A DYING PROMISE

OR, THE MISSING WILL

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Philip was riding slowly home one evening after a duty visit to a distant village, his horse was tired, so he rode with a loose rein absorbed in such thoughts as that kind of motion favors. He was expecting, even dreading, though he did not like to own it, a letter from home that this mad dream must end then. He had just received a hint that that might be intrusted with a mission taking him from Myserabad for weeks or months. Besides the prospect of advancement that afforded, him, it would take him from temptations which daily and hourly became more powerful; so he was both sorry and glad. Suddenly the sound of clattering hoofs and the startled cries of some native attendants roused him from his reverie, and turning he saw a runaway horse, ridden by a lady, thundering along the road toward him. The horse's mane and the lady's hair streamed on the wind their furious speed, the rider sat well and was pulling with all her might. He had but time to recognize in his pale face, flashing eye, and firm-set mouth, the features so seldom absent from his mind, when the clashing of elephant bells was heard, and the richly caparisoned elephant of a native nobleman, preceded by servants and carrying a gay howdah on its mountain of a back, issued from the shadow of some tall trees concealing a bend of the road and caused Miss Maynard's mare, which was new to India and terrified at these walking castles, to swerve violently and leap a low stone wall bordering the roadside.

Philip, who had stopped petrified at first sight of the runaway and had plunged into his reverie, and turning, could hear the mare's hoofs strike on the wall and the heavy double crash of her fall as her hind-quarters rose to the jump.

He turned in his saddle with all apprehension, then sprung down and cleared the wall, on the other side of which the ground stood steeply, and saw the mare struggling to her feet at the bottom of the little declivity, to which she had slid in her struggles after her tumble.

Ada lay at the foot of a tree; he supposed her head must have struck it in the fall. A red mist came before his eyes, he hastened blindly to her side. Her hat had fallen off, her face was quite white, her head slightly drooping to one shoulder, her arms were flung helplessly, one above her head the other abroad downward, the wild hair mingled with them; she did not stir a limb, she seemed not to breathe; he thought she was dead.

He knelt down and raised her in his trembling arms, feeling her pulse and vaguely observing that she was so blood on her, nor any sign of broken bones. He called her by name and kissed her, and it seemed to him that some time must have elapsed before there was a little sigh, a quiver, then he saw the dark eyes open.

She raised her head and made an effort to rise, his firm clasp relaxed, and with a little help she stood on her feet and moved and felt her arms.

"Oh! there is nothing the matter" she said, with a smile and a gradual return of color. "But you, you look so pale and strange, I am so confused and giddy. My head"—

"Sit down, you are hurt," he cried. Then he placed her gently on the ground with her back against the tree, and knelt by her side and fanned her with his cap.

Their servants had in the meantime come up, water was fetched, the runaway horse caught and brought back, and Ada, who had been exhausted by her long struggle with the mare, and cheered by a little which raised a small swelling on her head, gradually became herself again.

"I do think I must be a kind of cat," said laughing, and looking up with a sort of shy confidence that he had never seen before. "I always come to life again, whatever happens!"

"Why will you risk that beast," he complained, "she is not fit to carry a lady."

"She is a darling. A Hindoo procession frightened her and the elephant drove her distracted. Colleen Bawn is afraid of elephants."

He took care to have the saddle transferred from the darling's back to that of his own tired horse, when he found that Ada intended to ride home, and himself mounted the Colleen Bawn, who was too docile known for any more cantrips. Ada made no objection to this arrangement, allowed him to lift her into the saddle and adjust her habit, which he did without looking up, and when this was done, and he was on the runaway, they started homeward at a walk, in the last rays of the sinking sun.

They rode about a mile and half in silence, broken only once or twice by Philip's inquiries if she was warm enough, for the air was sharpening; if the motion hurt her, all of which he did with a certain air of compunction, as if he had been the cause of the accident; and to which Ada replied in a low tone, as if confiding secrets that must reach no other ear.

The ride seemed unending, and yet the dark trees of the Maynards' bungalow became visible with too cruel quickness; when he heard her low replies; it was like heaven, and yet he hesitated to speak from a terror of hearing her voice.

The swift-coming Indian night had already fallen when they drew rein before the veranda, so that they could scarcely see each other.

"I must lift you," he said, when she would have taken his hand to spring; "you must not risk any jar."

Then she passed in without any good-night, and while the syces were again changing the saddles, Philip explained to Colonel Maynard why he had been riding the Colleen, and then rode off on his own horse.

He sat still in his room for some time, not even trying to shake off the intoxication of the last hour. Why should he? It would have to be got rid of soon enough, and it was something to have lived that hour.

Home letters had arrived; he was in no hurry to open them; was there not a life-time to consider them in, and only this one brief hour to taste the exhilarating sparkles of that one draught of deepest happiness in? Why, he had held her like a child, in his arms, had kissed her unrebuked—but one hour since, and must the chill, hard agony of duty come so soon between them? His hands still thrilled with the anguished pleasure of touching the thick tresses of dark hair, when helping her to gather the disordered mass together, and his heart still ached with the reproachful memory this soft touch called up of the day of his father's funeral, when Jessie curved his face with the golden mantle of her own curling hair, and comforted him in his need. And Jessie and he were alone in the world, together, now as then, bound forever by a solemn promise to dying ears.

The unopened letters lay on the table before him, their white face

offering a perpetual mute reproach; but the low rich sounds of Ada's voice were still in his ears, and he still felt the throb of her returning life beneath his hand; he buried his face in his hands and saw the long eyelashes slowly parting and the wonder of the dark eyes in the sudden flash of returning consciousness. She looked so happy. He would give the whole world that Ada should not love him, yet it would be like death to know she did not. At last he plucked his hot face from his hands, pushed back his ruffled hair and stood up. The letters were few; there was none from Jessie, and he was glad, he would feel like a traitor if he read a letter of hers just then. They were business letters, some on Jessie's account, one on his own, he read them studiously, hoping to cool the fever that consumed him. The last was from a friend, it had the Maxwell post-mark, and was in Mr. Ingleby's handwriting.

"Old Ingleby," he cried, "if he were but here for one half-hour!" Yet what would Mr. Ingleby think if he could see into his heart? Many a time he had asked his advice, both as boy and man, from the days when he went to tea in Mr. Ingleby's rooms and wondered to see a grown man sit so many slices of bread and jam, until the handlady one day told him it was because he had given his dinner away to some poor man or woman, and grumbled that there was no pleasure in looking after the comforts of such a discomfortable gentleman. He opened the letter, foreboding no evil and read:

"Dear Randal: You will wonder why in the world I am writing to you, and when you have discovered the reason perhaps will wonder why I did not write before, unless, indeed, you rate me a meddler in other men's concerns."

He read on and turned red, still on and turned pale, and when he had finished, his face was gray contracted in lines of pain.

His blood throbbed in his ears with a sound like the old familiar throb, throb of the mill, he saw the dark water break to diamond-dust in the slow wheel, smelt the homely scent of corn and meal, saw the kind faces in the sunshine and firelight, and remembered all the pleasant peace of his youth. The yearning, unspoken tenderness, as of some dumb animal, in Maude's eyes, seemed to follow him everywhere through all those boyish scenes the mingled appeal and trust in his dying eyes stabbed him to the heart with perpetual poignancy; again he felt the tremulous fingers relax their hold on the clasped hands of Jessie and himself, and chill his marrow with their icy touch. How young, how utterly alone and defenceless Jessie was! And he had not understood the half-articulate cry in her letters. He would read that last letter offering release again. But he could not; he had torn it up.

Yet he had not torn up Ada Maynard's last letter before Lucknow, though it was quite illegible, darkly stained as it was with blood.

There was no sleep for him that night, a great part of which he spent in writing letters and arranging papers and things of value.

Nor did Ada Maynard sleep much; she was too happy, and the necessity of living over the day's events, was too imperious. Philip's face bending over her, the gray eyes wide with terror and alight with love, painted itself perpetually on the dark curtain of the night. She had seemed to pass, with the shock of her fall, out of the limits of life into the illimitable shadow of nothingness; whence she was called back by the sudden expression of a strong, deep love, to find herself cradled like an infant in loving arms, colded and supported in utter helplessness and peace in the power and tenderness of a great and enduring passion. It seemed to her fancy that life would never have returned to her but for the magnetic potency of that other strong young life upon it; the deep pulsations of the heart on which she rested seemed to have set her own strained pulses beating afresh, the charm of the fairy prince's kiss had awakened her from the sleep of death.

"Young Randal seems to be Ada's good genius," her father said; "he is always on the spot in the nick of time."

"There is evidently a fate in it. Ada," Mrs. Ross added; and even Mrs. Maynard murmured something about romance, mingled with an interdict on Ada's riding any more without her father's brother—which she had only done that day in consequence of Wilmot's failing to turn up at the appointed hour.

Would Philip appear at the ruined temple to which they were to make a party that day? was Ada's first thought on waking and rising with the earliest peep of dawn. He had been asked to join them and had promised to ride over in the afternoon, if not on duty, as he knew he would be in the early part of the day. She hoped he would not come, and yet she knew that she would be grievously disappointed if he did not.

They set forth in the beautiful cool morning, intending to reach their destination before the midday heat although at this season it might be borne, and by salamanders like Philip Randal, enjoyed. Ada's syais had never known her mistress so concerned about her dress before; first out gown was tried and then another; this ribbon was taken and that discarded, flowers were chosen and then thrown away, because they would be faded before noon. But when these ceremonies were at last ended and Ada hastened, a little late, through the garden to the water side where their little yacht was awaiting them, it was not the neat fresh morning costume just received from home that caused Mrs. Maynard to exclaim:

"Really, Ada, I had no idea that hat and dress were so becoming! but some spiritual cause, which at once fired and superseded her face.

She received the attentions of attendant cavaliers with neither more of the accustomed hauteur which at once charmed and provoked them, and caused more spiteful things to be said of her than anybody in Myserabad, especially by a certain young civilian who was considered the most eligible bachelor at the station; she grew more and more preoccupied on the day wore on. Tiffin was served and eaten, and while some elderly people rested in the shade to admire the prospect and smoke, the foolish young ones went off in two and threes to explore the ruins or stroll by the water.

"He is not resting," she said to herself, declining to join any of the small parties and taking a chair by the side of her mother, who was made up in a political discomfort of the first international importance; and as such it will be a nuisance and a weariness to the minds of the Grand Dukes. Their standpoint is indicated at the outset of this article because they are the all powerful persons here. The Department of State, which in most other countries takes the lead in directing external affairs, is in Russia merely a registry

for the afterthought of the Emperor's uncles.

At the very outset of the diplomatic struggle over the question of searching and seizing for the volunteer fleet, this same Department of State made play with the characteristics which may be depended upon to mark its proceedings throughout the negotiations. The demand for the release of the Malacca was, in the full meaning of the term, an ultimatum.

The Russian Foreign Office wished to argue the matter, but the British Ambassador replied that no exchange of notes was admissible. He asked for the immediate delivery of the ship, the alternative being action by force for its release. The answer was:

"All right, we will give it up. We accept the British Ambassador's assurance that the contraband explosives in the cargo are for the British fleet at Hong Kong and not for the Japanese."

The Ambassador then asked, "when shall we get delivery of the ship?" He was told that a telegram had been sent to Port Said, at the Mediterranean end of the Suez Canal. Later he learned that the Malacca had sailed from that port before the telegram arrived.

"Now I am quite strong, I worked all winter without pains in my back or any part of my body. Dodd's Kidney Pills cured me."

If the Kidney Disease is of long standing it may take time to cure it. But Dodd's Kidney Pills will do

ANOTHER VOICE ON THE PRAIRIES

TELLS OF DIABETES CURED BY DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS

W. G. Bartleman Could Get no Relief till He Tried the Great Canadian Kidney Remedy.

Wapella, Assa., N. W. T., Aug. 22 —(Special).—This thriving town furnishes one of the most remarkable cures of Kidney Disease that has ever been reported on the prairies. Mr. Wm. G. Bartleman, a well-known farmer, is the man cured and he makes the following statement:—

"I had Kidney Trouble and it developed into Diabetes. I went to the doctor but his treatment was of no use whatever to me. I began to take Dodd's Kidney Pills in December, 1902. I took them all winter and summer while I was unable to work my farm. I took twelve boxes in all and in August I was able to work.

IN MERRY OLD ENGLAND

NEWS BY MAIL ABOUT JOHN BULL AND HIS PEOPLE.

Occurrences in the Land That Reigns Supreme in the Commercial World.

The total indebtedness of Manchester, it is said, now amounts to £21,-000,000.

The curfew bell is still rung every night at Yarmouth Parish church at eight o'clock.

Every year in Great Britain some 15,000 deaths are directly due to alcoholic excess.

Thirteen life insurance companies in Great Britain refuse to accept risks on unvaccinated persons.

The number of outdoor and indoor paupers in London on the last day of 13rd week of June was 108,428.

The fine old lamps on Waterloo Bridge, London, were recently removed, their places being taken by standards of modern design.

The value of the jewellery in Lord Aylesbury's estate is estimated at £170,000. The family gems alone are valued at £50,000.

The most valuable sword in Britain is one that was presented to Lord Wolseley. The hilt is set with brilliants, and it is valued at £2,-000.

Leeds Town Council will ask to approve a scheme for street improvements, electric lighting, and hospital purposes, which will involve the borrowing of £280,000.

One of the loveliest of the many marriage gifts received by Lady Marjorie Gordon, was a big cairngorm heart, surmounted by a little coronet of diamonds and pearls.

The supply of sterilized milk by the Liverpool Corporation has become quite a popular business. As many as 500 families are now supplied, the weekly consumption being 1,200 gallons.

The death of Admiral George Lydiard Sulivan, at the age of 72 years, is announced. He was the youngest son of the late Admiral Thomas Ball Sulivan, and entered the navy in June, 1846.

At an Irish wedding recently a London firm supplied the best man to the order of the bride groom, whose friends disapproving of the marriage, had refused to take any part whatever in the function.

The London Library, which has just got a new president in Mr. Balfour, has already attained its £50,000 fund. The idea of the institution originated with Thomas Carlyle, who found it difficult to work in the British Museum.

There is no royal household in Europe where the tradesmen's accounts are so regularly paid as in that of King Edward. Once every month every single item is compared with the ordinary expenses of the household is paid to the uttermost farthing.

On the 2nd inst. the Lord Mayor of London received a letter from Lord Strathcona, forwarding by request of the Minister of Finance, a sum of £30,000, voted at the last session of the Dominion Parliament as a contribution to the Queen Victoria Memorial Fund.

The cost of life insured in making and distributing drink in England and Wales during the past ten years is, said to have been the sum of 29,210 males from 25 to 65 years of age, of whom 12,000 would not have died had they not been engaged in this particular trade.

INDEPENDENT ORDER OF FORESTERS.

Membership nearly 225,000
Surplus accumulated fund
nearly $8,000,000
This Order has already
paid out to Widows and
Orphans and disabled
Brethren $18,000,000
Thousand of farmers in Canada are members of the Institution.

Something of the great work it is doing may be understood when it is stated that each work-day of the year it is paying out to Widows and Orphans and disabled brethren as much money as would be received for the harvest—allowing 20 bushels to the acre—of 100 acres of wheat.

For full particulars see any member or address,

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