

The Statue in the Wilderness.

I tell the tale as I heard it, two-fifths of a century old. But the voice and the hand that breathed it are now with the silent dead.

Dear Queen, how the faith of this ranger hold put to shame my own weak trust in Thee. But still, in my weakness, I ask Thee to bless and to guide me on life's stormy sea.

And the wild flowers gave their homage. As they remained the turf at her feet.

And the wild flowers gave their homage. As they remained the turf at her feet. And clambered overhead in profusion.

But how will I tell you the beauty that lay in the Child God's smile. Or the grand, yet gracious majesty that was with Him all the while.

And I felt one answer alone could be given. As I knelt of the moss-grown sod. And I vowed my life and the love of my soul to the service of my God.

Yet there it stood, and by some hand placed. With a pure ideal face. And gazed in the stone of the pedestal.

What was their fate? These saintly men, sleep they each in an unknown grave. And they gain the martyr's palm and crown?

What tortures and privations? What tortures and privations? What tortures and privations? What tortures and privations?

These men of the "Black Robe" here. Can never be known, till the last trumpet sounds.

What tortures and privations? What tortures and privations? What tortures and privations? What tortures and privations?

AGNES BURR.

RETURNED FROM THE GRAVE

By MRS. HENRY WOOD: Author of "East Lynne," "Oswald Gray," &c.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—CONTINUED.

"Did you love for him cease with that night?" resumed Lord Dane.

"Can love cease as rapidly as it comes on?" she returned her accent one of sharp pain.

"I had the choice of two alternatives; to return to Scotland—hated Scotland—or to marry George Lester, and I chose the latter.

"But to go off in that strange way in Colonel Moncton's yacht. And the castle close at hand for you to have been brought to?"

"That night was the turning point in my life, as well as in yours," was Lord Dane's pointed answer.

"How could you think of not letting us know you were alive?"

"Let who know? My father and mother were dead, and you the wife of George Lester; there were none left in the old country who cared to hear from me."

"Yes," responded Lord Dane. And he may have felt himself safer when beyond the pale of British law.

There was a pause in the conversation; each was occupied with the past. Lady Adelaide was the first to interrupt it.

Last September, when the steplion's east me as before. But for your stubborn exertions with the life-boat, I had never again seen Danesheld.

"I tell you, as I told Appery, when he put to me the same question—for reasons. Perhaps of the delicate motive of not wishing suddenly to deprive my Lord Dane of his title and rent-roll."

There was a grim smile on the speaker's face, and Lady Adelaide slightly started as the full import of the words struck upon her.

"I have not interfered—I would not interfere in Herbert Dane's marriage. I expect she would be his wife by now, had not her fancy become enthralled by another, one William Lydney."

"Against a Dane?" of course they would be; but I am not speaking against a Dane.

"Why then he—he will be—surely—Lord Dane?" uttered she, when her consternation allowed her to speak.

"The very moment the breath goes out of my body, he is Danesheld's lord. A better part for Maria Lester than Herbert Dane."

"As we saw, so we must reap," concluded Lord Dane. "Deceit is a crime that, sooner or later, entails its sure punishment."

CHAPTER XXIX.

LORD DANE (we call him so a little while longer) and Miss Dane were seated at breakfast in the castle, or to speak more correctly, after breakfast, for the meal was over, though the things were not removed.

"It's of no use trying to convince me, Geoffrey," said she persisting in her own view of things. "I know that he is no more what you call him, than I am."

"Had those police creatures kept him in custody, I should have gone in the carriage and made a morning call upon him at the station. I should. Just to testify my regard for him, and to show Danesheld how very much I resent the opinion they have taken up respecting him."

"Possibly you would like to offer him a wife in your own person, as well as a morning call, and enjoy the benefit of the gift coach," drawled Lord Dane.

"Indeed, yes, he and no other," she smiled. "I dispatched a note to him yesterday evening, after I heard of his release from the fangs of Young and those harpies, requesting him to be here this evening at ten o'clock, on important business. I want to offer him my congratulations, and to assure him of the fact that the more Danesheld abuses him, the higher he stands with me."

"You always were a weak fool, Cecelia, and you show it more every day," was the complimentary retort of Lord Dane.

"How remarkably impolite you are, Geoffrey, and you do take such unaccountable prejudices," was Miss Dane's rejoinder, who, whatever may have been her other deficiencies, possessed one of the meekest tempers.

"Ab, but you can't," she returned gently clapping her hands in triumph, as she looked from the window, "for he is already come."

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"What do you do there, sir?" he foamed. "I am here in obedience to a request of Miss Dane," was the answer, delivered courteously. "My visit is not to your lordship."

"I am the master of this castle," foamed Lord Dane, "and there's the door. Go out of it."

"I have come here to prepare you for a most unpleasant surprise," began Mr. Blair, somewhat at a loss for words to break the unwelcome tidings; "and I have but a minute or two to do it in, for one is following me close at hand—who—must cause a startling effect upon you: and it will be well for you that I speak first. But you are ill!"

"No," replied Lord Dane, unconcernedly as his quivering lips, which he was biting in his agitation, allowed him to speak. Proceed.

"You were surprised at my addressing you as 'sir,' and naturally so. I am sorry that it should have fallen to my task to inform you of the change hanging over your head; but I must do my duty, however unpleasant."

"Adelaide," said Lord Dane, waking from a fit of musing into which he fell, "take it for all in all, life has not been to you all flowers and sunshine."

"Ten years and some months ago," proceeded Mr. Blair, "a catastrophe occurred in the Dane family. Captain the Honorable Harry Dane met his death, as was supposed, in falling from the heights, struggling with an assailant. Until a day or two back, it was neither known or suspected who the other was; but it is at length discovered to have been you. He—"

"Well it might be. All that he had dreaded for years was come. Lady Adelaide had spoken of her burden, but what was hers compared to the one he had carried? One perpetual nightmare had lain upon his soul. In his ghastly visions by day and by night, one perpetual terror had ever been upon him—the day of discovery, when he should be dragged from his high pinnacle to answer for the murder of his cousin Harry; perhaps to suffer for it a felon's punishment, death upon the scaffold. That the officer now before him was about to arrest him, and was thus preparing him, in his humanity, he entertained no manner of doubt. The perspiration broke out on his brow in large drops of anguish and he threw up his hands to Mr. Blair in an attitude of entreaty.

"I was not wilful murder," he gasped, in a tone of the sharpest pain. "If you arrest me for it, you will do me a foul wrong, for I am innocent. We were quarrelling, and it came to blows; he struck the first as I have a soul to be sure, he attacked me. I was a soldier, and he was the edge of the cliff, in our strife, and he went over, but I did not push him; I swear I did not. I was as guiltless of intentionally causing his death as I am of causing yours. Could Harry Dane speak to you from the next world he would say so."

"I have thought for some days that it might be a warning that this was coming upon me," continued Lord Dane, in a dreamy tone, as he leaned against the side board, never so much as hearing the interruption.

"Harry Dane appeared to a?" "What?" uttered Mr. Blair. "Appeared where?"

"Aye, vicarious, I am a strong man, sir, a man of enlightened education, of intellect; as, as all such must do, I have ever cast the most contemptuous disbelief, the fiercest mockery on supernatural tales. Ghosts, visions, appearances!—they might be fit marvels for children, but not for men. Nevertheless, I tell you now in the broad light of day, I, Geoffrey, Baron Dane, in full possession of my mind and senses, I tell you that some evenings ago I saw the apparition of my cousin Harry. Never since the fatal night of his death had I entered the ruins, but the story told by Shad, that the plotting might be there, sent me to them. It was the night preceding the day when I telegraphed for you. I stood in the ruins, my thoughts naturally cast long back to the unlucky night and its events, when I was last there. I raised my eyes, and there at one of the apertures, gazing in upon me was the form of Harry Dane. I saw it as plainly as ever I saw it during his lifetime.

Lord Dane's voice faltered, for sounds—he deemed them ominous ones—seemed to arise from the next apartment the hall. Mr. Blair's ears were opened to the same, but before he could say another word to Lord Dane, or impede his movements, the latter had drawn the door gently open, so as to allow of peeping out. You may forgive the tremor that shook his frame; he believed that the officers of justice had arrived for him.

Not much like officers of justice, however, did the group look that met his view. Standing in the hall, his left hand affectionally laid on the shoulder of William Lydney, was a tall, upright figure, his high features bearing an unmistakable likeness to the Dane family. In spite of his pallor and his white hair, none could mistake him for any other than Harry Dane. "In the body of the spirit?" may have thought one who was gazing. The old servants of the castle were gathered around—some standing, some positively kneeling, all with tears in their eyes. Bruff's eyes were overflowing; and in the background stood Ravensbrind and Lawyer Appery.

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surely our own doing, bring forth their natural fruit? We plant an acorn, and it up an oak tree; we sow an ear of wheat, and it ripens into corn; we set a noxious weed, and it comes up to ears. Just so it is with the moral world; according as we plant, so must we gather."

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"But we were on the wrong scent. I with all my penetration and experience was misled. While we were cunningly guarding the castle, the hall was entered; and that, not the castle, was the object from the first. Now, by stating particulars to you so far, you will readily give me credit for being in possession of the whole, and it was upon my authority William Lydney was discharged from custody—"

"But what could possess you to discharge him?" sharply asked Mr. Lester. "The man is as great a villain as ever walked. Have you done it to screen him from the consequences of his guilt?"

"I am not sorry to hear an admission from your lips," equally returned the officer, who had sat with professional coolness until the burst was over; "that it is the being under the cloud of your displeasure which drives him to be wild and to join bad company. You speak truth, Mr. Lester. Whatever ill your son may be guilty of, you have driven him to it. He was the housebreaker into the hall last night—that is, the mover in the step—the ring-leader."

"Perhaps you will say I drove him on to that!" chafed Mr. Lester, whose feelings were taming down from indignation into pain.

"Yes, I should, if you ask my opinion. Mr. Lester, allow me—it is of no use to contend against facts, or to resent what it is my painful duty to tell you. Knowing, as you now do, who I am, you may be sure I should not come to you with a half-substantiated story. It was your son who planned and carried out the attack on his father's house, the poachers being persuaded and bribed by him to help in it."

"There was no robbery, in the ordinary sense of the word, and the pistol you heard discharged was raised by him at one of the men, who had hinted that it might be pleasant to effect a little business of that sort on his own cheek. There was something taken, however."

"Mr. Lester looked around, as if to make sure that the chairs and tables were all in their places.

"What was taken?" he inquired, his accent savouring of incredulity.

"Have you examined your iron safe?"

"No." But Mr. Lester turned short around and examined it then; that is, gave a stare at the outside.

"I fancy his object was to get into his possession a certain deed, relating to some money he believes he is entitled to, but which you withhold. And I fancy he succeeded."

After a pause of astonishment, Mr. Lester hastily drew some keys from his pocket, and unlocked the safe. He knew precisely where to lay his hand upon the parchment, and essayed to do so.

"The deed is gone!" he uttered turning around in perturbation. And Mr. Blair nodded.

"You now perceive your son's motive. I don't defend him; mind that. I don't defend him; but some may deem that he had provoked. Whether the money ought by law to have come to him when he was of age, I cannot offer an opinion upon. He expected that it should, and the least you could have done, was to allow him to peruse the deed. When you shall deliberate the past over with less prejudice than you have probably been in the habit of doing, you may arrive at the same conclusion as myself—that had Wilfred Lester been treated differently by his father, he might never have forfeited his good name."

"Are you going to arrest him?" was the rejoinder of Mr. Lester, who was cutting rather a sorry figure; as most men do when a conviction of their own bad conduct is brought home to their shame.

"To arrest him is not in my department. If you choose to give him into custody, you can hand your warrant and instructions to Inspector Young. Your son might get the punishment, but I know who would get the odium. When the whole facts were disclosed, the miserable course of his past treatment, there's not a judge upon the bench but would recoil from sentencing him,—thinking of their own children."