Red Heart and Black Arrow

A Tale of the Rolling Wave

CHAPTER XXII.

Not for long was I to revel in the luxury of feeling that treacherous fiend's life ebbing under the pressure of my thumbs. McIntyre's rough grasp fell upon my shoulder, while the two attendant seamen flung themselves upon me and dragged me away. As I was hustled to the companion-stairs Kennard appeared, coming hurriedly from the saloon.

"For God's sake, speak a word to him, General Waldo," appealed McIntyre, "mayhap it will quiet him. The poor young lady has passed away, and it has clean lifted his senses. He has nearly killed the doctor."

But all the "word" I got from Kennard as he brushed by us toward the state-room where Zavertal was picking himself up was the whisper: "Don't be a fool, you will spoil everything!"

Heaven knows, now that the mad delight of choking Zavertal was denied, there was no need to quiet me. They led me back to the cabin on deck half-dazed with grief, and thrust me in, McIntyre showing by hid dejected manner that he sorely repented the rash kindness which had provoked such a scene. He had probably had a taste of his medical officer's quality already, and dreaded the consequences of his having taken me below—too late—for a last word with my dying love.

How long I remained in that stricken state I know not, but as my numbed brain cleared, the brief sentence Kennard had spoken was still ringing in my ears, and to my calmer judgment it began to present vague possibilities of hope. True, I was in the position of one who clutches at straws, but there the straw was, all the same. "Don't be a fool," he had said, "you will spoil everything." Despite his calling, Kennard was a kindly and sympathetic man, and these were hardly the words he would have used to one so bitterly bereaved if he had known that Aline was dead. It would, indeed, have been the height of selfish egotism to describe his eagerly-desired detection of the criminals as "everything," when their crime had robbed him whom he was addressing of more than all. Again, if he had known that she was dead, surely the time would have come for accusation and denouncement, but in place of that he seemed as keen on preserving secrecy as ever.

On the other hand, to discount my vague hope, there was the fact that he could not possibly know that she was not dead. He was coming from the saloon dinner-table, whence his watchfulness must have prompted him to follow Zavertal on the latte's being summoned to his patient; and he could not therefore be sure that some laxity on Mrs. Binkworth's part had not yielded an opening to the enemy in the interval since he last held communication with her. Then, too, there was the doctor's pronouncement that the death was unmistakable, and Mrs. Brinkworth's frantic grief.

So, as soon as the clouds had lifted, they began to lower again, and I longed eagerly for the coming of Kennard, who alone could solve the mystery. Looking at my watch I found that it was close on eleven o'clock, and I wondered that he had not been before. He must have known my need of him, and yet here was the time when the passengers retired of their berths at hand, and he had given no sign. From the sailors who had me in charge I could gather nothing, for they obstinately refused to speak.

It must have been half an hour after the hush on deck had told that the passengers had retired for the night, that the door was gently opened and Kennard stole into the cabin. I had not been trusted with a lamp, lest in madness I should set fire to the ship, but a ray from the electric arc outside falling on his face showed that even his steadfast nerves were strung to highest tension. He came close, and, drawing me up to the light, read the agony I had been enduring in my sunken cheeks and heavy-lidded eyes.

"Bah! and is it as bad as that?" he murmured. "Why, man, you never give a fellow credit for anything. So you really thought—eh?"

"And it is not so!" I cried, almost beside myself with the reaction that I felt was coming.

"You ought to have known that I could not be more explicit then," he replied. "I should not have spoken roughly to you if you had had real cause for grief. I could not get to you before, because for us to be in communication might have given the whole thing away; but if I could have foreseen that good-hearted idiot McIntyre's move, I should have found means to warn you somehow. As it was, I had taken careful steps to prevent your being troubled with bad news til, I had told you the programme. Zavertal and Vizard are closeted together in the latter's cabin below, but it is well to preserve caution to the end. Listen"—and he whispered in my ear half a dozen short, crisp sentences that nearly sent me mad with joy.

"It is to be performed outside here at midnight—an arrangement prompted by gratuitous malice for the purpose of harrowing you and snatching a paltry revenge," he concluded. "And now I must be off to see that there is no hitch. Vizard, of course, will have no reason to be present, but he is nearly sure to make an excuse for being on deck at the time, if only for the pleasure of gloating over you. I am ready for him either way."

He left the cabin as quietly as he entered, and looking at my watch I saw that it wanted ten minutes of midnight. Half the time had elapsed when I heard a whispered conclave outside. Directly it ceased, one of my guards put his head in at the door and said,—

"Begging your pardon, sir, for the mistake that's been made, and for our part in it, but it is Mr. McIntyre's orders that the door is unlocked and you free to leave when it suits. Meantime, me and my mate is to remain—seemingly on guard."

"Right you are, my man," I replied; "least said soonest mended. I'll stay here for the present."

He went out, closing but not locking the door, and I stationed myself so as to command a view of the deck through the window. The night was dead calm, and there was no motion on the ship except the vibration of the engines. At last the silence was broken by the clanging of eight bells for midnight. Hardly had the last stroke died away when the sound of footsteps coming from aft reached me, and peering closer yet I saw McIntyre walking slowly at the head of a little procession, which halted and ranged up at the ship's side opposite my cabin.

There was no doubt about the nature of the ceremony that was to be performed. Immediately behind McIntyre, who led by virtue of his position as acting captain, came four sturdy sailors carrying a coffin, that for obvious reasons was evidently heavily weighted. In its rear followed Zavertal and Mrs. Brinkworth, while after a little interval Vizard strolled up, as if attracted to the scene by chance, and took up a position whence he could see my window as well as the business in hand.

At a motion from McIntyre the sailors put the coffin down close to the side, and drawing back a little, appeared to wait respectfully for McIntryre to commence reading the service. The two men who had been guarding my door also lounged forward a little, the effect of the grouping, which was carried out in the most natural manner, being that both Zavertal and Vizard, though standing apart, had each three or four seamen in their immediate vicinity.

In the ordinary course everything would have been ready for commencement, but McIntrye hesitated, turning over the leaves of his Prayer-book as though he had a difficulty in finding his place. This is not at all an unusual occurrence with a captain called on to read the burial service, but McIntyre was shooting glances in the direction of the companion-stairs. They escaped the notice of the mourners, whose heads were decorously bent; but I, watching every move, saw them quite plainly, and burned with feverish anticipation.

At last a quick flash passed over the Scotchman's face, and he dropped his book with a bang on the coffin-lid. Knowing what was to happen at that signal, I gazed from Vizard to Zavertal and back again, not to lose a fraction of the vengeance which they had thought to wreak on me, but which, after all these tortuous windings, was now to be turned against themselves. The coffin-lid was raised with a jerk, and out sprang young Lord Darranmore, his face aglow with excitement and boyish impudence.

"You've got the wrong one, Doctor, and not dead either," he piped in his shrill boyish treble, pointing at Zavertal, while the sailors edged up closer. "So nice of you to change the turns and give a poor boy a chance. You had better have stuck to the programme, and settled Darranmore on the run from Italy to Alexandria, eh?" And he kept on vociferating till I stepped quietly out of the cabin, when even his exuberance yielded to the coming climax.

At the first sight of the little Earl, Zavertal's broad face had broken out into beads of perspiration; and Vizard, scowling defiance at me, now muttered a startled oath heard by all. The suddenness of the grim jest sprung upon them had, as was intended, caused them to "give themselves away" in the presence of witnesses, but their cup was not yet full. As I advanced to join the group on one side, from the other came the sound of Kennard's natural voice, and all eyes were turned that way to see the American detective, stripped of all disguise, coming from the companion-house with Aline on his arm. At the sight, Zavertal folded his arms and groaned as one who admits that hope is gone.

At the same moment McIntyre touched his cap to me and said, "You are in charge again, sir. Thank God, my part is done."

I merely nodded, for I was watching Vicard narrowly, guessing that he was made of sterner stuff than his fellow-criminal, and now a furtive motion of his hands caused me to act promptly.

"Seize that man." I cried to the sailors behind him, and so well drilled had they been by Kennard and McIntyre in the part they had to play that six brawny arms were round the villain before he could get to his pistol. Simultaneously the other sailors took possession of Zvertal's portly form, and the capture was complete.

At a gesture from Kennard Mrs. Brinkworth joined Aline, and together the two ladies left the deck—glad enough, as they told me afterwards, to be released from the glare of Vizard's burning eye. He made no attempt to struggle with his captors or to utter speech, but his silence, aided by that snake-like glitter, was more terrible than words.

"So," said Kennard, coming in front of him, "my European trip has led to business. I had heard of the Red Heart and Black Arrow—as who of the inner circle of my trade has not?—but I never thought that a six months' holiday was to lead to the breaking of the gang and the arrest of its chief. I have to thank the taint of an old scent, left by your friend Zavertal there, for the lucky chance. You made a false step, Mr. Vizard—to call you by your last known name—when you allied yourself with a gentleman of such a nototious record."

It will be remembered that Vizard had never seen Kennard in his own character, and he had excellent reasons for not suspecting his identity. The stranger's taunt stung him into curiosity. "Who is this fellow?" he ground out between his clenched teeth, shooting a furious glance at his trembling colleaugue.

"It is Kennard; you must have made a mistake," the wretch replied.

"Then I have met my match; we are fairly beaten," was Vizard's comment, murmured in tones that had changed to the quiet chagrin of a beaten man; and when at the same moment I signed to the seamen to take the prisoners to the place that had been prepared for them, he gave no trouble.

I shall always believe that this sudden submission was only a ruse of his subtle brain, working towards some fresh scheme for revenge, liberty, or both; but if so, he was moved by a short-lived hope. The procession had taken only about half a dozen steps, when the wild figure of a man, barefoot, and with nothing on but trousers and shirt, rushed from some lair where he had lain concealed, and stabbed Vizard again and again, all helpless as he was in the grasp of his guards. Kennard, McIntyre, and I, sprang forward and seized the assailant, to find that he was Dicey—the skipper of the Miranda—relapsed into raving delirium.

We handed him over to the men of the watch who crowded round, as quiet as a lamb now that his purpose was gained, and exulting that he had "got square" on the man who had tempted him with fair promises, then shot him, and afterwards abandoned him in the doomed vessel.

"Any one of the wounds would have been fatal," pronounced Kennard, rising from an examination of the great criminal's dead body. "Believe me, I am not spiteful when I express the wish that that miserable tool of his could have permitted me the luxury of seeing him hanged."

(To Be Continued.)

Pains In the Back Hips and Spine.

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When you read such letters as the following from well-known and highly respected people in all parts of the country you need no longer wonderw hy the sale of Dr. Chase's Kidney Liver Pills is so far in advance of any similar remedy. When the people find out the virtue of this great medicine they tell their neighbors about it, and so the good news spreads.

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"We have used Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in our home for the past eight years for various troubles, and have always found them successful." Thus writes Mrs. H. Hevenor, of West Gravenhurst, Ont., and she adds: "At the age of eight years, my little boy was attacked with la grippe, and the trouble developed into St. Vitus' dance, from which he suffered in a severe form. He was under several doctors at different times, but none of them helped him. Then I decided to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and they restored him to perfect health, and there has not since been any return of the trouble. More recently I have used the pills myself for muscular rheumatism, and they were equally successful in effecting a cure. The pills have saved us many a dollar in doctor's bills, and I would like every one who is sick to try them."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cure all troubles due to poor or watery blood, or weak nerves, and that is the reason why they are the most popular medicine in the world, and have a much larger sale than any other remedy. They cure such troubles as rheumatism, sciatica, partial paralysis, St. Vitus' dance, anaemia, indigestion neuralgia, heart troubles, and the ailments common to women, simply because they make new rich, red blood, strengthen the nerves and thus drive disease from the body. You can get the pills from any medicine dealer, or they will be sent post paid at 50c. per box, or six boxes for $2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont. See that the full name "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People," is printed on the wrapper around every box.

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Stunted, weakly children are those whose food does them no good, because they do not digest it properly. Keep the child's digestive organs right and it will grow up strong and healthy, and it will not cause mother much trouble while it is growing up. It is the weak children—the puny children—that wear the mother out caring for them day and night. All this is changed when Baby's Own Tablets are used. They promote digestion, they give sound, natural sleep, they keep baby bright and cheerful. They are good for older children, too, and cure all their minor ailments. It costs only 25 cents to prove the truth of these statements—and you will be thankful afterwards. Mrs. Archibald Sweeny, Carleton, N. S., says: "I have given my little one Baby's Own Tablets, and am more than pleased with the results. I can recommend them to every mother." That's the way all mothers, who have used the Tablets, talk. That's the way you will talk if you will try them when your little ones are ailing. You can get the Tablets from any dealer, or they will be sent by mail at 25c. a box by writing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

A DICKENS GRIEVANCE.

Tom Pinch's Seats Removed From Fountain Court.

Dickens worshippers are lamenting the mysterious disappearance of the seats from Fountain Court, in the Temple, says the London Express.

Always numerous here, they have a real grievance to discuss, for this now violated shrine had hitherto been held sacred to the memory of lovers' meetings and Martin Chuzzlewit.

It is easy to imagine that Ruth Pinch and John Westlock—John so bold and Ruth so shy—may have sat on these identical seats. And what would Tom Pinch, who so loved this fountain refuge, have said to the gratuitous impertinence of their removal?

Some of the most delightful sentiment in all Dickens is associated with this spot. Here it was that John Westlock's secret assignation with Ruth was stumbled upon by ingenuous Tom.

"'What an extraordinary meeting!' said Tom. 'I should never have dreamt of seeing you two together here.'

"'Quite accidental,' John was heard to murmur.

"'Exactly,' cried Tom; 'that's what I mean, you know. If it wasn't accidental there would be nothing remarkable in it.'

"'To be sure,' said John.

"'Such an out-of-the-way place for you to have met in,' pursued Tom, quite delighted. 'Such an unlikely spot!'

And so on, until Ruth managed to get round on the further side of her brother and squeeze him, as much as to say, "Are you going to stop here all day, you dear old blundering Tom?"

"Afterwards came another, and a more fateful meeting.

"Why they came toward the fountain at all was a mystery, for they had no business there. It was not their way. It was quite out of their way. They had no more to do with the fountain, bless you, than they had with—with love, or any out-of-the-way things of that sort.

"However, there they found themselves. And another extraordinary part of the matter was that they seemed to have come there by a silent understanding. Yet when they got there they were a little confused by being there, which was the strangest part of all; because there is nothing naturally confusing in a fountain.

"'What a good old place it was!' John said. With quite an earnest affection for it.

"'A pleasant place, indeed,' said Ruth. 'So shady.'

"Oh, wicked little Ruth! Oh, little Ruth! Why fly that tiny, precious, blessed little foot into the cracked corner of an insensible old flagstone in the pavement, and be so very anxious to adjust it to a nicety?"

BURGLARS' SUPERSTITIONS.

Strange Beliefs of the Professional Thief.

The habit and repute theif, born and bred in the city slums, is always superstitious and cowardly. He believes in the power of witches, omens, and the protecting properties of amulets, talismans, and charms; and when searched at the police-office there is usually found in his pocket, or concealed about his person, bits of coal, rusty horse-shoe nails, lucky stones, and rings. He parts with these articles, on which he relies for safety in the hour of peril, with the greatest reluctance, and stipulates with the turnkey to have them returned either to himself or friends.

The burglar's greatest enemy in his nocturnal wanderings is a dog, whose presence he even dreads more than the policeman or detective. To protect and safeguard himself against canine attacks on his person he carries about with him a sprig of the grey limewort, which, when used as an amulet, is an absolute preventive against the bites of dogs. This plant when used internally is said, on the authority of Bacon, to remove hydrophobia.

There is also a curious superstition common among all classes of the genus law-breaker regarding the power of a candle made from the body of a young woman. The belief is that such a candle not only renders the perpetrators of robberies invisible, but that it throws the victim or victims into a state of deep somnolency. Within the last two years four ignorant Russian peasants murdered a girl and made candles out of her body. Before the murders were executed they confessed that they committed the crime to make themselves invisible while perpetrating a robbery they had planned.

In the Scotch Criminal Code of the eighteenth century there are express penalties against this hideous candle superstition. The thief has implicit reliance in the foreknowledge claimed by gipsies and other people, and he has been known to pay blackmail to professed exponents of the "black art" who threatened him with all manner of perils. A thief who has the misfortune to be arrested two or three times red-handed in company with a chum is set down as "unendly," and is carefully avoided and shunned as if he were suffering from some contagious disease. It is these ostracized thieves in the commonwealth of crime that are utilized by detectives in their explorations.

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