

Under a Ban.

IN TWO INSTALLMENTS—PART II.

CHAPTER I.

Dick, you dear old ass, shake hands this instant. I've come to town on purpose to see you!

Sir Ughtred Cheshire held out a hand that, for size and sunburn, would have done credit to a navy, notwithstanding he had been a baronet almost from the hour of his birth.

The man addressed as Dick turned a flushed face on him, as he reluctantly placed his long white fingers in those outstretched to him.

'Have you heard?' he said. 'Fourteen years for both of them.'

'I heard. You've cut the service?'

'Weeks ago. It would have cut me if I hadn't.'

'What are you going to do?'

'Work my way out to one of our colonies and take what I can get in the shape of a berth.'

'That's not good enough, old man. I have something better than that to suggest though I shake in my shoes at the thought of putting it into words. It will sound like an 'intent to insult.'

'You couldn't insult anyone if you tried, myself least of all, Cheshire.'

'Wait a bit. But before I yield to the temptation to cut and run, I'll out with it. I want a new coachman, and you'd suit me down to the ground.'

The retired guardsman gazed blankly at his friend, and broke into a short laugh.

'That will hardly wash, old fellow,' he said quietly.

'Why not? You have never been within a hundred miles of The Quarries.'

There's not a soul there who knows you. Of course, men may come sometimes who will think there's a something familiar about you; but the same men may run up against you in New Zealand or Canada, looking after pigs, or driving cattle to market. You won't like roughing it. Dick; you're not that sort, and you are too lazy ever to make your fortune. Come, have a look at my idea. Shave your moustache, and you'll be another man.'

'The stables at The Quarries are noted throughout the West of England. No man's horses can touch mine. Think how you'll enjoy the handling of 'em. My groans are decent fellows, used to holding the coachman in respect. At any rate, come and try it. Give it a month's trial. I am not going to take 'No' to that.'

The breezy determination of a man accustomed to have his way in most things overcame the other's lingering reluctance to give in.

'On one condition, then,' he agreed.

'You will give me your word of honor to forget that you ever met me before the day on which I present myself at The Quarries as your coachman.'

There must be no ridiculous sentiment in our relations to each other. On this understanding alone can I become your debtor.'

'Debtor be hanged! What nonsense you talk!'

'I mean it, Cheshire—I should say Sir Ughtred.'

'Dance take it, Dick! But I must have you on some terms, so you shall have your way in this for a month. How shall I call you?'

'By my mother's name—Brandon. I have a baptismal right to it; she named me Richard Brandon. I am thankful she did not live to see this day.'

'So am I, for your sake. But the disgrace is not yours. Will you do me a service, Dick?'

'I am in your service, Sir Ughtred.'

Cheshire said a strong word in a soft undertone; then he smiled, and fell in with his friend's mood.

'Brandon, I want you to drive me down to Sibby Towers this evening. I am due there to dine and sleep. You can hire a trap somewhere and call for me at the Cecil at six thirty sharp.'

'Very good, sir.'

Dick turned away, and made at once for the first barber shop, to get rid of his moustache.

As Sir Ughtred Cheshire walked slowly in another direction he heard his name pronounced by the occupant of a smart victoria, which had overtaken him and stop ped.

'Get in,' I want you to tell me things. Are you in a hurry to go anywhere in particular?'

'No, Lady Ainslie; and, if I were, I would break a dozen appointments rather than lose the chance of a talk with you.'

'Pack for an hour? I was her ladyship's brief command to her coachman.'

'That was Mr. Forster you were talking to, was it not?' she said, turning an animated and decidedly pretty, though not very youthful, countenance to Sir Ughtred.

She was fully a dozen years his senior, but that did not prevent his admiring her immensely.

'Yes,' he answered, trying to make up his mind what age she looked today.

She varied from about eight-and-twenty to forty, according to her mood, which was as variable as her toilet.

'Poor fellow! He's superbly handsome. Tell me all about it. I only heard the bare particulars away in Rome, and I only got back last night. His father has done something, hasn't he? I don't think I knew he had a father.'

'Lawyer; firm of Forster and Norville,

began Cheshire. 'No particular family, but a certain amount of ambition, on the father's part. He married one of the Surrey Brandons. Dick Forster has the good taste to 'favour' them. His father has never loved him, though he has always been proud of him. Sent him to Rugby, where he learnt nothing. From there to Sandhurst, where he learnt how to ride, and grew to such a height that he was good for nothing but a guardsman. Father had plenty of money; Dick never knew where it came from until quite lately, when it was discovered that Forster and Neville are two of the most accomplished rogues in town, swindled everybody they could get hold of. They both got fourteen years. Dick talks of emigrating.'

'Best thing he can do, poor fellow! What an awful shame! Does the other man leave a family?'

'Haven't a notion. How well you are looking, Lady Ainslie!'

'Rome agreed with me.'

The smile accompanying these words told Sir Ughtred that her ladyship had enjoyed her lengthy sojourn in the south.

She had omitted to keep pace with her years in the matter of growing sedate: her heart was as young as it had been at twenty—youthful—so people who had known her then said; for at twenty she was in love with a man who, after amusing himself at her expense, married a richer woman.

She was not long getting over it, but it left its mark on her, as such things sometimes will.

She had her revenge two years later when she married Lord Ainslie, and took precedence of the other man's wife at all social functions where they chanced to meet.

Before Cheshire parted from her that afternoon, he asked her to come to The Quarries a fortnight later and set as hostess on the occasion of an expected visit from his fiancée and her mother, who were coming to spy out the land.

'I didn't know you were engaged,' said Lady Ainslie, with a little frown. 'Why have you not told me?'

'Because I am not at all sure that I am, was the curious response. I haven't seen her yet. It is a family arrangement of long standing. I had almost forgotten it until reminded by my lawyer that, according to the strongly-expressed wish of the late Admiral Ormond and my father, Miss Ormond and I were to meet and inspect each other, if neither of us had taken a fancy to anyone else by the time she had reached her twenty-fifth birthday. She stands on the brink of it today, unattached and fancy-free—or so her mother assures me. It is about time I settled down, so I have asked them to The Quarries.'

'You are a cool hand, upon my word! How old are you? Twenty six?'

'Twenty seven—nearly twenty eight.'

'Well, I think I'll come, to prevent your doing anything rash. Promise me to bind yourself definitely before consulting me. Will you, Ughtred? You are too nice to be thrown away on a girl who may perhaps, value you chiefly for your title. Is she rich?'

'Comfortably so, I believe. I promise anything you like to ask. I really don't care whether I marry or not.'

'If I were fifteen years younger and unmarried you are the very man I should choose, said Lady Ainslie, with the candour which made this particular man like her above his other women friends. 'Of course my husband may accompany me to The Quarries?'

'He had better, if he doesn't want me to make love to you. I shall expect you this day fortnight.'

It was not until they had parted that he remembered Dick.

Lady Ainslie knew him and would certainly recognize him.

It was scarcely kind, perhaps, to expose the poor fellow to the possibilities of recognition while his father's shame was so fresh in his mind; but after all, it was bound to happen sooner or later, and he might as well get under fire at once.

The chance of recognition from ordinary acquaintances did not, however, seem so probable when Cheshire himself almost overlooked his friend on his first appearance in his new capacity.

The loss of his moustache made a remarkable change in Dick, to say nothing of the driving-coat and coachman's hat which replaced his ordinary attire.

There were several carriages in the hotel courtyard when Cheshire looked out of the window to see what sort of trap his 'man' had brought for him; but it was a good half minute before he spotted Dick on the box seat of a dogcart, holding in a tandem team that seemed, by the look of them, to have done no work for a week at least.

'He makes up well,' thought the baronet as he hastened down, too considerate to expect such animals to stand long.

'You've found some beauties,' he observed, as he clambered up beside his new coachman.

'Yes, sir.'

Glancing around to see that Cheshire's portmanteau was safely on board, 'Brandon' nodded to the booter who was at the leader's head and they were off.

Dick forgot that his father was a felon, and that his own career as a military man was at an end; in his delight at the skill required to navigate his team through the

crowded streets.

He loved horses better than any human being he had yet met, except the man who at his side, his great warm heart rejoicing at the initial success of his plan to make life worth living still for his old chum.

Of course Cheshire did not mean to stop at making Dick his coachman.

That was but a ruse to keep him in sight for the next few weeks.

He would have refused to become a visitor at The Quarries under present conditions, and there did not happen to be a better post to offer him just then.

Whether they would succeed in maintaining the relative positions of master and man remained to be seen; one of them had strong doubts on the subject, but this was not Dick.

CHAPTER II.

It was the first time in his life that Dick had ever travelled third-class.

It was characteristic of him that he chose to do so when he went down to The Quarries.

He was a born actor, and he experienced a certain amount of pleasure in living up to his present role in every detail.

But he could not stand a third 'smoker,' and decided to defer lighting his own cigar until the train stopped somewhere long enough to admit of his enjoying it on the platform.

This was at Bristol, where there was a ten minutes' wait, of which Dick made the most, and very nearly got left behind.

As the train began to move, he made a rush for his seat, but was hindered by a call from a girl wearing a nurse's uniform, occupying a first-class compartment.

'Please stop the train! A tipsy man has got in here!'

Dick had the door open in an instant, while he signalled with his spare arm to the guard.

But that official was facing the other way, on the lookout for his van, and all the notice taken of Dick's signal was a vigorous and unceremonious push from a stalwart porter, which landed him almost at the nurse's feet.

He forgot his new role, and started apologizing in his best manner.

'It was not your fault,' said the girl quickly; 'and, if it were, I'd forgive you for being here. You are more than a match for him—sending a searching glance at a medium-sized figure, dressed in loud checks, which set smiling inanely at her from the corner to which prudence had bid him retreat at the first sign of Dick's entrance.'

'Has he annoyed you?'

'He was beginning to. He had only just got in, and if I had noticed his condition I should have had him turned out; but I was reading, and did not look at him until he spoke. Thank you very much for your prompt response to my call.'

Her eyes—very pretty ones—looked the gratitude expressed by her words.

'I am very glad to have been of service to you,' said Dick, meaning what he said.

'As for that little whipper-snapper, I'll drop him out of the window if he comes a foot nearer.'

But the 'whipper-snapper' was not tipsy enough to be valiant.

He kept his distance, and soon fell asleep, leaving the two at the other end of the compartment practically alone.

They chatted like old acquaintances.

The girl looked sad, in spite of her frequent smiles, and a sort of defiant air with which she seemed determined to fight her sadness, and Dick liked her face, and her voice, and her manner.

They arrived at Taunton all too soon.

He had to change here, and said so sorrowfully.

But the nurse's face brightened.

'So have I. I wonder if you are going my way, by any chance? My destination is Quickmoor.'

'So is mine! What a jolly coincidence!'

He brightened, too, until he wondered what she would think of him when—as must inevitably happen—he met him driving Sir Ughtred Cheshire and his guests about the neighborhood.

He decided to tell her the truth, and bid her good bye; so, when they stood together waiting for the North Devon train, he turned to her with the unaffected dignity which he had inherited from his mother.

'We had better part now or you may find it difficult to forgive me later on. I am going to Quickmoor, as coachman to Sir Ughtred Cheshire, of The Quarries.'

There was a suggestion of a gasp on the part of the pretty nurse, but she recovered herself in an instant, and replied:—

'Well, I am going as nurse to his lodge-keeper, so we are about equal after all.'

'But I am travelling third-class.'

'As I should be doing had not Sir Ughtred sent me the money to go first.'

'Just like him!' said Dick involuntarily.

'You know him well?'

'He is my old—or, I mean I have met him once or twice at the club. Oh, confound it all!'

The pretty nurse was laughing in irrepressible amusement.

'Please forgive me!' she said, sobering as she noticed his annoyance at his slips.

'But you really have betrayed yourself; not but what I know, of course, that you could be only masquerading.'

'Indeed, I am doing nothing of the kind, I am down on my luck, and am genuinely glad of getting the berth of coachman to Sir Ughtred. Here comes the train. I'll see you comfortably settled, and—'

'My nerves were shaken by the horrid man; I positively cannot travel alone. Please continue to look after me. I—I'll go third if you like.'

'You little darling!'

Dick did not say this aloud, but he looked at it as he muttered gratefully—

'That you don't!'

They had a compartment entirely to themselves this time, and when they had started, the nurse was the first to speak.

'It will sound to you like an odd coincidence; but it is a fact for all that. I am down on my luck also. I studied nursing

Mother and Doctor Too

Until the doctor comes, and for minor ills and accidents, the mother must doctor her family. Tens of thousands of mothers have relied upon JOHNSON'S ANODYNE LINIMENT, and have found it always reliable. It is used both externally and internally and it is the remedy for inflammation from any cause. Used continually for 30 years as a household remedy, its sustained popularity and increasing use every year are the best possible testimonials to its curative powers.

Johnson's ANODYNE LINIMENT

Is of greatest value in treating colic, cramps, diarrhoea, cholera morbus, bites, bruises, burns, stings, chafing, colds, coughs, croup, catarrh, bronchitis, la grippe, lameness, muscle soreness and pain and inflammation in any part of the body. Sold in two sizes, 1/2 lb. and 1 lb. The larger size is more economical. If your dealer hasn't it send us a note. Ask for it.

J. S. JOHNSON & CO., 22 Custom House St., Boston, Mass.

for a hobby at a time when I had no thought that I should ever have to work for my living. Now my profession stands between me and starvation; I have not a penny but what I earn.'

'My own case exactly,' said Dick. 'But it must be terribly hard for you,' he added, with sudden sympathy.

'Not worse for me than for you. Besides, I like it. This is my first private case; but I go to it with a lighter heart than I have had for many a long day.'

'Another coincidence! I feel as jolly as a sandboy at the thought of tooling people about the country down here. Will you tell me your name? Mine is Dick Brandon.'

'Mine is Diana Langton. I wonder if it will be a part of my duties to open the gates for you to drive in and out?'

'I wish it might. Oh, look here. Miss Langton. There is not the slightest necessity for you to feel that you ought to recognize me if we run up against each other at the Quarries.'

'Of course not!' she laughed softly. 'The lodge-keeper's nurse could not possibly be expected to converse on terms of equality with Sir Ughtred's coachman. I am glad to find you know your place, Mr. Brandon.'

'You'll have to drop the 'Mr.' he warned her. 'As a uniformed nurse you are miles above me. I shall be privileged to address you as 'Nurse,' that's one comfort. Nurse Diana! That doesn't 'go' somehow. 'Diana' should be on horseback, taking her fences in first class style.'

The pretty eyes flashed and then saddened.

'Never again!' she murmured. 'Parting with my horse was the hardest of all. I loved the darling!'

'You do ride? You are fond of horses?'

'Fonder than I am of human beings, I think.'

'Then that's another bond between us. Why confound it, here we are! Before our time, surely?'

'I don't think so.'

Cheshire was on the platform.

He had come to ask about a parcel, and to see if Nurse Langton had arrived, for the lodge-keeper was dangerously ill.

His eyebrows went up a little when he saw his new coachman step coolly out of a first class compartment and then give his hand to the nurse.

'Ah, Brandon, found your way down, I see? Have I the honour of addressing Nurse Langton? Yes? Your arrival is eagerly looked for by poor Collett's wife. He is very bad, I fear. This way, please. You drive, Brandon; Phillips will show you the road.'

Sir Ughtred assisted the nurse into the wagonette and seated himself opposite, while Dick, after speaking to the horses, with a pat for each, got up in front, and gathered up the reins.

Before they reached The Quarries, Cheshire was in possession of the little circumstance which had brought about an acquaintance between Nurse Langton and Dick Brandon.

His only audible comment was—

'I wondered to see him travelling 'first,' I confess. Glad he was there to come to your rescue.'

But when he saw the glance directed at his coachman's military-looking back by the pretty eyes, he began to wonder what the end might be.

Dick's own fine orbs were very expressive, as he turned his head to take a silent farewell of his late travelling companion when she alighted at the lodge.

'Wait for Nurse Langton's opinion of Collett,' said Ughtred to the groom, as he climbed into the wagonette again. 'Straight ahead, Brandon!'

When the horses had started, the baronet added, in a hearty tone—

'Welcome! Dick, old man! And forgive me this once for breaking conditions.'

'Thanks, Cheshire,' Dick turned his eyes on his friend. 'I'm awfully glad to be here.'

'I've arranged for you to have a little shanty of your own,' continued Sir Ughtred. 'It belonged to one of the gamekeepers who had the misfortune to die six months ago. His mother lived with him, and I couldn't turn her out, so she's there still, and is prepared to 'do' for you. She's a decent old soul, and won't annoy you at all.'

'Thanks,' said Dick again.

He guessed that the arrangements for his comfort would prove the best that could be made without attracting too much comment.

But the house was in sight now, with its double row of windows straggling east and

west and in and out, in charmingly irregular fashion, so he squared his shoulders and drove on in silence.

He was awake and about early next morning, having had a somewhat restless night, in spite of Mrs. Upton's skill in bed-making.

Perhaps Nurse Langton had had something to do with his sleeplessness; certainly, his thoughts were of her as he left the cottage soon after six o'clock, and made for a bill he had seen from his bedroom window, on top of which he expected to find, not only a refreshing breeze, but a stand point from which to take an extensive survey of the surrounding country.

He started at a brisk pace, whistling cheerily as he stode along; but the birds soon silenced him, their morning song being so far superior to anything he could hope to produce in the way of music, except through the medium of his violin.

'I wish I had brought it!' he said to himself regretfully. 'Though, I suppose, it would hardly have done. I shall have to be content with Mrs. Upton's piano; it won't half a bad sort of instrument, I wonder if the deceased gamekeeper was musical? His mother doesn't look a pianist by any means. Ah! those birds, I wonder if she would enjoy listening to them?'

The 'she' with whom his thoughts were busy was certainly not Mrs. Upton.

A moment later the sound of a human voice broke in unmusically on the throbbing melody of the birds—a voice not only unmelodious, but also uncultured and altogether unpleasant.

'Give us a copper, miss? I ain't 'ad no bed to sleep in this night, and I ain't got no money to buy a bit of breakfast.'

'That is not true!' This second voice sounded sweeter even than the song of the birds to Dick Brandon's ears. 'You were eating when I caught sight of you.'

An oath was the immediate response, and that oath, ugly though it was, was followed by a still uglier threat, which sent Dick flying along in the direction of a gate by means of which he hoped to reach the rude disturber of the sweet morning peace.

The man—a tramp of the lowest order—turned on his heel and scurried away at the sound of the about to which Dick gave vent as he cleared the gate with a spring.

Diana Langton came towards him with grateful eyes and outstretched hands.

You seem destined to be my deliverer Mr. Brandon.'

'I desire no better destiny,' he replied, taking the hands and holding them for a moment. 'But will you pardon my suggesting that you do not again expose yourself to the chance of annoyance? I may not always be at hand you know.'

'You have a right to suggest, and I promise to obey. But I certainly did not anticipate this second affair. Of course, I know I must take a stroll in the country alone? In the worst parts of London the nursing uniform is sufficient protection against any possibility of insult.'

'So it ought to be. That carrion who accosted you just now was of the lowest type of his kind. Had he not looked so vilely unclean, I should have enjoyed thrashing him, but I felt reluctant to lay my hands on so loathsome a thing.'

'He is loathsome!' Nurse Langton shuddered. 'Let us forget him. Isn't it a heavenly morning? Did you ever hear anything sweeter than these dear birds? I do so want to get to the top of that hill! Mrs. Collett is with her husband, so I can spare an hour.'

'What sort of a night have you had? asked Dick, as he fell into step at her side, feeling that the beauty of the morning was without a single flaw.'

'Very bad, poor fellow! Like a true nurse she thought of her patient, not of herself. She sought for a few moments at a time, he had no sleep until half past five. Then, as Mrs. Collett kindly brought me some coffee, and offered to stay with him, I thought I'd take a walk to refreshen me up by the time he wakes again. He'll probably have a good sleep now.'

'You have not been in bed at all?'

'How could I? I am used to it, and I shall rest by and bye you know.'

CONTINUED ON PAGE SEPTEN.

CANCER

For a full and complete list of the names of the men who have been cured of cancer, or pain, For Canadian testimonials & brochures, write Dept. 111, Messrs. Macdonald, 100-102, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150, 152, 154, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 166, 168, 170, 172, 174, 176, 178, 180, 182, 184, 186, 188, 190, 192