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*The Green Dwarf*  
*and Other Early Fiction*



## The Green Dwarf

I AM INFORMED THAT THE WORLD is beginning to express in low, discontented grumblings its surprise at my long, profound and (I must say) very ominous silence.

“What,” says the reading public, as she stands in the marketplace with grey cap and ragged petticoat, the exact image of a modern blue,\* “what is the matter with Lord Charles? Is he expiflicated by the literary Captain’s\* lash? Have his good genius and his scribbling mania forsaken him both at once? Rides he now on man-back through the mountains of the moon or – mournful thought! – lies he helpless on a sickbed of pain?”

The last conjecture, I am sorry to say, is, or rather was, true. I have been sick, most sick. I have suffered dreadful, indescribable tortures arising chiefly from the terrible remedies which were made use of to effect my restoration. One of these was boiling alive in what was called a hot bath, another roasting before a slow fire and a third a most rigid system of starvation. For proof of these assertions apply to Mrs Cook, back of Waterloo Palace, situated in the suburbs of Verdopolis. How I managed to survive such a mode of treatment, or what the strength of my victorious constitution must be, wiser men than I am would fail in explaining. Certain it is, however, that I did at length get better, or, to speak more elegantly, become convalescent, but long after my cadaverous cheek had begun to reassume a little of its wonted freshness I was kept penned up in a corner of the housekeeper’s parlour, forbidden the use of pen, ink and paper, prohibited setting foot into the open air and dieted on rice-gruel, sago, snail soup, panada, stewed cockchafers, milk broth and roasted mice.

I will not say what was my delight when first Mrs Cook deigned to inform me, about two o’clock on a fine summer afternoon, that as it was a mild, warm day I might take a short walk out if I pleased. Ten minutes sufficed for arraying my person in a new suit of very handsome

clothes and washing the accumulated dirt of seven diurnal revolutions of the Earth from my face and hands.

As soon as these necessary operations were performed, I sallied out in plumed hat and cavalier mantle. Never before had I been fully sensible of the delights of liberty – the suffocating atmosphere which filled the hot, flinty street was to me as delicious as the dew-cooled and balm-breathing air of the freshest twilight in the wildest solitude. There was not a single tree to throw its sheltering branches between me and that fiery sun, but I felt no want of such a screen as with slow but not faltering step I crept along in the shadow of shops and houses. At a sudden turn the flowing ever-cool sea burst unexpectedly on me. I felt like those poor wretches do who are victims to the disease called a calenture. The green waves looked like wide-spread plains covered with foam – white flowers and tender spring grass and the thickly clustered masts of vessels my excited fancy transformed into groves of tall, graceful trees, while the smaller craft took the form of cattle reposing in their shade.

I passed on with something of that springing step which is natural to me, but soon my feeble knees began to totter under the frame which they should have supported. Unable to go further without rest, I looked round for some place where I might sit down till my strength might be *un peu rétabli*.\* I was in that ancient and dilapidated court, called (pompously enough) Quaxmina Square, where Bud, Gifford, Love-dust and about twenty other cracked old antiquarians reside. I determined to take refuge in the house of the first mentioned, as well because he is my most intimate friend as because it is in the best condition.

Bud's mansion is indeed far from being either incommodious or unseemly. The outside is venerable and has been very judiciously repaired by modern masons (a step, by the by, which brought down the censure of almost all his neighbours), and the inside is well and comfortably furnished. I knocked at the door; it was opened by an old footman with a reverend grey head. On asking if his master were at home, he showed me upstairs into a small but handsome room. Here I found Bud seated at a table surrounded by torn parchments and rubbish, and descanting copiously on some rusty knee buckles which he held in his hand, to the Marquis of Douro, and another puppy, who very politely were standing before him with their backs to the fire.

“What's been to do with my darling?” said the kind old gentleman as I entered. “What's made it look so pale and sickly? I hope not chagrin at Tree's superannuated drivél.”

“Bless us!” said Arthur, before I could speak a word. “What a little chalky spoon he looks! The whipping I bestowed on him has stuck to his small body right well. Hey Charley, any soreness yet?”

“Fratricide!” said I. “How dare you speak thus lightly to your half-murdered brother! How dare you demand whether the tortures you have inflicted continue yet to writhe his agonized frame!”

He answered this appeal with a laugh intended, I have no doubt, to display his white teeth, and a sneer designed to set off his keen wit, and at the same instant he gently touched his riding wand.

“Nay, my lord,” said Bud, who noticed this significant manoeuvre, “let us have no more of such rough play. You’ll kill the lad in earnest if you don’t mind.”

“I’m not going to meddle with him yet,” said he. “He’s not at present in a condition to show game. But let him offend me again as he has done, and I’ll hardly leave a strip of skin on his carcass.”

What brutal threats he would have uttered besides I know not, but at this moment he was interrupted by the entrance of dinner.

“My lord and Colonel Morton,” said Bud, “I hope you’ll stay and take a bit of dinner with me, if you do not think my plain fare too coarse for your dainty palates.”

“On my honour, Captain,” replied Arthur, “your bachelor’s meal looks very nice, and I should really feel tempted to partake of it had it been more than two hours since I breakfasted. Last night – or rather this morning – I went to bed at six, and so it was twelve before I rose. Therefore, dining, you know, is out of the question till seven or eight o’clock in the evening.”

Morton excused himself on some similar pretext, and shortly after, both the gentlemen – much to my satisfaction – took their leave.

“Now Charley,” said my friend, when they were gone, “you’ll give me your company, I know, so sit down on that easy chair opposite to me, and let’s have a regular two-handed crack.”

I gladly accepted this kind invitation because I knew that if I returned home, Mrs Cook would allow me nothing for dinner but a basin full of some filthy vermined slop. During our meal few words were spoken, for Bud hates chatter at feeding time, and I was too busily engaged in discussing the most savoury plateful of food I had eaten for the last month and more to bestow a thought on anything of less importance. However, when the table was cleared and the dessert brought in, Bud wheeled the round table nearer the open window, poured out a glass



of sack, seated himself in the cushioned armchair and then said in that quiet, satisfactory tone which men use when they are perfectly comfortable: "What shall we talk about, Charley?"

"Anything you like," I replied.

"Anything?" said he. "Why, that means just nothing, but what would you like?"

"Dear Bud," was my answer, "since you have been kind enough to leave the choice of topic to me, there is nothing I should enjoy so much as one of your delightful tales. If you would but favour me this once, I shall consider myself eternally obliged to you."

Of course, Bud, according to the universal fashion of storytellers, refused at first, but after a word of flattery, coaxing and entreating, he at length complied with my request and related the following incidents which I now present to the reader not exactly in the original form of words in which I heard it, but strictly preserving the sense and facts.

— C. WELLESLEY

## 1

**T**WENTY YEARS SINCE, or thereabouts, there stood in what is now the middle of Verdopolis, but which was then the extremity, a huge irregular building called the Genii's Inn. It contained more than five hundred apartments, all comfortably, and some splendidly, fitted up for the accommodation of travellers, who were entertained in this vast hostelry free of expense. It became, in consequence of this generous regulation, the almost exclusive resort of wayfarers of every nation who, in spite of the equivocal character of the host and hostesses, being the four Chief Genii: Tali, Branni, Emi and Anni,\* and the despicable villainy of the waiters and other attendants, which notable offices were filled by subordinate spirits of the same species, continually flocked thither in prodigious multitudes.

The sound of their hurrying footsteps, the voice of rude revel and the hum of business has ceased now among the ruined arches, the damp mouldy vaults, the dark halls and the desolate chambers of this once mighty edifice which was destroyed in the great rebellion, and now stands silent and lonely in the heart of great Verdopolis — but our business is with the past, not the present day, therefore let us leave moping to the owls and look on the bright side of matters.

On the evening of the 4th June 1814, it offered rather a different appearance. There had been during that day a greater influx of guests than usual – which circumstance was owing to a grand fête to be held on the morrow. The great hall looked like a motley masquerade. In one part was seated cross-legged on the pavement a group of Turkish merchants who, in those days, used to trade largely with the shopkeepers and citizens of Verdopolis in spices, shawls, silks, muslins, jewellery, perfumes and other articles of oriental luxury. These sat composedly smoking their long pipes and drinking choice sherbet and reclining against the cushions which had been provided for their accommodation. Near them a few dark sunburnt Spaniards strutted with the gravely proud air of a peacock, which bird – according to the received opinion – dares not look downwards lest his feet should break the self-complacent spell which enchants him. Not far from these lords of creation sat a company of round, rosy-faced, curly-pated, straight-legged, one-shoed beings from Stump Island, where that now nearly obsolete race of existences then flourished like the green bay tree. More than a dozen genii were employed in furnishing them with melons and rice pudding, for which they roared out incessantly.

At the opposite extremity of the hall five or six sallow, bilious Englishmen were conversing over a cup of green tea. Behind them a band of withered messieurs sat presenting each other with fine white bread, peculiarly rich, elegant Prussian butter, perfumed snuff, brown sugar and calico. At no great distance from these half-withered apes, within the great carved screen that surrounded a huge blazing fire, two gentlemen had established themselves before a table on which smoked a tempting dish of beefsteaks, with the due accompaniments of onions, ketchup and cayenne flanked by a large silver vessel of prime old canary and a corresponding tankard of spiced ale.

One of the personages whose good fortune it was to be the devourer of such choice cheer was a middle-aged man who might perhaps have numbered his fifty-fifth year. His rusty black habiliments, powdered wig and furrowed brow spoke at once the scholar and the despiser of external decorations. The other presented a remarkable contrast to his companion. He was in the prime of life, being apparently not more than six- or seven-and-twenty years of age. A head of light-brown hair arranged in careless yet tasteful curls well became the pleasing, though not strictly regular features of his very handsome countenance, to which a bright and bold blue eye added all the charms of expression. His form, evincing both strength and symmetry, was set off to the best advantage

by a military costume, while his erect bearing and graceful address gave additional testimony to the nature of his profession.

“This young soldier,” said Bud, with a kindling eye, “was myself. You may laugh, Charley” – for I could not forbear a smile on contrasting the dignified corporation of my now somewhat elderly fat friend with the description he had just given of his former appearance – “you may laugh, but I was once as gallant a youth as ever wore a soldier’s sword. Alack-a-day! Time, troubles, good liquor and good living change a man sorely.”

“But,” the reader will ask, “who was the other gentleman mentioned above?” He was John Gifford, then the bosom friend of Ensign Bud, as he is now of Captain Bud.

There was a profound silence so long as their savoury meal continued, but when the last mouthful of beef, the last shred of onion, the last grain of cayenne and the last drop of ketchup had disappeared, Gifford laid down his knife and fork, uttered a deep sigh and, opening his oracular jaws, said, “Well, Bud, I suppose the fools whom we see here gathered together from all the winds of heaven are come to our Babylonian city for the unworthy purpose of beholding the gauds and vanities of tomorrow.”

“Doubtless,” replied the other. “And I sincerely hope that you, sir, also will not disdain to honour their exhibition with your presence.”

“I?” almost yelled the senior gentleman. “I – go and see the running of chariots, the racing and prancing of horses, the goring of wild beasts, the silly craft of archery and the brutal sport of the wrestlers! Art thou mad, or are thy brains troubled with the good wine and nutmeg ale?” Here the speaker filled his glass with the latter generous liquid.

“I am neither one nor t’other, Gifford,” answered Bud, “but I’ll venture to say that forasmuch as you despise those gauds and vanities as you call them, many a better man than you is longing for tomorrow on their account.”

“Ah! And I suppose thou art among the number of those arrant fools?”

“Ay, truly said. I see no shame in the avowal.”

“Don’t you indeed! Oh, Bud, Bud... I sometimes hope that you are beginning to be sensible of the folly of these pursuits. I sometimes dare to imagine that you will one day be found a member of that chosen band who, despising the weak frivolities of this our degenerate age, turn studiously to the contemplation of the past, who value, as some men do gold and jewels, every remnant, however small, however apparently trivial, which offers a memento of vanished generations.”

“Goodness, Gifford, how you talk! I like well enough to see Melchizedek’s cup\* for the sacramental wine, the tethers by which Abraham’s camels were fastened in their pasture grounds or even the thigh bone and shoulder blade of one of our own worthy old giants, even when these latter articles turn out to be the remains of a dead elephant. (Ah, Giff, touched ye there, I see.) But as to making such matters the serious business of my life, why hang me if I think I shall turn to that trade before a round dozen of years have trotted merrily over my head.”

“You speak like one of the foolish people,” replied Giff solemnly, “but still I glean a handful of comfort from your last words. At some future period you will give serious attention to the grand purpose for which we were all brought into the world.”

“Maybe ay and maybe nay. But whether I do or not, my cherub there, Stingo, seems as if he would have no objection to turn both antiquarian and lawyer already.”

“Ha! What! Is it that same sweet boy whom I saw yesterday at your house, whose young features express a promising solemnity far beyond his tender years?”

“The same, and a sour, squalling, ill-tempered brat it is!”

“My dear friend,” said Gifford, with great earnestness, “take care that you do not check the unfolding of that hopeful flower. Mind my words, he will be an honour to his country, and here, give him these toys” – taking a number of roundish stones from his pocket – “and tell him I have no doubt they were used as marbles by the children of the ancient Britons. Doubtless he will know how to value them accordingly.”

“To be sure he will. But, my dear friend, the next time you make Stingo a present, let it be some slight treatise on the law. He is continually hunting in my library for books of that nature, and complains that he can scarcely find one of the sort he wants.”

“The angel!” exclaimed Gifford in ecstasy. “The moment I get home I will send him a complete edition of my compendium of the laws. He shall not long pine in the agonies of inanition.”

“You are very kind,” said Bud, “but now let us change the subject. I understand that Bravey is to occupy the President’s throne tomorrow. I wonder who will be the rewarder of the victors.”

“It is not often that I remember the idle chat which passes in my presence, but I heard this morning that Lady Emily Charlesworth is to be honoured with that dignity.”

"Is she? That's well. They could not possibly have made a better choice. Why, her beauty alone will give *éclat* to the whole routine of tomorrow's proceedings. Now, tell me honestly, Giff, do you not think Lady Emily the most beautiful of earthly creatures?"

"She's well enough favoured," replied Gifford. "That is, her garments ever become her person, but for her mind, I fear it is a waste, uncultivated field which, were it not wholly barren, presents a rank crop of the weeds of frivolity."

"Prejudiced old prig!" said I angrily. "Would you have a spiritual essence of divinity like that to wither her roses by studying rotten scrolls and bending over grub-devoured law books?"

"Not precisely so, but I would have her to cultivate the faculties with which nature hath endowed her by a diligent perusal of abridged treatises on the subjects you mention, carefully digested by some able and judicious man. I myself, when her uncle appointed me her tutor in the more solid and useful branches of a polite education, composed a small work of ten quarto volumes on the antiquaries of England, interspersed with explanatory notes, and having an appendix of one thick volume quarto. If I could have got her to read this little volume carefully and attentively through, it might have given her some insight into the noble science of which I am an unworthy eulogist. But while, by a strange perversion of intellect, she listened to openly and followed obediently the instructions of those trivial beings who taught her the empty accomplishments of music, dancing, drawing, modern languages, etc., etc., while she even gave some occasional odd moments to the formation of flowers and other cunning devices on the borders of silken or fine linen raiment, I alone vainly attempted to lure her on in the honourable paths of wisdom, sometimes by honeyed words of enticement, sometimes by thorny threats of correction. At one time she laughed, at another wept, and occasionally (to my shame be it spoken) bribed me by delusive blandishments to criminal acquiescence in her shameful neglect of all that is profitable to be understood by either man or womankind."

"Bravo, Giff!" said Bud, laughing. "I wish she had boxed your ears whenever you bothered her on such subjects! By the by, have you heard that your fair quondam pupil is about to be married to Colonel Percy?"

"I have not, but I do not doubt the rumour – that's the way of all women. They think of nothing but being married, while learning is as dust in the balance."

"Who and what is Colonel Percy?" said a voice close behind.

Bud turned hastily round to see who the strange interrogator might be. He started as his eyes met the apparition of a tall, slender form dimly seen by the decaying embers which now shone fitfully on the hearth.

"Friend," said he, stirring up the fire to obtain a more perfect view of the stranger, "tell me first who and what you are who ask such abrupt questions about other people."

"I," replied he, "am a volunteer in the cause of good government and suppressor of rebels, and ere long I hope to be able to call myself a brother-in-arms with you, it being my intention shortly to enlist under the Duke's standard."

As the unknown gave this explanation, a bundle of brushwood which had been thrown on the half-extinguished fire, kindling to a bright blaze, revealed his person more clearly than the darkening twilight had hitherto permitted it to be seen. He appeared to be full six feet high; his figure, naturally formed on a model of the most perfect elegance, derived additional grace from the picturesque though rather singular costume in which he was attired, consisting of a green vest and tunic reaching a little below the knee, laced buskins, a large dark robe or mantle which hung over one shoulder in ample folds and was partially confined by the broad belt which encircled his waist, and a green bonnet surmounted by a high plume of black feathers. A bow and quiver hung on his back, two knives whose hafts sparkled with jewellery were stuck in his girdle and a tall spear of glittering steel which he held in one hand served him for a kind of support as he stood. The martial majesty of this imposing stranger's form and dress harmonized well with the manly though youthful beauty of his countenance, whose finely chiselled features and full bright eyes, shaded by clusters of short brown curls, shone with an expression of mingled pride and frankness, which awed the spectator while it won his unqualified admiration.

"Upon my word, friend," said I, struck with the young soldier's handsome exterior, "if I were the Duke, I should be well pleased with such a recruit as you promise to be. Pray, may I enquire of what country you are a native, for both your garb and accent are somewhat foreign?"

"You forget," replied the stranger, smiling, "that you are my debtor for a reply: my first question remains yet unanswered."

"Ah, true," said Bud, "you asked me, I think, who Colonel Percy might be?"

"I did, and it would gratify me much to receive some information respecting him."

"He is the nephew and apparent heir of the rich old Duke of Beaufort."

“Indeed! How long has he paid his address to Lady Emily Charlesworth?”

“For nearly a year.”

“When are they to be married?”

“Shortly, I believe.”

“Is he handsome?”

“Yes, nearly as much as you, and into the bargain his manners are those of an accomplished soldier and gentleman, but in spite of all this, he is a finished scoundrel, a haughty, gambling, drinking, unconscionable blackguard.”

“Why do you speak so warmly against him?”

“Because I know him well. I am his inferior officer and have daily opportunities of observing his vices.”

“Is Lady Emily acquainted with his real character?”

“Perhaps not altogether, but if she were, I do not think she would love him less. Ladies look more to external than internal qualifications in their husbands elect.”

“Do they often appear in public together?”

“I believe not. Lady Emily confines herself very much to private life. She is said not to like display.”

“Do you know anything of her disposition or temper? Is it good or bad, close or candid?”

“I’m sure I can’t tell you, but there is a gentleman here who will satisfy your curiosity on that point. He was her tutor and should know all about it. Pray, Gifford, favour us with your opinion.”

Gifford, hearing himself thus appealed to, emerged from the dark corner which had hitherto nearly concealed him from view. The stranger started on seeing him and attempted to muffle his face with one end of the large mantle in which he was enveloped, as if for the purpose of avoiding a recognition. But the worthy antiquary, at no time sharp-sighted, and whose brains at this particular juncture happened to be somewhat muddled by the draughts of spiced ale which he had just been administering to himself with no sparing hand, regarded him with a vacant stare of wonder as he drawled out: “What’s your business with me, Bud?”

“I merely wished to know if you could inform this gentleman what sort of temper Lady Charlesworth had.”

“What sort of temper! Why I don’t know. Much the same as other girls of her age have, and that’s a very bad one.”

The stranger smiled, gave a significant shrug of the shoulder which seemed to say, “there’s not much to be had from this quarter,” and, bowing politely to the corner, walked away to a distant part of the hall.

When he was gone, the two friends sat silent for some time, but Bud's attention was soon attracted by the sound of a voice apparently employed in reading or recitation proceeding from the group of Frenchmen who were seated at no great distance. He walked towards them. The speaker was a little dapper man dressed in brown coat and waistcoat, and cream-colour continuations. He was uttering the following words with abundance of action and grimace as Bud came up.

"Well as I was saying, the Emperor got into bed. 'Cheveleure,' says he to his valet, 'let down those window curtains and shut the casement before you leave the room.' Cheveleure did as he was told and then, taking up his candlestick, departed. In a few minutes the Emperor felt his pillow becoming rather hard, and he got up to shake it. As he did so, a slight rustling noise was heard near the bedhead. His Majesty listened but all was silent, so he lay down again. Scarcely had he settled into a peaceful attitude of repose when he was disturbed by a sensation of thirst. Lifting himself on his elbow, he took a glass of lemonade from the small stand which was placed beside him. He refreshed himself by a deep draught. As he returned the goblet to its station, a deep groan burst from a kind of closet in one corner of the apartment. 'Who's there?' cried the Emperor, seizing his pistols. 'Speak, or I'll blow your brains out!' This threat produced no other effect than a short sharp laugh, and a dead silence followed. The Emperor started from his couch, and hastily throwing on a *robe de chambre* which hung over the back of a chair, stepped courageously to the haunted closet. As he opened the door something rustled. He sprang forward, sword in hand. No soul or even substance appeared, and the rustling, it was evident, had proceeded from the falling of a cloak which had been suspended by a peg from the door. Half ashamed of himself he returned to bed. Just as he was about once more to close his eyes, the light of the three wax tapers which burned in a silver branch over the mantelpiece was suddenly darkened. He looked up. A black opaque shadow obscured it. Sweating with terror the Emperor put out his hand to seize the bell rope, but some invisible being snatched it rudely from his grasp, and at the same instant, the ominous shade vanished. 'Pooh!' exclaimed Napoleon. 'It was but an ocular delusion.' 'Was it?' whispered a hollow voice in deep mysterious tones close to his ear. 'Was it a delusion, Emperor of France? No, all thou hast heard and seen is sad forewarning reality. Rise, Lifter of the Eagle Standard! Awake, Swayer of the Lily Sceptre! Follow me, Napoleon, and thou shalt see more!' As the voice ceased, a form dawned on his astonished sight. It was that of a tall



thin man dressed in a blue surtout edged with gold lace. It wore a black cravat very tightly twisted round its neck and confined by two little sticks placed behind each ear. The countenance was livid, the tongue protruded from between the teeth, and the eyes, all glazed and bloodshot, starting with frightful prominence from their sockets. '*Mon Dieu!*' exclaimed the Emperor. 'What do I see? Spectre, whence comest thou?' The apparition spoke not but, gliding forward, beckoned Napoleon with uplifted finger to follow. Controlled by a mysterious influence which entirely deprived him of the capability of either thinking or acting for himself, he obeyed in silence. The solid wall of the apartment fell open as they approached, and when both had passed through, it closed behind them with a noise like thunder. They would now have been in total darkness had it not been for a dim blue light which shone round the ghost and revealed the damp walls of a long vaulted passage. Down this they proceeded with mute rapidity. Ere long a cool refreshing breeze, which rushed wailing up the vault and caused the Emperor to wrap his loose nightdress closer round, announced their approach to the open air. This they soon reached, and Napoleon found himself in one of the principal streets of Paris. 'Worthy spirit,' said he, shivering in the chill air, 'permit me to return and put on some additional clothing. I will be with you again presently.' 'Forward,' replied his companion sternly. He felt compelled, in spite of the rising indignation which almost choked him, to obey. On they went through the deserted streets till they arrived at a lofty house, built on the banks of the Seine. Here the spectre stopped, the gates rolled back to receive them and they entered a large marble hall which was partly concealed by a curtain drawn across, through the half-transparent folds of which a bright light might be seen burning with dazzling lustre. A row of fine female figures richly attired stood before this screen. Each wore on their heads garlands of the most beautiful flowers, but their faces were concealed by ghastly masks representing Death's heads. 'What is all this mummerly?' cried the Emperor, making an effort to shake off the mental shackles by which he was unwillingly restrained. 'Where am I, and why have I been brought here?' 'Silence!' said the guide, lolling out still further his black and bloody tongue. 'Silence if thou wouldst escape instant death.' The Emperor would have replied, his natural courage overcoming the temporary awe to which he had at first been subjected, but just then a strain of wild supernatural music swelled behind the huge curtain, which waved to and fro and bellied slowly out as if agitated by some internal commotion or battle of warring winds. At the same

moment, an overpowering mixture of the scents of mortal corruption, blended with the richest eastern odours, stole through the haunted hall. A murmur of many voices was now heard at a distance. Something grasped his arm roughly from behind; he hastily turned round; his eyes met the well-known countenance of Marie Louise. ‘What, are you in this infernal place, too?’ says he. ‘What has brought you here?’ ‘Will Your Majesty permit me to ask the same question of yourself?’ returned the Empress, smiling. He made no reply – astonishment prevented him. No curtain now intervened between him and the light. It had been removed as if by magic, and a splendid chandelier appeared suspended over his head. Throngs of ladies, richly dressed but without Death’s-head masks, stood round, and a due proportion of gay cavaliers was mingled with them. Music was still sounding, but it was now seen to proceed from a band of mortal musicians stationed in an orchestra near at hand. The air was yet redolent of incense, but it was incense unblended with stench. ‘*Bon Dieu!*’ cried the Emperor. ‘How is all this come about? Where in the world is Piche?’ ‘Piche?’ replied the Empress. ‘What does Your Majesty mean? Had you not better leave the apartment and retire to rest?’ ‘Leave the apartment! Why, where am I?’ ‘In my private drawing room, surrounded by a few particular persons of the Court whom I had invited this evening to a ball. You entered a few minutes since in your nightdress with your eyes fixed and wide open. I suppose, from the astonishment you now testify, that you were walking in your sleep.’ The Emperor immediately fell into a fit of the catalepsy, in which he continued during the whole of that night and the greater part of the next day.”

As the little man finished his story, a person dressed in blue and gold uniform bustled through the surrounding crowd of listeners and, touching the narrator with a sort of official staff which he carried in his hand, said: “He arrests him in the name of the Emperor.”

“What for?” asked the little man.

“What for!” reiterated a voice at the other end of the hall. “He’ll let him know what for. What’s the meaning of that scandalous anecdote, he should like to know! To the Bastille with him instantly, incessantly!”

All eyes were turned towards the deliverer of this peremptory mandate, and lo! the identical Emperor himself, in his accustomed green surtout and violet-coloured pantaloons, stood surrounded by about twenty gendarmes engaged in continued and uninterrupted snuff-taking. Everyone’s attention was now attracted towards *le grand Napoléon*, and *le pauvre petit conteur de sirnettes*\* was hurried off to the Bastille

without further notice or compassion, as it was now getting very late and the inn was all bustle and confusion in consequence of the excitement occasioned among the guests by the arrival of the illustrious visitor. Bud and Gifford, to whom the Emperor was no novelty, thought proper to take their departure. They walked down the first street together and then, as their roads lay in opposite directions, separated for the night.

## 2

**A** BRIGHT AND BALMY SUMMER'S morning ushered in the first celebrations of the African Olympic Games. At an early hour (as the newspapers say), the amphitheatre was crowded almost to suffocation in every part except the open area, a square mile in magnitude, allotted to the combatants, and those private seats which were reserved for the accommodation of the nobility and other persons of distinction.

The scene of the games was not exactly then what it is now. The houses which surround it on three sides were at that time but newly built; some indeed were but half finished, and a few had only the foundations dug. The lofty hill called Frederick's Crag, which completes the circle on the fourth side and whose summit above the seats is at the present day covered with gardens and splendid private dwellings, was then a sombre forest whose ancient echoes were as yet unviolated by the sound of the woodcutter's axe. The stumps of a few recently felled trees likewise appeared in the midst of the newly cleared arena, but it is a question in my opinion whether, by the vast improvements which have since taken place in the neighbourhood of the amphitheatre, the scene has not lost in picturesque variety what it has gained in grandeur and perfect finish.

On that memorable morning the tall magnificent trees, waving their still dewy arms now towards the blue sky, which seemed not far above them and now over the heads of as many peoples, nations, tongues and kindreds as Nebuchadnezzar's decree called together on the plains of Dura,\* flung into the prospect a woodland wildness and sylvan sublimity which, in my opinion, would be a more potent and higher charm than any of the artificial forms of beauty our great city has created in their stead are capable of infusing.

After an hour of anxious expectation, the distant sound of musical instruments announced the approach of the principal personages. Bravey advanced slowly and majestically, followed by a brilliant train of nobles. His tall and imposing person was set off to the best advantage by an ample robe of purple splendidly wrought with gold. He took his seat

on the President's throne amid bursts of universal applause. After him came Lady Emily Charlesworth, his niece. The flutes and softer instruments of the musicians breathed a dulcet welcome as the fair rewarder of victors, with a graceful rather than stately tread, moved towards her decorated seat. Her form was exquisitely elegant, though not above the middle size, and as she lifted her long white veil to acknowledge the thunderous applause of the multitude, a countenance was revealed such as painters and poets love to imagine, but which is seldom seen in actual life. The features were soft and delicate, the general complexion transparently fair, but tinged on the cheeks and lips with a clear, healthy crimson hue which gave an idea of vigour and healthy freshness. Her eyes, dark, bright and full of animation, flashed from under their long lashes and finely pencilled brows an arch, laughing, playful light, which, though it might not perhaps have suited well in a heroine of romance, yet added to her countenance a most fascinating though indescribable charm. At first, as she removed her veil and met the gaze of more than a million admiring eyes, a blush mantled on her beautiful cheeks. She bowed timidly though gracefully, and her white hand trembled with agitation as she waved it in reply to their greeting, but she soon regained her composure. The scene before her awoke feelings of a higher nature in her susceptible mind.

The blue and silent sky, the wild dark forest and the broad glimpse of mountainous country opening far beyond, tinged by the violet hues of distance, contrasted with the mighty assemblage of living and moving beings, the great city and the boundless sea beyond. These circumstances, together with the sound of the music, which now in subdued and solemn but most inspiring tones accompanied the heralds as they summoned the charioteers who were to contest the first prize to approach, could not but kindle in every bosom admiration for the simple sublimity of nature and the commanding magnificence of art.

Three chariots now drew up round the starting post. In the first sat a little man with a head of fiery red hair and a pair of keen, malicious black eyes which kept squinting round the arena and regarding everyone on whom their distorted glances chanced to fall with a kind of low black-guard expression which accorded well with the rest of his appearance and equipment. His chariot was rather out of character when compared with the gorgeousness of all surrounding objects, being in fact neither more nor less than a common spring cart drawn by four of those long-eared and proverbially obstinate animals called asses, whom he alternately