

# LOVE REASONS NOT.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### A WRONGED WOMAN'S THREAT.

For some five minutes there was silence, and the two who were to be mortal enemies looked at each other. Leone knew then that all prayers, all pleadings were in vain; that they were worse than useless; but in the heart of the foe there was no relenting, no pity, nothing but scorn and hate. She had poured out the whole of her soul in that supplication for pity; and now she knew that she had humbled herself in vain; the mother's cruel words smote her with a pain like that of a sharp sword. She was silent until the first smart of that pain was over, then she said, gently:

"Why do you say anything so cruel—why do you hate me?"

"Hate you?" replied my lady, "how can you be so mistaken? It is not you I hate, but your class—the class to which you belong—although the word hate is much too strong. I simply hold them in sovereign contempt."

"I cannot help my class," she said, briefly.

"Certainly not; but it is my place to see that my son takes no wife from it. To you, yourself, I can have no dislike; personally I rather like you; you have a pleasant face, and I should take you to be clever. But you have not even one of the qualifications needful—absolutely necessary, for the lady whom my son calls wife."

"Yet he chose me," she said, simply.

"You have a nice face, and my son has fancied it," said the countess contemptuously. "You ought to be grateful to me for separating you from my son now. I am doing for him the kindest thing that any one could do. I know Lord Chandos better than any one else, and I know that he tires of everything in a short time. He would be weary of you by Christmas, and would have loathed the chains he had forged for himself. When he was a child he tired of a new toy in half an hour—his disposition has not changed."

"I cannot believe it," cried Leone. "I will not believe it, great lady as you are. You are wicked to malign your own son."

"I do not malign him," said the countess, indifferently. "Many gentlemen think it quite complimentary to be called changeable. My son has always been known as one of the most variable of men; nothing pleases him long; it is seldom that anything pleases him twice. You think he will always love you; let me ask you why? You have a pretty face, granted; but there is nothing under the sun of which a man tires sooner. You have nothing else; you have no education, no accomplishments, no good birth; I should say no good breeding, no position, rank or influence. If I may speak my mind plainly, I should say that it was a most impertinent presumption for you, a farmer's niece, even to dream of being Lady Chandos—a presumption that should be punished and must be checked. You would, without doubt, make an excellent dairy-maid, even a tolerable housekeeper, but a countess never. The bare idea is intolerable."

She grew more angry as she spoke; for the girl's grace and beauty, the wonderful sweetness of her voice, the passion, the power, the loveliness of her face, began to tell upon her, she could not help owing to herself that she had seen nothing so marvelous as this wonderful girl.

"Then," said Leone, calmly, "I have appealed to you in vain?"

"Quite in vain," replied my lady. "Remember that against you personally I have nothing to say, neither have I any dislike; but if you have common sense, you will see that it is utterly impossible for my son to take the future Countess of Lanswell from a farm house. Now try and act rationally—go away at once, leave my son, and I will see that you have plenty to live upon."

"Whatever may be said of the class from which I spring," cried Leone, "I believe in the sanctity of marriage, and I would scorn to barter my love for anything on earth."

"Yes, that is all very pretty and very highflown," said the countess, with a contemptuous laugh; "but you will find a few thousand pounds a very comfortable matter in a few years' time."

"You said you would rather see your son dead than married to me, Lady Lanswell; I repeat that I would rather die of hunger than touch money of yours. I did not know or believe that on the face of God's earth there was ever a creature so utterly hard, cold and cruel as you."

The light of the setting sun had somewhat faded then, and it moved from the proud figure of the countess to the lovely young face of Leone, but even as the light warmed it, new pride, new energy, new passion seemed to fill it. The prayer and the pleading died—the softened light, the sweet tenderness left it; it was no longer the face of a loving tender-hearted girl, pleading with hot tears that she might not be taken from her husband—it was the face of a tragedy queen, full of fire and passion. She stood, with one hand upraised, like a sibyl inspired.

"I have done, Lady Lanswell," she said; "you tell me that Lord Chandos is free to marry as he will when he is twenty-one."

"If you can find any comfort in that statement, I can verify it," she replied; "but surely you are not mad enough to think that, when my son is of age, he will return to you."

"I am sure of it," said Leone. "I believe in my husband's love, and my husband's constancy, as I believe in Heaven."

"I hope your faith in Heaven will be more useful to you," asserted the countess.

"I have womanly pity enough to warn you not to let your hopes rest on this. I prophesy that Lord Chandos will have utterly forgotten you by next June, and that he does not see you again."

"I will not believe it, Lady Lanswell. You are my superior by birth and fortune, but I would neither exchange mind nor heart with you. You have sordid and mean ideas. My husband will be true, and seek me when the time comes."

My lady laughed. "You are very happy to have such faith in him; I have not half so much in any creature living. You hold that one card in your hand—you seem to think it a winning one; it may or may not be. I tell you one thing frankly; that I have already settled in my own mind who shall be my son's wife, and I seldom fail in a purpose. You are a wicked woman," cried Leone. "I have no fear of you. You may try all that you will. I do not believe that you will take my husband from me. You are a wicked woman, and God will punish you, Lady Lanswell. You have parted husband and wife who loved each other."

"I am not very frightened," laughed my lady. "I consider that I have been a kind of providence to my son. I have saved him from the effect of his own folly. Will you allow me to say now that having exhausted a very disagreeable subject, this interview must be considered closed? If you would like any refreshments my housekeeper will be pleased to—"

But the girl drew back with an imperial gesture of scorn. "I want nothing," she said. "I have a few words to say to you in parting. I will repeat that you are a wicked woman, Lady Lanswell, and that God will punish you for the wicked deed you have done. I say more, whether Heaven punishes you or not I will. You have trampled me under your feet; you have insulted, outraged, tortured me; you have received me with scorn and contempt; you have laughed at my tears; enjoyed my prayers and humiliation. I swear that I will be revenged, even should I lose all on earth to win that revenge. I swear that you shall come and plead to me on your knees, and I will laugh at you. You shall plead to me with tears, and I will remind you how I have pleaded in vain. You have wrong my heart, I will wrong yours. My revenge shall be greater than your cruelty; think, then, how great it will be."

"I repeat that I am not frightened," said the countess, but she shrank from the fire of those splendid eyes.

"I was mad to think I should find a woman's heart in you. When the hour of my revenge comes, my great grief will be that I have a heart of marble to deal with!" cried Leone.

"You cannot have such great affection for your husband, if you speak to his mother in this fashion," said the countess mockingly.

The girl stretched out her white arms with a despairing cry. "Give me back my husband, and I recall my threats."

Then, seeing that mocking smile on that proud face, her arms fell with a low sigh. "I am mad," she said, in a low voice, "to plead to you—quite mad!"

"Most decidedly," said the countess. It appears to me there is more truth in that one observation than in any other you have made this evening. As I am not particularly inclined to the society of mad men or mad women, you will excuse me if I withdraw."

Without another word, my lady touched the bell. To the servant who entered she said: "Will you show this person out as far as the park gates, please?"

And without another look at Leone, she quitted the room.

Leone followed in silence. She did not ever look around the sumptuous home one day she believed to be hers; she went to the great gates which the manservant held open as she passed through. The sun had set, and the gray, sweet gloaming lay over the land. There was a sound of falling water, and Leone made her way to it. It was a cascade that fell from a small but steep rock. The sound of the rippling water was to her like the voice of an old friend, the sight of it like the face of some one whom she loved. She sat down by it, and it sung to her the same sweet old song:

"A ring in pledge he gave her,  
And vows of love we spoke;  
Those vows are all forgotten,  
The ring asunder broke."

It would not be so with her, ah no! If ever the needle was true to the pole, the flowers to the sun, the tides to the moon, the stars to the heavens, Lord Chandos would be true to her.

So she believed, and, despite her sorrow, her heart found rest in the belief.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### LEONE'S PROPHECY.

No words could do justice to the state of mind in which Lord Chandos found himself after that interview at Cawdor. He rushed back to London. Of the three previous days remaining he spent one in hunting up the shrewdest lawyers in town. Each and all laughed at him—there was the law, plain enough, so plain that a child could read and understand it. They smiled at his words, and said, half-contemptuously, they could not have imagined any one so ignorant of the law. They sympathized with him when he spoke of his young wife, but as for help there was none.

The only bright side to it was this, he could remarry her on the day he came of age. Of that there was and could be no doubt, he said, but he was bent on finding some loop-hole, and marrying her at once, if it were really needful for the ceremony to be performed again. It could not be, and there was nothing for it but to resign himself to the inevitable. He did not know that Leone had heard the terrible sentence, and he dreaded having to tell her. He was worn out with sorrow and emotion. In what words was he to tell her that she was not his wife in the eyes of the law, and that if they wished to preserve her character unspotted and unstained she must leave him at once?

He understood his mother's character too well to dare any delay. He was sure that if Leone remain-

ed even one day under his roof, when the time came that he should introduce her to the world as his wife, his mother would bring the fact against her, and so prevent her from even knowing people.

There was no help for it—he must tell her. He wrote a letter telling her he would be at River View for luncheon on the following day; he knew that he must leave that same evening for the continent.

He would have given the world to have been able to renounce the royal favor, of which he had felt so proud, but he could not. To have done so would have been to have deprived him not only of all position, but to have incurred disgrace. To have refused a favor so royally bestowed would have been an act of ingratitude which would have deprived him of court favor for life.

He must go; and when the first pain was over, he said to himself it was, perhaps, the best thing that could have happened. He could not have borne to know that Leone was near him, yet not see or speak to her.

It was all for the best, painful as it was. If for these long months they must be parted, it was better for him to be abroad—he dare not have trusted himself at home. He loved Leone so well that he knew his love would have broken down the barriers which the law had placed between them. He would go to River View, and let it pain him as it would, he would tell her all, he would leave her as happy as was possible under the circumstances. He would stay away until the time was over; then the very day he came of age, he would return and remarry her. He laughed to scorn his mother's prophecy. He prove untrue to his darling! The heavens must fall first. Not for him the mill-wheel story—not for him the broken ring.

How happy they would be, then, when the time had passed and he could introduce Leone as his beloved wife to the whole world. He would try and think of that time without dwelling more than he could help on the wretched present. He went home to River View, but the first glance at Leone's face told him that she knew all.

It was not so much that the beauty had gone from it, that the beautiful eyes were dim with long, passionate weeping, or that the lips trembled as she tried to smile. Her whole face had changed so completely; its tragic intensity, the power of its despair, overmastered him.

Lord Chandos clasped her in his arms, and covered the sad young face with kisses and tears.

"My darling," he said, "you know all; I can see you know all."

The ring of happy music had quite died from her voice—he hardly recognized it.

"Yes," she answered him, "I know all."

"My darling," he cried, "it is not my fault. You will think I ought to have known it; but I swear to Heaven that I never even thought or suspected it. I would rather have been dead than have put you in a false position, Leone—you know that."

She laid her fair arms on his neck, and hid her white face on his breast.

"I am sure of it," she said, gently; "I have never thought of that; I know that you intended to make me your wife."

"So you are my wife, let who will say to the contrary—you are my beloved, revered, honored wife, Leone. Why, my darling, all the strength has left you! Look up, Leone. They have done the worst they can do, and what is it? They have parted us for a few months. When the parting is ended we shall be together for life."

She tightened the clasp of her fair arms around his neck.

"I know; I have faith in you, but it is so hard to bear, Leone. We were so happy, and you were all the world to me. How shall I live through the long months to come? Leone, perhaps you will be angry with me—I have done some thing that perhaps you will not like."

"That would not be possible Leone. I must always like everything you do. Why, my darling, how you tremble! Sit down, there is nothing in all the world to fear."

"No; let me tell you what I have to say with my head here on your breast. You must not be angry with me, Leone. When I had seen Mr. Sewell, I felt that I could not bear it. I went down to Cawdor and saw Lady Lanswell."

He started with surprise. She raised her face to his, longing to see if he were angry, yet half afraid.

"You went to Cawdor to see my mother," he repeated. "My darling, it was a strong measure. What did she say or do?"

"You are not angry with me for it, Leone?" she asked, gently.

"I angry, my darling? No, a thousand times no. I could not be angry with you. Why did you go—for what purpose?"

I went to ask her to have pity on us; not to enforce this cruel sentence; to be pitiful to me because I love you so dearly."

"And her answer?" asked Lord Chandos, eagerly.

"Her answer was everything that was cruel and wicked. Ah, forgive me, Leone, she is your mother, I know, but she has taken in her cruel hands a divine power. She has parted us and I prayed her to be merciful. I told her how dearly we loved each other, but she had no pity—no mercy—no woman's kindness, no sympathy. She was cold, cruel, proud, haughty. She insulted, humiliated and outraged me. She refused to hear one word, and when I left her, I swore to be revenged on her."

The slender form trembled with passion. He drew her even more closely to his breast.

"My darling you need not think of vengeance," he said. "I am grieved that my mother was unkind to you. Had you consulted me, I should most certainly have said do not go. Mind, I am not angry or annoyed, only so far as this, that I would not have you irritated for the world. I must say that I had always felt that if my mother could see you our cause was won. I did not believe that any creature living could resist that face."

She looked up at him with unutterable love.

"Do you really care so much for it, Leone? Have you never seen a face you like as well?"

"No, and never shall see one, my darling; when we are parted it will live in my heart bright and fair until we meet again."

Then the tender arms clung more tightly to him.

"Must we be parted, Leone?" she whispered. "We were married in the sight of Heaven—must we leave each other? Oh, Leone, it cannot be true; no one can say that I am not your wife."

name. And then he told her of the favor conferred upon him, and how he was compelled to accept it or never to hope for court favor again.

She listened with a face that seemed turned to stone. Slowly the tender arms unwound themselves and fell by her side; slowly the beautiful eyes left his and filled with despair. He tried to console her.

"You see, my darling," he said, "that in any case we must have parted. Though this appointment is a mark of royal regard, still it is quite imperative. I could not have refused it without ruin to my future career, and I could not have taken you with me, so that for a time we must have parted."

"I see," she said, gently, but her hands fell, and a shudder that she could not control passed over her.

"Leone," said Lord Chandos, "We have not long to be together, and we have much to arrange. Tell me, first, what you thought of my mother?"

"She is very beautiful, very proud, very haughty, cold and cruel—if not wicked," said the young girl, slowly.

"That is not very flattering," said Lord Chandos.

"I could have loved and worshipped her if she had been kind to me," said Leone; "but she was cruel, and some time or other I shall have my revenge."

He looked gravely at her.

"I do not like to hear that, my darling. How can you be revenged?"

A light came over her face; "I do not know. I have a prophetic insight at times into the future. As I stand here, I know that a time will come when your mother will weep to me as bitterly as I wept to her, and just as much in vain."

"I hope not," he answered. "All will be well for us, Leone. But revenge, my darling, is a horrible word, and does not suit those sweet lips at all. Let me kiss away the sound of it."

He bent his handsome head and kissed her lips with love that seemed stronger than death and true as eternity.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## DANGERS OF BALLOONING.

### A Balloonist Makes a Remarkable Voyage—Lost her Ballast Bag and Shot up Like Lightning.

Ada Mitchell made a balloon ascension from Rutland, Vt., Wednesday. She alighted on Rochester Mountain, twenty-six miles distant, after a remarkable and perilous voyage.

"The wind was blowing almost a gale," Miss Mitchell said, "when I was preparing to start. The balloon pitched considerably, and it was with difficulty that I got fairly off. I had no sooner left the ground than I discovered that two of my bags of ballast, weighing 25 pounds each, had slipped from the basket underneath my feet, so that only one bag remained. The ballast had hardly left the basket when the balloon shot upwards and off to the North with a marvellous speed that increased every moment as I got into the higher air current. This, with the triple ascending force due to the absence of the ballast, gave a maximum speed of a mile a minute."

"As I neared the clouds I took out of my pocket an aerial barometer and found I was 4,000 feet above the sea. I had no sooner entered the clouds than the car began to toss and lunge frightfully in the cross currents. The wind seemed to blow from several directions at once.

COLLIDES WITH A CYCLONE.

"Suddenly I was in the middle of a whirlwind of great violence. The balloon turned first one way and then another. It pitched and swayed until I thought I should lose my hold upon the ring around my waist, or step from the board upon which I was standing. More than this it was terribly cold and a damp chill seemed to creep into my bones, numbing my hands until there was no feeling in them."

I do not know how long I was in the cyclone. It was not more than a few seconds, probably, but it seemed an age. Suddenly again the blast struck the top of the balloon, keeling it over so quickly that I almost lost my hold on the ring. Then it lurched upwards so suddenly that the last bag of ballast was pitched over-board. As the bag left the basket, the balloon with 125 pounds less ballast then it should have had, shot upward with the rapidity of lightning, and in a few seconds I was gliding quietly but rapidly through a clear atmosphere, with the bright sunshine about me. It was still cold, but the air was free from the dampness that prevailed in the clouds, and I began to get warm again and regain my composure."

"As soon as I was out of the clouds I took out my barometer again and found that I was in an altitude of 8,000 feet. I continued to sail steadily for about a minute when I struck a current of air moving in a northerly direction. Immediately the speed increased again. Having passed some distance beyond the section of the clouds through which I had ascended, I began to think of coming down. Accordingly I pulled the rope connected with the escape valve and soon began to descend rapidly, at the same time continuing in a northerly direction with great velocity."

A MOMENT OF FRIGHT.

"On reaching the clouds I again encountered violent cross-currents of air that caused the balloon to pitch and sway frightfully, as before. Seeing that I was again in an aerial storm, I tried to close the escape valve, but it had become jammed in some manner and would not shut. For a moment I was thoroughly frightened. However, I finally succeeded in closing the valve and casting the air anchor in time to stop the flight of the balloon. I landed in the top of a pine tree on one of the most desolate heights of the Green Mountains, thankful to escape alive and never again to tempt fate above the earth."

Parental Solicitude.

Daughter—"But, ma, I don't like him." Mother—"He is an only son, and his father is very rich."

"Well, as to that, his father is a widower, and may marry again."

"True, I did not think of that. Perhaps you'd better marry the father."

## A FOREST FIEND.

### THE BUTCHER-BIRD, OR SHRIKE, KILLS FOR MERE PLEASURE.

It is a Veritable Terror of the Woods, and Hangs its Victims in Trees When It Can not Devour Them—Common in Canada.

No bird native to this country is so little known and surely none has such striking habits of life as the shrike or butcher bird. He is a member of a family comprising some two hundred species, of which only one well-defined sub-family is resident in North America. Bold, daring, handsome, he is at once the braggart and the beau of the woods. At a little distance a Southerner would readily mistake him for the mocking-bird.

His bluish-gray plumage, tail tipped with white and broad black patch across each eye, give him a trim, jaunty air quite pleasing to the eye, but, alas! a dreaded object to smaller and weaker birds. His habitat is Northern North America, and though he breeds in the high ground of New England and New York, he grows more common after the Canadian line is crossed. The shrike is

A BORN TYRANT.

Not content with killing and devouring all insects large enough to attract his fancy, he attacks snakes, moles, mice and small birds whenever opportunity offers. His disposition is as unlovable at home as abroad, for seldom are two or more seen together but they are engaged in an ugly family quarrel. They are truly carnivorous, and except for certain weaknesses of bone and muscle would rank as true birds of prey.

There is one strange, uncanny characteristic, however, which separates this woodland bully from all known birds. Naturalists have watched it, studied it, pondered over it and written long pages of inexplicable explanations of it, and common people have doubted in their superstition or ignorance whether it was the doing of a bird or a demon in bird form. To-day it remains as deep a mystery as it was one hundred years ago.

THIS IS THE PUZZLE.

The butcher-bird in his riotous love of killing slays many more victims than he has any possible use for. He seems to do it for the mere fun of the thing. Instead of leaving the dead, however, he carries them one by one to some thorny hedge or tree and there impales them in all sorts of fantastic positions in the branches. It gives one a start to come out of a piece of woods when gunning and see a thorn-tree laden with a ghastly crop of locusts, toads, sparrows, grass-snakes, lizards and chipmunks.

If the shrike ever returned to feed upon his grim hoard there would be an explanation of his conduct and he would be credited with the epicurean taste of a thoroughbred vulture who likes things "a bit gammy." But such is not the case. The wierd fruit hangs for days upon the limbs, and if hawks or crows do not find and steal it will rot until only a few tiny white skeletons remain to tell of the massacre.

Comparatively few dwellers in the backwoods know this eccentricity of the butcher-bird, and hence arise many curious and apparently well-authenticated stories of trees that catch birds in their branches and of storms that rained down toads and lizards, so that the trees were full of them. Not more than a fortnight ago a leading New York daily had a half column devoted to a mysterious

"RAIN OF SNAKES."

in a village in the northern part of the state. The story, which was well authenticated, stated that two prominent farmers of the place, driving past an orchard after a storm saw an apple tree hanging full of small snakes. Had they been men of less established characters for sobriety their reputations might have suffered seriously after such a reminiscence, but as it was, several other persons afterwards visited the spot and saw for themselves the unusual spectacle.

There were, it seems, at least a hundred young garter-snakes and adders dangling from the ends of the lowest limbs, and on closer examination it was found that each reptile was transfixed by a sharp twig, upon which it had apparently been impaled. No similar case has ever been known in that region, and the only possible explanation was, as the two farmers claimed, that the snakes had been thrown down in the rainstorm. How they were ever carried up in the first place was not explained.

This was but the handiwork of our friend the shrike. It was only good luck, however, which threw the snakes in his way, for he would quite as willingly have decorated the tree with the prettiest song-birds in the woods.

The butcher-bird

IS A BORN THIEF.

as well as a murderer, and often meets his death while hopelessly endeavoring to kill and carry off a tame pet bird from a cage or to rob a hunter's cabin of fresh meat. Any tid-bit he finds he will steal, even if only to suspend it from a locust bough hard by. The Canadian fur traders and trappers despise him heartily, and never lose a chance to kill him. The half-breeds call him "Whiskey Joe," and claim he is half drunk all the time, and hence does these foolish things.

He will spy out the most carefully hidden trap and always manage to purloin the bait without being caught. The wild-country north of the great lakes is a favorite haunt of these butchers, and the Indians who hunt and sell furs to the Hudson Bay Company complain bitterly of the depredations of "Whiskey Joe."

The shrike builds a bulky, somewhat elaborate rest of heavy sticks below, and upon this foundation a warm covering of bark, leaves and grass is laid. It is usually in some low tree, and the eggs, which are somewhat smaller than a pigeon's are decidedly pretty. They are of a grayish green, mottled, specked and scratched with reddish brown. The young nestlings begin their education by wrangling and fighting as soon as hatched, in which amiable diversion their fond parents set them striking and perpetual examples.