

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, ST. JOHN, N. B.; WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 1907

When the Tide Rises

By Ida De Thael

PART I.

Amour! dans étroite esport
Les deux amis
Bien doucement jusqu'à la porte
Du Paradis.
—Duchesse de Rohan.

The air was cold, but the sun shone brightly on the grim old castle. The stout walls showed stains of blood, for often invaders had tried to hew their way into the stronghold, but it had resisted all their fierce onslaughts, and now the banner of the Lord of Tremaneuk floated proudly on the highest tower.

The clang of arms, martial music, could be heard, yet it was not to raise an alarm. Peace reigned and this was a day of rejoicing.

After a long absence Tremaneuk had returned to his castle. But the old warrior delighted only in fights and in battles, so he had immediately summoned all the neighboring lords to a magnificent tournament.

From far away places young knights hastened to come, eager to win the praise of the brave old warrior, still more pleased at the thought of covering themselves with glory in the sight of Guireka, his beautiful daughter.

Several times that morning the drawbridge had been lowered, and knights, followed by squire and pages, were admitted. Guireka was in the great hall with her father, greeting her guests with words of welcome. But though she tried to smile there was a pensive look in her eyes—her thoughts were far away.

At last, seizing her opportunity, she slipped out unnoticed. Through narrow, winding passages she ran till she found herself on the roof of the big central tower.

From there an extensive view could be obtained seaward, for when the tide was high the waves beat the foot of the battlements, but she gazed instead at the white road that through the "lande" led to the castle.

It was empty, but after a while a small speck became visible. It grew rapidly, and she could distinguish a knight. The face was concealed by the visor, yet she soon recognized him, and her heart began to beat faster.

When they had first met she was but fifteen and Kerbronn was not yet a knight, but from that day her image had remained graven on his heart. It was Guireka that he had chosen as his lady when he had been knighted. It was to win her love, it was to win her, that he had fought during all those wars, madly risking his life, heedless of the danger, heedless of the beauty of other women.

Was she not the fairest among the fair? Her voice when she sang rang out sweet as that of an angel. Her heart was warm and tender.

When Guireka grew into a woman her charm was everywhere praised and many wooed her, but her father had refused to listen to any proposal. His only son had been killed, and Guireka would inherit the castle and his large dominions—powerful and noble indeed must be her lord.

Yet, in spite of all, Kerbronn had not given up hoping. He was handsome and brave—loved in the lady's bower and feared in the field.

Never had he dared to speak openly to her, but had she not guessed his secret?

The last time they had met it was in a neighboring castle. The drive back was long, and they had stopped to rest during the heat of the day in a glade. Guireka had asked for some music, and he had sung, inspired by love.

Her eyelashes were moist when he had concluded, and as he went away his hopes were high.

During the following months Kerbronn had achieved many a heroic deed, and now he was hastening back, eager yet trembling. If he distinguished himself during the tournament and carried away the prize that Guireka was to give away herself, might he not hope that one day she would become his wife? But it was against no mean rivals that he would have to fight.

She came forward to greet him, but they could only exchange few words. Guireka soon after retired to her apartments, but they would meet at the banquet given that evening in honor of Tremaneuk's distinguished guests.

The hall presented a magnificent sight when Kerbronn came in.

On the heavy oak tables stood silver ewers full of scented water, which young pages brought round to the guests, and when the meal had begun musicians hid in the balcony started playing.

The knights wore their richest armor, gayly colored surcoats hung from their shoulders, and ornaments of precious stones glittered in the light of many lamps.

The hum of voices filled the hall, but silence fell when Guireka appeared and sat down by her father's side under a raised dais. She was wonderfully lovely in her gold embroidered white gown, but her face was sad. The full red lip did not smile, and she kept her large eyes obstinately cast down.

But her father seemed so boisterously cheerful, and his gaiety was infectious. The banquet lasted long. When it was at last ended the Lord of Tremaneuk rose, and taking his daughter by the hand, led her into the middle of the hall. "Before going farther," he began, "I want to announce to you, my friends, a joyful event. My daughter is betrothed to the Lord of Rolken. Let us drink to the health of the young people." A shout of congratulation was heard, and the guests and the vassals rose to their feet and drank, lifting the wine goblets high in the air. But the cup fell from Kerbronn's hand and a mist came before his eyes as Rolken drew near to Guireka and took the maiden's hand in his.

Passively she listened to the enthusiastic toasts and to the praises of her charm and beauty. Regardless, she walked by her betrothed's side.

The revels lasted long—they appeared endless to Kerbronn. At last the tables were cleared, and the guests gathered round the huge fireplace, in which entire trees burned and blazed.

The minstrel tuned his harp and sang a long lay in honor of some of the glorious victories achieved by the Lord of Tremaneuk. He was much applauded, for there was a martial strain in his music that roused the hot blood of the younger men.

When he had ceased playing some of the knights sang in their turn, for in those chivalrous days music was deemed a necessary accomplishment. All exalted the beauty of some fair lady, but the words of love sounded as a bitter mockery to Kerbronn. He did not even listen to the talk of his companions, but kept gazing in silence at Guireka.

Suddenly he rose and tuning his harp, asked permission to sing.

He chose the poem he had improvised the last time he had been with the maiden, for he wished to ascertain whether she remembered what had been for him a never to be forgotten day.

"He sang of a happy spring morn and of the exquisite tenderness of a youthful love. The hearts of all his listeners were



OR TO WIN HER! MURDER AND EVEN PERJURY BECAME POSSIBLE.

gladdened, and they forgot the cold winter wind that blew outside.

But when he had struck the last chord Guireka suddenly rose from her seat. Large tears fell on her cheeks and she hastily sought the darkness that reigned at the bottom of the hall, to hide there her grief.

One rapid glance Kerbronn threw at her, and he saw that she was weeping.

She loved him. The words of worship he had whispered to her had not faded from her memory. Her heart was swelling with happiness, and, finding it was above his strength to conceal the tumult of his feelings, he went out of the hall.

But when in the cold, chilly air the hope that had sprung up in his breast suddenly died out. What should it matter to her father the sympathy Guireka might feel for him? She was engaged to another, and he would never listen to her objections.

Though brave and loyal—even his enemies recognized him as such—Tremaneuk was a stern man, and no one ever dared to disobey his commands, for his will was law.

Kerbronn thought for some time, but he could make no plan. Suddenly, acting on his impulse, he went to his room and hastily wrote to Rolken:

"I love thy betrothed bride. One of us must disappear. Will thou fight with me? On foot or on horseback?"

Calling to his page, he said to him: "Go to the Lord of Rolken and deliver this paper into his hand. Tell him I await his answer."

The boy ran quickly away and speedily returned. On the same paper Rolken had replied:

"The maid of Tremaneuk shall be mine, and never will she become your wife. Thou art not worthy of her. Neither shall I deign to cross my sword against thine."

With a gesture of fury Kerbronn dashed the paper to the ground.

"It shall not be!" he passionately cried. "Guireka shall never be his."

"Take care, I will be revenged," he said to himself.

He gave the message to his page, and as his head throbbed with fever he began to walk on the terrace that overhung the ocean.

The weather was infinitely sad and dreary. The gray clouds seemed to crawl on the ground; in that light fog even the sea was scarcely visible. All appeared dim and confused.

Kerbronn shivered as the cold wind blew on his heated brow. He gazed up at the huge castle; it seemed to frown threateningly on him, and, though brave, he felt suddenly weak and helpless.

How could he wrest Guireka away from the hands of her father? Fight against his powerful rival, who so scornfully refused to listen to him?

A night bird flew past, and its weird cry rang long in his ears. Murder! Murder! Who spoke that word? Kerbronn

clenched his hand convulsively and his heart almost stopped beating. "Guireka shall never be his!" he repeated.

In the hall the carousing still lasted, and as he listened to the sounds of revelry the deadly purpose grew in his mind. On the morrow the sky was bright and the pages were early astir. The knights were putting on their richest armor, eager to distinguish themselves by their handsome appearance as well as by their valor.

But Kerbronn thought little of his appearance as he buckled on his mail shirt, and when he had finished he dismissed his page with an abrupt gesture.

When he was alone he took up his lance and dipped the point in a liquid he had poured out from a small phial.

His hand trembled, but he did not falter. Resolutely he followed his friends and joined in the conversation.

The bright weather added to the beauty of the scene. Under the balcony on which Guireka stood all the knights rode past, their horses curvetting and cantering, wishing to show off their magnificent horsemanhood.

With a flourish of trumpets the tournament began, and the knights stood still, motionless as steel statues and on their helmets and breastplates the sun sparkled brightly. Then when silence fell they separated in two groups, facing one another, and with bent lances waited for the last signal.

Kerbronn had quickly gazed round before his companions lowered their visors. He recognized Rolken and took his place in front of him.

Rolken did not try to avoid him. He felt intensely irritated and was well pleased at the thought of an encounter.

At full speed they rode against one another, bending on their lances.

With a deafening crash Kerbronn's weapon struck against his rival's mail shirt, the sharp point went through the steel and penetrated the flesh.

Rolken was unharmed, yet, when his squire helped him to his feet, he could mount again on his charger.

During a few minutes he rode to and fro, ready to attack another knight, but suddenly he swayed in the saddle and would have fallen off had not his squire caught him and helped him to dismount. But he was unable to stand, and, with a groan, he fell back. The tournament was stopped, and Tremaneuk rose hastily to see what was the matter. Some friends had already gathered round the wounded man and were trying to unbuckle his armor.

"A leech! Call a leech!" cried Tremaneuk as he saw with horror the knight's distorted features.

A great confusion followed. Every one gave some advice or offered an extraordinary remedy. Kneeling at his side, Guireka chafed the cold, clammy hands in hers.

The leech began bleeding the knight. He understood nothing of this strange illness, but it was necessary to do something to inspire the beholders with confidence in his skill.

Twice the dying man tried to raise himself and speak, but only a moan escaped from his pallid lips. Then suddenly the convulsed features relaxed, and he fell back dead.

In a few minutes the general joy had been changed into sadness. Of course all the festivities were instantly stopped, and after a while all the guests departed, talking in hushed whispers of the tragic death of their friend.

During the confusion Kerbronn had disappeared.

Two days after the funeral took place. The corpse was borne on an open litter by four knights, and the Lord of Tremaneuk followed with Guireka.

His face was stern and sad, for he had a despicous will and was resolved that Rolken should be his daughter's husband. It was impossible for him to fight against death, but he was looking visibly disturbed.

They were entering the chapel when suddenly, on a gesture of the priest, the funeral procession was stopped.

Then the monk, who stood by the door, slowly advanced. Surprised, the knights made way, till he stood but a few steps from Kerbronn. Pointing to him with his hand he said in a clear voice that was heard by every one:

"This man is not worthy to enter the house of God."

There was a short silence. Every one gazed inquiringly at the priest and the young man till, turning round, Tremaneuk hastily asked:

"What is the meaning of this disturbance? What does all this signify?"

In the same clear voice the priest replied:

"A man whose hands are stained with blood may not enter this church."

"But explain yourself," the impatient lord violently cried.

"I accuse this knight of having foully murdered Lord Rolken."

A storm of indignant cries interrupted the monk.

"Kerbronn is a brave and loyal knight, incapable of feloniously acting," boldly asserted, pressing forward, an old warrior who had himself knighted the young man.

"I knew him since he was a child and he ever proved himself worthy of esteem."

"It is not possible Kerbronn should be a murderer," said Guireka in her turn, and she bravely came and stood by the accused man.

"Listen," and with an imperative gesture the priest rushed the excited crowd.

"I have found a paper on the body of Rolken. The eyes of the dawn of the tournament Kerbronn wrote to threaten him, swearing he would be revenged. On the morrow Rolken was no more and his end was tragic and unexpected. It could not be explained how that wretched man," she said to her father. "True, his crime is a horrible one."

"But reply: why don't you defend yourself?" Tremaneuk and the old Ploudaue

cried at the same time, turning toward Kerbronn.

With a violent effort the young man sought to master his agitation, and in a hoarse voice he replied:

"I did not such an accusation. You are my comrades—during years we have fought side by side and you know that I ever acted as a true and loyal knight."

"He speaks well! It is the truth!" cried a dozen voices.

There was a pause; then the priest slowly said:

Then let Kerbronn stand before the altar and swear by the Cross and Blood of Our Saviour that he is not guilty of Rolken's death, and if my suspicions are unjust may our Lord forgive me."

By one common impulse all the other men drew back and Kerbronn found himself alone at the foot of the altar.

He threw one despairing glance behind him. All his friends were gazing anxiously and Guireka's eyes were full of distress. Oh, to win her! Murder and even perjury became possible.

He raised his hand. "I swear!"—but as he began he glanced at the corpse. It appeared to him that the dead man was opening his lips to speak, and he abruptly stopped.

A faint murmur—was it anger or astonishment?—rose. Then silence fell. Kerbronn thought he saw an expression of horror come into Guireka's face.

He hastily withdrew his gaze and clearing his throat began answer:

"I swear!"

Once more his voice broke. A blasphemous oath! He could not bring himself to pronounce the dreadful lie.

He felt that he was doomed. His soul was lost. His life was wrecked. Wildly he threw up both hands and staggered back.

"I swear! I swear!" he shrieked in a hoarse, agonized voice. But the gold cross on the altar seemed to be burning like fire, a red veil came before his eyes, and, covering his face with his hands, he groined aloud and fell prostrate on the ground.

"He is guilty! He hath slain our friend! Murderer!" and springing forward Tremaneuk raised his sword and would have struck had not a strong hand held him back.

"Hold!" cried the monk. "Thou standest on consecrated ground. Shed no blood here!"

After a slight hesitation Tremaneuk sheathed his sword.

"Seize that man and carry him out," he ordered.

He was obeyed, and they were soon all gathered outside. But Guireka now stood forth as an angel of mercy.

"Have pity on that wretched man," she said to her father. "True, his crime is a horrible one."

"It was the most dastardly and treacherous crime that was ever perpetrated," he fiercely interrupted.

"Yes, but in spite of all he is thy guest. Give him at least time to repent. Banish him, but do not shed his blood."

"Rolken also was my guest, and his death must be avenged."

Nevertheless Guireka's words appealed to his sense of hospitality, for he had at once considered it as a sacred duty to protect the stranger that slept beneath his roof, however guilty he might be.

"Lords," he said, turning around, "speak. How shall we punish this murderer?"

"Death! Death!" was replied on every side.

But again Guireka threw herself forward.

"Oh, no!" she cried. "Be merciful. Our guest's life is sacred. He has indeed proved unworthy of his knighthood, but let him live and repent of his sins."

"He cannot remain among us," sternly replied Ploudaue, whose heart bled in witnessing the dishonor of his friend. "Let the insignia of his knighthood be taken away from him."

"You are right," Tremaneuk slowly replied. "His life will indeed be spared, but our friend will be avenged, for dishonor is worse than death." Then, raising his voice so as to be heard by all, he cried: "Since the Lord of Rolken has been treacherously slain, before his grave is closed his murderer must be punished. Bring the traitor forth tonight. Dash his scutcheon in the mire, tear off his belt and break his sword."

During all that time Kerbronn had remained in a semi-conscious state, too paralyzed with horror to be able to move or speak. But when some of the soldiers raised him to his feet and began unbuckling his armor he understood, and tried to thrust them away.

"No, no!" he cried. "Not that! Kill me rather!"

"Hold him!" Tremaneuk said to the men, but they were not powerful enough to resist Kerbronn, who now fought in a frenzy of despair.

"Kill me! I have slain thy kinsman. I deserve death. But not that—not dishonor. I shall not submit to it."

Tremaneuk laughed harshly. "Thou hast dishonored thy knighthood. This is thy just punishment."

"Have mercy!" Kerbronn went on, turning toward the other knights. "Ploudaue, remember, I fought by thy side for years as a loyal knight. But I could not resist that awful temptation. I deserve punishment and will submit to your verdict, only spare me that shame."

But Ploudaue suffered much and that made him merciless.

"Thou hast sullied thy name and fair fame; thou deservest no pity," he gloomily replied.

With a groan the miserable man turned away. On all the faces he saw late and disgust. Again the soldiers tried to seize him, but he escaped from them and fell on his knees in front of Guireka.

"Guireka, thou at least shalt be merciful! I ask not for pardon. I implore but for

death. Put me on the rack, torture my body if you will, but spare me that disgrace," and clinging to the maiden he tried to seize her hands.

But she drew back and gazed at Kerbronn with such scorn and contempt that he shrank back as if she had struck him. "May God forgive thee," she simply said.

"This must end," said Tremaneuk. "Hold him tight and tear off the knightly spurs."

"Do not touch me!" Kerbronn wildly cried as he sprang up. "No one will be merciful and put an end to my suffering. Take care! You cast me off; I will revenge myself!"

"Enough, enough!" Tremaneuk violently cried, and a dozen men fell on him.

A horrible scene followed. Kerbronn was like an infuriated brute, and, shrieking with fury, struck heavy blows right and left. Suddenly his voice would break and he would pitifully implore them, begging for a speedy death. His manly features were horrible to listen to, and even those strong men shuddered.

At last when the remains of the defiled sword had been dashed to the ground Tremaneuk spoke again.

"Take this man and put him outside the castle door. Henceforth he is an outlaw, and whoever sees him must kill him without sin. Go," he added, turning to Kerbronn. "Go far from here to hide your disgrace and the shame you have brought on knighthood."

Kerbronn spoke not a word in reply. The fierce struggle, the agony of mind he had endured had exhausted all his strength.

The men led him forth and the door was closed with a heavy clang. His life was ended; he was an outlaw.

It was impossible to remain near those walls, the mute witnesses of his dishonor, and he slowly began to walk forward.

Night had fallen, but what mattered cold and suffering? External sensations existed no more, in his brain was madness and a feeling of atrocious desolation crushed him. If those men had torn off limb and flesh instead of the insignia of his knighthood he would not have suffered so acutely.

At last he stumbled and fell forward. He had reached the summit of a small hill and the path he had unconsciously followed ended there. Turning round Kerbronn threw a last look behind him. The sky was covered with dark clouds, the sea appeared of a dull leaden color, yet the outline of the castle was faintly visible. A light suddenly shone. The funeral procession was coming out from the chapel. Huge torches had been lit and the flames, fanned by the wind, threw their ruddy light on the stern features of the pallbearers. Guireka was again walking behind the bier and there was a tragic look on her white, magdalen face. The men began to sing a funeral chant, and the thrud of the waves as they broke on the shore seemed a fit accompaniment to their deep and wailing voices. When they had finished the dirge the women lifted their voices, and, rising above the wailing of the wind, he could hear them repeat the mournful words, the heartbreaking lamentations that centuries after centuries men have repeated with voices shaken with sobs.

Kerbronn had fallen to his knees, unable to stand any longer. Crouching on the ground, he gazed on as fascinated. But when the funeral procession had disappeared he raised his hand against heaven and cursed the day when he was born.

(To be concluded next week.)

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KINGS COUNTY ABDUCTION CASE UP AT HAMPTON

Hampton, N. B., June 14.—(Special).—This morning in the county court Kings county under the Speedy Trials act before His Honor Judge Wedderburn, Donald B. Kennedy, a prisoner confined in the county jail on an indictment charged with abducting, on June 1st, Elsie Boone, the 15-year-old daughter of Fred Boone from her home at Norton, pleaded not guilty. Fred Boone and Elsie Boone testified to the facts of the latter going off with the accused for a walk. They met on the road a short distance from her home and walked to Sussex and back to Apophis. They finally walked up Millstream Road toward Herwick and sat down on the steps of the Baptist church where they were found by the girl's father who having missed his daughter rudely enquired and followed these up, learned of her having been seen with the accused, secured a warrant for his arrest and accompanied by a constable started out by team in pursuit.

Boone said he was armed with a loaded revolver, which he produced and would have used on the accused and his daughter had not sworn that Kennedy had not criminally assaulted the girl.

Fred L. Fairweather represented the crown and J. M. McIntyre appeared for the accused.

On application of the crown prosecutor and with the consent of counsel for defendant, an adjournment was made until Monday, June 24th, at 10 a. m.

BAGGAGE MASTER CRUSHED TO DEATH AT LIVERPOOL, N. S.

Bridgewater, N. S., June 14.—A shocking accident occurred in the railway yard at Liverpool last night, which resulted in the almost instant death of Wilfred Hebb, baggage master on the Liverpool and Halifax train.

The train was being made up for the route and Hebb, who was uncoupling two cars, stepped between them while they were moving. His foot was caught between the rail and guard, and he was crushed to death by a wheel passing over his body. His neck and back were broken and he was badly cut about the body. He died in a few minutes.

The average man wastes too much time feeling sorry himself.

ABSORBINE

will induce inflammation, even John's sore throat, or any other sore throat, before it is too late to do any good. It is a sure cure for all such ailments. It is a sure cure for all such ailments. It is a sure cure for all such ailments.

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