

temper." But he did perhaps better than that; he went away altogether, and was not in Cobble End at all on our wedding-day.

"Cobble End" was the name of our seaside village; an odd name enough, but not one which suggests a pretty place, but it was very pretty, and it never looked prettier than on my wedding-day; it was bright summer, the birds were singing and the trees waving, and everything seemed so glad that Harry and I were going to be happy. The bells seemed to sound louder and sweeter than I had ever heard them, and there was joy in the sound of the waves, as they dashed on the shore and rippled at our feet as we walked beside them.

There was no going away for our honeymoon; we were going to live in the village close to my father's house. Harry was going to take me to Bristol and Clifton for two days, but that was all, and that could not come off just yet, for it was the busy season. Harry professed to care nothing for Edward Bathurst's threats and wild words, but I think it made him decide to be married sooner than we should have otherwise been. He did not like the idea of my being exposed to the chance of meeting and listening to him.

"He won't interfere with my wife," he said; "he might try annoy my sweetheart."

So we were married right in the midst of the fishing season, when Harry was very busy and could only spare the day. But I was just as happy as if I had taken a holiday then. There was no sign of Edward Bathurst on our wedding day nor on day for a long while, and when he did come home he seemed quite a different man. He shook hands with me and wished us happiness, but there was a look on his face I did not like, and I told Harry I should be glad when he went away again.

Harry laughed at me, but I think he was glad too when it was known that Edward was going to leave Cobble End altogether, that he had only come home to dispose of his property and bid his friends good-bye. It was soon done; the houses were sold and the boat too, and we all understood that he was going to a place on the east coast, somewhere near Yarmouth. It was far enough away for me to feel quite comfortable. He could do me no harm there, and he would forget his anger and jealousy and settle down on his own account, in a quiet, Christian-like fashion.

I heard of him going his rounds of farewell in the village before I saw him; I was sitting alone in our little room with the door open, looking at the moonlight on the sea outside, when he came in suddenly as if he had started up from the earth. I had not been thinking of him, and I was rather frightened till I saw who he was. I said something about wishing him success wherever he was, but he turned upon me with eyes that glittered with evil passions.

"You ought rather to wish that I might never hold up my head amongst my fellow men again, Agnes. I beg your pardon, Mrs. Wyld," he said, with a sneer at my new name. "Your wish should be that I might die conveniently soon."

"Why?" I asked, frightened, though I strove to appear at my ease. "Because I shall keep my oath."

"What oath?" "The oath to have my revenge on you and him for your treachery. You have sent me into the world a broken, disappointed man, and when you least expect it, my turn shall come. I will have vengeance full and bitter for every pang you have made me suffer."

I was so frightened that I hardly knew when he went away, and Harry found me crying bitterly when he came home presently. He did his best to cheer me up when I told him what had happened, and bade me never mind what Edward Bathurst said. "Revenge had gone out of fashion now," he declared, with a laugh, "and no one went about vowing vengeance like a stage ruffian." I did not know what that meant;

I had never seen a theater or read a play in those days, but I was roused and comforted by what he said, and I tried to think no more about it. Edward Bathurst went away to his new life, and we saw no more of him. I say we, for I did; I met him one night just outside the village, only for a moment, and he looked me full in the face and said:

"I never forget, Agnes Wyld, recollect that!"

No one else had seen him, and Harry always said it was my fancy, that I thought so much about his threat that I had conjured up his image. I knew better. It was his hand that touched me, and his voice that spoke in my ear in the loneliness of Weston Lane. I was sure of it then. I knew it without a doubt afterward.

CHAPTER II.

My married life was as happy and uneventful as most lives are in little villages by the seaside, and we had very little communication with the busy world at Cobble End. We had no lodgings to let to fine people, and Weston itself, such a proud, upstart town now, with its grand visitors and wonderful doings, was no more than a village itself.

My father died when I had been married two years, thanking Heaven that his darling child was so well provided for, and three years after that I was a widow myself. I can't bear to think of it, even now; the pang seems to come all over again that I felt when they brought my darling home to me a corpse. He had left me in the morning with a kiss and a blessing and a promise to our boy—a bright, darling child of four, with his father's eyes and sunny, curly hair—that he would come and give him a ride before I went to bed. It was an accident, carelessness somewhere; Harry was down by the sea, painting a boat, and she lurched over and crushed the life out of him before anyone could lend a hand to save him.

Everyone was very kind, but what kindness can compensate for such a loss as mine; a loss that left me alone in the world without relation or friend. I don't know how I ever roused myself to try and earn a living for my boy and myself, but Heaven was kind to me, and I did it somehow, though with such a sore heart and sinking spirit as I hope have fallen to the lot of few women in this world.

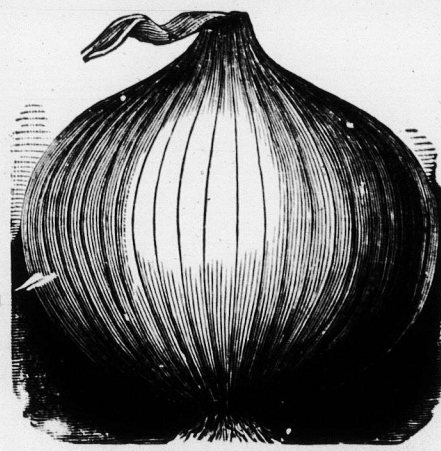
It was my boy that kept me up and spurred me on to do something and for a year I remained in the little village where I had been so happy, and all this time I had never heard of Edward Bathurst. Everybody thought he was dead, and I was glad to think so, too. But I tried to put him out of my thoughts as much as I possibly could, for the very remembrance of him always made me shiver; then I used to laugh at myself for my fears and reason with myself, and say:

"He can have no spite against me now; Harry is dead, and I have suffered enough surely to satisfy even him."

About a year after my great loss we had some sort of news of him. Someone, I don't know who, brought word to Cobble End that he had joined a band of desperados in the Western States of America, and that he was one of the most daring and wicked of the gang, who were said to respect nothing, and to hold life as nothing when they wanted to gain their ends. There was a great deal in the papers about them, but I did not understand nor quite believe all I heard, and went my way, thankful that I was left in peace.

I had to go into Weston one summer evening with some work. There was a clergyman whose wife was very good to me in the way of employment, and it was dark before I could get home. I was anxious on account of my boy, my little Harry. But he was a fearless child, and the neighbors looked after him for me when I was away. Still it was dark, and I hurried as fast as I could to get home while something of daylight still lasted. There was not a vestige of light when I did reach home, and

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