

REGINA FAIRFIELD;

OR

A TERRIBLE EXPIATION.

CHAPTER III.
"The Fair One with Golden Locks" was the title of a beautiful fairy tale of an enchanted princess, of which my sister Regina used to be very fond; and in gay reference to her penchant for this, and in compliment to her high style of blond beauty, we gave her this sobriquet. We also called her "Queen Blanchette," in flattery of her regal grace, and her exceeding, her wonderful, fairness. She was, in fact, the very fairest living thing I ever saw. You have seen the wreck! amazing, beautiful, even in ruins, but that thing bears no more resemblance to my resplendent Regina than does charred skeleton of the lightning-blasted tree to the green and stately mountain pine—heaven receive her! To return.

I had not seen my sister, Regina, for two years, during which time she had been absent at a "finishing school." I was, therefore, curious as anxious to meet her now, that she had returned home permanently. I wished to see what these two years from sixteen to eighteen, spent at the finishing school, had done for her, who, batine pride, already embodied my idea of womanly perfection.

We reached our journey's end.

It was late in lovely, March day, that we arrived at Willow Hill. We had changed our travelling dresses for drawing-room costume at the little town of A—, two miles distant, while waiting for a carriage that was to meet us there.

Therefore, upon our arrival, we were ushered at once into my sister's presence, who was already expecting us. Much as I was prepared for improvement, I confess I was surprised, delighted, and somewhat flushed, at the sight of the elegant woman awaiting our approach.

She sat erect, but at ease, in a high-backed armchair, covered with purple velvet, whose dark rich background threw out her beautiful and graceful form in fine relief. She was arrayed in rich white satin, whose glossy and ample folds, descending to her feet, merely permitted the tip of one tiny embroidered slipper to be visible. Her arms and neck fairer than the satin itself, were bare, except for being delicately shaded by falls of the richest, and finest lace, and encircled by pearl bracelets and necklace. Her hair, her "golden locks," were rolled off from her temples in rich and heavy folds in Pompadour, and bound back by Oriental pearls, exposing a brow of frosty fairness and sovereign pride. There was a coldness in this statuque dignity of my sister, that prevented me from meeting her with any demonstration of fraternal love or joy. I think not her then as I should have met her then if I had not have met any other friend, and, presenting my college friend, named—

"Mr. Wallraven, of Virginia."

Regina slightly inclined her graceful head, in acknowledgement of Wallraven's profound, and deferential bow, and raising her eyes with a quick and quickly-withdrawn glance, held out her hand to welcome him to Willow Hill, saying, quite graciously:

"I know the Wallravens of Hickory Hall, by reputations—"

Here Wolfgang gave a violent start, reeled as under an unexpected and overwhelming blow, "made a mighty effort" and recovered his self-command, all in a passage of a few seconds, while I looked inquiringly at Regina, and she, with calm surprise, regarded him.

"Will you be seated, Mr. Wallraven, and you Fordinand?" she said. "We sat down, and Regina, possibly to fill an awkward pause, in the conversation, observed:

"Yes—I know the Wallravens of Hickory Hall, by history and report. Wolfgang Wallraven—your American ancestor and namesake, sir—I heard my father say was a Lutheran refugee who came to Virginia in the company of his intimate friend, our master, Lord B—, and who, as long as his lordship remained governor of Virginia, retained a place in his council. I hope, sir, that we may become better known to each other."

On concluding these gracious words, my princess raised her eyes to those of Wallraven; but they swiftly fell again, while the faintest color dawed on her fair cheek. Wallraven had bowed, and bowed, at the close of every condescending sentence; but now, when common civility required him to say something he was dumb. I came to his relief.

"Miss Fairfield," said I, "is quite an affair to the early history, antiquities, and traditions of the Old Dominion, for which she had a great veneration. She is rich in legends, and though born in Alabama, evidently considers Virginia her mother country, and infinitely prefers it to her native soil."

"For many excellent reasons, without a doubt," said Wallraven, with a bow toward my fair queen, who, with her snowy eyelids drooped till her long, golden lashes rested on her delicately-roseate cheek, remained silent. Now I came to her rescue.

"Regina, like the conservative people of the Old Dominion—the prevalence of old English feeling and family pride, which neither England herself has outlived, but that still survives in her eldest daughter, Virginia, the child that most resembles her. It is a prejudice—an anti-republican thing, contrary to the spirit of the nineteenth century. You are lagging behind the age, Regina, but you will get over this."

A cold smile chilled the fair face of my sister, who deigned no other reply.

"This is not so, lady, my friend exaggerates: these are not your sentiments," said Wallraven in his deep, rich tones, and with a manner which was strangely blended de

precision and dignity.

"She quietly raised those golden

eyelashes, to drop them again,

as she replied:

"'Only the right of knowledge, a fatal gift of insight into the hearts of others, and a dangerous habit of reading aloud what I find written theron,' he replied with mournful sarcasm.

I looked at him from head to foot. He was sitting in an easy-chair, with his hands joined on his knees, his brigand-looking head bent forward, his piercing eyes fixed on the door, and his veil of jet-black hair falling forward, and shading his darkening countenance. There was so much bitter sorrow in his attitude, expression, and tone, that my judge, expression, and tone, that my displeasure fled.

"'Wolfgang!' said I, "what is it that makes me love you so? You say the most exasperating things to me, and then disarm my wrath by a look, a tone?"

"What is it, perhaps, that you feel am your friend? Fairchild, my dear fellow, put me in no future plans of your own. The greatest injury I could do myself, the greatest benefit I could confer upon you," is to tell you this. Leave me. Good-night!"

We met next morning early. Like most houses in this neighborhood, ours had long plazas, upstairs and down, running around three sides of the house, with the front room always all opening up hinged upon them. Therefore, as I opened my chamber door and stepped out upon the plaza, I saw that Wallraven had come out of his room, and was pronouncing these. He turned, smiling, to meet me, took my arm, and said something complimentary of the "beautiful country," now in full spring bloom, though the month was March. After promenading there for some time, enjoying the pure morning air, and the extensive prospect, we went below and entered the morning-room. It was a long, handsomely-furnished apartment.

Regina was standing at the upper end of the room, attended by two maid-servants, to whom she was giving some directions, and who, as we entered, left her, and passed out by a side door.

Regina came to meet us. She was a pure white morning-blossom of very transparent light tissue, with skin made very pale, whose slender folds floated gracefully with every movement of her queenly form. Her golden hair was rolled back from her snowy forehead, and the evening before, only in view of the jeweled bandouliere, it was bound by a narrow white ribbon, she held in her hand a few white lilies, whose perfume filled the air. If I find a word to express the union of the loftiest hauteur with the most perfect purity and the most aerial delicacy, I would use that word to describe Regina, as, wafting fragrance with every motion, she floated on to meet us.

"I confess I prefer the ancestral pride of Virginia plainer to the 'purple velvet,' whose dark rich background threw out her beautiful and graceful form in fine relief. She was arrayed in rich white satin, whose glossy and ample folds, descending to her feet, merely permitted the tip of one tiny embroidered slipper to be visible. Her arms and neck fairer than the satin itself, were bare, except for being delicately shaded by falls of the richest, and finest lace, and encircled by pearl bracelets and necklace. Her hair, her "golden locks," were rolled off from her temples in rich and heavy folds in Pompadour, and bound back by Oriental pearls, exposing a brow of frosty fairness and sovereign pride. There was a coldness in this statuque dignity of my sister, that prevented me from meeting her with any demonstration of fraternal love or joy. I think not her then as I should have met her then if I had not have met any other friend, and, presenting my college friend, named—

"Mr. Wallraven, of Virginia."

Regina slightly inclined her graceful head, in acknowledgement of Wallraven's profound, and deferential bow, and raising her eyes with a quick and quickly-withdrawn glance, held out her hand to welcome him to Willow Hill, saying, quite graciously:

"I know the Wallravens of Hickory Hall, by reputations—"

Here Wolfgang gave a violent start, reeled as under an unexpected and overwhelming blow, "made a mighty effort" and recovered his self-command, all in a passage of a few seconds, while I looked inquiringly at Regina, and she, with calm surprise, regarded him.

"Will you be seated, Mr. Wallraven, and you Fordinand?" she said.

"We sat down, and Regina, possibly to fill an awkward pause, in the conversation, observed:

"Yes—I know the Wallravens of Hickory Hall, by history and report. Wolfgang Wallraven—your American ancestor and namesake, sir—I heard my father say was a Lutheran refugee who came to Virginia in the company of his intimate friend, our master, Lord B—, and who, as long as his lordship remained governor of Virginia, retained a place in his council. I hope, sir, that we may become better known to each other."

On concluding these gracious words, my princess raised her eyes to those of Wallraven; but they swiftly fell again, while the faintest color dawed on her fair cheek. Wallraven had bowed, and bowed, at the close of every condescending sentence; but now, when common civility required him to say something he was dumb. I came to his relief.

"Miss Fairfield," said I, "is quite an affair to the early history, antiquities, and traditions of the Old Dominion, for which she had a great veneration. She is rich in legends, and though born in Alabama, evidently considers Virginia her mother country, and infinitely prefers it to her native soil."

"For many excellent reasons, without a doubt," said Wallraven, with a bow toward my fair queen, who, with her snowy eyelids drooped till her long, golden lashes rested on her delicately-roseate cheek, remained silent. Now I came to her rescue.

"Regina, like the conservative people of the Old Dominion—the prevalence of old English feeling and family pride, which neither England herself has outlived, but that still survives in her eldest daughter, Virginia, the child that most resembles her. It is a prejudice—an anti-republican thing, contrary to the spirit of the nineteenth century. You are lagging behind the age, Regina, but you will get over this."

A cold smile chilled the fair face of my sister, who deigned no other reply.

"This is not so, lady, my friend exaggerates: these are not your sentiments," said Wallraven in his deep, rich tones, and with a manner which was strangely blended de

precision and dignity.

"She quietly raised those golden

eyelashes, to drop them again,

as she replied:

"'Only the right of knowledge, a fatal gift of insight into the hearts of others, and a dangerous habit of reading aloud what I find written theron,' he replied with mournful sarcasm.

I looked at him from head to foot. He was sitting in an easy-chair, with his hands joined on his knees, his brigand-looking head bent forward, his piercing eyes fixed on the door, and his veil of jet-black hair falling forward, and shading his darkening countenance. There was so much bitter sorrow in his attitude, expression, and tone, that my judge, expression, and tone, that my displeasure fled.

"'Wolfgang!' said I, "what is it that makes me love you so? You say the most exasperating things to me, and then disarm my wrath by a look, a tone?"

"What is it, perhaps, that you feel am your friend? Fairchild, my dear fellow, put me in no future plans of your own. The greatest injury I could do myself, the greatest benefit I could confer upon you," is to tell you this. Leave me. Good-night!"

I have said to you in the do so? What right have you to do so? Only the right of knowledge, a fatal gift of insight into the hearts of others, and a dangerous habit of reading aloud what I find written theron," he replied with mournful sarcasm.

I looked at him from head to foot. He was sitting in an easy-chair, with his hands joined on his knees, his brigand-looking head bent forward, his piercing eyes fixed on the door, and his veil of jet-black hair falling forward, and shading his darkening countenance. There was so much bitter sorrow in his attitude, expression, and tone, that my displeasure fled.

"'Wolfgang!' said I, "what is it that makes me love you so? You say the most exasperating things to me, and then disarm my wrath by a look, a tone?"

"What is it, perhaps, that you feel am your friend? Fairchild, my dear fellow, put me in no future plans of your own. The greatest injury I could do myself, the greatest benefit I could confer upon you," is to tell you this. Leave me. Good-night!"

We met next morning early. Like most houses in this neighborhood, ours had long plazas, upstairs and down, running around three sides of the house, with the front room always all opening up hinged upon them. Therefore, as I opened my chamber door and stepped out upon the plaza, I saw that Wallraven had come out of his room, and was pronouncing these. He turned, smiling, to meet me, took my arm, and said something complimentary of the "beautiful country," now in full spring bloom, though the month was March. After promenading there for some time, enjoying the pure morning air, and the extensive prospect, we went below and entered the morning-room. It was a long, handsomely-furnished apartment.

Regina was standing at the upper end of the room, attended by two maid-servants, to whom she was giving some directions, and who, as we entered, left her, and passed out by a side door.

Regina came to meet us. She was a pure white morning-blossom of very transparent light tissue, with skin made very pale, whose slender folds floated gracefully with every movement of her queenly form. Her golden hair was rolled back from her snowy forehead, and the evening before, only in view of the jeweled bandouliere, it was bound by a narrow white ribbon, she held in her hand a few white lilies, whose perfume filled the air. If I find a word to express the union of the loftiest hauteur with the most perfect purity and the most aerial delicacy, I would use that word to describe Regina, as, wafting fragrance with every motion, she floated on to meet us.

"I confess I prefer the ancestral pride of Virginia plainer to the 'purple velvet,' whose dark rich background threw out her beautiful and graceful form in fine relief. She was arrayed in rich white satin, whose glossy and ample folds, descending to her feet, merely permitted the tip of one tiny embroidered slipper to be visible. Her arms and neck fairer than the satin itself, were bare, except for being delicately shaded by falls of the richest, and finest lace, and encircled by pearl bracelets and necklace. Her hair, her "golden locks," were rolled off from her temples in rich and heavy folds in Pompadour, and bound back by Oriental pearls, exposing a brow of frosty fairness and sovereign pride. There was a coldness in this statuque dignity of my sister, that prevented me from meeting her with any demonstration of fraternal love or joy. I think not her then as I should have met her then if I had not have met any other friend, and, presenting my college friend, named—

"Mr. Wallraven, of Virginia."

Regina slightly inclined her graceful head, in acknowledgement of Wallraven's profound, and deferential bow, and raising her eyes with a quick and quickly-withdrawn glance, held out her hand to welcome him to Willow Hill, saying, quite graciously:

"I know the Wallravens of Hickory Hall, by reputations—"

Here Wolfgang gave a violent start, reeled as under an unexpected and overwhelming blow, "made a mighty effort" and recovered his self-command, all in a passage of a few seconds, while I looked inquiringly at Regina, and she, with calm surprise, regarded him.

"Will you be seated, Mr. Wallraven, and you Fordinand?" she said.

"We sat down, and Regina, possibly to fill an awkward pause, in the conversation, observed:

"Yes—I know the Wallravens of Hickory Hall, by history and report. Wolfgang Wallraven—your American ancestor and namesake, sir—I heard my father say was a Lutheran refugee who came to Virginia in the company of his intimate friend, our master, Lord B—, and who, as long as his lordship remained governor of Virginia, retained a place in his council. I hope, sir, that we may become better known to each other."

On concluding these gracious words, my princess raised her eyes to those of Wallraven; but they swiftly fell again, while the faintest color dawed on her fair cheek. Wallraven had bowed, and bowed, at the close of every condescending sentence; but now, when common civility required him to say something he was dumb. I came to his relief.

"Miss Fairfield," said I, "is quite an affair to the early history, antiquities, and traditions of the Old Dominion, for which she had a great veneration. She is rich in legends, and though born in Alabama, evidently considers Virginia her mother country, and infinitely prefers it to her native soil."

"For many excellent reasons, without a doubt," said Wallraven, with a bow toward my fair queen, who, with her snowy eyelids drooped till her long, golden lashes rested on her delicately-roseate cheek, remained silent. Now I came to her rescue.

"Regina, like the conservative people of the Old Dominion—the prevalence of old English feeling and family pride, which neither England herself has outlived, but that still survives in her eldest daughter, Virginia, the child that most resembles her. It is a prejudice—an anti-republican thing, contrary to the spirit of the nineteenth century. You are lagging behind the age, Regina, but you will get over this."

A cold smile chilled the fair face of my sister, who deigned no other reply.

"This is not so, lady, my friend exaggerates: these are not your sentiments," said Wallraven in his deep, rich tones, and with a manner which was strangely blended de

precision and dignity.

"She quietly raised those golden

eyelashes, to drop them again,

as she replied:

"'Only the right of knowledge, a fatal gift of insight into the hearts of others, and a dangerous habit of reading aloud what I find written theron,' he replied with mournful sarcasm.

I looked at him from head to foot. He was sitting in an easy-chair, with his hands joined on his knees, his brigand-looking head bent forward, his piercing eyes fixed on the door, and his veil of jet-black hair falling forward, and shading his darkening countenance. There was so much bitter sorrow in his attitude, expression, and tone, that my displeasure fled.

"'Wolfgang!' said I, "what is it that makes me love you so? You say the most exasperating things to me, and then disarm my wrath by a look, a tone?"

"What is it, perhaps, that you feel am your friend? Fairchild, my dear fellow, put me in no future plans of your own. The greatest injury I could do myself, the greatest benefit I could confer upon you," is to tell you this. Leave me. Good-night!"

We met next morning early. Like most houses in this neighborhood, ours had long plazas, upstairs and down, running around three sides of the house, with the front room always all opening up hinged upon them. Therefore, as I opened my chamber door and stepped out upon the plaza, I saw that Wallraven had come out of his room, and was pronouncing these. He turned, smiling, to meet me, took my arm, and said something complimentary of the "beautiful country," now in full spring bloom, though the month was March. After promenading there for some time, enjoying the pure morning air, and the extensive prospect, we went below and entered the morning-room. It was a long, handsomely-furnished apartment.

Regina was standing at the upper end of the room, attended by two maid-servants, to whom she was giving some directions, and who, as we entered, left her, and passed out by a side door.

Regina came to meet us. She was a pure white morning-blossom of very transparent light tissue, with skin made very pale, whose slender folds floated gracefully with every movement of her queenly form. Her golden hair was rolled back from her snowy forehead, and the evening before, only in view of the jeweled bandouliere, it was bound by a narrow white ribbon, she held in her hand a few white lilies, whose perfume filled the air. If I find a word to express the union of the loftiest hauteur with the most perfect purity and the most aerial delicacy, I would use that word to describe Regina, as, wafting fragrance with every motion, she floated on to meet us.

"I confess I prefer the ancestral pride of Virginia plainer to the 'purple velvet,' whose dark rich background threw out her beautiful and graceful form in fine relief. She was arrayed in rich white satin, whose glossy and ample folds, descending to her feet, merely permitted the tip of one tiny embroidered slipper to be visible. Her arms and neck fairer than the satin itself, were bare, except for being delicately shaded by falls of the richest, and finest lace, and encircled by pearl bracelets and necklace. Her hair, her "golden locks," were rolled off from her temples in rich and heavy folds in Pompadour, and bound back by Oriental pearls, exposing a brow of frosty fairness and sovereign pride. There was a coldness in this statuque dignity of my sister, that prevented me from meeting her with any demonstration of fraternal love or joy. I think not her then as I should have met her then if I had not have met any other friend, and, presenting my college friend, named—

"Mr. Wallraven, of Virginia."</p