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ll She Be Sacrificed?

TER III.—AN UNWELCOME VISITOR.

eral days after that, I at his re-
wish, visited this strange man. I
nd him to be very intelligent, and
e of talking sensibly on most subjects.
n I doubted that the opinion I had
of him was correct; and yet every
then some words of his would con-
. That wild flash too in his eyes
often observed when he was excit-
ave colour to my suspicion.
e, the more I knew of her, the more
ted me, and the more I suffered.
was hereditary madness in the
might not she also be afflicted some
I think that such a misfortune
reserved for that gentle girl, gave
anxiety. To put an end to this
suspense, I one day asked her if my
ture was a right one.
My father mad! Oh Doctor, what can
you think so?" she asked in astonish-
d her that his own occasional remarks
me to form this belief.
You are wrong, Dr. Aylmer. His words
too true a meaning. It would be
enough if he had been insane, but
—" She stopped, as if afraid she
d too much.
uld not pain her by asking her more;
en she gave me her hand and said
ye, I could not resist pressing it warm-
y own.
ne gate, a man stopped me. "That
e let, isn't it?"
Yes."
For how long, do you know?"
ll I was not certain, which was the
You know the people, don't you?"
Yes; I do."
And their name?"
Certainly; if I know them, I know their
What is their name?"
Knowing who the person was, and dis-
ble manner, I waived answering his
I did not think it right to answer
ions about my acquaintances from
ers in the streets. I therefore passed
y some professional visits, without
g for him to speak again. I saw that
xed angry, as he moved away in the
his direction.
h I returned home I observed the man
He was watching attentively the
e of the house in which my neighbor
s lodged. His hat was very much drawn over
ce, as if he did not wish to be recog-
The next morning when I was pass-
g our gate to go next door, I saw
ning their gate. He marched bold-
the steps before me and knocked. The
t answered the door.
I have come to see your mistress on
ess."
My mistress can see no visitors, and
s in the house."
Indeed. But she will see me. Please to
me to the sitting room?"
I will ask her, sir. What name shall I
?"
h, never mind my name."
I will tell her, sir, if you will wait
Show me to the parlour or drawing
, then, while you go. You can say, if
like, that I am from the house agent."
n said this, I noticed a sinister smile on
face—which was an ill-looking one—that
me think he was uttering an untruth.
med instinctively to distrust him. I
ed him into the house; but he looked
pleased as I entered the room, into which
had been conducted.
"You're a friend, and a privileged one, I
pose?" he asked.
"Whose friend?"
"The young lady's."
"You seem not to have yet ascertained
name," I observed. "If you do come
the house agent, I should have thought
would have known it?"
"I do know the name, sir, and perhaps
rd than you do, though you had the in-
ity to refuse to answer my question
I politely asked you yesterday."
"It is no business of mine," I resumed,
tell my friends' names to any stranger
e road who may choose to ask me."
"You are, I suppose, the doctor who lives
door?"
swered coldly.
e door opened, and Ida came in.
"Oh, is it you, Doctor? I thought it
—" She stopped suddenly, as the
g man standing behind me met her
She turned very pale, and looked on
with an expression of disgust, mingled
fear. I cannot call it any other name;
fear. He was, I perceived, an un
come visitor. He held out his hand to
but she raised to touch it. She
y bowed still more coldly than I had
"I was beginning to fear some of you
gotten," he said, with a hideous smile, "see-
that Doctor here. I hope it is not your
lt?"
never saw such a look of contempt as
gave him which she surveyed him.
emoved around and stared at me, which
ce as a hint that he wished to be relieved
of my presence. Thinking she might
ire to speak openly to him when I was
the room, I proceeded up stairs to see my
tient, who was now progressing favour-
, and was on the fair road toward re-
ery. I did not see Ida again before I
as she was still with her visitor. I ob-
ed the following day that she looked
ery and harassed.
"You have been sitting up too late," I
d, taking her hand.
"No, indeed, Doctor. But it is true I
e not slept at all since yesterday morn-
"Mrs. Thompson does not require such
e watching now," I continued. "You
uld have gone to rest as usual."
"So I did; but my thoughts kept me
ake."
"Then you must try and not think to-
ght; that's your Doctor's command re-
member, and you must obey it."
She tried to smile, but with very poor
cess, and the tears came to her eyes in-
ly. How I longed to be able to comfort
"I am afraid," I said, "that your visitor
yesterday caused you annoyance."
"Don't speak of him; he is one of the
ful causes of our unhappiness. If—
ts are of no use."

I told her that he had asked me the day before what their name was, and that I had refused to say. I inquired if her father knew he had called; she replied that he did. After a few minutes' conversation, I proceeded to the housekeeper's room. She was so very much better, that I told her she might get up—which she much wished to do but that she was not to go farther than the next room as she must avoid the slightest cold for some time to come. When I left Mrs. Thompson, Ida asked me if I would go up to her father, as he had expressed a desire to see me. Before going to him, however, she made me promise not to say anything about the gentleman I had seen, as Mr Colebrooke did not like him.

I found him looking more thoughtful and melancholy than usual. I told him so.

"Yes," he assented. "Continual anxiety is no preserver of health or spirits."

"But you should keep your mind calm, and not let your anxiety overcome you."

"Ah, Doctor, what's done cannot be undone. Sin leads to sorrow, and it may now lead to a worse one than has yet been. The innocent may suffer for the guilty."

I did not understand him; but I was sure his words had an ominous meaning.

Ida looked at him, and then gave a slight involuntary shiver. He noticed it.

"Ida, my child, you love me, don't you?"

"Dear papa, you know it."

"You would do a great deal for me?"

"Try me," she said, quietly and firmly.

"Even sacrifice yourself, my treasure?"

"Yes, I would even sacrifice myself."

"Rather than see me die of my own choice?"

"Yes, yes; a thousand times." She spoke emphatically, but with agitation.

"God grant," I observed, "that there will never be any need for such a sacrifice."

"There may be, though," said Colebrooke in a serious tone. "Dr. Aylmer, I repeat, strange though it may sound, there may be, and soon."

I glanced at Ida, quite unable to comprehend this singular speech; but she looked away, apparently shunning my gaze.

"Ida," continued her father, "your assertion, then, is deliberate and unalterable?"

"Nothing can change it, papa."

He smiled, and a gleam of hope, such as I had never seen on it before, lighted up his face. He kissed her tenderly. There was no doubt he was dotingly fond of his daughter, and at this no one could wonder. Who *could* help being fond of such a treasure?

"You hear her," he said proudly; "and it is true. I know she would do anything for me."

"But I do not understand what you mean," I said. "In the, I hope, improbable event happening of your life depending on your daughter sacrificing hers, would you not willingly yield yours, rather than accept such an alternative?"

"Her life!" exclaimed he. "No; you don't understand me. I mean her happiness, her free wishes—not her death. God forbid!"

"That is another matter, Mr. Colebrooke. But you would not let her do even that, would you?"

He made no answer. But I observed that a struggle was going on in his mind, the contentions of self-interest and self-love on the one hand, and affection for his child on the other. Such a battle may soon have to be decided. Which force will be victorious?

CHAPTER IV.—COLEBROOKE'S SECRET REVEALED.

On the following Monday I went to pay some long promised visits in London, and did not return for a week. My first call on my arrival was to our neighbors. Mrs. Thompson was now well enough to resume her usual duties, and the temporary servant had been sent away. Ida looked careworn and weary. How I wished I could mitigate her unhappiness! She, so young and interesting, to be rendered miserable through no fault of her own.

"Dear Miss Colebrooke," I said, taking her hand gently, "I know you have been fretting. You are in trouble. Are you sure I cannot help you?"

"You are very kind to offer to help," she replied, smiling sadly; "but no one, I am sorry to say, no one can help me."

"Is it so bad as that? Is it a new trouble?"

"A new trouble that will soon come" she replied, in a tone so despairing, that my heart ached to hear her.

"I wish I could take it away," I said earnestly.

She raised her eyes to mine for a moment, and then a deep blush came over her sweet face. My look had expressed more than my words had.

"Dear Ida," I continued, "if I cannot relieve your sorrow, at least let me share it;" and then I told her all my love. As I spoke, a gleam of joy shone for a moment in her face. It seemed as if the return of happiness was not so very distant. The instant after, it was gone; but not before it had told me what I longed to know.

"Dear Dr. Aylmer, you do not know. What you ask may not be. It can never be. I—I am engaged to be married to—to——"

If I had touched a powerful electric battery, the shock her words gave me could not have been greater. I had not thought of her having any lover, and I felt sure she cared for me. Presently, I asked her if she loved the man to whom she was engaged.

"I must try hard," she replied, "to do so—if I do not now. We must all do hard things sometimes."

"Not like him!" I exclaimed. "And yet you are engaged to marry him."

"Do not judge me harshly," she said almost pleadingly. "You do not understand what compels me to——"

"To sacrifice your life," I concluded. "Ah, I knew now what your father meant when he asked you the other day what you would do for him. But in what way your marrying against your own wishes can benefit him, I am unable to understand."

"Shall I tell you?"

"Yes."

"It might save his life."

"Save his life?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"Well, it is right you should have the reason. He has several times said he would not mind *your* knowing. I trust to your friendship for me not to divulge a terrible secret. Do not stop me. I would rather tell you now. My poor father had the dreadful misfortune to deprive a fellow-creature of his life. You have heard of what is termed the Hickards murder?"

I nodded affirmatively.

"The only witness to the act was Mr. Purse—Hickards' fellow-partner—the man you saw here some days since, and who at one time was an acquaintance of ours in London. With a view to turning the miserable business to his own advantage, he has sworn to my father that he will aid him in quitting the country, even at his own risk, *if I consent to marry him*. If I do *not* consent, then he will give my father into custody and positively swear he saw him *murder* the man! I have, of course, no alternative, and the wedding is fixed for next Monday."

This was a Thursday.

"Next Monday?" I cried in a tone of pain. "Oh Ida, your father cannot allow this."

"Don't blame him. He has not urged me in the least. I have told him that I *will* do it. I am quite determined. Why, I should be my own father's murderer, if I refused this man."

"As it is," I said, "you will murder your own peace, and mine."

"In spite of what I have told you, Doctor, would you still choose to marry me, the daughter of——"

"What does it signify to me whose daughter you are, as long as you are my own darling Ida?" I said this in a voice of passionate tenderness. I do not remember now all that passed. I know I entreated her to reconsider her decision. I used every argument to persuade her. I promised to aid her father to escape. But all was of no avail. She wept bitterly; but she remained firm.

To escape would be a matter of great difficulty. Mr. Purse had taken lodgings in the house right opposite, and watched all their movements. He had threatened that if Ida did not meet him at the church at half past ten on Monday, he would go directly to the police station and have her father arrested. At one time, they had tried to leave the country, and had even taken passages in a steamer on the point of departure from Liverpool to Montreal; but just as they were going on board, they had observed Mr. Purse, though, as it turned out, he had not noticed them. And as he was coming to the ship to see some friends off, they had hastily returned to land before he had, as they believed, discovered their presence. They had then thought it better to conceal themselves in the country for a time until vigilant search should have abated. They were now living by means of money to the amount of about a thousand pounds, the profits of some articles of value which they had sold. They had not placed this sum in the bank, as if they had, there would have been danger of their whereabouts becoming known.

But how had Purse discovered their hiding place? It was quite by chance. The house in which they now lived had, as already stated, stood long empty, and the proprietor was desirous to dispose of it. With this view he wrote to his solicitor in London to put the property in the market; and the solicitor, it so chanced, employed for this work the very firm of property agents with which Mr. Purse was connected. It was not, however, Purse who first went to Spanners to look at the property, but another representative of the firm; and he, calling at the house to ask about the property, spoke with the housekeeper Mrs. Thompson, whom, however, he had not before seen; but he was not allowed into the house. On his return, in reporting to Mr. Purse regarding the property, he commented upon the fact of his not having been admitted into the house; which awakened the curiosity of Purse, who put some questions as to the housekeeper's appearance, and such like. The result of these inquiries was that Mr. Purse's suspicions were aroused, and he himself set off at once for Spanners. But Mrs. Thompson by this time being ill, he failed to see her as he had hoped. He made inquiries, however, as to the occupants of the house in question, and learned that a young lady named Colebrooke, with her servant, had taken it; that she called nowhere, went out but seldom, and had excited curiosity. He resolved to watch the house, and for this purpose engaged lodgings opposite. Was Mr. Colebrooke with them or not? This he could not ascertain, and he forbore to ask any one. One day, however, he espied Ida as she bade me good-bye at the door; and when I came to the gate, as already narrated, he stopped me, doubtless hoping to ascertain whether the gentleman lived in the house.

And what was the cause that led to the dreadful crime? It was the old story of human anger uncontrolled. Mr. Colebrooke—whose real name was Wayne, but who had assumed a false name for obvious reasons—had been made the dupe of a wicked schemer of the name of Hickards, by whom he had been induced to part with his money to purchase shares in a lead mine speculation. The mines proved to be myths; but the gold he had collected from Mr. Colebrooke and others who had trusted him, went to enrich Mr. Hickards, who, as already stated, was Purse's partner. An action was instituted against Hickards; but the fraud, though few doubted it, could not be established against him with evidence sufficient for conviction. Hickards had carried out the swindle too ingeniously and rendered detection impossible. He was acquitted; and Mr. Colebrooke, a ruined man, unable to obtain redress, happened to be in town one day on some business, when he had occasion to call at his enemy's office. Mr. Hickards was in; and unfortunately some almost unavoidable references to what had already taken place between them, so enraged the two men, that open violence was the result. Hickards had lifted a knife that lay on the table; but this Mr. Colebrooke wrested from him, and in the affray that ensued, the weapon pierced the breast of the wretched swindler. He died instantly. His partner, Mr. Purse, who at that moment entered from an adjoining room, rushed forward to seize Mr. Colebrooke; but the latter managed to elude him, and made his escape.

Mr. Purse, dreading lest suspicion might perhaps be directed against himself, reported to the police that Mr. Colebrooke had done the deed. A warrant for his apprehension was obtained; but Mr. Colebrooke had fled, disguised, with his daughter and the housekeeper, and as yet had baffled discovery. The all-important fact remains to be told that Purse, who had formerly been a trusted acquaintance of the man he afterwards, with his partner, helped to ruin, was a rejected lover of Ida; his affection for her being the redeeming point in his character. He determined, as soon as he discovered their hiding place, to make use of his power, and by promising to aid Colebrooke in escaping from the country, induce Ida to marry him. How he succeeded in getting her consent, has already been told.

CHAPTER V.—AT THE ALTAR.

The next day I called on Mr. Colebrooke. I told him that I had proposed to his daughter, and that the reason she had refused me was because she had promised to marry Mr. Purse to save her father being arrested on a charge of murder.

"You love Ida!" he exclaimed. "You have offered her marriage; and she has never told me. I thought there was no one that she particularly cared for. It will make it the worse for her, my poor, poor child!"

"And you, sir, have consented to sacrifice her?"

"Doctor, has she told you the dreadful reason?"

"She has. I grieve extremely for her, for you both; but if you promise to free her from this man, I will help you to escape——"

"Oh, impossible, impossible!" he interrupted. "That man"—and his face became clouded with a look of fierce hate—"is lynx-eyed. Till Monday, he has told me, he shall watch night and day from his window opposite, and take care I shall not escape him. He will do it—I know him—though he passes the whole time without sleep."

"But you can come over your back-garden palings," I persisted. "You can pass out through my gate at night. He will think you are me, and that your daughter is my Aunt. Oh, I am sure we can manage it."

"Ah, Doctor, there will be no such good luck. If he did not discover the trick at the time, it would not be long before he did so. He would telegraph to every station, and I should be a hunted man again. Don't you know a price of three hundred pounds is on my head?"

I did all I could to prevail on him to listen to my schemes; but he was obstinate. I became angry with him at last, and told him I did not believe he really loved Ida, as he would not even make a final effort to save her.

He looked at me. Ha not love his only child! What was I thinking? Did I not know what misery it was to him to give her up? She had insisted on it. To lose her father would be a double sorrow to her. She has said so, and he believes her. He knew she would rather a hundred times marry that scoundrel than let her father suffer death.

I told him how terribly the dread of her coming fate was distressing her. She would never know happiness again. The misery would only end with her life. I felt a great deal more. I told him bluntly that I believed he loved himself more than he did his daughter. I expected him to be angry with me; I thought he would have been offended at my rudeness. But no; he remarked that he only compressed his lips tightly, and in his eyes I saw a set purpose, a wild determination. What it was, good or evil, I knew soon.

"Then you won't let me assist you?" I said on leaving. "You will allow Miss Colebrooke to suffer still more for your sin?"

"Go!" he uttered hoarsely. "Leave me! I have nothing more to say."

I left, feeling disgusted with him. In my deep sorrow and despair, I could find no excuse and feel no pity for his own great grief at having to accept the offered sacrifice.

Monday came, only too soon. It was a beautiful day; but its sunshine seemed to mock me. Ida, my beautiful, noble Ida, how I felt for her; how I felt for myself. Oh, why must she, so true and good, suffer for another's crime? Why should she be the innocent victim to save a guilty life? To see her again for the last time, to look once more on her before she was lost to me forever, came to me as an irresistible desire. I would go to the church. She should not see me. I would sit in the gallery, and school myself to bear the sight. I must steel my aching heart to submit patiently and suffer silently. I would go, even though I knew the scene would only increase my pain. I should watch her until she was indissolubly united to the man she abhorred; and then—ah, then.

At ten o'clock I went to the church. It was not very full, as the coming marriage had not been made knew. I seated myself in a quiet corner where I could see all, without being seen. Purse came in smiling complacently, and soon after Ida entered with Mrs. Thompson. The former was dressed in black—fit emblem of her mourning soul. She was deadly pale and trembled visibly; but she kept up bravely, though I knew the ordeal she was undergoing was worse than death. The clergyman was punctual to the minute, and the service began. Mr. Purse was asked the first question in the marriage service, and answered clearly and loudly. The same question was then put to Ida. Her answer seemed to die on her lips. She just managed to whisper it. I thought she would have fainted; but she had work to do—it was begun, it must be completed.

"Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?" inquired the reverend gentleman.

Mrs. Thompson came forward and replied. The clergyman handed the ring to the bridegroom; but at the same moment there was a bustle in the church—a murmur of voices—and in another second Mr. Colebrooke rushed hurriedly and breathlessly to the altar.

"Stop!" he cried. "I forbid this marriage. She *shall* not marry him."

The clergyman stared at him in blank amazement. Mr. Colebrooke's objection was demanded.

"I declare," he replied with deliberate distinctness, "that this is my daughter. My daughter only consented to marry that man to save my life. I give myself up to justice. My daughter wished to save me; I am here to save her."

"Is this statement correct?" asked the clergyman of Ida.

She did not speak; she only hid her face in her hands in an agony of emotion. Her father took her gently by the hand and led her into the vestry, followed by Mrs. Thompson and the clergyman. I joined them there. Colebrooke seemed pleased to see me.

"I have done it," he said; "I am not such an unfeeling parent as you thought me. I shall die, and you and my child will be happy when I'm gone."

"O father, father," she sobbed despairingly. "Don't, don't speak so."

There were tears of pity in the minister's eyes; my own were moist. Such a scene as that would affect the hardest nature. Two policemen, who had been sent for by Purse, now entered the vestry to arrest Colebrooke. Ida clung to him convulsively. He tried to soothe her, and kissed her with passionate affection. I knew now how I had wronged the man. His devotion to his child had conquered his fear of death. I felt an admiration for him. The sense of right had gained the day.

"Come and see me in prison, my darling," he said, as he was being led off, accompanied by Purse; "and you too," he added, turning to me.

I promised willingly. The next minute he was gone, leaving Ida in speechless grief. I ordered a cab for her, and took her home. My dear aunt stayed with her the whole day, a ministering angel of comfort.

Two months passed away, and the trial took place. At one time the evidence seemed conclusive of the guilt of Mr. Colebrooke—that the deed was intentional and designed, not the result of a momentary passion, or accident. His known enmity to the dead man was certainly a strong fact against him; while the evidence of the man Purse seemed to make the links of circumstantial proof complete and deadly. But when Ida was placed in the witness box, and told the story of Purse's villainy, a change came over the jury; more especially when the prisoner's counsel pointed out how Purse had used his knowledge to force the daughter and father into a compact as distasteful to them as it was, on Purse's part, opposed to the laws of the country. Purse had indeed been guilty of an enormous, for personal and selfish ends, to compound a felony, and this was itself a crime. The speech was successful. The jury returned a verdict that the prisoner had not been guilty of murder; and no alternative charge of manslaughter having been made—the prosecutor having relied upon Purse's evidence as sufficient to prove the capital charge—the prisoner was thereupon acquitted.

Purse must, soon thereafter have left the district, as we never saw or heard of him again.

But Mr Colebrooke did not long survive the shock which he had sustained, and in a few weeks we stood by the bed where he lay dying. He took his daughter's hand.

"I give my child to you," he said, as he placed it in mine. "She is the only legacy I have to leave, but you will have a priceless treasure in her. I am certain she will prove to you as true and affectionate a wife, as she has been a true and affectionate daughter to me."

For many weeks after that, Ida was very ill. We thought we should have lost her also, but God mercifully spared her to me. I left Spanners, and came to London, where I have since obtained a considerable practice, and where we were quietly married.

My darling is looking over me now, as I write, and I kiss the white hand that rests on my shoulder.

Ah, who in the world has a wife more fondly loving, more dearly beloved?

[THE END.]

WORTH LAUGHING AT.

Current fun—Going through the rapids.

He jests at scars who never umpired a ball game.

A girl may have plenty of bustle and still be very lazy.

Nonsense—The opinion of the fellow that doesn't agree with you. Reason—Your own opinion.

It is not the anonymous writer's name that interested parties want: It is the scalp.

A new book, "Hints to Poets," is just out. It will be followed by a sequel, "There's the Door," for use in editorial rooms.

"What do you suppose I'll look like when I get out of this?" snapped a young lady at a conductor of an overcrowded street car. "A good deal like crushed sugar, Miss," said the bell ringer. And the young lady hung on to the strap and rode four miles further, with the smile of an angel.

A Versatile Genius.—Maud—"Mr. Allround is a sort of universal genius; isn't he?" Mabel—"Yes; he is exceedingly clever." Maud—"He is something of a lawyer and something of a musician. What is his profession?" Mabel—"Well, the lawyers call him a musician and the musicians call him a lawyer."

"You must do a lot of fishing nowadays," said a friend to an impecunious acquaintance, with a fishing basket slung over his shoulder. "Well, you see, it's just this way. My clothes are getting kind of seedy-looking, and when I pack this basket around folks think I've put on my old clothes to go fishing."

One of the most trying times in a young lady's life is when in church she feels a great big overgrown sneeze coming on, and she starts out on a voyage of discovery to find the pocket of her dress to get her handkerchief. The female pocket used to be in a gettatable place, but now it is wherever the architect's fancy makes it.

An exchange says that "a book entitled becoming popular among our golden youth. Is a volume of convenient size and of neat but humble binding, which contains instead of letters and poetry, a flask of whisky." By close application to such a book a youth will become a well-read man, about the more

A California man tried to run away from his wife and boarded a sailing vessel for Honolulu. His wife went by steamer, got there first, met him when he landed and escorted the unhappy man back home. At first her conduct was attributed to her strong love for her husband, but it was afterward ascertained that he had concealed her false teeth before he left.

A gentleman drove up to the door of a backwoodsman and inquired the distance to the next town. "Wal," said the Hoosier, as he bit a quarter section off a plug of tobacco, "I guess it's nigh onter three mile." "Are there any Knights of Pythias in the town?" "I don't know, stranger; but I guess they is. Least ways our onlokens is gittin' sore cer every night."