

# BEYOND RECALL.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A PROSPECT OF REPRIEVE.

At first I was too bewildered by the crowd of ideas that had been forced upon me to feel the terror of my situation. When I tried to fix my thoughts upon one object and distinguish it from the rest I found it impossible. It was as if a host of people were shouting at me simultaneously; as if a number of pictures were being passed rapidly before my eyes; as if I had fallen from a great height, and was called upon to give an intelligible account of all I had heard and seen.

With a strange feeling of apathy I sat down on the edge of my bed, and set myself to count the bricks in the wall under the coating of whitewash between the door and the side. After awhile, my eyes dazzled with the bright reflection of the gas upon the lime, a feeling of sickness came over me, and I sank my head in my hands. Then, just as the figure of the sun will present itself when you shut your eyes after looking at it, Hebe's white face, as she dropped back into the major's arms, came before me. I see it now as I saw it then—the white upturned face and parted lips, standing out in strong relief against the major's black coat.

"What has she done that she should suffer?" I asked myself, conscious for the first time of the injustice of this punishment. "What crime have I done that I should be here?"

With this feeling of savage rebellion fired my heart—a feeling of bitter hatred to heaven and earth and all mankind. I cursed the judge whose impartiality had forcibly won upon me during the trial. It was the furious instinct of a trapped beast who will snap in his pain even at the hand that would unbind the spring.

I was in this mood when the chaplain came to visit me. I did not raise my head when the door opened. I only knew he was present when he laid his hand on my arm, and sitting beside me on the plank began to speak. Then I looked up quickly with the sudden conception that Hebe might have found her way hither to bid me "good-bye" for ever. Seeing his black coat and shaven lip I buried my face again.

It was only a jail officer, paid like the warders to administer what humanity could not deny. Humanity! What had humanity to do with me?

He spoke to me of God's love and mercy. I turned away with a brutal laugh. Where were the love and mercy of that omnipotence which suffered two innocent creatures to be plunged into shame and misery? Then he told of the Divine pardon accorded to repentant sinners, and begged me to pray with him for forgiveness while there was yet time.

"I have nothing to pray for," I cried; "least of all for forgiveness. I am innocent."

He showed no surprise. Many another found guilty, may be, had professed innocence in that very cell.

"Which of us can say he is blameless?" he said, gently. "Though you are innocent of this crime, yet surely there are other sins for which you would ask grace before your lips are closed for ever."

A thought of Hebe; of the last meeting in her room; of the suffering I had then inflicted upon her by the brutality into which I had sunk; of the final shock that had struck her down before my eyes in the court; of the lifelong sorrow and shame to which I had doomed her for want of manly courage to cut my way through the meshes of misfortune that had fallen upon me.

"Which of us is blameless?" I asked.

"Good God, not I!" The chaplain spoke on, and I listened patiently. It was not his words I listened to—my thoughts were too busy to take in their sense; it was the tone that appealed to my heart, reviving memories of the past. Something in the clerical accent, may be, called back to my mind that morning when he first brought Hebe to see my carving. I seemed to hear him moralizing upon art and the proper use to be made of those gifts with which Providence endows a chosen few—pointing his homely homily with instances of great men risen from estates lower than mine, while Hebe stood over my work with bent head, in the evening glow, her face catching its tender flush, her dark-fringed eyes fixed wonderingly on the carving. I realised it all—the log workshop that had been my father's, now mine, with its low, latticed windows; the hollyhocks in the garden; the swallows snrilly whistling as they swept in wide circles above the dwelling house; the shavings on the floor, the chips on the bench, the resinous smell of the pine freshly laid up to season on the cross beams overhead, and myself standing against the bench, toying with a chisel, listening to the simple old man, and taking in all he said as a gospel, applying his illustrations to myself, with an eager longing, a feverish impatience to have done with press making, and to be rising through my art to fame; then forgetting him and myself as I glanced at Hebe, whose beauty was a new revelation. Hebe! I saw her again and again. Picture after picture came before me—our first meeting alone, and those that followed. I felt once more that delirium of joy when I knew that she loved me, the exultant pride with which we built high castles in the air, palaces of art in which she was to reign princess, and inspire me with never ending subjects for carvings that could never cease to reflect her beauty and sweetness.

The chaplain paused; the charm was broken. I awoke from the dream of love and happiness and palaces to see the gas with a dim halo burning against the blind-irg wall. All was gone—all, all!—every hope of joy, every memory of hope. Yet as I drew my fingers over my eyes, Hebe's white face came back to my sight, no longer pink with the glow of the summer sun, but white and ghastly—her wide eyes fixed on me in a last look of agony and despair.

Where was she now? Stretched upon her bed, asking what was to become of her, the widow of a man hanged on a gallows? No, no! Her soul ached not for herself, but for me; no self pity flooded those dear eyes with tears. If she wept it was for my lost life. My heart broke down, and tears trickling through my fingers fell upon the stone floor. Then the chaplain seeing me softer, begged me to follow his prayer.

"Yes," said I meekly; "I will pray."

And so I dropped upon my knees, and laying my arms on the bed, buried my face in them to hide the working of my face, and with grief and remorse and pity all tearing at my heart I prayed as well as I could that God would have mercy upon my wife.

Ah! my next visitor was of another sort. Early the next morning in bustled Mr. Beeton, the solicitor; his eyelids up, his tightly closed lips down. Without a word he shook hands with me.

"Bad job, bad job!" said he, presently. "I said so—not to you, of course. N ver does to send a man up for trial with despair in his face; but I told him. The moment I saw the major's attitude I said to him, 'If you don't go out of the country for ten days, my client will go to penal servitude for life. Yet he stayed—d—d old fool!' he muttered under his breath, as he set down his bag. 'And as if,' he added, turning again to me, his brows overlapping with the intensity of his exasperation—'as if not content with showing off his chivalry—that's your word for it—showing off his chivalry for public admiration, he must go and let out what you said to him in the toolhouse, with the construction he put upon it. That was the turning point. Up to then every thing was on our side; it was a moral certainty that we should get you off; conviction on the evidence as it stood was out of the question. He ruined us—dropped us clean into the hands of the enemy with his theatrical reticence and his theatrical display. It was as if he had planned it all out beforehand—as if he had done it all on purpose. Done on purpose!" he repeated musingly, as he regarded the floor, his head on one side, one brow up, the other down.

I was surprised at the solicitor's changed demeanor. Previously he had shown some sort of reserve, even a certain deference, in speaking to me; now all that was thrown off. It seemed to me only too significant. What need was there for the man to observe respect or attempt concealment in the presence of one condemned to end his life in a few days on the gallows?

"As if he had done it on purpose!" he repeated once more, reflectively; then suddenly casting one eye at me he asked, "What relation is he to Miss Hebe Thane?"

"None whatever."

"None!" he said in a tone of surprise. "I thought he was her uncle."

I turned away impatiently without responding. Why had he come here to trouble my last hours, and excite me with a feeling of animosity at a time when I wished only to make peace with all men? Mr Beeton took no notice of me—why should he?—but stood drawing his hand down his long face as he studied the floor, whilst I, taking the Bible from its shelf, seated myself on the plank bed to read.

"Well," said he, suddenly, recovering his brisk, energetic manner, "we mustn't lose time. Never mind about reading just now. You'll not be hanged this time."

"What do you mean?" I gasped.

"Oh, your sentence will be commuted, of course. That's what I've come about. If we don't muddle it you will get off with penal servitude for life; that in ordinary cases means twenty years' imprisonment. That's not insupportable. You will come out at forty, and at that age a man may yet hope for some enjoyment of life. If we do muddle it, you'll get imprisonment for the whole term of your natural life. That is, intolerable, and in my view considerably worse than being hanged at once, for you have nothing to live for—nothing to hope for. You will never lose sight of your prison walls till body and mind are worn out, and you die."

"How can that be avoided?" I asked with breathless anxiety.

"I am about to show you. If we can make the Home Secretary believe, as I think we may, that you were convicted upon the misconception of certain words, uttered thoughtlessly in the excitement of the moment, that those words are open to quite a different construction, and that there was not sufficient motive to lead to the perpetration of such a crime, he will certainly remit your penalty to the utmost."

"Do you think it possible to convince him of that?"

"I do. Thanks to the prosecutor, it was made evident at the trial that your wife was a servant in Mr. Thane's house. Now, no sane man, as one of the papers has pointed out this morning, can believe that a young fellow, bearing the character for honest living and sober ways that your landlady gave you, would commit a murder merely to save his wife from losing her situation."

"But—" He checked me with a motion of his hand.

"I know what you would say: your wife is not a servant. That fact must be concealed. It is perfectly unnecessary to reveal that fact. To forgo this chance of escape will be suicide on your part; and worse than that, for it is not only your life that is at stake, but the welfare of your wife. Now will you second me in this effort?"

"Of course I will."

"In that case you must not see your wife; you must not let her come here to see you."

"Does she wish? has she asked to see me?" I faltered.

"Yes I have tried to persuade her from it, showing her the danger. I have, with difficulty, prevailed upon her to wait until she hears from you before deciding."

I heard this with a mingled thrill of joy and regret—joy in this testimony of her constant love; regret in the conviction that I must not see her. Yet to go away without seeing her once more—without a look or a word of farewell—I could not reconcile myself to that. Mr. Beeton, with his shrewd, experienced eyes, saw well enough what was passing in my mind as I sat there grinding my palms together in the desperate struggle to overcome the longing of my heart.

"Understand fully," said he, "what you expose us to by suffering your wife to come here. You betray the one fact on which the happiness of half a lifetime depends. If it is made known to the Home Secretary what your wife's station is, he will see at once a full and adequate motive for the murder. The loss of situation by a servant is comparatively nothing; the loss of station and her father's love by a young woman of beauty and gentle breeding—"

"Enough," I muttered. "I forbid her to come to me. Tell her so."

"I will," he said, cheerfully. "I'll put your command so strongly that she shall not be overruled by the impulse of her

own heart. You've done what is sensible and right," he repeated going toward the door. "Always supposing," he added, suddenly stopping and turning round, as the warder turned the key—"always supposing that our friend, the major, does not intervene."

## CHAPTER XII.

### "OUR FRIEND THE MAJOR."

In the afternoon a warder told me I was to go with him to the consulting room, where a visitor wished to see me. This room stands alone in a corridor. It is closed on all sides with thick plate glass, impervious to sound, but open to the observation of the warders without. Here the prisoner usually consults with his solicitor; mine preferred the cell, his clients feeling "more at home" there, as he told me, with cynical frankness.

I saw that my visitor was the kind-hearted old vicar, Mr. Bullen. He hastily blew his nose, and put his handkerchief away as I approached; but the signs of emotion were yet in his face when I entered. His eyes were red and wet; his lips trembled as he tried to speak, and failed; he could only stretch out his two hands to me with a look of unutterable sorrow.

The warder went outside, leaving the door open, as is customary when the prisoner is condemned and his visitor a personal friend.

I grasped the hands of my old friend, and we sat down in silence. He looked in my face for a minute, and then I know not what he saw there that overcame him, but he broke down completely, turning away to hide the tears that ran down his cheeks.

The sight of the dear old fellow's grief unmanned me; for sympathy with us in our misfortune is sometimes harder to bear than the misfortune itself. The words I would have spoken choked me; and for a little while we sat there mute, clasping each other's hands tightly, while the reflection occurred to me that this might be the last friendly grip I should ever feel.

"Tell me, Kit," he said, suddenly facing me—"tell me, my boy, that you are innocent."

"By God, I am innocent!" I replied.

"Thank Heaven for that," said he, devoutly. "No one can command sincerity from misfortune, but the knowledge that you are innocent must give you strength to meet it with resignation and bear the bitterest blow with fortitude. It has lightened my heart, and will lighten one still more nearly bound to you than I am."

"I hope it may," I murmured.

"It will, Kit; it will!" he protested, stoutly. "The heart that loves you now must love you ever, and in that love find a constant spring of sweet reflection and solace. But I've not come to play the part of a spiritual comforter, my boy; no doubt the chaplain of this great establishment is a far more able man in that respect than I. I am here to render you practical service if I can. We knew about it last night."

He continued, after a pause. "A neighbor had been to London, and brought us the evening paper with a brief account of the trial. It was the first we had heard of it. As a rule, I avoid that kind of reading. I need not tell you how we felt—how we regretted that you had not sent for me. I might have done something for you, Kit. I could have told them all I knew about you; what an admirable workman you were; how well you conducted yourself in all things; how you stood by your old mother to the last, plodding on in the workshop when you were tempted to go where your genius would obtain better recognition. That must have counted for something, for surely a good son is never a bad man. And all that I had to say in your favor could have been suggested by Miss Thane, who doubtless would have been as willing as I to go into the witness box. For she always took the deepest interest in all that concerned you, though you, of course, knew nothing about it, albeit Mrs. Bullen will have it that some romantic attachment existed between you of which we were kept in ignorance. You know what ladies are, Kit, when they get notions of this kind into their head; there's no disabusing their minds of error. I came up by the first train, and as it was too early to see you, I went to Richmond, hoping to learn something from my dear Hebe about your poor wife."

"Did you see her?" I asked.

"No. The house is shut up; the family gone away. That was a necessity, for I hear that Mr. Thane dismissed all his servants."

This was a relief.

"I knew, my dear fellow, that your wife's welfare must be your chief consideration, and I hoped that Hebe could tell me something about her. Indeed, I thought it might be one of her own maids who she took from—that you had married."

I shook my head.

"You are married Kit?" he asked with some anxiety.

"Yes—unfortunately for my wife."

"Then that settles Mrs. Bullen," said he, with a slight accent of triumph. "The poor soul sticking to her absurd hypothesis contends that you were visiting Hebe that dreadful night, and finds an explanation of your reticence in the fact that you feared to involve her in your misfortune."

I tried to laugh, as if the notion were ridiculous.

"You may assure Mrs. Bullen positively that I was at the Cedars not to visit Miss Thane, but my wife."

"I will put an end to that nonsense," said he decisively, striking the floor with his stick. Then looking at me, his manner changed in an instant to its former tenderness, he exclaimed, in a tone of self-reproach, "God forgive me: this is no time for such trifles! Come Kit, we have to talk about your poor wife. Our first care must be to provide for her, and she shall be provided for, I promise you. There's a home in the Vicarage for her as long as we live, and I shall take care that she does not want after we are gone. You know me, my boy, and you know Mrs. Bullen—the best woman in the world at heart, but susceptible to errors of judgment like any other. With us your wife shall never know want, nor hear a word of reproach against you; for her secret, if she would guard it, shall be sacred in your keeping. She shall be our daughter as truly as if it had pleased Heaven to make you our son."

I can but write his words as I remember them; it is impossible to describe the pathetic tenderness that made them eloquent. I tried to express the gratitude that I felt.

"Not a word of that," he cried, interrupting me as he slid his arm within mine and pressed it to his side—"a word. What

has Providence given me all the good things of life for but to use them to advantage, and how can I more profitably employ them than in providing for the welfare of one who, I doubt not, will love us in return, and be a comfort to us for the rest of our days?"

"God bless you for this kindness," I murmured, overcome by his generosity. "Be sure, sir, that if ever my poor wife is in need of help she will come to you. At present, thank Heaven, she is well cared for and will not suffer want in addition to this blow so long as she is not known for the wife of the convicted criminal. I would tell you more—all indeed, but—"

"I know, I know," he interrupted, giving my arm another affectionate squeeze. "You have told me enough. Your wife's wishes must be considered before anything else. Far be it from me to take her from her friends for the gratification of my desires; and if she knows that at any moment she will find a home and a home—a cheerful home—as bright and happy as we can make it—"

"Oh, she already knows that sir."

"I am glad you told her that, Kit—glad you gave me credit for sympathy and a true affection. Now let us think about yourself. Something must be done to obtain a reprieve—a respite."

"My solicitor is doing everything that is possible in that way."

"Does he give you any hope of succeeding?"

"Yes; he seems confident of obtaining the fullest possible remission of my sentence. I shall be let off with twenty years of penal servitude."

"Why this is comforting news indeed, Kit; it is almost more than I hoped for. You will still be a young man in twenty years."

I buried my face in my hands to stifle the cry of despair that rose from my very heart, as I thought of the twenty years that were gone, and compared them with those that were to come. In a moment all the brightness of the past flashed upon me—the long days of careless happiness, the days of keen delight and buoyant hope; all these lay behind me, lost for ever! Before me was nothing but the impenetrable gloom of blank despair.

"Have you no hope of mercy?" asked the vicar, laying his hand on my shoulder.

"Do you call it mercy to spare the life of such a hopeless wretch as I? That robs me of my last hope. I can only wish that I were dead."

"Is that your wife's hope, Kit?" asked my old friend, gravely. "Think of her, Kit—think that at this very moment she is praying God to spare you to her. Think how her heart is aching with the fear that she may never see your face again."

"Wouldn't it be better so? Degraded below the level of a slave; herded with the vilest of mankind; what shall I be at the end of twenty years?"

"Whatever you choose to make yourself, Kit Wyndham," replied the vicar, with more sternness than I had ever seen him exhibit. "If you give way to evil influences you must become a brute; if you resist them you will be a man—a better, a stronger man, more worthy of a woman's love than you are to-day. Courage, Kit, courage! Be a man, for the sake of your wife. Think of her love; wear it about your heart like a talisman, that will give you strength to overcome the enemy, and bring you out triumphant from the struggle. Think of her counting the days and hours for your release, supporting the weary days, with the confident hope of happiness to come, and, believe me, you will not have the heart to do ill. This weakness will pass away—ay," said he, his voice trembling as the tears dropped through my fingers, "it is past already. You will come out well from this ordeal, and amply compensate that loving wife for all her patient suffering."

"I will be a man," I said to him as we parted.

I was much happier when I went back to my cell. Over and over again I repeated what the good old vicar had said to me. It gave me new life. I saw something now to live for. Hopes shone brightly even through the long vista that lay before me. I was in this better mood the next morning when Mr. Beeton again visited me.

"It's all right," he said, cheerfully; "we've petitioned the Home Secretary, and you'll get your commutation in a few days. It's a moral certainty."

"I am glad of it."

"Haven't seen the major?"

"No."

"Ashamed to show his face. No wonder. Good job if he continues to keep out of the way."

But the major was not ashamed to show his face. I was taken up into the consulting room to meet him just after Mr. Beeton left me. He looked anxious and ill; but there was no sign of shame or regret even on his thin, handsome face.

"We have made a great mistake, Mr. Wyndham," he said, giving me his hand, "and I wish to undo it if it is not too late."

I was silent, not knowing to what mistake he referred.

"You behaved like a man of honor," he continued, taking a seat; "and you must not be strung up like a blackguard felon. We have made mistakes all round. It was a mistake to employ that fellow Beeton—a man, I am told, who is a disgrace to his profession, and whose very name is sufficient to damn the client who employs him. Mrs. Wyndham, of course, knew nothing of him; in her terrible anxiety she naturally sought the first legal help suggested by the sergeant at the police station. The next mistake was to follow his direction at the trial. No good end was ever yet achieved by wrong means."

"What wrong means were employed?" I asked.

"Well, to begin with, the evidence on our side was used to mislead the jury, and certainly succeeded in throwing suspicion of complicity on some one of the servants, with the result that all the poor devils were discharged the next day, and their character seriously damaged. We may look upon it as a trifle; but they don't, it's certain. And the last mistake is to suffer that rascal Beeton to petition the Home Secretary. I heard of that this morning. I have just come from Brighton. That must ruin your chance of escape, as surely as Beeton is a rascal and the Home Secretary is a gentleman. Now, Mr. Wyndham, I wish to undo this mischief, as I tell you, if I can."

"What do you propose?" I asked.

"I propose to go to the Home Secretary myself. I am personally acquainted with him. He is a man of the utmost integrity, I need not tell you, and I am certain that, when

he hears the whole truth, he will exercise his power to the utmost in your favor."

"Is this my wife's wish?" I asked.

"She is too ill—too overwhelmed with trouble to form a decision; she referred me to you, that is why I am here."

"You will reveal all."

"All—to the Home Secretary only. I shall tell him of your clandestine marriage, of your misfortune, and the position of your wife. He will see, then, that you were in some measure justified in the desperate means you took."

"Major," said I, "do you believe that I shot that man?"

His hands were crossed on one knee, and his eyes fixed on the ground as he spoke. He lifted his head and looked me in silence for a moment or two after I had put that question. He looked at me in perplexity, till suddenly a movement at the door drew his attention to the warder standing there. Then a ray of intelligence passed over his face, and gave place to an expression of contempt and disdain as he once more fixed his eyes on me.

"He thought I was pleading innocence by that question from the fear of the gallows. Rising from his chair he came close to me and said, in a low tone—"

"I am sure of it; though for the first time I doubt the manliness of your motive. I shall go to the Home Secretary and tell him what I believe to be the truth, be the consequences what they may."

And without again offering me his hand he left me.

Two days after, the order came for my removal; my sentence being commuted to penal servitude for term of my natural life.

The major had seen the Home Secretary; and I was fettered for life!

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## SURVEY OF GEORGIAN BAY.

### Capt. Boulton Gives a Reporter an Insight Into the Work that Has Been Done.

In 1883, owing to the numerous disasters which were continually taking place in Georgian bay on account of the unknown rocks and shoals which abound, the Dominion Government decided on a complete survey of the coast and accordingly the spring of 1884 saw the arrival of Capt. Boulton, R. N., from England to take charge of the work, at which he has been engaged ever since. Yesterday he passed through the city on his way to Ottawa after the conclusion of his season's operations. Talking to the reporter the captain remarked that he could hardly say very much about his work without a breach of confidence, but what he could he would. Before leaving Owen Sound Capt. Boulton was requested, owing to the illness of Lieut. Gordon, nautical adviser to the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, to test the newly launched revenue cutter H. M. S. Newcastle. This was interesting, owing to the necessity of laying out a mile upon water, a thing which the captain says has never been done in Canada before. The method employed was to measure a mile on shore, to mark it with huge beacons, and then by the use of parallels to transfer it to the water, buoys being dropped at either end. Having reported favorably on the cutter, Capt. Boulton, with his party, composed of five officers and 23 men, sailed from Owen Sound on board the Government steamer Bayfield—a boat, by the way, which gets its name from Admiral Bayfield, Capt. Boulton's predecessor of nearly a quarter of a century ago—for Parry Sound to finish a section which they had not completed during the previous year. They then took up the section between Waubaushene and Parry Sound (including the Christian islands), but were unable

to complete the survey.

This will probably be finished about the middle of next summer. Sufficient, however, was done to show that these waters, which are in reality the head waters of the bay, are splendidly suited for navigation by the largest vessels, the harbors being good and the approaches comparatively free from danger. In the captain's opinion the best solution of the north-western freight question would be the establishment of a port somewhere between Parry Sound and Waubaushene, which would be almost due west from Ottawa, and a direct line of railway to Montreal via Ottawa. A rather curious circumstance of the trip was the fact that two of the party took typhoid fever and one diphtheria. Capt. Boulton attributed this phenomenon to the drinking of too much water while rowing in the shallows off shore, a thing, as the captain waggishly said, rather unusual with sailors. Capt. Boulton left last night for Ottawa, where he will be engaged in plotting and draughting from his summer notes till spring, when, having severed his connection with the Government and accepted a position on the staff of the British Hydrographer, which is being kept open for him, he will go to London, Eng. Though this is Captain Boulton's last season the survey of Georgian bay will probably not be completed for at least two years, as two long stretches along the southern shore of the bay still remain unsurveyed. These are from Christian island to Collingwood and from Cape Rich to Thornbury; but, when these are done, not only will the whole of Georgian bay have been surveyed, but also the north channel of lake Huron as far as St. Mary's river. Capt. Boulton also reports that the Bayfield, instead of being laid up this year as usual, will go out again in November, under command of Capt. McGregor, Capt. Boulton's old sailing master and pilot, to watch the fisheries during the close season.

One the Heart, the Other the Lips.

The tall, slender, graceful women will always want a man to go walking with her, but the women who are twenty pounds too heavy would rather receive him in her drawing room. By sitting up very straight a dumpy woman can still make a good showing, especially if she happens to belong to the short-limbed, long-bodied sort; but when she stands up she loses.

Two young friends of mine—one tall, the other short—were chaffing each other in my presence. Said the dumpy:

"I'm just the stature of the Venus de Medicis. I reach exactly up to a man's heart."

"Bah," cried the tall one. "I'm as tall as the Venus Victrix. I reach up high enough to get to a man's lips."

A steam dynamo is the latest combination noted. In this the steam engine—an upright one—is attached to the dynamo, instead of, as at first, the dynamo being attached to the engine. The floor space required is no larger than if the dynamo had a pulley for belt driving.