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"I will gladly swear by everything I bold sacred that no other woman than you shall ever be my wife. If I cannot have you, be sure you have spoiled every other woman for me. There is but one in all the world—but one. I can at least save you that pain."

She then stood on tiptoes to lift her lips to him and said: "I give you the same promise. How you must have suffered when you thought I was to wed another."

After a pause she went on: "But it might have been worse—that is, it would be worse if you should marry some other woman; but that is all settled now and I feel easier. Then I might have married the old French king, but that, too, is settled, and we can endure the lesser pain. It always helps us when we are able to think it might have been worse."

Brandon might have escaped from England in the Royal Hind, for the wind had come up shortly after they left the ship, and they could see the sails indistinctly through the gloom as she got under way. But he could not leave Mary alone, and had made up his mind to take her back to London and march straight into the jaws of death with her if the king's men did not soon come.

He knew that a debt to folly bears no grace, and was ready with his principal and usance.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHETHER or not Brandon would have found some way to deliver the princess safely home and still make his escape I cannot say, as he soon had no choice in the matter. At midnight a body of yeomen from the Tower took possession of the Bow and String and carried Brandon off to London without communication with Mary. She did not know of his arrest until next morning, when she was informed that she was to follow immediately, and her heart was nearly broken.

Here again was trouble for Mary. She felt, however, that the two great questions, the marriage of herself to Louis, and Brandon to any other person, were, as she called it, "settled," and was almost content to endure this as a mere putting off of her desires, a meddlesome and impertinent interference of the fates, who would soon learn with whom they were dealing and amend their conduct.

She did not understand the consequences for Brandon, nor that the fates would have to change their purpose very quickly or something would happen worse even than his marriage to another woman.

On the second morning after leaving Bristol Brandon reached London and, as he expected, was sent to the Tower. The next evening Lady Mary arrived and was taken down to Greenwich.

The girl's fair name was of course lost, but, fortunately, that goes for little with a princess—since no one would believe that Brandon had protected her against himself as valiantly and honorably as he would against another. The princess being much more unsophisticated than the courtiers were ready to believe never thought of saying anything to establish her innocence or virtue, and her silence was put down to shame and taken as evidence against her.

Jane met Mary at Windsor, and of course there was a great flood of tears. Upon arriving at the palace the girls were left to themselves, upon Mary's promise not to leave her room, but by the next afternoon she, having been unable to learn anything concerning Brandon, broke her parole and went out to see the king.

It never occurred to Mary that Brandon might suffer death for attempting to run away with her. She knew only too well that she alone was to blame, not only for that but for all that had taken place between them, and never for one moment thought that he might be punished for her fault, even admitting there was fault in any one, which she was by no means ready to do.

The trouble in her mind growing out of a lack of news from Brandon was of a general nature, and the possibility of his death had no place in her thoughts. Nevertheless for the second time Brandon had been condemned to die for her sake. The king's seal had stamped the warrant for the execution and the headsman had sharpened his ax and could almost count the golden fee for his butchery.

Mary found the king playing cards with De Longueville. There was a roomful of courtiers, and as she entered she was the target for every eye, but she was on familiar ground now and did not care for the glances nor the observers, most of whom she despised. She was the princess again and full of self confidence, so she went straight to the object of her visit, the king. She had not made up her mind just what to say first, there was so much, but Henry saved her the trouble. He, of course, was in a great rage and denounced Mary's conduct as unnatural and treasonable, the latter, in Henry's mind, being a crime many times greater than the breaking of all the commandments put together in one fell, composite act. All this the king had communicated to Mary by the lips of Wolsey the evening before, and Mary had received it with a silent scorn that would have withered any one but the worthy bishop of York. As I said, when Mary approached her brother he saved her the trouble of deciding where to begin by speaking first himself, and his words were of a part with his nature, violent, cruel and vulgar. He abused her and called her all the vile names in his ample vocabulary of billingsgate. The queen was present and aided and abetted with a word now and then, until Henry, with her help, at last succeeded in working himself into a towering passion and wound up by calling Mary a vile wanton in plainer terms than I like to write. This aroused all the antago-

nism in the girl, and there was plenty of it. She feared Henry no more than she feared me. Her eyes flashed a fire that made even the king draw back as she exclaimed: "You give me that name and expect me to remember you are my brother? There are words that make a mother hate her firstborn, and that is one. Tell me what I have done to deserve it? I expected to hear of ingratitude and disobedience and all that, but supposed you had at least some traces of brotherly feeling—for ties of blood are hard to break—even if you have of late lost all semblance to man or king."

This was hitting Henry hard, for it was beginning to be the talk in every mouth that he was leaving all the affairs of state to Wolsey and spending his time in puerile amusement. "The toward hope which at all poyntes appeared in the young Kynge" was beginning to look, after all, like nothing more than the old time royal cold fire, made to consume but not to warm the nation.

Henry looked at Mary with the stare of a baited bull.

"If running off in male attire and stopping at inns and boarding ships with a common captain of the guard doesn't justify my accusation and stamp you what you are, I do not know what would."

Even Henry saw her innocence in her genuine surprise. She was silent for a little time, and I, standing close to her, could plainly see that this phase of the question had never before presented itself.

She hung her head for a moment and then spoke: "It may be true, as you say, that what I have done will lose me my fair name—I had never thought of it in that light—but it is also true that I am innocent and have done no wrong. You may not believe me, but you can ask Master Brandon—here the king gave a great laugh, and of course the courtiers joined in.

"It is all very well for you to laugh, but Master Brandon would not tell you a lie for your crown." Gods! I could have fallen on my knees to a faith like that. "What I tell you is true. I trust-

ed him so completely that the fear of dishonor at his hands never suggested itself to me. I knew he would care for and respect me. I trusted him, and my trust was not misplaced. Of how many of these creatures who laugh when the king laughs could I say as much?" And Henry knew she spoke the truth, both concerning herself and the courtiers.

With downcast eyes she continued: "I suppose, after all, you are partly right in regard to me, for it was his honor that saved me, not my own, and if I am not what you called me I have Master Brandon to thank—not myself."

"We will thank him publicly on Tower hill day, after tomorrow at noon," said the king, with his accustomed delicacy, breaking the news of Brandon's sentence as abruptly as possible.

With a look of terror in her eyes Mary screamed: "What! Charles Brandon—Tower hill?—You are going to kill him?"

"I think we will," responded Henry. "It usually has that effect, to separate the head from the body and quarter the remains to decorate the four gates. We will take you up to London in a day or two and let you see his beautiful head on the bridge."

"Behold—quarter—bridge! Lord Jesus!" She could not grasp the thought. She tried to speak, but the words would not come. In a moment she became more coherent, and the words rolled from her lips as a mighty flood tide pours back through the arches of London bridge.

"You shall not kill him. He is blameless. You do not know. Drive these gawking fools out of the room, and I will tell you all." The king ordered the room cleared of everybody but Wolsey, Jane and myself, who remained at Mary's request. When all were gone, the princess continued: "Brother, this man is in no way to blame. It is all my fault—my fault that he loves me, my fault that he tried to run away to New Spain with me. It may be that I have done wrong and that my conduct has been unmaidenly, but I could not help it. From the first time I ever saw him in the lists with you at Windsor there was a gnawing hunger in my heart beyond my control. I supposed of course that day he would contrive some way to be presented to me."

"You did?"

"Yes, but he made no effort at all, and when we met he treated me as if I were an ordinary girl."

"He did?"

"Yes."

"Horrible."

Mary was too intent on her story to heed the sarcasm, and continued: "That made me all the more interested in him, since it showed that he was different from the wretches who beset you and me with their flattery, and I soon began to seek him on every occasion. This is an unmaidenly history I am giving, I know, but it is the truth and must be told. I was satisfied at first if I could only be in the same room with him and see his face and hear his voice. The very air he breathed was like an elixir for me. I made every excuse to have him near me. I asked him to my parlor—you know about that—and did all I could to be with him. At first he was gentle and kind, but soon, I think, he saw the dawning danger in both our hearts, as I, too, saw it, and he avoided me in every way he could, knowing the trouble it held for us both. Oh, he was the wiser! And to think to what I have brought him. Brother, let me die for him—I who alone am to blame. Take my life and spare him—spare him! He was the wiser, but I doubt if all the wisdom in the world could have saved us. He almost insulted me once in the park—told me to leave—when it hurt him more than me, I am now sure, but he did it to keep matters from growing worse between us. I tried to remember

the affront, but could not, and had he struck me I believe I should have gone back to him sooner or later. Oh, it was all my fault! I would not let him save himself. So strong was my feeling that I could bear his silence no longer, and one day I went to him in your bedroom and fairly thrust myself and my love upon him. Then, after he was liberated from Newgate, I could not induce him to come to me, so I went to him and begged for his love. Then I coaxed him into taking me to New Spain and would listen to no excuse and hear no reason. Now lives there another man who would have taken so much coaxing?"

"No, by heaven, your majesty!" said Wolsey, who really had a kindly feeling for Brandon and would gladly save his life if by so doing he would not interfere with any of his own plans and interests. Wolsey's heart was naturally kind when it cost him nothing, and much has been related of him which, to say the least, tells a great deal more than the truth. Ingratitude always recoils upon the ingrate, and Henry's loss was greater than Wolsey's when Wolsey fell.

Henry really liked or, rather, admired Brandon, as had often been shown, but his nature was incapable of real affection. The highest point he ever reached was admiration, often quite extravagant for a time, but usually short lived, as naked admiration is apt to be. If he had affection for any one, it was for Mary. He could not but see the justice of his sister's position, but he had no intention of allowing justice in the sense of right to interfere with justice in the sense of the king's will.

"You have been playing the devil at a great rate," he said. "You have disobeyed your brother and your king, have disgraced yourself, have probably made trouble between us and France, for if Louis refuses to take you now I will cram you down his throat, and by your own story have led a good man to the block. Quite a budget of evils for one woman to open. But I have noticed that the trouble a woman can make is in proportion to her beauty, and no wonder my little sister has made so much disturbance. It is strange, though, that he should so affect you. Master Wolsey, surely there has been witchery here. He must have used it abundantly to cast such a spell over my sister." Then turning to the princess: "Was it at any time possible for him to have given you a love powder, or did he ever make any signs or passes over you?"

"Oh, no; nothing of that sort. I never ate or drank anything which he could possibly have touched. And as to signs and passes, I know he never made any. Sir Edwin, you were always present when I was with him until after we left for Bristol. Did you ever see anything of the sort?"

I answered "No," and she went on: "Besides, I do not believe much in signs and passes. No one can affect others unless he can induce them to eat or drink something in which he has placed a love powder or potion. Then, again, Master Brandon did not want me to love him, and surely would not have used such a method to gain what he could have had freely without it."

I noticed that Henry's mind had wandered from what Mary was saying and that his eyes were fixed upon me with a thoughtful, half vicious, inquiring stare that I did not like. I wondered what was coming next, but my curiosity was more than satisfied when the king asked, "So Castkoden was present at all your interviews?"

Ah! Holy Mother! I knew what was coming now and actually began to shivel with fright. The king continued, "I suppose he helped you to escape?"

I thought my day had come, but Mary's wit was equal to the occasion. With an expression on her face of the most dove-like innocence she quickly said:

"Oh, no! Neither he nor Jane knew anything of it. We were afraid they might divulge it."

Shade of Sapphira! A lie is a pretty good thing, too, now and then, and the man who says that word of Mary's was not a blessed lie must fight me with lance, battleax, sword and dagger till one or the other of us bites the dust in death, be he great or small.

"I am glad to learn that you knew nothing of it," said Henry, addressing me, and I was glad, too, for him to learn it, you may be sure.


[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Skyrockets Before Gunpowder.
It matters very little in the long run to the small boy when, how or where fireworks were first made and of what they are made now. But the fact remains that the despised heathen Chinese first made them and used them and that civilized communities did not know of them until the fourteenth century. The skyrocket was first invented toward the close of the ninth century and at that time was used, so it is said, in India and China in war. That was long before the invention of gunpowder.

Ornamental Jade.

The Chinese have cut jade for ages, but never ornamented it except by sculpture. When it was introduced into India, the native jewelers, with their quick eye for color, at once saw what a perfect ground it afforded for mounting precious stones, and they were the first to incrust them on jade. The India museum in London possesses the choicest specimens of this work known of the best mogul period.

Knew What He Wanted.
"Can I show you anything?" asked the young man behind the counter at the hat store.
"I guess so," said the young man who had dropped in. "I want one of those disappearing hats you wear when you o to the opera. Got any?"



Jim Dumps exulted, "We do not, On Summer days so close and hot, Build up a fire and stew and steam! A dish of 'Force,' a bowl of cream, Is just the food to fit our whim, And keeps us cool," laughed "Sunny Jim."

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