thee, youth, appear.

Here I wait thy will and best,  
Here with me thou'lt safely rest,  
Thou art my chosen guest;  
Then enter thou, nor fear.

Mortal, now in dead of night,  
Magic spell of friendly sprite,  
To favour thee, hath bound aright  
Aught that would thee harm.

Hither hasten, youthful rover:  
In my secret inmost bower,  
Thou shalt find a worthy dower;  
Defy not, then, my charm.

By this time they had arrived opposite to the cave; Albert motioned to his companions to stay the bark, and scarcely had they obeyed, when, having leapt into the flood, he was soon descried by them climbing up the jutting crags below the cavern—he entered beneath its lowbrowed opening, and disappeared. Gazing upon each other with looks of dread, and fearing to speak, lest there should be horror in the tones of their own voices, they retired to some distance, waiting in the hope that the adventurer might reappear. At length they returned to the castle, in the same silence of terror they had hitherto observed. "Where was their companion, the Count—had he perished? How had they lost him—what had they beheld?" These and similar questions were put to them by the terrified inmates. Their replies were brief, vague, incoherent, but all of dreadful import; and no doubt retained as to the youth's having become the victim of his own temerity.

The following morning when the family were assembled, and preparing to commence their matin repast, Lord Albert advanced into the hall, and took his wonted station at the table, with the usual salutations. All started as if a spectre had stood before them—yet, strange to say, no one dared to address him as to his absence, or his mysterious return—for he had apparently but just quitted his chamber, clad in his wonted morning apparel; every one was as spell-bound, since no sooner did any attempt to question the Count, than he felt the words die away upon his lips. There sat a wondrous paleness on his brow, yet was it not sad; there was, too, a more than common fire in the expression of his eye, he was thoughtful—at times abstracted, but instantly roused himself and essayed to animate the conversation. If the silence of the others was singular, that of Albert himself was equally so, for he took no notice whatever of the occurrences of the preceding evening. No sooner had he quitted the hall, than every one began to enquire of his neighbour, if he knew when, or how the Count had returned—to wonder at their own silence on this topic, and impute it to some magic charm. Day after day did they continue to express to each other astonishment, their surmises, their apprehensions; but even his most familiar friends did not venture to speak a syllable to him on the subject of their curiosity; among other circumstances, which were whispered about, it had been remarked, that instead of the ring the Count used to wear, which was of great value and family antiquity, he now had one of which the circlet itself, and not the ornament, was apparently cut out of a single

piece of emerald, and, as some averred, who had taken the opportunity of examining it, unperceived by its wearer, inscribed with mystic characters.

In time, however, these circumstances ceased to be the theme of conversation and even appeared forgotten during the preparations for the approaching nuptials between the Count and the lady Bertha; and were never mentioned during the gaieties attendant upon the solemnisation. On the evening after the bridal day, while the Count was conversing apart with one of his guests, in the recess of an oriel window, the faint beam of the new moon fell upon his face, he looked up aghast, as if struck by some sudden, dreadful recollection, and dashed his hand against his forehead, rushed wildly out of the apartment. Consternation seized all who witnessed this dreadful burst of dismay, of which none could tell the cause.

Retired from his guests, the Count was hastily pacing to and fro, in a long gallery leading to his private apartments, when Bertha broke in upon him. She did not notice his extreme disorder, being herself hardly less agitated; but informed him that on the preceding night a figure veiled in a long flowing drapery, had been seen standing at their chamber door, and the next morning a ring picked up by her attendants on the very spot where this mysterious appearance had been observed. She then gave the ring to her Lord—it was that he had formerly worn. "Fatal, fatal night!"—Listen, Bertha exclaimed he in a tone of anguish.

"Impelled by curiosity, I visited the cave of the 'Water Lady;' it was on the third of the moon. She compelled me to an interchange of rings; from her it was that I received this fatal one, which you observe on my finger, and which I am bound by a solemn vow never to lay aside. I vowed also,"—he shuddered as he spoke—"to consent to receive a visit from her on the third of the month; this I was obliged to do, or incur all the consequences of her wrath, while yet in her power: from that fatal period, I have been obliged to submit to these intercourses with a strange being—the consequences of my unhallowed curiosity. Last night was due to her!"

Bertha listened in horror—the Count looked on his finger, the circlet of the emerald was gone; how he knew not, but he hoped that he was now released from his terrible vow; yet he felt a strange presentiment of impending misfortune. Bertha, notwithstanding her own distress, endeavoured to cheer him, but became alarmed herself at the ashy paleness of his countenance; he tried to persuade her that he was not so disturbed as she imagined, & turned to a mirror for the purpose of seeing whether his features wore the deadly aspect she fancied—but a cry of horror issued from her lips; the mirror had reflected his dress, but neither his hands or his face. He felt that he was under the ban of that mysterious being, with whom his fate was so strangely linked. A deadly chill darted through his heart, he rushed to his chamber, but no sooner had he laid his fingers upon the bolt of the door, than he felt them grasped by a cold icy hand. "Albert," cried a voice, "thou hast broken the compact so solemnly ratified between us. Last night was the third of the moon: know that spirits may not be trifled with." Bertha had followed her bridegroom—she had heard the awful voice—she felt that some strange visitation was at hand, yet was not therefore deterred from entering the apartment.

Next day no traces of either Albert or Bertha could be discovered: they were never seen again; and all agreed that they had perished by the revenge of the "Water Lady." The castle was deserted; became a ruin—and the peasantry used ever afterwards to point out with dismay the fatal cavern of the Black Water Vault, and to relate to the traveller the legend of the Water Lady.

During the Revolutionary War, several of the States issued paper money; but it did not last long—in some of them, the depreciation began in March, 1777, at one and a quarter for one, and progressed to January, when it was eight hundred for one of silver!

## ANNAPOLIS BIBLE SOCIETY.

WE whose names are underwritten, do agree to form ourselves into an association for the purpose of distributing copies of the Holy Scriptures more extensively among the indigent, and such as may be proper objects of this charity. And for our government we adopt the following

CONSTITUTIONAL ARTICLES:  
1st. This Society shall be denominated *The Female Bible Society of Annapolis and its Vicinity, auxiliary to the American Bible Society.*

2d. Every Lady who subscribes these articles, and pays one dollar at the time of subscription, and annually afterwards, shall be a member; and every Lady who pays ten dollars at any one time shall be a member for life.

3d. Conformably to the principles of the parent institution, the Bibles and Testaments to be circulated by the Society shall be without note or comment; and those in the English language shall be of the version now in common use.

4th. The business of the Society shall be conducted by a Board of Managers, consisting of twenty members of the Society; they shall appoint from their own body a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, a Recording Secretary, and a Corresponding Secretary; shall fill any vacancies which may occur in the Board, and call special meetings of the Society, if it shall be deemed necessary, and five shall form a quorum.

5th. There shall be an annual meeting of the Society held on the first Tuesday in October, at which time twenty managers shall be elected for the ensuing year, who at the close of their term of service shall report their proceedings to the Society.

6th. The Ladies elected as Managers shall meet within three days after their election, and choose from their own board the officers for the ensuing year.

7th. At the annual meeting of the Society the President, or in her absence the Vice-President first on the list, then present, and in the absence of all the Vice-Presidents, such member as shall be appointed for that purpose, shall preside at the meeting.

8th. The Treasurer shall take charge of the money collected, which money shall be deposited in the Farmers Bank till it is disposed of by order of the Board; she shall keep a regular account of all receipts and expenditures, and make a quarterly report of the state of funds to the Board of Managers; her accounts to be annually examined by a committee appointed for that purpose, which committee shall report to the annual meeting of the Society.

9th. The surplus revenue of the Society, after deducting the incidental expenses, and supplying the destitute within the sphere of its operation, with the Scriptures, shall be transmitted to the American Bible Society.

10th. Each meeting of the board, and of the Society, shall be opened by reading a portion of Scripture, and closed with a Hymn.

11th. The members of the Society shall be entitled to the privilege of purchasing from the depository of the Society, Bibles and Testaments, at cost prices.

12th. A copy of this Constitution, signed by one of the officers,

with the name and residence of the other officers, and one or more copies of each annual report shall be transmitted to the Secretary of the American Bible Society.

13th. The Board of Managers shall have power to make by-laws for their own regulation, and to fill up vacancies occurring in the Board during their year of office.

14th. These articles shall suffer no alteration except at a meeting of the Society, specially convoked for the purpose.

BY-LAWS.

1. The board shall meet on the first Tuesday in every month.

2. It shall be the business of the Corresponding Secretary to receive and answer all letters addressed to this Society, and copies of these letters shall be afterwards read before the Board.

3. The Recording Secretary shall keep regular minutes of the proceedings of the Society, file all papers, &c. keep a register of the names of those to whom Bibles or Testaments are given, as also the managers by whom they are distributed.

4. The Managers shall make it their business to inquire what families or individuals, residing within the city or its vicinity, are in want of the Scriptures, and may be proper objects of the attention of this Society. In visiting the poor, where none of the family can read, it shall be the duty of the Managers to read the Scriptures to them.

5. No resignation shall be received but such as shall be in writing.

6. Each manager shall, at every stated meeting, render an account of the Bibles or Testaments she has distributed since the last meeting, and the names of the persons to whom they are given shall be in writing.

7. For the convenience of the Managers, the city shall be laid off in districts, and two or more Managers appointed to each, whose business it shall be to solicit subscriptions, to collect them as annually due, to ascertain who there may be in the district in want of the Scriptures, who would contribute by small payments, or in part, to the purchase of them, and to whom it would be proper to bestow them gratis.

8. It shall be the business of both Officers and Managers to inquire what Ladies there are in the vicinity who would undertake, either by individual exertion, or by forming associations auxiliary to this Society, to collect subscriptions, and to ascertain who in their respective neighbourhoods may be in want of the Scriptures, and the business of the Corresponding Secretary to write to such Ladies soliciting their cooperation.

OFFICERS.

Mrs. Jane Davis, President,  
Mrs. Mary Steele, 1st Vice-President,

Mrs. Rebecca Nicholson, 2d Vice-President,  
Mrs. Elizabeth Maynadier, Treasurer,

Mrs. Eliza Shaw, Recording Secretary,  
Miss Catharine Steele, Corresponding Secretary.

MANAGERS.

Mrs. Lloyd, Miss Ann Brice,  
Mrs. Goldborough, Miss H. A. Chase,  
Mrs. A. Pinkney, Miss Ann Randall,  
Mrs. F. McCobb, Miss C. Ridgely,  
Mrs. M. J. Ridgely, Miss Isabella Steele,  
Miss A. Franklin, Miss H. Ridgely,  
Miss E. Mills, Miss E. Maynadier.

50 Dollars Reward.

Ran away from the subscriber, living on the head of South River in Anne Arundel county, on the 4th day of September instant, a Negro Man named Bill, about 25 or 26 years of age, five feet four or six inches high, five or six above each eye, also one between the fore finger and thumb of the right hand, has a long head, large teeth, pleasant countenance, active and intelligent for a negro. Had on a grey coat, with black buttons, the covers nearly worn out, the coat patched at the elbows, with new cuffs, nankeen waistcoat with black buttons; he has no doubt changed his clothes. I am induced to believe he has been noticed away by a young white girl about 15 years of age, with whom it appears he has been on intimate terms. He took with him a dark bay mare, saddle, bridle, and saddle bags—the mare has a star in her forehead, and a small snip on her nose—paces, trots and gallops, two hind feet white above the hoof, also the fore right leg white. Thirty dollars will be paid for the man and mare, if taken in the State—if out of the state, the above reward, if secured so that I get them again.

RICHARD TUCKER.  
Sept. 13.

50 Dollars Reward.

Abandoned from the farm of Mrs. Sarah Clements, on the South side of Severn River, near Annapolis, on the 8th instant, a negro man named

JACOB,  
He is about 5 feet 9 or 10 inches high, and his person though slender is muscular; his colour is not remarkably black nor lighter than usual; he has a stern, sullen, bold expression of countenance; speaks promptly when spoken to, and is rather more intelligent than plantation negroes generally are; his motions indicate considerable activity and strength, and he walks remarkably fast and with great ease to himself. He has large nostrils and a flat nose; has lost two of his front teeth, and has a small scar on his left hand just below the third finger. He has a wife living in Baltimore named Heliah, the property of Mrs. Cava W. Edels, whether it is likely he has gone. The above reward will be paid to any person who will deliver the said slave to the subscriber at the before mentioned farm, or who will secure him in the Annapolis goal.

Benjamin S. Masser,  
Sept 13.

Dissolution of Partnership.

The partnership heretofore existing between George and John Barber has been mutually dissolved. All persons indebted to the said firm are requested to settle, either by bond or note, and those who have claims are requested to present them for payment to George Barber, who is authorized to adjust the concerns of said firm.

George Barber,  
John T. Barber.

The public are informed, that their Packets will run as usual. Merchants and others, who send Goods, &c. are requested to designate particularly the names of the persons for whom they are intended, and the places where they are to be sent. They will not be responsible for letters sent in the packets, but every attention will be paid to their delivery. They have an Extra SCHOONER, which will take and carry Freight, and from any port in the Chesapeake Bay.

The editors of the Federal Gazette and American, Baltimore, are requested to insert the above once a week for six weeks, and forward their account to this office.

May 17.