

the milk-white surface of the mere. The corn was ready for cutting, but scarce a sheaf had yet fallen before the sickle. It was the very medium and prime of the summer's beauty, and my lady-love had returned from her third London season, and was still Constance Beverley. It was later than my usual hour of visiting at the Manor, for my father had been unwell during the night, and I would not leave him until the doctor had been, to Constance had put on her hat and started for her morning's walk alone. She took the path that led towards Alton, and I followed and I caught sight at the same moment of the well-known white dress flitting under the old oaks in the park. My heart used to stop beating when I saw her, and now I turned sick and faint from sheer happiness. Not so Bold: directly he caught sight of the familiar form away he scooped like an arrow, and in less than a minute he was bounding about her, barking and frisking, and testifying his delight with an ardour that was responded to in a modified degree by the young lady. What prompted me I know not, but instead of walking straight on and greeting her, I turned aside behind a tree, and myself unseen, watched the form of her I loved so fondly, as she stopped gracefully on towards my hiding-place, she seemed surprised, stopped, and looked about her, Bold meanwhile thrusting his nose into her small gloved hand.

'Why, Bold, said she, 'you have lost your master? And as she spoke she stooped down and kissed the dog on his broad, honest forehead. My heart pounded as it would have burst. Never shall I forget the sensations of that moment, not for worlds would I have accused her then—it would have been sacrilege, it would have seemed like taking advantage of her frankness and honesty. No; I made a wide detour, still concealed behind the trees, and struck in upon the path in front of her as if I came direct from home. Why was it that her greeting was less cordial than usual? Why was it no longer 'Vere' and 'Constance' between us, but 'Mr. Egerton' and 'Miss Beverley'? She seemed ill at ease, too, and her tone was harder than usual till I mentioned my father's illness, when she softened directly. I thought there were tears in her voice as she asked me—

'How could I leave him if he was so poorly?'

'Because I knew you came back yesterday, Miss Beverley, and I would not miss being one of the first to welcome you home,' was my reply.

'Why do you call me Miss Beverley,' she broke in, with a quick glance from under her straw hat. 'Why not "Constance," as you used?'

'Then why not call me "Vere"?' I retorted, but my voice shook, and I made a miserable attempt to appear unconcerned.

'Very well, "Constance" and "Vere" let it be,' she replied, laughing; 'and now, Vere, how did you know I came back yesterday?'

'Because I saw the carriage from the top of Buttercup Hill—because I watched there for six hours that I might make sure—because—'

I hesitated and stopped, she turned her head away to catch Bold. Fool! fool that I was! Why did I not set my fate at once upon the cast? Another moment, and it was too late. When she turned her face again towards me it was deadly pale, and she began taming rapidly, but in a constrained voice, of the delights of her London season, and the gaieties of that to me unknown world, the world of fashionable life.

'We have had so many balls and operas and dissipations, that papa says he is quite knocked up and who do you think has been dancing with me night after night?' (I winced), 'who but your old schoolfellow, your dear old friend, Count de Rohan!'

initiated listless completely into the background. I held my tongue and watched my old schoolfellow. He was but little altered since I seen him last, save that his tall figure had grown even taller, and he had acquired that worn look about the eyes and mouth which a few seasons of dissipation and excitement invariably produce even in the young. After detailing a batch of marriages, and a batch of 'failures,' in all of which the names of the sufferers were equally unknown to me, he observed, with a peculiarly marked expression, to Constance, 'Of course you know there was never anything in that report about De Rohan and Miss Blight; but so many people assured me it was true, that if I had not known Victor as well as I do, I should have been almost inclined to believe it.'

I watched Constance narrowly as he spoke, and I fancied she winced. Could it have been only my absurd fancy? Ropsley protested, 'I saw him yesterday, and he desired his regards to you, and I was to say he would be here on the 3rd.'

'Oh! I am so glad!' exclaimed Constance, her whole countenance brightening with a joyous smile, that went like a knife to my foolish, inexperienced heart, that ought to have reassured and made me happier than ever. Does a woman confess she is delighted to see the man she is really fond of? Is not that softened expression which pervades the human face at mention of the 'one loved name,' more akin to a tear than a smile? 'He is so pleasant and so good-natured, and will endow us all so much here,' she said, turning to me, 'Vere you must come over on the 3rd, and meet Count de Rohan; you know he is the oldest friend you have, — an older friend even than I am.'

I was hurt, angry, maddened already, on this kind speech, with the frank, effusive glance that accompanied it, fitful my bitter cup to overflowing. Has a woman no compunction? or is she ignorant of the power a few light commonplace words may have to inflict such acute pain? Constance cannot have guessed the feelings that were tearing at my heart. But she must have seen my altered manner, and doubtless felt herself aggrieved, and thought she had a right to be angry at my unjustifiable display of temper.

'I thank you,' I replied, coldly and distantly. 'I cannot leave my father until he is better. Perhaps De Rohan will come over and see us if he can get away from his pleasant engagements. I fear I have stayed too long already. Good-bye. Ropsley; good morning Miss Beverley. Hare, Bold, Bold.'

She looked scared for an instant, then hurt, and almost angry. She shook hands with me coldly, and turned away with more dignity than usual. Brute, idiot that I was! even Bold showed more good feeling and more sagacity than his master. He had been sniffing round Ropsley with many a low growl, and every expression of dislike which a well-nurtured dog permits himself towards his master's associates; but he looked wistfully back at Constance as she walked away, and I really thought for once he would have broken through all his habits of fidelity and subordination, and follow her into the house.

What a pleasant walk home I had I leave those to judge who, like me, have dashed down in a fit of ill-temper the structure that they have taken years of pain, and labor, and self denial to rear on high. Was this, then, my boasted chivalry—my truth and faith that was to last for ever—to fight through all obstacles—to be pure, and holy, and unwavering, and to look for no return? I had failed at the first trial. How little I felt, how mean and unworthy, how far below my own standard of what a man should be—my ideal of worth, that I had resolved I would attain. And Ropsley, too—the cold, calculating, cynical man of the world—Ropsley must

work with his easel and colors, but this time the curtain was not hastily drawn over the canvas, and my father himself invited me to inspect his work.

I came in heated and excited, my father was paler than ever, and seemed much exhausted. He looked very grave, and his large dark eyes shone with an ominous and unearthly light.

'Vere,' said he, 'sit down by me. I have put off all I had to say to you, my boy, till I fear it is too late. I want to speak to you now as I have never spoken before. Where have you been this morning, Vere?'

I felt my color rising at the question, but I looked him straight in the face, and answered boldly, 'At Beverley Manor, father.'

'Vere,' he continued, 'I am afraid you care for Miss Beverley—say, it is no use denying it, he proceeded, 'I ought to have taken better care of you. I have neglected my duty as a father, and my sins, I fear, are to be visited upon my child. Look on that canvas, boy, the picture is finished now, and my work is done. Vere, that is your mother.'

It was the first time I had ever heard that sacred name from my father's lips. I had often wished to question him about her, but I was always shy, and easily checked, whilst he from whom alone I could obtain information, I have already said, was man that brooked no inquiries on a subject he chose should remain secret, so that hitherto I had been kept in complete ignorance of the whole history of one parent. As I looked on her likeness now, I began for the first time to realize the loss I had sustained.

The picture was of a young and gentle-looking woman, with deep, dark eyes, and jet-black hair, a certain thickness of eyebrows and width of forehead denoted a foreign origin; but whatever intensity of expression these peculiarities may have imparted to the upper part of her countenance, was amply redeemed by the winning sweetness of her mouth, and the delicate chiselling of the other features. She was pale of complexion, and looked somewhat sad and thoughtful; but there was a depth of trust and affection in those fond eyes that spoke volumes for the womanly earnestness and simplicity of her character. It was one of those pictures that, without knowing the original, you feel at once must be a likeness. I could not keep down the tears as I whispered, 'Oh, mother, mother, why did I never know you?'

My father's face grew dark and stern: 'Vere,' said he, 'the time has come when I must tell you all. It may be that your father's example will serve as a beacon to warn you from the rock on which so many of us have made shipwreck. When I was your age, my boy, I had no one to control me, no one even to advise. I had unlimited command of money, a high position in society, good looks—I may say without vanity now—health, strength, and spirits, all that makes life enjoyable, and I enjoyed it. I was in high favor with the Prince. I was sought after in society; my horses won at Newmarket, my jests were quoted in the Clubs, my admiration was coveted by the "fine ladies," and I had the ball at my foot. Do you think I was happy? No. I lived for myself; I thought only of pleasure, and of pleasure I took my fill; but pleasure is a far different thing from happiness, or should I have wandered away at the very height of my popularity and success, to live abroad by myself with my colors and sketch book, vainly seeking the peace of mind which was not to be found at home? I was bored, Vere, as a man who leads a aimless life always is bored. Fresh amusements might stave off the mental disease for a time, but it came back with renewed virulence; and I cared not at what expense I purchased an hour's immunity with the remedy of fierce excitement. But I never was faithful to my art.

whole existence for the sake of a time-worn superstition and an unmeaning vow. Thus I argued, and on such fallacious principles I acted.

'Vere, my boy, right is right, and wrong is wrong. You always know in your heart of hearts the one from the other. Never stifle that instinctive knowledge, never use sophistry to persuade yourself you may do that which you feel you ought not. I travelled down at once to the convent. I heard her at vespers; I knew that sweet, silvery voice amongst all the rest. As I stood in the 'low-roofed chapel, with the summer sunbeams streaming across the grain d'arches and the quaint carved pews, and throwing a flood of light athwart the aisle, while the organ above pealed forth its solemn tones, how could I meditate the evil deed? How could I resolve to sacrifice her peace of mind forever to my own wild happiness? Vere, I carried her off from the convent—I eluded all pursuit, all suspicion—I took her with me to the remotest part of Hungary, her own native country. For the first few weeks I believe she was deliciously happy, and then—it broke her heart. Vere, she believed she had lost her soul for my sake. She never reproached me—she never repined even in words; but I saw, day after day, the colour fading on her cheek, the light growing brighter in her sunken eye. She dropped like a lily with a worm at its core. For one short year I held her in my arms; I did all that man could to cheer and comfort her—in vain. She smiled upon me with the wan, woful smile that haunts me still; and she died, Vere, when you were born.' My father hid his face for a few seconds, and when he looked up again he was paler than ever.

'My boy,' he murmured, in a hoarse, broken voice, 'you have been sacrificed. Forgive me, forgive me, my child; you are illegitimate.'

I staggered as if I had been shot—I felt stunned and stupefied—I saw the whole desolation of the sentence that had just been passed upon me. Yes, I was a bastard; I had no right even to the name I bore. Never again must I hold my head up amongst my fellows; never again indulge in those dreams of future distinction, which I only now knew I had so cherished; never, never think of Constance more! It was all over now; there was nothing left on earth for me.

There is a reaction in the nature of despair. I drew myself up; and looked my father steadily in the face.

'Father,' I said, 'whatever happens, I am your son; do not think I shall ever reproach you. Even you might cast me off if you chose, and none could blame you; but I will never forget you—whatever happens, I will always love you the same.' He shook in every limb, and for the first time in my recollection, he burst into a flood of tears; they seemed to afford him relief, and he proceeded with more composure—

'I can never repay the injury I have done you, Vere; and now listen to me and forgive me if you can. All I have in the world will be yours; in every respect I wish you to be my representative, and to bear my name. No one knows that I was not legally married to her, except Sir Harry Beverley. Vere, your look of misery assures me that I have told you too late. I am indeed punished in your despair. I ought to have watched over you with more care. I had intended to make you a great man, Vere. In your childhood I always hoped that my own talent for art would be reproduced in my boy, and that you would become the first painter of the age, and then none would venture to question your antecedents or your birth. When I found I was to be disappointed in this respect, I still hoped that with the competency I shall leave you, and your own retired habits, you might live happily enough in ignorance of the branch which

What contrasts there are in life. Light and shade, Lazarus and Dives, the joyous spirit and the broken heart, always in juxtaposition. Here are two pictures not three miles apart.

A pale, wan young man, dressed in black with the traces of deep grief on his countenance, and his whole bearing that of one who is thoroughly overcome and prostrated by sorrow, sits brooding over an untasted breakfast. The room he occupies is not calculated to shed a cheerful influence on his reflection. It is a long, low, black-wainscotted apartment, well-stored with books and furnished in a curious and somewhat picturesque style with massive chairs and quaintly carved cabinets. Ancient armor hangs from the walls, looming ghostly and gigantic in the subdued light, for although it is a bright October morning out-of-doors, its narrow windows and thick walls make Alton Grand dull and sombre and gloomy within. A few sketches, evidently by the hand of a master, are hung in favorable lights. More than one are spirited representations of a magnificent black-and-white retriever—the same that is now lying on the floor, his head buried between his huge, strong paws, watching his master's figure with unwinking eyes. The master takes no notice of his favorite. Occasionally he fixes his heavy glance on a picture hanging over the chimney-piece, and then withdraws it with a low, stifled moan of anguish, at which the dog raises his head wistfully, seeming to recognize a too familiar sound. The picture is of a beautiful, foreign-looking woman; its eyes and eyebrows are reproduced in that sorrow-stricken young man. They are mother and son; and they have never met. Could she have but seen me then. If ever a spirit might revisit earth to console the weary pilgrim here, surely would be a mother's, bringing comfort to suffering child. How I longed for her love and her sympathy. How I felt I had been robbed—yes, robbed—of my rights in her and premature death. Reader, have you never seen a little child after a fall, or a blow or some infantine wrong or grievance, run and hide its weeping face in its mother's lap? Such is the first true impulse of our child's nature, and it is never completely eradicated from the human breast. The strong, proud man, though he may almost forget her triumphs and his successes, goes to his mother for consolation when he is overtaken by sorrow, deceived in his affections, wounded in his feelings, or sad and sick at heart. There he knows he is secure of sympathy and consolation; there he knows he will be judged harshly, and as the world judges there he knows that, do what he will, a fountain of love and patience, never to dry; and for one blessed moment he is indeed a child again. God help those who, like us, have never known a mother's love. So are the true orphans, and such he will forget.

Bold loses patience at last, and pokes cold, wet nose into my hand. Yes, Bold is no use to sit brooding here. 'Hie, hie, fetch me my hat.' The dog is delighted with his task. Away he scampers across the springing at the crape-covered one, bringing me in his mouth, his fine honest countenance beaming with pride, and his tail wagging with delight. We emerge through a door into the garden, and insensibly, for the first time since my father's death, we take the direction of Beverley Manor.

This is a dark and sadly shaded place, let us turn to one of brighter lights and variegated coloring.

To be continued.

A farmer at Newburg, N. Y., has eaten oysters in twenty minutes.