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LORD DACRE OF GILSLAND; OR, The Rising in the North: AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF THE DAYS OF ELIZABETH.

By E. M. Stewart.

CHAPTER III.—CONTINUED. "Monster of ingratitude!" exclaimed Lucy, "is this thy return for my father's care of thee in thy sickness, for the kindness he has shown thee? Wretch, from the first hour that thy odious person darkened his door."

"Verily, maiden!" replied Ralph, "it is the return which the ungodly shall receive for those works which they term good, and in which they place so vain a confidence, disregarding the sufficiency of faith, which sanctifieth all things, making that pleasing and profitable to the Lord which the men of Belial call wicked and unjust, for the Lord looketh not to the actions, but to the faith, maiden, to the faith."

"Hypocrite!" said Lucy, "the wound under which you now smart is doubtless a proof that heaven grants success to your villainy."

"If pleaseth the Lord sometimes to try the spirits of his elect, though he levels not his bolts at the laborers in his vineyard; but the ungodly his right hand hath smitten, and they are crushed in to the dust. A skillful leech must be he who shall restore Henry Willoughton; to me unworthy servant, it was allowed to make vain the boasts of the wicked. I saw him as he fell with his bow broken by the wound which this trusty right hand inflicted."

"Alas! the brave and trusty Willoughton!" exclaimed Lucy, "springing from the couch and grasping the hand of Gilbert. 'Man, if you have mercy tell me if he has been slain by this wretch?'"

"Be comforted, sweet maiden," replied Gilbert, "I saw the gallant fall, but I think not he was slain; but be satisfied and I will procure the intelligence of his fate to-morrow. And now poor child thou art faint and cold, I pray thee take a cup of this good wine and a morsel of a manchet."

Lucy declined the proffered refreshment, and implored him to prove that he really pitied her by restoring her to her father. This he told her he did not dare to do, and bending down he entered her in a low tone to taste the wine. "Consider, fair damsel," he said, "thou art in no condition to neglect thy bodily strength!" a suggestion the wisdom of which she immediately felt.

Meanwhile Morley and Ware approached and eyed her with a bold freedom that shocked the defenceless Lucy, but from which she had no means of escaping; and Ralph, wining every moment under the pain of his wound, yet looked at the wine flask as if he had a strong inclination to make himself better acquainted with its contents. Upon this, Edmund Ware approached him, saying, "Friend Ralph, thou dost oggle that wine-flask with a great show of affection, but I doubt that the austerity of thy faith forbids thee to taste."

"Surely!" replied Ralph, "the Lord gives not the wine and the oil, the goodly beebes, and the fat capon, only to wash the lying throats and stuff the sinful maws of the unbelieving; evil it is to them when they are permitted to eat of the fat and drink of the strong, and a snare shall these good things be to them, leading them to betray the wickedness of their hearts. But a support and a delight are they to the faithful; and good youth, I pray you give me of the wine, for I thirst!" Gilbert no longer interfered to prevent Ralph swallowing the, to him, pernicious draught and fixing the flask itself to his lips, he greedily swallowed the greater portion of its contents, while Ware and Morley stood by in anticipation of some malicious sport from the workings of the wine on the spirit of the Puritan. They were, however, for the time disappointed; for, in five minutes after he drank it Ralph fell into a profound slumber. Soon afterwards the other three men withdrew from the cabin, and Lucy could hear their voices in conversation. Thus left for awhile to herself she began, though she knew that escape was for the present moment impossible, to resolve its practicability when she should be removed from the boat, and sought to acquire some knowledge of the direction in which she was being conveyed. "Softly" rising, she stole across the cabin, at the upper end of which she perceived a

window with a shutter drawn across it. To reach the window she was compelled to pass the couch on which Ralph slept, and she sickened to behold it all stained with the blood which had flowed from his unbound wrist. Carefully pushing back the shutter, she looked out upon the night. It had cleared considerably, and the pale rays of the moon showed the city in the far distance, with the beacon of Bow flaming in the midst. Nearer at hand they trembled upon the spires of Ratcliffe, and threw a faint light upon the houses which rose dark and grim upon the banks of the river. Ratcliffe, Rotherhithe, Wapping, and Deptford, were then, as now, places connected with the shipping, but their houses were thinly scattered, and made a picturesque appearance, with here and there a few tall trees rising among them.

Lucy Fenton leaned weeping against the cabin window; she possessed not the high toned enthusiasm of her cousin Gertrude, and sank under a situation sufficiently alarming to startle the strongest nerves. Gradually declining, as the boat glided along into deeper shade, one after another the groups of houses disappeared. The cottages of Deptford, with their plastered walls, narrow casements, and the dark granaries piled among them, were no longer seen; and Lucy, who knew the banks of the river well, perceived that they were approaching Greenwich, at that time a place of royal residence. A vivid hope agitated her breast that some barge or boat might approach the one in which she was confined. In this expectation she was not disappointed. They had just gained Greenwich, when the dashing of oars met her ear, and she perceived a barge advancing in the moonlight, which streamed in a long line down the centre of the river. It was within less than a bow shot of the fishing boat, when Lucy, leaning from the cabin window, uttered a piercing scream, and loudly implored for assistance. A shout immediately arose among Sir Philip's men, but the barge was nigh, and there was no way to escape but in an endeavor to shoot past it. A few words, however, were spoken to the rowers of the barge by a gentleman who was walking on the deck; and as the fishing boat skimmed along the surface of the water, it was suddenly arrested by a grappling iron, which brought it with a violent concussion against the side of the barge.

"Oh, courteous gentleman, save me from these villains!" shrieked Lucy, and the next moment she was violently dragged from the window, and extended on the floor of the cabin, the unwounded hand of Ralph Adams grasping her throat with a violence that threatened suffocation, while his eyes flashed with all the fury of delirium. Meanwhile the cavalier on board the barge advanced and enquired the meaning of the shriek which he had just heard. He was a man of portly and majestic figure, the numerous flambeaux borne by his attendants in the barge, which was painted and gilded in the richest manner, showed the costly jewels that ornamented his dress, and lighted up his fine but voluptuous features. He was apparently about the middle age, perhaps somewhat past it, but his uncommon graces, both of face and figure, made ample amends for the absence of youth.

The attire of his person was magnificent, his doublet was of black velvet, puffed with gold tissue, nor were his limbs deformed by the enormous trunk hose so commonly worn at the time, his stockings were of knitted silk, than an article of great expense, large crimson rosettes decorated his shoes, and upon the small black velvet cap, which sat lightly on his head, was a plume of white feathers, fastened by an agraffe of diamonds. At his shoulders hung a mantle of scarlet cloth, richly embroidered with gold; this article of attire was peculiarly appropriate to the noblemen and gentleman of the period. A small falling ruff, of the finest foreign lace, was left open at his throat, and the hilt of his rapier glittered with jewels. To the angry enquiries made by this person as to the female in the boat, Morley replied, by alleging with the most consummate impudence that she was his sister, whom he was conveying back to her father's house, from which she had absconded. But the gentleman, being by no means satisfied with this reply, was preparing to send his people on board the boat, when Morley, who had meantime possessed himself of a hatchet, severed at a blow the cable which held the grappling iron, and the vessels flew wide asunder. The cavalier seemed much inclined to order pursuit, when he was approached by a grave looking personage, quietly watching his friend's proceedings. The countenance of this personage was thoughtful and impressive, it might even have been termed handsome, but for the sinister expression of the hawk-like eyes, and the dubious character of the mouth. The tightening of the thin lips as if in resolve, and the smile that always withered to a sneer, were equally unpleasant to behold. The attire of this person was that of a man of rank, but it had none of the splendor of his companions. "I knew not," said this gentleman, in a low but chilling tone, "that thou hadst so much of the old leaven about thee still, as to assume the office of knight-errant to distressed damsels."

"Heaven forbid that the old leaven should poison my heart!" returned the other, who was nettled by his sarcastic manner, "but it appeared that the voice of the maiden was known to me, and if it be she whom I suspect, she is the daughter of an honest man, whose child I would not willingly leave in peril!"

"Thou art marvellously generous!" replied his friend, "but who waits for us, uses not to like delay: though I forgot, perchance 'twill pleasure her to wait for thee," he continued, his lips curling into a still more sardonic sneer. "By this time the boat was skimming along like a bird, half a mile ahead of the barge, the furrow that marked her course glittering in the moonlight. The master of the barge knew that in company of his present guest it would be unwise to persist in his design of pursuit."

"Were it not a goodly work to strangle this unbellying maiden, she could then no longer sin against the Lord!" said Ralph Adams to himself, as he held Lucy on the floor of the cabin. The poor girl meanwhile could hear even in her agony the voice of the owner of the barge to whom she had petitioned for assistance. In looking at the

infuriated countenance of Ralph, she felt that her life was in danger. By the old in sorrow as in years, a sudden and violent death is looked upon with an eye of just alarm; but to a young creature like Lucy, happy, prosperous, beloved, full of joy in the present, and hope for the future, how terrible were the moments in which she thought she was about to be crushed out of life by the insane fanatic Ralph; what an age of agony did those fleeting moments contain! Ralph Adams had been taken into the house of Lucy's father, Richard Fenton, as the son of a worthy man, and a well meaning and sincere, however mistaken reformer. The son resembled his father only in his fanaticism, which latter quality working upon a froward and malicious heart, and a head stupid to a degree of idiocy, had transformed him into a being at once contemptible and fearful. In Fenton's house he had been rather despised than hated, even his malice had been pitied as the offspring of a defective intellect. It was not remembered that excessive weakness is often the concomitant of excessive crime, and excessive cunning.

Certain it was that the sudden entrance of Gilbert to the cabin alone saved the life of Lucy Fenton, whose face was convulsed by the strong grasp with which the miscreant had seized her throat. It might have been that Ralph, in the possession of the little sense which nature had vouchsafed to bestow upon him, would not have thought of committing a crime so cruel, so desperate, and so uncalculated. But the deep draught of wine which he had taken had operated balefully on his frame, already in a state of fever from the pain of the wound inflicted by Lord Dacre, and the scream of Lucy as the barge appeared awakened him in a high state of delirium. He turned his eyes gleaming with the fury of a fiend upon Gilbert as he entered, exclaiming—

"Stand back, for the Lord hath delivered the ungodly into my hands, to be offered up as a sacrifice to him, even as Abraham was to have offered up his beloved son, Isaac! Verily I tell thee my heart waxes sore within me when I find myself put upon this deed, the slaying of the fair maiden, but the commands of the Lord who may venture to gainsay them!"

"A murmur upon the mad Puritan!" said Gilbert—"hound, leave go the girl! Ho! Edmund, John, come hither!"

By the time they came, Gilbert had already freed the terrified Lucy; but the united strength of Morley and himself was necessary to bind the fanatic, who, when they had forced him back to the couch, bitterly upbraided them for interfering in the work of the Lord, who had bid him slay the ungodly maiden.

"Hark thee, good friend madman!" said Gilbert, "that wine has, even as I suspected, wrought thee much mischief; thou art demented with fever or strong drink, or surely thou wouldst remember that an angel was sent to tell Abraham not to slay Isaac; therefore thou must have made some small mistake about that same command thou dost talk about."

"Belike that I did," answered Ralph, "for as I wakened out of my sleep, I heard a noise of the rushing of waters, and the sound of many voices, and methinks one said, 'Ralph! Ralph! get thou up, and slay the maiden!'"

"Slay the maiden! get thee gone for a rot," cried Gilbert, "it was save the maiden! But here we are, gentle damsel!" he said, approaching Lucy, as the boat a few minutes afterwards grated on the sand, left bare by the ebbing tide.

"Gentle damsel, will it please you, prepare to take horse." Then perceiving that she was half fainting with terror and exhaustion, he took from Edmund Ware a large mantle, which he held ready, and wrapping her in it, he raised her in his arms and bore her out of the cabin. As he scrambled with her up the bank Lucy, revived by the fresh air, unclosed her eyes, and perceived two men waiting at a little distance with horses for the whole party. Ralph was then handed out of the boat with very little ceremony, and after some jesting between Morley and those who were left in it, which Lucy found was occasioned by the deception he had practised on the cavalier of the barge, the sail was extended, and it glided slowly up the river. The poor Lucy, while being placed on one of the horses, looked round in search of aid, but alas! none was near. Sir Philip's men having landed in a secluded spot between Woolwich and Greenwich, nothing was to be seen but fields bordered with dwarf willows near to the river, and at a little distance Shooter's hill, and the land around it luxuriant with the stately elm and birch. Gilbert having mounted behind Lucy that he might support her, Ralph was firmly bound and placed upon a horse before one of the men who had been waiting, and as soon as these arrangements were completed, the whole party set off at a rapid rate, crossing the country for about half an hour, at the expiration of which time Lucy found that they were making a detour in order to avoid a village to the right, at a little distance from which the turrets of some lofty building met her view. But this also they avoided, and struck into a lane arched over by the lofty trees that were planted on both sides of it; the paths were slippery with the late rain, and they were obliged to proceed slowly and with great caution. As they turned out of this lane Lucy saw in the moonlight a gate, apparently forming the entrance to the pleasure grounds of some mansion. In this conjecture she was not deceived, and soon found that she had arrived at the place of her destination; for Edmund Ware, dismounting from his horse, drew forth a key, with which he unlocked the gate, and the whole party passed into the grounds. These were finely wooded, and seemingly laid out with great taste, for here and there Lucy caught a glimpse of the smooth waters of an artificial lake, or the sparkling of a fountain, as it rose and fell in the moonbeams which had now either entirely dispersed the clouds, or skirted their dark masses with a border of light. They soon reached another gate, where they again paused, and Gilbert dismounting, lifted Lucy from the horse, and unlocking the gate, led her into an extensive flower garden, while his companions receiving from him a few words of direction, departed, taking Ralph along with them.

Stone terraces, grottos, temples, and fountains,

hedges of clipped yew, flower beds intersected by an infinity of serpentine paths marked the fashionable garden of the age. Lucy, faint and ill with the strange perils of the night, was weary with traversing it, when she perceived a stately mansion with a broad terrace running along the side she was approaching. Up the steps of this terrace she was led by Gilbert. The sight of the mansion made her heart sink, for it convinced her that she had a powerful oppressor. It was built of deep red brick, the form quadrangular, and at each corner stood a massive round tower; these towers possessed but little beauty, their shape being that of a pepper box. The windows were innumerable, but long and narrow, and surrounded by ornaments in free-stone. The terrace which Lucy trod was magnificent. Marble statues graced it at certain distances, between these were flowering shrubs, many of them of foreign growth; yet, dripping with the rain, they shed a delicious perfume. In the centre of this terrace was a noble fountain having a basin of red marble, surrounded by allegorical figures wrought in the same material, in the midst the waters gushed from the upheld horn of a colossal figure of plenty. A little beyond this fountain Gilbert stopped at a small door at which he knocked. A footstep was soon heard within, and Lucy shuddered dreadfully as it was opened by a woman fully of the middle age, but who yet retained traces of uncommon beauty. Upon her head she wore a hood of black velvet, worked with silver thread. Her petticoat and bodice were of rose-colored taffeta, slashed with black; yet to all this gaiety of attire so unseemly at her years, her face, in spite of its lingering beauty, presented a strange and withering contrast. In her hand she held a silver lamp, and as she raised it to examine the countenance of Lucy, it showed the lines upon her own, which anguish rather than years, seemed to have ploughed: the wild melancholy of her black eyes, the marble paleness of her cheek. But her sadness seemed not that of a wounded and innocent spirit. In her face were the deep traces of despair, that despair which those only know who mingle their sorrows with their guilt. This expression, so wild, so sad, was rendered more startling by her gay dress: it was as if a corpse had been attired for a festival. One word she spoke as Lucy entered, "Welcome!"

CHAPTER IV. She is fooled. With a most false effect; and J, the truer, So to be false with her.

CYMBELINE. The bright sunbeams of a remarkably fine October morning had forced their way between the overhanging upper stories of the narrow streets and lanes of the city, dispersing their customary gloom, and penetrating even to the dusty warehouses of John Harding, while he ransacked his stores to satisfy the capricious fancy of some half-dozen of the Court gallants. The place was heaped with rich merchandise: bales of wrought velvets and embroidered satins from Persia and Genoa, gold and silver tissues, feathers dyed to all the colors of the rainbow, packages of fine lace, and lawn, and tapestry were ranged on one side of the warehouse, while on the other were vases and drinking cups—some wrought of curious wood, others of ivory or agate. There were also boxes of costly spices and preserved fruits, rare perfumes, fans, pomander boxes, Venice mirrors, scarlet cloth, and all other fineries, whether native or foreign.

Most devoutly did John Harding on this morning wish that his courtly customers had deferred their visit; once when Master Wood, the kind warden of the city watch, offered to take his place with the apprentices and men for a moment, he stole away from among the heaps of unfolded satins and glittering tissues to speak a word of comfort to his distressed brother-in-law, Richard Fenton. Comfort, however, the latter was in no condition to receive, an unexpected dispatch of business at York had brought him home on the preceding evening, only a few hours after the abduction of his daughter; and it was his knocking at the door of Harding's house which had so abruptly broken in upon Gertrude's conversation with Lord Dacre. The remainder of the night and the early part of the ensuing morning were spent by him in attempts to find out some clue by which he might recover his lost Lucy; but having failed in every endeavor, he had yielded to despair, and sat weeping like a child by the couch of Willoughton, who, in a state of high delirium, increased the distress of the unfortunate father by raving incessantly of that daughter whom he had lost.

"Where is Gertrude?" said Harding. "I know not!" replied Fenton, in the peevish tones of ever selfish sorrow. "Little care has thy spoiled daughter for an afflicted uncle, a sick friend, or a lost cousin; doubtless, so wise a damsel must be superior to affection. Oh, my sweet Lucy, little didst thou think how lightly Gertrude prized thee!"

"Richard, you are unjust!" answered Harding. "At another time, and when may it please a merciful heaven, our darling Lucy is restored to us, I will prove to you that my Gertrude's heart is as tender as her mind is noble: does our friend here want anything which her care could supply? does she not know her good nurse, Mabel, to be a sage attendant for the sick? hath she failed in any tender enquiries? or were it in vain to watch without intermission by the couch of a wounded youth?"

"That it were not!" said, in a low voice, a comely looking old woman, as she drew back the bed curtain which had concealed her. "I pity thee from my heart, Master Fenton; but do not be angry with my child because she escaped the snare into which your's unhappily, has fallen: remember, too, how harshly, not half an hour since, you bid her from your sight; and yet, sweet lady, I know she would return this minute, and bear with all your ill-temper, could she but hope to give you a moment's comfort. Please not, then, to find fault with my child!" Giving a fond parental emphasis to the last words, nurse folded round her her ample gown of fine green stuff, settled her clean white cap, and sunk back in her chair; the mute and kind attendant of the wounded Henry.

"Alas!" resumed Harding, "tis a very merit in

my Gertrude which so much angers thee, Richard! how many a tear for her cousin must she stifle in the difficult duty which lies before her this day; young and beautiful as she is, to what trials am I not even in these hard times compelled to expose her. But thy purity be thy shield, my own gentle Gertrude; and if heaven has yet a care for the innocent, may we not hope that it will restore our Lucy in safety to her friends!"

And where meanwhile was Gertrude? In Harding's house was a small room hung with dark tapestry, it contained a bed, two Flemish chairs, some cushions covered with purple save, a table, a closet, and a large and curiously carved cabinet of oak. Neither casement nor door, however, were visible; upon the table stood a massive silver lamp, fed with perfumed oil, its steady spiral flame resting on the brow of Lord Dacre, half shadowed as it was by the rich masses of his raven hair, while he bent attentively over some papers, beautifully contrasted with his fine and thoughtful countenance, that of the fair girl who knelt on a cushion at his feet. The eyes of Gertrude were fixed on the face of her preserver, while he rapidly wrote on the paper which she was to convey for him to the hands of Vitelli. She fancied that she could read the spirit's working in that noble face in the momentary darkening of the majestic brow, the slight motion of the curved lip; but when he suddenly looked up, she almost shrank as the full light of his dark and penetrating eyes seemed pouring into her own.

It is a lingering memory of some purer state of existence, or a sweet prophecy of happiness to come, that magical and indelible intelligence which fetters soul to soul—which wakens us so suddenly to a new life, to a thousand senses never known before. Youth, beauty, all the charms of mind may encircle us with their enchantments, and yet rouse not that throbbing sympathy which pains the bosom with its sweet delight seeming most like a recognition, a restoration to some far-off bliss.

Involuntarily the eyes of Gertrude fell beneath the overpowering glance of Lord Dacre. She rose from her kneeling posture, and hesitated to speak, the victim of a confusion from which her courtly companion was not free, for though he had finished his letter he paused for a moment, forgetful of the instructions which he was about to give. A silence so embarrassing was broken by a slight noise within the oak cabinet, the door of which was opened to give John Harding admission to the apartment.

"Your pardon, noble Lord!" he said, "if I seem to hurry your communications on a matter so important as that you would intrust to the guidance of my daughter; but if she leave not the house presently, a busy neighbor whom it were well should have no knowledge of her errand, will be like to insist on accompanying her."

"I know well whom you mean," interrupted Gertrude, "our inquisitive Bertha Allen would molest us with her affected good will."

"Even so!" answered Harding. "Then with your leave, noble Lord," said Gertrude, "if your instructions be ready, I will forthwith set out for the dwelling of the valiant Italian. Pardon would I avoid this dame of Lombard street, who had last night only a slanderous word for my mistress, but whose curiosity I will surmise would lead her hither this morning.—The Virgin guard me from the defect which even now I blame in Dame Bertha! but if we are to yield credence to more than the mere gossip of the neighborhood, we may keenly suspect her to be one of the mean and miserable spies of the Court."

While thus speaking, Gertrude received the paper from the hand of Lord Dacre, together with a ring which she was first to present to the Italian.

"Where now," she continued, "is Mistress Allen?"

"She holds Mabel in close converse, mingling her discourse with a thousand malevolent sneers at our poor Lucy, and she promises to remain until she has seen you my child."

"Thanks for the information mine acute Mistress Bertha," returned Gertrude. "I will put on my hood, and slip down the back stairs, and let me have three minutes' start of the portly dame, I warrant she will not overtake me." So saying, Gertrude concealed the packet in her bosom, and playfully waving her hand to her father and Lord Dacre, she sprang through the open door of the cabinet, and vanished up a flight of dark and narrow stairs which were dimly discernible within.

Gertrude had not overrated her nimbleness of foot; and in five minutes, wrapped in a black silk mantle, and with a hood of green embroidered silk drawn half over her beautiful face, she was hastening along the Corn Market, bearing in her hand a small basket filled with specimens of choice perfumes, her excuse should her errand to the Italian Captain arouse any undue observation. Her light step and graceful figure were not, however, so easily disguised, and more than one, "Good morrow to you, Mistress Gertrude?" "Whither so fast our Lily of Gnes Street?" "Nay, tell us, have ye heard aught of Mistress Lucy?" checked the anxious maiden on her way. A more serious interruption however awaited her.

(TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.)

A DISCREET HINT.—Matilda (star-gazing), "How I would wish I could catch a falling star!" Young Dobbs (whose picture has been so successful at the academy this year)—"That's impossible, Miss Matilda. But—a—might I suggest that you needn't go far for a rising one?"—Punch.

GETTING HIS ANSWER.—Important old gent (from the country, who thinks the lofty bearing of these London burmoids ought to be "taken down a bit").—"Glass of ale, young woman; and look sharp, please!" Haughty blonde (blandly)—"Second class refreshments lower down, sir!"—Punch.

A little boy in St. Cloud a few days ago undertook to see if he could lift himself by hanging on a mule's tail. He found out all about it, and the doctors think the skin on his forehead will grow up, but will leave a bad scar.

It is a strange fact that wise men learn more from fools than fools do from wise men.