

REGINA FAIRFIELD

OR

A TERRIBLE EXPIATION.

CHAPTER IV.

"Well, I listened eagerly, too eager! He paused, dropped his head upon his hands, and seemed to be diving into the past."

Deep silence reigned between us, broken only by the supernaturally loud ticking of the chamber clock, hurrying on toward midnight. There sat upon the foot of the bed, his shoes resting on his knees, his face buried in the palms of his hands, his strong, jet-black locks falling forward, shoulder after shoulder shaking his frayed hair.

"Poor fellow! He does not know how to begin!" thought I, and waited anxiously some time at the feeling of delicacy withholding me from interrupting him, until I found, by the cessation of his shudders and the perfect immobility of his form, that he had fallen into a fit of deep abstraction, and that his thoughts were far, far from me. Then, after some hesitation, I recalled him, by a word spoken in a low, gentle tone: "Wallraven!"

"Wallraven?" said I again, with a still kinder tone, "you were about to give me—"

"Bh! bh! bh! Oh, thou son of Eve! Never tell me of woman's curiosity! We have not a bit, have we?—laughed he, in the most sanguine and exasperating manner.

"You will wonder, perhaps, at the strange patience I had with that bitter, cold, arid youth; but in truth I was more grieved than angry at his sneering and insulting tone, for undoubtedly it was betrayed the predominant sorrow, the deepest melancholy, that filled the same compassionate toleration for his ill-treatment of my nearly loved mother. I replied, gently:

"I did not solicit your confidence, Wolfgang. It was voluntarily professed on your part; and I tell you now that, unless by so doing, I can very materially serve you, I have no wish to profit by your secrets further than fidelity to my sister's interests under existing circumstances seems to require."

"To what existing circumstances do you refer?" he asked, quickly.

"To your relations, or implied relations, with Miss Fairfield."

"And what do you suppose them to be?"

"From what I witnessed this evening, I presume that you are engaged," I replied, gazing at him with anxious scrutiny.

"You are wrong—we are not engaged!"

"Not? Is it possible that Regina has rejected you?"

"No, for I have not offered her my hand."

"What? not? Then you intend to do so at the first opportunity?"

"No! I have no intention ever offering myself to this Fairfield."

"Then, by heaven's grace, I have forgiven you upon my own account; you shall first give me satisfaction for your unkindly conduct of this evening, and then swear never to offend Miss Fairfield by coming into her presence again."

"Oh! Ferdinand, my fine fellow, don't fare up. You do not know what you are talking about!"

"I say I will have satisfaction!"

"And so you shall; and any and every satisfaction you please, and as much of it as you please! Come, I will right, or apologize, as you will!"

"Sir, you are my guest." I beseeched you, with all convenient speed that you put yourself in some more practicable relation to the brother of the woman you have offended, that he may—"

"Blow my brains out with better grace!"

"Call you to a strict account for your proceedings this evening."

"I have betrayed friendship, trust, hospitality; I merit death! Shoot me where I sit, Ferdinand; I wish you would!"

"You are mad!"

"I kissed her twenty times, Ferdinand, and I never intend to marry her. Come, why don't you shoot me?"

"You are a lunatic—you are not responsible for any word or act," said I, and I was beginning to feel so. If I had been ever so angry with him, my resentment would have vanished when, with one of his sudden changes of mood, he dropped his head upon my shoulder, and sobbed and wept like the melting of an avalanche, gasping between whites, in low, earnest, fervent, interrupted tones.

"I live, and worship your beautiful and haughty sister! Love her because she is fair, worship her because she is proud! Yest! yest! I worship the ground she walks on—for it is holy ground; the pebble her foot spurns—fog, it is a precious stone! Words! words! breath! air! soul! You! People, have talked about dying for their beloved! I am doing it! I am doing it!"

"Language cannot convey the heartrending tone in which these words were spoken. He went on: "Yest! yest! I will tell you for my conduct of this evening, I had firmly repressed my feelings for six weeks. I thought the day over, and well-nigh over! I went up to her to night to bid her adieu, with the stern determination of not never seeing her again. She held out her hand—looking up to me with her beautiful, besmirching, mad dening eyes—eloquent with love, sorrow, reproach, inquiry—and the great tide of long-suppressed emotion rushed in, filling my heart, flooding my brain, bearing down, and sweeping away reason, memory, understanding! and I did and said some maniacal things! Come, shoot me, if you please! Yes, I will meet you when and where you please, and bear the bosom to your knife or ball, but never raise my hand against you, my brother, my heart, dear brother! It is the voice of death!"

(To be continued.)

An old Scotch gravedigger was remonstrated with one day at a funeral for making a serious overcharge for digging a grave. "Well, ye see, sir," said the old man, in explanation, making a motion with his thumb towards the grave, "him and me had a bit o' a tiff twa or three years syne owe a braw watch I set him an' I've never been able to get the money out o' him yet. Now," says I to myself, "this is my last chance, and I'd better take it."

Mr. Freshman—"I am told that that blows quite strongly here at times." Prominent Citizen—"Well, you that is so, I've known it to blow for twelve days and nights on a stretch, and hold a sheep up against the side of a bank 14 feet high, never once let him fall." And another time it blew so hard that the crows in Farmer Tetrapod's cornfield couldn't fly back to the rookery, but they had to walk home. And another time it blew so hard that the wind blew him so hard that the crows in Farmer Tetrapod's cornfield couldn't fly back to the rookery, but they had to walk home. The method of cooking the animal is to roast it in an oven brown, with onions, garlic, bay leaf, red wine, and some fragrant herbs other than those mentioned.

FORESTRY CONVENTION.

The Premier Names Jan. 10, 11, and 12, 1906, as the Date.

To the public of the Dominion of Canada:

Canada possesses one of the largest areas of virgin forest of any country in the world and is ranked by European experts first, or among the first, in the important sources of the world's timber supply for the future.

The preservation of the streams in permanent condition, constant flow which is largely controlled by the forests on the watersheds, has had an important influence on the industrial and agricultural development of the Dominion. The expansion of our electrical and mechanical industries will be regulated to a great extent by water, which forms the greatest source of power in all countries, and some of our western districts are dependent on irrigation to ensure the success of agricultural operations.

In all the older provinces the clearing of the soil has been carried to such an extent that it is often effected in the water supply and on agriculture are clearly marked while in the western prairies the need of clearing trees for houses and fields is seriously felt by the settlers.

This is denied by many dairymen, but, nevertheless, it is a fact, man says he is having trouble with his milk on account of the feeding of silage, he is charging himself with carelessness, for it is certain the bad flavors entered the milk after it was drawn from the cow. The silage odor is very penetrating. It hangs to the hair of the cow and the garments of the milker; it fills the air of the stable when silage is fed just before milking, and then the milking done without washing the hands, the milk is almost sure to be tainted. Milk left in the stable easily absorbs the silage odor.

The early construction of the Transcontinental Railway, and of other railways through our northern districts and the consequent opening of those districts to general traffic has increased the danger from fire, which has already been a most active agent of destruction.

These conditions, we have,

had time enough to eliminate the malodorous material. There is another feed, silage, that is fully as strong in odor as onions, and some persons even more unpleasant and yet a cow can consume large quantities of even the rankest silages and produce milk without trace of the silage odor.

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These odors that enter milk after it is drawn from the cow can be largely removed by aeration. Merely lifting the milk in a dipper and allowing it to fall in a current of pure air will remove the bad odors, but this is actually injured if the ratio is not correct.

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