

HELENA GRAHAM,  
OR  
THE BRIDE'S SACRIFICE.

CHAPTER IX.

"Well, you see, about dark I was wandering about the shore, enjoying a cigar and the beauty of the evening, and ruminating whether it wouldn't be advisable to take a boat and go over to see her adorable majesty, Queen Helena. Most likely my cogitations would have ended in my going, only, unfortunately, there was no boat to be seen. I was about to turn away in despair, when I suddenly espied a boat containing two persons land at some distance below where I stood. One was a young fellow, tall and good looking, with a certain air of aristocratic hauteur about him, that told me he was not to be interfered with. But his companion—O, ye gods and little fishes, what a perfect little sylph she was! Such a miraculous combination of blue eyes, yellow curls, snowy complexion, pink cheeks, and red, kissable lips, it never was my good fortune to encounter before. But what struck me most forcibly was her resemblance to some one I had seen before; and after puzzling myself for a long time, I at length discovered she was the very image of pretty little Jessie of the Isle."

"Jessie! oh, pooh! it couldn't have been her," said Captain Graham, with an uneasy start.

"Of course, it couldn't have been her with so dainty a knight as that; but it was most confoundingly like her, or what she was when I saw her last—four years ago—though I dare say she has greatly changed since then."

"Well, what was there so strange about a handsome fellow and a pretty girl landing on the beach to interest the nonchalant Aleck Murray?" asked Captain Graham.

"Listen. I haven't got to the strange part of my story yet. They walked up the beach to the road, and I could see the girl was terrified and excited, while he tried to soothe and quiet her. My curiosity was aroused, for, upon my soul, Graham, I never saw a lovelier little creature; and with a sort of an idea they were up to some mischief, I followed them. It was nearly dark, and they hurried on so fast they did not see me, and I tracked them into one of the most obscure streets of the town, and saw them enter a little secluded Presbyterian Kirk."

"Well," said his auditor.

"Well, sir, the fellow left her there and went off. I crept softly in, and in the obscurity hid behind a post, determined to see the end. Dark as it was, I could see she trembled with inward emotion, and crouched down in her seat, with her face hidden in her hands, as if terror, remorse, sorrow, or some other feeling was weighing down her heart."

"Wonder the gay Aleck Murray did not approach and offer her consolation," said the young captain, dryly.

"By Jove! I felt like doing it," said Mr. Murray, in all sincerity; "but I wanted to see what was up, for I knew now all could not be quite right. Presently, the young man came back, and with him a minister. All was clear as stars at noonday now. This was a runaway match, a clandestine marriage—something which is always interesting to fast young men like myself. The happy pair stood up before the clergyman, and the train were soon made one flesh. My ears would have run themselves into points in order to hear the better, but I listened in vain. The minister mumbled over the ceremony so confoundingly low that I could not hear a single word—not even the names of the parties, which I was particularly anxious to find out. I suppose it was all right, however, for I saw the clergyman pocket the fee, and the young man, tucking little blue-eyes under his arm, walked off; and faith, I'd given a trifle to have stood in his place. I followed, not being ambitious to be locked up all night even in so holy a place as a church."

"Just as I went out, I heard the most awful shriek I ever want to hear again, and there the bride stood like one suddenly turned to stone, while the bridegroom was trying to console her. What scared her I don't know, but certainly I never saw a more terrified look on any face than was on hers. Not wishing to be seen I drew back, and in a few minutes they started on. I followed them as before, and saw the girl stop for a moment in a grocery shop, while he waited outside. Then they went down to the beach; he handed her into the boat, pushed off, and they were gone—leaving me to rub my eyes and wonder whether I was sleeping or waking. Now what do you think of this wedding on the sly, without friends, or anything in the usual line?"

"Well, really, I cannot say. Such things do not interest me as deeply as they do you. Perhaps it's the Strathmore fashion."

"No; there's something wrong. He was evidently of a rank superior to the girl. I could tell that, both by their dress and air, and general appearance. I should like to get to the bottom of this mystery."

"Then why not see the minister that married them, and find out from him?"

"Well, for sundry reasons. First, I didn't see his face, and shouldn't know him if I stumbled over him. Second, it looks so like a really low-bred trick, this tracking them and playing the spy, that I should be ashamed to tell any one of it but so old a friend as you."

"Well, then, never mind this mysterious couple any more," said Captain Graham, impatiently; "but tell me what I better do about this advertisement."

"Why, go and see this 'H. Preston' at once, that's all. I'll go with you; it's not ten minutes walk from here."

"But, if it should prove to be a humbug," said Captain Graham, as he sallied forth arm-in-arm with Murray.

"Then thrash H. Preston, writer to the signet, within an inch of his life," said his pacific friend; "it's the only balm for a wounded mind I know of."

Captain Graham laughed; and the conversation turned on various matters as they walked on.

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Surgeon Dentist, Guelph.

Office over E. Harvey & Co's. Drug Store, Corner of Wyndham & Macdonnell-st., Guelph.  
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References kindly permitted to Dr. Harold, McGuire, Keating, Cowan, and Mc Gregor, Guelph.

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300 Pieces of those heavy home-made Flannels, yard wide, 25 cents, worth 40 cents.  
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MILLINERY, MANTLES—In our Show Room above in beautiful variety. READY-MADE CLOTHING—In Dread Nought Coat, Pea Jackets, Pants and Vests in endless variety. Keep your money till you reach the Leading House—the Great Golden Lion, the far famed House for Cheap Goods, and where you will get a hearty reception.

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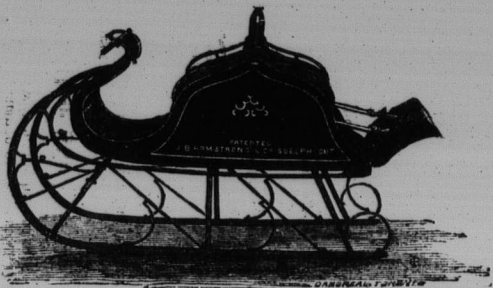
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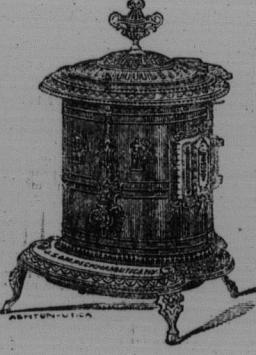
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Shafting, Pulleys, Hangers, Saw Arbours, etc., made to order.

Millwrighting & repairing engines, factory machinery, sewing machines, etc., promptly attended to and a good job guaranteed.

Shop near the Erasmus Bridge, opposite the Wheel Factory.

Carpenters, Cabinet Makers and others can have the wood turning well done on short notice.

Guelph, Nov. 17, 1874. do

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May 27, 1874

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Sound Business Principles adhered to in my Store.

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THE BEST GOODS AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE PRICES!

1000 Pieces New Dress Goods Just Arrived at Tremendously Cheap Prices!

Beautiful lot of Black Dress Silks, and at fully 25 per cent. under any Establishment in Guelph. A delightful assortment of Plain Colored Glace and Broadened Dress Silks, Wedding Silks, &c., and at wonderfully cheap prices. The finest and largest stock of Black Lustres and Black Alpaca in the Province, and at marvellously cheap prices. Call and see them, and every variety and price of every kind of dress goods made. PRICES CHEAP, AND QUALITY GOOD.

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With a most complete Stock of Mantles, Jackets, Polonaises, and Cloths of all kinds to make up from.

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In this Department I hold an immense stock of

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Pants and Vests,

Suits to match,

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