

MIRIAM HEARNSHAW

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No. 49.

For the *Hearthstone*.
THE OLD PINE CANOE.

BY J. H. RAMSAY.

Remember the days that have long ago faded
From hills that stand high in the sun's breezy
beams,
The flower-sprangled shore by the cedar-tree shaded,
And the bridge where we fished in the many-
soured stream,
Remember the boat rendered grey by the weather,
That often we sailed in to where the grapes grow,
We climbed to the top of the tall vines together,
And watched the waves cradle the old pine canoe.
But where is the glory ambition projected,
When gaily we roved o'er the water-bound scene?
Where now is the gladness that bright scene re-
flected?
Ah! where is the boat that we moored on the
green?
The spirit of change has all silently taken
The charms that we loved from the objects we
know,
The beauty is fled and our friends have forsaken
The scenes where we paddled the old pine canoe.
Never again can they come to rejoice us
When evening's last sunbeams repose on the hill,
Never again shall we hear their glad voices,
Except when the echoes of memory thrill.
If we gather once more all the grave has not gath-
ered
To join in the joys we were wont to pursue,
Ah, who could forget all the sorrows that withered
The days since we sailed in the old pine canoe?
Farewell to the fair waving valley forever,
Farewell to the flowers that grew by the shore,
Farewell to the course of the blue-winding river,
Farewell to the scenes that can gladden no more.
The spring may return, and the season of roses,
The forest and valleys their verdure renew,
But the friends of those scenes that our memory
shows us
Have gone down time's stream like the old pine
canoe.

DESMORO;

OR,

THE RED HAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TWENTY STRAWS," "VOICES
FROM THE LUMBER-ROOM," "THE HUMMING-
BIRD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER V.

Desmoro's heart began to throb fast and pain-
fully, and his limbs were shaking as if he had
been suddenly seized with the ague.
Gently and noiselessly he pressed his knee
against the woodwork of his window, which,
opening, swung back on its hinges. Then Des-
moro, moving as in a dream, entered the apart-
ment, in the middle of which stood a large
canopied bed, and a table, bearing on it a night-
lamp.
Shutting the casement behind him, Desmoro
paused, and gazed around him. Then he ad-
vanced a step, and stopped to listen.
As he could distinctly hear the regular
breathing of some person in heavy slumber,
he gathered courage and proceeded.
The youth was thinking how much better it
would have been for Ralph and himself had
Dinah managed to escape through her own
casement. But Desmoro had yet to learn
wherefore she required assistance in her flight.
On tiptoe he crossed the room, holding his
breath all the while; and reaching a door, he
noiselessly turned the key of it, and passed at
once into another sleeping apartment, where
Dinah Tillysdale herself was sitting, pale as a
marble statue, with a twinkling rushlight on a
table by her side, and a number of packages,
and baskets, before her.
She started up at the boy's entrance. She was
expecting to see Ralph.
Desmoro put his finger on his lip, enjoining
silence; and shutting the portal behind him,
approached the maiden.
"Mr. Thetford is outside waiting for you,"
whispered he.
"Oh, I am so frightened!" she cried, trem-
blingly, sinking back into her chair. "I shall
never have the courage to pass through my
aunt's room! Why didn't Ralph himself come
to me?"
"He couldn't climb into the balcony, Miss
Dinah, and as I could, he sent me in his
stead."
The young girl rose, and looked wistfully at
the packages. "Will you help me to carry
away these?" said she. "For two whole years
I shall be very poor, Desmoro—too poor to buy
any such clothes as I possess now; so as I
should not like to distress Ralph by ever ap-
pearing before him in shabby dresses, I have
made up my mind to take with me as much
of my wardrobe as I possibly can," she added,
by way of explanation.
Desmoro nodded his head, and at once be-
gan to load himself with baskets and bundles,
until his arms were completely filled.
Dinah having put on her cloak, and drawn
its hood over her pretty head now took up a
couple of heavy packages. "What about the
remainder?" she inquired, anxiously glancing
at a small trunk, and a large parcel. You can-
not manage any more, neither can I."
"I will return for these when you are safe—
that is, if they are of very great consequence to
you," Desmoro answered.
"Thank you very much, Desmoro. Oh, I am
trembling in every limb!"



THE ELOPEMENT OF DINAH TILLYSDALE.

"Shall we need the light?"
"No; I will go first, and lead the way down
the stairs, which are not at all awkward."
Saying which she softly opened the door, and
quakingly entered her aunt's chamber, Des-
moro close behind her.
Then both stood still for a few moments.
Miss Tillysdale was sleeping soundly behind
the drawn curtains of her bed; and no sounds
reached their ears but her hard and regular
breathings, and the tic-tic of the lady's large
gold watch.
Dinah crept on, so also did her companion,
until they gained the door communicating with
the staircase. Here Dinah, putting down her
luggage essayed the latch as the portal.
"Heavens! it is locked, Desmoro— it is
locked, and the key's removed!" she exclaimed,
in a terrified whisper. "Whatever is to be
done?" she continued, wringing her hands in
helpless bewilderment and alarm.
"Where do you think the key is?" inquired
her companion, in almost as much terror as
herself.
"My aunt must have it in her own posses-
sion," she returned, despairingly. "This is as
I feared."
"What are we to do now?" queried Desmoro,
still speaking under his breath.
"What can we do?" she rejoined.
"The window! I will help you through it
into the tree, which is at no great distance from
the ground," said the youth.
Dinah reflected for a few seconds. The room
was very spacious, and her aunt was still pro-
foundly sleeping.
"Stay!" she said; "I will place yonder
screen between ourselves and her." And at
once Dinah did as she said, and afterwards re-
turned to Desmoro's side again.
The lamp's quivering, feeble rays, filled the
vast apartment with a mystic light. The heart
of the runaway maiden was throbbing fast and
painfully, as she stood gazing around her, un-
certain how to act; whether to escape by the
window, or to return to her chamber, and so
abandon all thoughts of flight.
But to-morrow, she reflected Ralph would
have to quit Blackbrook, and he might be
lost to her for ever! Oh! she could not bear
that thought—she could not endure the idea of
being separated from him, who had become
dearer to her than all the world besides.
Desmoro was watching the various changes
passing over his companion's features, wonder-
ing what she could make up her mind to do.
In his own secret heart, he was thinking how
badly the whole business had been arranged,
condemning it accordingly.
"I will attempt to descend by the casement,"
Dinah at length said. "I must not remain here,
I cannot do so."
"Mr. Thetford will be growing impatient,"
Desmoro remarked.
"To be sure he will," she answered, quickly
regaining her packages of personal property,
and crossing the space between herself and the
window, the sash of which she unclosed care-
fully.
Desmoro was by her side, ready to assist her
descent.
At this moment the sleeper was heard to
turn round in her bed, and utter low, murmur-
ing sounds, at which Dinah started, and clung
tremblingly to her companion.
"She is awaking, Desmoro!" quaked she, in
sudden fright.
"Hush!" responded he, warningly, at the
same time dropping the bundles he was carry-
ing, and pushing her through the open window

into the balcony, where he followed her. "Hist!"
he continued, bending over the stone railings in
front of him, and endeavouring to pene-
trate the darkness. "Are you there, Mr. Thet-
ford?"
"What is the matter?" was the quivering
response.
"Miss Dinah cannot leave the house by any
other means than this window. Be prepared
for her, below there!"
"Ay, ay, all right! My strong arms shall
catch my love, should her feet chance to slip!"
answered the enamoured stroller.
Dinah now stepped over the balustrade into
the tree beneath, clinging first to one branch of
it, then to another; as she did so, tearing her
garments to shreds, and scratching and bruising
herself terribly. But her gripe was a tenacious
one, her feet did not slip once, and she soon
felt a pair of loving arms around her, and was
safely lifted to the ground.
"Thank heaven, you are here!" at length ex-
claimed Ralph, folding the maiden to his heart.
"Now let us hence—Desmoro will quickly fol-
low us!"
"No, no, not yet!" she returned. "He has
all my clothing in his charge."
"Your clothing, Dinah!" her lover repeated,
in surprise.
"Yes, Ralph," she answered; "you know I
could not come to you without either money or
garments. Two years hence we may laugh at
my present thoughtfulness, but we cannot af-
ford to do so now."
"Catch!" said a voice from above; and fol-
lowing the voice, one of Dinah's large packages
dropped at the feet of the lovers, and then an-
other. Then Desmoro disappeared from the bal-
cony into the room beyond it.
But scarcely had he done so, when a bony
hand clutched at his shoulder, a shrill shriek
rent the air, and Desmoro, turning, confronted
the grim face of Miss Tillysdale.
"Red Hand!" she exclaimed, recognising the
lad, and tightening her hold on him. "Thieves!
—thieves! Help! — help!" she continued,
screaming with all her might. "Oh, you in-
famous young villain! Is this a return for my
charity towards you? Thieves! — thieves! Help!"
"My aunt's voice!" cried Dinah. "She has
awake, and seen Desmoro. What are we to do?"
she added, clinging to her lover.
"Let us fly at once!—if we stay here we are
lost!" returned Ralph, hurrying her away from
the spot.
"But the poor lad, Ralph?" said she regret-
fully.
"Let me first bestow you in some place of
safety, then I will return here, and look after
him. Be at rest about Desmoro, he shall not
be placed in any difficulty on our account; of
that, be fully assured."
"My aunt will arouse the whole house, and
send for the constables. I tremble for poor
Desmoro. Then she will discover my flight,
and the share that he has had in effecting it,
and he will be threatened and terrified by her
until he confesses to her all he knows about us;
whereabouts we may be found, and everything
else she will be wishing to learn from him."
As Ralph's terrors on this subject were just
as great as hers, and as he was most unwilling
to lose the prize now that he was holding it in
his absolute possession, he drew her onwards
and onwards through the darkness, entirely
forgetful of Dinah's property, which had been
left behind.
Still firmly clutching the youth's collar, Miss
Tillysdale, seized a hand-bell, and vigorously

rang it, all the time accompanying its sound
with her own thin, shrill screams, and her
cries of "Thieves—thieves!"
Utterly forgetful of her disordered appear-
ance, Miss Tillysdale thus endeavoured to call
the household to her assistance, but, as the
lady's apartment was far removed from all the
other sleeping rooms of the hotel, she could
not, all at once, succeed in making herself
heard by any one save the terrified lad who
was shivering in her grasp.
"Don't stir, you young rascal!" she said,
panting for breath, and shaking him. "You
midnight robber—you wicked ingrate! But
you shall be sent to prison, that you shall;
and I'll have you transported across the seas,
to work in chains for all the rest of your un-
worthy days."
"No, no!" cried Desmoro, dropping on his
knees at her feet. "Spare me, spare me; I
came not here to injure you in any way—I
came not here to rob or harm any one!"
"You false-tongued knave!" returned the
lady, again raising the bell. "I am not to be
imposed upon by you—not I, indeed! Did I
not read your depraved character the very
first moment I set my eyes on your ill-favoured
visage? And that red hand of yours, too!
Ugh! Can't any one see how Satan-branded
you are?—isn't the fact published to the whole
world?"
"Oh, Miss Tillysdale!" shuddered Desmoro,
all his blood seeming to congeal in his veins,
"don't, don't think so badly of me, I entreat!
And in pity don't say I am Satan-branded! I
am fatherless, motherless, and almost friend-
less! then pray, pray, have mercy on me!"
"Have mercy on you, indeed!" repeated she.
"What have you just thrown through the casement,
and who are your associates in this nefar-
ious affair?" she added, shaking the hand-bell
in his face.
"It is no nefarious affair, ma'am, and I have
no associates at all."
"What?" shrieked she. "Didn't I detect
you in the very act of flinging some of my
property over the balcony, beneath which one
of your own vile class was waiting to receive
it?"
"Miss Dinah was beneath it, ma'am," re-
turned Desmoro, quite distinctly.
"Miss Dinah?" exclaimed she, perfectly
aghast. "My niece?" she added, dragging
Desmoro across the room, and throwing wide
the door communicating with the adjoining
chamber, into which she dashed at once.
"Empty!" she cried, in blank dismay. "Dinah
gone! fled! Whether, you limb of the Evil
One? You know, you know, for you have as-
sisted in her escape hence."
Desmoro did not reply; she had so galled his
feelings that he was almost heedless of her
words.
"Answer!" continued she. "Answer truly,
or it shall be worse for you. Where is Miss
Dinah Tillysdale at this moment?"
Still Desmoro was obstinately mute.
"With whom has she eloped? Tell me
that!"
Not a word of response came there.
"She must have had a companion," the lady
went on. "The ungrateful hussy could not
go off alone. Is it with Mr. Thetford that she
has run away? Tell me, boy, tell me all, else
you shall dearly rue this hour!"
He was still resolutely silent. Desmoro
knew that his strength was greater than that of
Miss Tillysdale, but he disdained to put that
strength to the test—disdained to attempt to
escape from her. He remembered his promise

of secrecy to Ralph Thetford, and he was deter-
mined to keep that promise, however much he
might chance to suffer by so doing.
"Listen!" resumed the lady, in angry excite-
ment. "Listen, and pay attention to my
words. Are you hearkening to me?" she
continued.
"Yes, ma'am."
"Reveal to me all that you know of this
disgraceful transaction, and I will at once give
you your liberty. To commence—who is the
companion of my niece's flight?"
"Excuse me, ma'am," responded he, very
calmly, "but I would rather not answer any of
your questions."
"You would rather not?" echoed she,
greatly exasperated. "Oh, indeed! but we'll
see about that, thou red-handed rebel! Mind!
if you refuse to satisfy my inquiries, you will be
made to answer those of others—of others, who
will force you to confess the truth!"
"No one can compel my tongue to speak
against my will!" returned the youth proudly.
"I do not care for your threats now, ma'am!"
he proceeded, growing almost reckless, "so do
your worst at once upon me!"
"Can I tempt you with money?" asked she,
softening her tones a little. "I'll buy from
you the knowledge I am seeking."
Desmoro shook his head.
"Then live, and repent of, your obstinacy!"
said Miss Tillysdale, throwing him from her.
And with those words she darted out of the
room, fastened the door behind her, and made
Desmoro a prisoner.
Then she once more sought to arouse the
slumbering household.
"This time Miss Tillysdale's cries were heard
and attended to, and her chamber was soon
crowded by the inmates of the hotel—by per-
sons who had rushed forth habited in all sorts
of strange costumes, their alarm at the lady's
screams having prevented them from paying
any heed to their respective toilettes.
The landlord of the hotel, hearing a light,
and armed with a poker, stood foremost.
Her figure shrouded in a large cloak, which
she had snatched up and hastily flung around
her, Miss Tillysdale stood in the middle of the
apartment, looking full of wrath and vindic-
tiveness.
The landlord glanced around, his eyes in
search of the thief he was expecting to see; but
he beheld only the grim figure of the ancient
spinster.
"Well, Mr. Landlord," began she, "this is a
fine establishment of yours—bravely conducted,
too, in which a lady may scream herself hoarse
before she is paid attention to!"
"What is the matter, madam?" he asked, in
much bewilderment.
"Matter!" echoed she, scornfully. "Mr.
Landlord, I have just escaped being murdered in
my bed!"
A thrill of silent horror pervaded the little
crowd of listeners.
"Yes, I repeat it—I have just escaped be-
coming the victim of an assassin!" pursued
Miss Tillysdale, in tragical accents. "Look at
that open window," continued she, pointing to
its unclosed sash; "through that the midnight
ruffian entered the chamber where I was lying
fast asleep. But just, just as he was about to
strike the blow—the blow which was meant to
deprive me of my precious life, I awoke, seized
his hand, and struggling with him at length
forced him into the next room, where I safely
secured him!"
Everybody was struck with admiration at
the lady's brave conduct, as described by her-
self; but their astonishment was greater still
when they saw her unlock the door, and drag
Desmoro forth.
The youth's face was covered with beads of
moisture, and his white lips quivered convul-
sively.
"Behold the miscreant!" said Miss Tilly-
sdale, introducing the shrinking youth to the
assembly. "Some one take charge of him,
and let a couple of constables be sent for forth-
with! Do you hear, landlord?"
"Yes, ma'am—directly, ma'am!" replied he,
much perplexed at the sight of an offender so
youthful.
"Who, dung my buttons, if it beant one of
those player chaps!" softly exclaimed an
ostler belonging to the hotel, in the ear of
some one near him. "I'll swear to him, cos
I've sin him on 'th stage, as they caws it,
dressed in all manner o' colours!" the man
added, in louder tones.
"Yes, you are right," returned Miss Tilly-
sdale, catching the ostler's words. "He is one
of those rogues, whom I, in the charity of my
simple heart, once sheltered and fostered, and
rewarded thus! Take him away!"
The landlord and others now laid their hands
upon poor Desmoro, who was immediately
dragged out of the room, down stairs, into the
kitchen, in which he was detained until the
arrival of the constables, for whom one of the
men servants had just been despatched.
Desmoro had dropped on a seat, and buried
his face in his palms. He felt that he was in-
volved in a serious difficulty, out of which he
saw no way of escape, save by betraying his
friend, which he was resolved not to do.
The youth's heart was full of trouble—full of
such trouble as it had never known till now,
and he was reflecting bitterly, and asking him-
self what he was to do.
He could not surely permit himself to be
wrongfully accused, and make no defence
against such an accusation?