

LITTLE VIXEN

CHAPTER XLIII.

Lettie's plan was indeed a diabolical one, and it included Mrs. Douglas, too, in its terrible details, for she reasoned that it would be as easy to rid herself of both as of one, in the clever way she had planned.

She remained absent from the parlor several hours, and when she re-entered it with a calm face and smiling lips, all the disastrous train was smoothly laid for the ruin of those she deemed her enemies. Under her bright, animated face and rich attire, throbbing the black heart of a murderess, and the crime she contemplated involved fourfold murder, for she had determined upon the destruction of Carl Douglas, his wife and daughter, and the old negro woman Phebe.

"I can never breathe freely again until all of the four are dead," she thought, and so laid her subtle plan for their destruction like a spider weaving his fatal web in the dark.

And she had never looked more bright and happy than she did after conceiving the terrible scheme of destruction. She entered the long parlors with head held high, sparkling eyes and flushed cheeks, completely dominated by fierce excitement and relentless hate.

Dawn, from the embrasure of a bay window, where she was half hidden by the falling lace curtains, beheld her entrance with surprise mixed with curiosity. How could Lettie look so gay, tottering on the verge of a precipice that meant ruin to her love and her ambition.

Lettie did not even frown, although she saw Tracy Tempest lingering by Dawn in the moonlight window, murmuring words that no one else was permitted to hear—passionate words from poets that they both loved—words that made both their hearts beat quickly with pleasure and pain.

"Let them enjoy their dream," she said, grimly, to herself. "It is their last interview in this world. Before morning's dawn the soul that lights those triumphant blue eyes will have passed to its account."

"My dear Aurora, I hope your headache is better," said Mrs. Tempest from the sofa where she was wearily reclining.

"It is almost well, I thank you," smilingly answered the arch dissembler.

She sat down carelessly near Capt. Langdon, and entered into light conversation with him; but his keen eyes noted how restlessly her burning black orbs wandered to the window where her indifferent betrothed lingered with her lovely rival.

"She is madly jealous," Langdon thought, in languid amusement. "I ought not to detain you any longer by my side. I see your betrothed looking anxiously this way." Dawn said, smiling to her lover.

She fancied that Lettie was yearning for even a kind glance or word from the man she loved and was soon to lose forever, and she was generous enough to wish to accord her all the pleasure she could derive from the gratification of her desire.

She even experienced a thrill of admiration for the composure with which Lettie had accepted her defeat, and the heavenly smile which she was watching the last hours of her reign pass away, bringing her to the hour of her doom.

But Tracy Tempest, when reminded that he was gently of his duty, curled his lip in unfeigned disgust.

"Be merciful, Miss Douglas, and remember all the years of her sweet society that lie before me in the future," he said, with grimace. "I shall not leave your side this evening unless you literally drive me from you, and I am sure you have too kind a heart to banish a poor wretch who is simply looking from afar at an unattainable paradise. Come into the music-room and sing for me. This divinely moonlight night needs only the soft strains of your melodious voice to make it like Eden's bowers."

She went with him to the brightly-lighted music-room adjoining the parlors, and sat down before the magnificent piano.

Lettie watched their exit with a subtle smile that still lingered on her lips as her rival's soft, sweet voice floated back into the room she had just left, every word of her song plainly audible, and evidently chosen for Lettie's sake, out of the pity of her womanly heart.

But it seemed to Lettie like a cruel mockery, and she whispered bitterly to herself.

"Enjoy your fancied triumph for a few minutes longer, little Vixen. The flying moments are hastening your doom."

Tracy hung like one entranced over the piano while Dawn sang low and softly:

"Come sit awhile beside me,
Beneath the stars' soft light,
And oh! forbear to chide me,
For I am sad tonight.
The shadow of tomorrow
Comes stealing o'er my heart,
And a voice of wilder sorrow
Is whispering 'We must part!'"

"Oh, look on me as heaven
Looks down upon the sea,
And say that I'm forgiven
For dreaming thus of thee!
Love came without a warning,
Too pure and true to scorn;
As radiance of the morning,
'Twas of thy beauty born."

"The echo of the ocean
Is murmuring in mine ear,
And the winds, with sad devotion,
Lift the tendrils of thy hair.
The stars that shine above you,
The tones that round you fall,
Oh, all things seem to love you,
But I—far more than all!"

With dark eyes full of passion and pain, Tracy Tempest leaned toward the lovely singer, but the words that trembled on his lips were never spoken, for just then came a startling interruption—the loud and prolonged clangor of the front door bell, startling all the echoes of the lofty hall into appalling sound.

It was verging upon 12 o'clock, and everyone started with surprise and expectancy. Miss De Navarre grew pale with fear, and exclaimed:

"Nobility but a telegraphic messenger ever rings the front door bell at this unearthly hour of the night!"

And in corroboration of her words a sleepy-looking butler immediately appeared at the door with a telegram for Dawn, signed with her father's name. With horrified eyes she read:

"I have been fatally hurt by an accident. Come to me at once. Bring Mrs. Douglas with you." She gave one ringing, passionate cry and the note fell from her hands. Someone caught it up and read it aloud as they crowded around her, shocked and anxious.

Mrs. Douglas flung her compassionate arms around the reeling form.

"Be brave, Dawn, my darling," she exclaimed, in a quivering voice. "You must not break down, you will need all your strength, for we must start at once to catch the midnight train for Washington. I will go with you; I will help you all I can."

The carriage was speedily ordered, and old Aunt Phebe was awakened by orders of Lettie, who was all sympathy and eagerness. The ladies, all pale and tearful and sympathetic, vied with each other in helping Dawn and Mrs. Douglas into their traveling dresses, and in a very few minutes they were hustled out to the carriage and the door closed upon them, with Auntie Phebe muttering her prayers aloud in the corner. The Tempest gave Dawn's hand a tender pressure as he helped her into the carriage, and he would have accompanied them to the railway, but Lettie's eager hand pulled him resolutely back.

"The carriage is full already, and they will not need you," she said, curtly. "The coachman can attend to everything."

The carriage drove away in the midnight darkness, for the moon was fast going down, and the arch traitress listened to the roll of the wheels with a wildly beating heart.

"How the wheels grind on the gravel!" she thought, with an irrepressible shudder, "and how plainly they seem to say 'Going to their doom! Going to their doom!'"

[To be Continued.]

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CIRCULATION OF THE
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For One Year—June 1st, 1899, to May 31st, 1900.

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| DATE. | JUNE, 1899. | JULY, 1899. | AUG., 1899. | SEPT., 1899. | OCT., 1899. | NOV., 1899. | DEC., 1899. | JAN., 1900. | FEB., 1900. | MARCH, 1900. | APRIL, 1900. | MAY, 1900. |
|--------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 | 7,900 | 8,171 | 8,177 | 8,397 | Sunday | 8,339 | 8,498 | 8,550 | 8,979 | 9,957 | Sunday | 8,849 |
| 2 | 7,899 | Sunday | 8,204 | 8,368 | 8,115 | 8,293 | 8,697 | 8,739 | 8,962 | 9,101 | 8,969 | 8,868 |
| 3 | 8,185 | 7,872 | 8,213 | Sunday | 8,138 | 8,297 | Sunday | 8,700 | 9,208 | 9,343 | 8,952 | 8,878 |
| 4 | Sunday | 8,042 | 8,294 | 8,061 | 8,135 | 8,444 | 8,532 | 8,758 | Sunday | Sunday | 8,986 | 8,867 |
| 5 | 7,994 | 8,074 | 8,711 | 8,309 | 8,154 | Sunday | 8,550 | 8,840 | 9,025 | 9,088 | 8,949 | 8,911 |
| 6 | 7,900 | 8,010 | Sunday | 8,232 | 8,170 | 8,396 | 8,497 | 8,947 | 8,901 | 9,049 | 8,958 | Sunday |
| 7 | 8,222 | 8,055 | 8,416 | 8,215 | 8,398 | 8,319 | 8,462 | Sunday | 8,976 | 9,090 | 9,072 | 8,866 |
| 8 | 8,032 | 8,419 | 8,260 | 8,236 | Sunday | 8,345 | 8,522 | 8,811 | 9,002 | 9,154 | Sunday | 8,905 |
| 9 | 8,028 | Sunday | 8,282 | 8,372 | 8,162 | 8,325 | 8,668 | 8,862 | 9,034 | 9,000 | 9,103 | 8,906 |
| 10 | 8,205 | 9,534 | 8,245 | Sunday | 8,180 | 8,344 | Sunday | 8,835 | 9,223 | 9,261 | 8,957 | 8,853 |
| 11 | Sunday | 8,772 | 8,219 | 8,230 | 8,182 | 8,706 | 8,586 | 8,775 | Sunday | Sunday | 8,887 | 8,868 |
| 12 | 8,016 | 8,414 | 8,496 | 8,340 | 8,238 | Sunday | 8,590 | 8,825 | 9,000 | 9,035 | 8,931 | 9,068 |
| 13 | 8,013 | 8,372 | Sunday | 8,281 | 8,191 | 8,344 | 8,550 | 9,002 | 8,997 | 9,046 | 8,939 | Sunday |
| 14 | 8,002 | 8,296 | 8,242 | 8,297 | 8,343 | 8,323 | 8,558 | Sunday | 8,979 | 9,010 | 9,074 | 8,885 |
| 15 | 8,024 | 8,425 | 8,338 | 8,071 | Sunday | 8,416 | 8,728 | 8,838 | 8,988 | 9,051 | Sunday | 8,877 |
| 16 | 7,977 | Sunday | 8,275 | 8,325 | 8,172 | 8,380 | 8,784 | 8,845 | 8,990 | 9,229 | 8,956 | 8,870 |
| 17 | 8,191 | 8,283 | 8,277 | Sunday | 8,268 | 8,331 | Sunday | 8,873 | 9,208 | 9,238 | 8,948 | 8,877 |
| 18 | Sunday | 8,331 | 8,263 | 8,129 | 8,250 | 8,485 | 8,692 | 8,808 | Sunday | Sunday | 8,861 | 9,207 |
| 19 | 7,985 | 8,301 | 8,334 | 8,266 | 8,141 | Sunday | 8,687 | 8,843 | 8,985 | 9,003 | 8,902 | 9,077 |
| 20 | 8,271 | 8,214 | Sunday | 8,262 | 8,233 | 8,342 | 8,644 | 9,100 | 8,894 | 9,002 | 8,914 | Sunday |
| 21 | 8,014 | 8,246 | 8,177 | 8,231 | 8,354 | 8,418 | 8,654 | Sunday | 10,700 | 9,030 | 9,029 | 8,868 |
| 22 | 8,036 | 8,444 | 8,276 | 8,274 | Sunday | 8,406 | 8,677 | 8,837 | 8,985 | 8,983 | Sunday | 8,886 |
| 23 | 8,042 | Sunday | 8,191 | 8,308 | 8,239 | 8,393 | 8,915 | 8,880 | 9,502 | 8,978 | 8,915 | 8,873 |
| 24 | 8,163 | 8,197 | 8,245 | Sunday | 8,231 | 8,457 | Sunday | 8,869 | 9,334 | 9,109 | 8,859 | 8,877 |
| 25 | Sunday | 8,254 | 8,268 | 8,242 | 8,604 | 8,626 | 8,707 | 8,822 | Sunday | Sunday | 8,793 | 8,878 |
| 26 | 7,993 | 8,247 | 8,358 | 8,268 | 8,293 | Sunday | 8,716 | 9,033 | 9,050 | 8,943 | 8,842 | 8,939 |
| 27 | 8,012 | 9,385 | Sunday | 8,262 | 8,233 | 8,414 | 8,668 | 9,057 | 9,374 | 9,094 | 8,838 | Sunday |
| 28 | 8,113 | 8,237 | 8,428 | 8,265 | 8,413 | 8,347 | 8,722 | Sunday | 8,969 | 9,004 | 8,951 | 8,822 |
| 29 | 8,034 | 8,328 | 8,269 | 8,173 | Sunday | 8,456 | 8,719 | 8,863 | | 9,025 | Sunday | 8,828 |
| 30 | 7,959 | Sunday | 8,272 | 8,248 | 8,277 | 8,479 | 8,660 | 8,943 | | 8,993 | 8,863 | 8,824 |
| 31 | | 8,154 | 8,278 | | 8,422 | | Sunday | 9,019 | | 9,078 | | 8,840 |
| TOTALS | 209,210 | 217,077 | 224,008 | 214,662 | 214,556 | 218,425 | 224,923 | 239,274 | 219,265 | 245,894 | 223,448 | 240,327 |

GRAND TOTAL OF COPIES CIRCULATED FOR THE YEAR, 2,691,069
Divided by 313, the actual number of days of issue, MAKES A DAILY AVERAGE FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS OF 8,597

DAILY AVERAGE FOR EACH MONTH.

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| June, 1899..... | 8,046 |
| July, "..... | 8,349 |
| August, "..... | 8,296 |
| September, "..... | 8,256 |
| October, "..... | 8,252 |
| November, "..... | 8,400 |
| December, "..... | 8,650 |
| January, 1900..... | 8,862 |
| February, "..... | 9,136 |
| March, "..... | 9,103 |
| April, "..... | 8,937 |
| May, "..... | 8,901 |

103,188

ONTARIO,
COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX,

To Wit:

IN THE MATTER of the circulation of the LONDON DAILY ADVERTISER.

I, John Cameron, of the City of London, in the County of Middlesex, Managing Director of The London Advertiser, do solemnly declare:

THAT the above statement represents the actual bona fide circulation of THE LONDON ADVERTISER for one year, between June 1st, 1899, and May 31st, 1900.

This circulation is exclusive of all spoiled copies, being the actual circulation of Mail List, Subscribers, Agents, Carrier Boys and Street Sales.

And I make this solemn declaration, conscientiously believing it to be true, and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as if made under oath and by virtue of The Canada Evidence Act, 1893.

Declared before me at the City of London, in the County of Middlesex, this 13th day of June, A.D. 1900.

T. H. PURDOM,

A Commissioner, etc., H. C. J.

John Cameron

LETTER FROM
CAPT. STUART

The following extracts from a letter written by Capt. Stuart to a friend in the country will be of interest to many of our readers. It is dated Kroonstad, O. F. S., May 19, 1900, and says:

I got your letter along with 32 others in one mail some days ago, and as you had the greatest number of inquiries to make, and mainly about myself, I have left it to the last. As to my health and experience, which you are kind enough to say, many are anxious to hear more about than they have heard, I am glad to report—and to answer your letter I must make quite a long report—that I am now all right in every respect.

I was never down sick, as some stronger men were who had less work and responsibility than I had, but I was nearly used up before I was sent down to the Cape from Belmont in January. I hadn't a good start. The two weeks' work of examining and enlisting the men during the day, and my late hours in my office at night, trying to finish up current business there, rather tired me out before we started. The work on the crowded vessel didn't help me any, and the outpost and other heavy duties in the intense heat and driving sand of De Aar, Orange River and Belmont, were in danger of knocking me out entirely, and I was sent for a change down to the Cape, where they needed an officer of some business experience. That is all there was in my going there. Though the duties were light, they were numerous, and I was very busy. While there I had a trip up to Methuen's camp at Modder River, to deliver a few odd bodies of men at various places, and I had a good view of the life of a British army in camp in the face of the enemy. There was shell fire going on intermittently, but doing no harm. You will probably know, for I have told several, that I missed Paardeberg by not getting Col. Otter's first telegram to join the regiment before leaving Belmont; but there were many other officers equally disappointed. The officer commanding my company and one other B Company officer also missed it. When I joined the regiment a few days after that event, they needed a paymaster badly, and I was given that duty for a time. Though the pay sheets were in a rather bad state, and I had considerable work in them, and in getting some of the sergeants to understand the necessary bookkeeping, yet it was not a hard job, and I had a horse to ride. I didn't care for my work, though it

was exceedingly important and had to be done right. But no matter, we are on service, and that was the order, and that is all I need know about it, and all my friends need know.

We had a hard time from Paardeberg to Bloemfontein, but as the chase was hot it was exciting, and I stood their exposure all right, and have again been very busy. When the brigade moved off on the Thabanchu expedition about which you will have heard, I was given charge of the camp, and all of the men of the 19th brigade who remained, about 600 in the four regiments, and for three weeks was acting brigadier, brigade major, commanding officer of our own men, adjutant, quartermaster and paymaster, all combined. As most of the men were either sick or convalescent, we actually ran a hospital as well as a camp. I was awfully tired when I got through with it, and had sent our own men to a rest camp, and turned over the brigade to the next senior. I have had great experience, but not exactly what I wanted. I know pretty well now what war is, better even than many who have seen more fighting. As soon as I got done with this I started for the front in charge of a convoy with clothing for the regiment. I got as far as the Vet—pronounced "Fat"—River by rail, with instructions to do the best I could after that to get the loads on. I met with two flat refusals from the camp commandant, and the army service corps' officer in charge of supplies, but finally, through Col. Grounau here at the Valschoy, we were permitted for permission to send on clothing, which was given, and I got on. We were all day crossing the Vet, with our 37 wagons, and traveled during the night to Smalheide. From Smalheide we went to Weigelien. The bridges and culverts, which are all of stone or iron, and well-built, are all blown up. They built a temporary bridge across the Vet by running a temporary line along the side of the bank to the present water level, and are doing the same at Weigelien, Zand River, and now here at the Valschoy. We travel mainly at night for the oxen's sake. Col. Otter, who was wounded at Thabanchu, passed us at the Zand River, and here, here long before us. I am told he was much pleased with my success in getting through, as well as my management of the brigade at Bloemfontein. We are going to Helbron tomorrow, and then I think I will likely be sent back to the company, as I have the pay business so arranged that it is not hard to do now. I want to see some fighting at close range, and I think I will get the chance.

The Orange Free State is a beautiful prairie country, with better, or at least longer, grass than that of the Northwest. From Weigelien to here is one immense plain, without even a kopje, just like the Mooselva and Regina plains, but with more low banked streams, with water in them. We all think the war will be over in a few weeks or a month now. It is very nice to think of getting home and

having rest, and some Sundays once more, and beds, and tables, and chairs, and not be in one incessant crowd of soldiers, foot and horse, and wagons, and mules, and oxen, and acres of boxes of hard tack and canned beef, and oats, and Kaffirs, with clouds of dust, and Babel of voices, orders and cries. It is not disorder, it only seems so. In a general way, everyone is minding his own business, and knows where to go, except, perhaps, at night, when belated stragglers come along, asking the way to their regiments or brigades. One man wants to know where the Norfolks are, another the 17th Lancers, another the Guards' brigade, or the New Zealand Mounted Rifles, or the 3rd Cavalry. It is a hard job to find one's home at night in a great camp. It will soon be over, I think, now that the men of the regiment won't be sorry. There are less than 400 men and half the officers left in the regiment now at the front. The rest all sick and dead, mostly sick, of course.

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To speak and to offend, with some people, are but one and the same thing.—La Bruyere.

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