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A YOUNG HEART'S FEARS.

BY A. S. B.
My life's frail bark, that down the placid stream
Of happy childhood's days has floated long,
Now comes unto the sea where currents seem
And fierce raise up huge watery mounds that
Eager to drive our ships upon the shoals
Of sin and sorrow, while the surging wave
Higher and higher climbs, until it rolls
O'er some sleight vessel's mast and to a
grave
In ocean's depths the hapless sailor hurk.
Trembling I now embark upon the mere
Where many a ship the roaring storm-wind
whirls
To ruin.—All my soul is filled with fear.
O Mary, Mother, star of stormy skies!
Guide thou my bark through storms to Paradise.

THE AMULET

CHAPTER VI.
SIMON TURCHI WREAKS HIS VENGEANCE ON GERONIMO.

It was about five o'clock in the afternoon. Julio was seated in one of the rooms of his master's dwelling, his arms crossed upon his breast. Absorbed in deep thought, he had his eyes fixed on an arm-chair which stood near the only window in the room, and from time to time he shook his head with an expression of anxious doubt.

The footsteps of a man in the room above interrupted his reflections; an ironical smile passed over his features as he muttered:
"He calls me a coward, the dastard that he is! For one hour he has been running about from room to room as though pursued by invisible spectres. How cunningly he has devised the whole affair in his own interest. Julio is to kill poor Geronimo! Julio is to bury the body in the cellar! Julio is to do all by himself! When we deal with false people, we must be on our guard. His intention is clear enough to me; he wishes to secure means, in case of necessity, of accusing me alone of the crime. He may threaten and rage as much as he pleases; he shall deal the mortal blow himself, or Geronimo shall leave this place unharmed."

Julio remained silent for a few moments, passed his hand across his brow, and said, looking at the chair:
"Think that in one hour that infernal seat will hold a corpse! The corpse of the most noble, affable gentleman I have ever known. May his good angel prevent him from visiting this out-throat place! Signor Turchi will kill him; but I must aid him. What will be the end of this bloody tragedy. The scaffold for the master and the gallows for the servant. This is the consequence of my disorderly life. Had I not gone, in a moment of intoxication, and without knowing it, to the place where Judge Voltai was assassinated, I would not have been obliged to fly from my country, and Signor Turchi would not have it in his power to force me to become his accomplice in a frightful crime. The old cur of Porto-Fino said truly, that 'Sin is a labyrinth; if once we enter, we lose the thread which enables us to return to virtue.' Ah! would I were with my mother in Italy. Useless with. It is too late; I am banished from my country, and a price set on my head."

He reflected for a few moments, then, with a gesture of impatience, he resumed:
"Come, come; of what good are all such thoughts. I am in his power, and I must yield to necessity; but once let the blow be struck, once let him commit a crime of which I can produce the proofs, then I will be master, and in my turn I will cry in his ears: 'Executioner! At the present moment I am powerless; I took any means to prevent the attempt, he might destroy all evidence of his criminal design, and deliver me up to the authorities of Lucca. I would be taken into Italy and broken on the wheel, in the very place where my poor old mother lives. I have always been a cause of sorrow to her; at least I will spare her this last disgrace. But the signor is coming down. He will reiterate his entreaties to me to strike the fatal blow; but I will not have the blood of this innocent gentleman on me.'"
Simon Turchi was approaching. His face was very pale, but the scar which furrowed his cheek was of a more ashy

hue. He did not tremble, but he walked precipitately, and he clasped his hands convulsively, like a man whose impatience can brook no delay.

He noticed that his servant was in deep thought, his head bowed upon his chest, and it was only in his near approach that Julio suddenly roused from his preoccupation. He entered the room and said:
"Julio the hour is nigh. Of what are you thinking. Are you afraid?"

"Afraid," replied Julio, with a light laugh; "why should I be afraid?"

"True, true," murmured Simon, "since I alone shall shed his blood."
"But," continued Julio, "if I have no cause for personal fear, would not love for my master fill me with painful thoughts. Signor, you are playing for dangerous stakes."
"Who will know what has taken place here?"

"Who. Is there not an eye above which sees all. And whilst here in the deepest secrecy, you imitate a human being to your thirst for vengeance, will not God hear the cry of agony of the Signor Geronimo?"

Julio saw, with a secret joy, that his words made his master tremble, although he tried to dissemble his feelings under an assumed insensibility.

"What a good joke!" replied Simon; "Pietro Mostajo talking of God! My precautions are too well taken; when the cellar will be the depository of the secret, there will be none to tell it."

"Do you think so, signor. When has such a murder ever remained concealed. It is not surprising that I bowed my head in thought. In imagination I saw such terrible things that I dare not tell them to you. Tears still fill my eyes at the thought."

"What did you see," asked Turchi, with interesting anxiety.

"What did I see. The bailiff and his attendants. They bound a man's hands behind his back; they dragged him through the streets like an odious criminal; the people cast filth and dirt upon the prisoner, and cried out, 'Murderer.' What did I see. A scaffold, and on this scaffold an executioner and one condemned to death; then a sword glittered in the sunlight, it fell, a stream of blood flowed, and a head rolled in the dust."
The servant stopped intentionally; but his master convulsively caught his arm, and said in a hoarse voice:
"What then. What then?"

"And then the crowd applauded and poured out maledictions upon the name."
"Whose name?"

"Yours, signor."
Simon Turchi was so overpowered by the picture thus presented of his probable end, that he uttered a cry of terror and sprang back, trembling. He cast down his eyes for a moment in silence.

Julio contemplated the signor, thus overpowered by emotion, with a derisive smile. He had not called upon this vivid scene solely as a means to induce his master to renounce his perilous enterprise; his motive was also to terrify him and to revenge himself for the violence he had been forced to endure from him.

The impression made upon Simon Turchi by this highly-wrought prediction did not last long. He raised his head, and said, in a contemptuous manner:
"Base Hypocrite; it is your own fear which excites your imagination to see such things. The most courageous man would become cowardly with the cowardly. It is unfortunate for me that I need you, otherwise I would soon rid myself of your presence. But I, at least, will not recoil from the undertaking. Speak; tell me how far I may depend upon you. The clock will soon strike, and there is no time for hesitation."

"We will see which of us will the more coolly perform his part of the task. You are mistaken, signor; fear does not disturb me. Sympathy for you suggested the train of thought, and I considered it my duty to place before your eyes once more the abyss into which you might fall."

"Be silent; it is too late," exclaimed Simon Turchi, beside himself with rage. "Fool, do you desire my ruin—my eternal dishonor. Shall I let my enemy live. Shall I let him—him the husband of Mary Van de Werve—look down upon

me from the height of his grandeur and felicity. No, no. I myself will be, and be, happy, rich, prosperous; and even should all escape my grasp; should the scaffold be my lot, the rage of vengeance which lacerates my heart must be satisfied. . . . Nothing, nothing, can restrain me; and, Julio, were you an obstacle in my path, I would pass over your dead body to strike a fatal blow at him who has poisoned my life. Do not attempt to thwart me, or I will crush you where you stand."

At these words Simon Turchi placed his hand on the hilt of his sword; his face was scarlet, his lips trembled, and his eyes flashed.

This threat did not disturb Julio, probably because he thought his master could not execute it. An ironical smile played upon his lips; he stepped back one or two paces, drew his knife, and said mockingly:
"It would be strange, signor, if Geronimo should find us engaged in a combat. It might save his life."

"What, would you dare?"

"Why not. Do you think Julio would permit himself to be led like a sheep to the slaughter?"

"Listen! He comes!" exclaimed Simon Turchi, starting with terror.

The repeated stroke of the yarder resounded through the court-yard where the little door gave entrance to the garden.

"Julio, I ask you again," said Turchi, anxiously, "what regainance I may place upon you."

"I will do what I have promised—neither more nor less."

"Then go open the door. Be guarded in your words, and show no dissimulation. Bring him to this room; tell him that I am engaged with the foreign merchant; if he does not sit down at once, watch a favorable moment to lead him to the arm-chair. Then call me and I will do the rest."

"You, then, are determined to make me entice the Signor Geronimo to sit down in the arm-chair?"

Turchi replied in a threatening voice and with flashing eyes;
"Pietro Mostajo, remember the Superintendent of Lucca."

Julio left the building, went to the garden-gate and opened it.

"Benvenuto, Signor Geronimo," he said, "what good luck brings you here on a visit to my master?" It is a long time since we have seen you."

"It is indeed a long time," replied the young noble with a genial smile, as he walked towards the house. "But the place looks so wild and uncared for. Did not the Signor Turchi speak of having the garden put in order?"

"Yes, but for some time my master has been very melancholy, and nothing seems to give him pleasure."

"I know it, Julio; but things will be better for him now."

"Would that your words would be true, Signor!"

"What a heavy sigh, Julio. You excite my fears. Is your master ill?"

The servant felt the importance of self-control, if he would not arouse the gentleman's suspicions. He therefore said, in a careless manner:
"Nothing is the matter, Signor. My master is very well, and to-day is in a good humor. Ever since I saw Bufferio's sword lifted against you, I have suffered from an occasional sudden palpitation of the heart. I find relief only in a deep sigh."

As they thus talked together, he conducted Geronimo to the room containing the large arm-chair.

"Signor Geronimo," he said, "my master is up stairs. I will inform him of your arrival. Please be seated."

Julio left the room; but instead of ascending the stair-case, he hid himself behind a door and listened attentively to hear the clashing of the springs of the chair.

After having waited in vain for a long time, he returned to the room, and said to the gentleman:
"Signor, my master begs you to excuse him for a while. He is engaged transacting some business with the merchant of whom he spoke to you yesterday. They are preparing a writing for you. Have the kindness to wait a few moments."

He now thought that Geronimo would, of his own accord, take the arm-chair and with a beating heart he observed his movements. But he was disappointed, for the young cavalier stood at the window, gazing thoughtfully into the garden.

Although Julio knew what distrust and impatience his master was counting the moments, he said to Geronimo, with assumed indifference:
"It is at least half a mile from the Dominion Convent to this place, and you must feel fatigued after your walk. Will you not rest in this arm-chair, Signor?"

"No, I thank you. I am not in the least fatigued. I love to look at those beautiful trees clothed in their fresh May verdure."

An involuntary movement of impatience escaped the servant.

"You need not remain here on my account, Julio," said Geronimo. "Go to your work; I will stay alone."

"If I still remain, contrary to your wish, it is to ask you a question; and yet I fear that you will be displeased at my boldness."

"Not at all, Julio. Can I render you any service? It will give me pleasure to show my gratitude for the courage with which you defended me when I was attacked by the ruffians."

"I had no reference to that. I heard you were about to marry the beautiful Miss Van de Werve. The news rejoiced me; but may your humble servant make free to ask you if it be true?"

The name of his betrothed flushed his cheek with joy, and he answered, with a smile:
"Yes, Julio, it is true."

"How blessed you are, Signor!"

"Yes, Julio, God has bestowed upon me the greatest earthly blessing, for which I shall eternally thank him. On the solemn day of our nuptials you will have cause to rejoice."

"I Signor?"

"Yes, you, Julio. Miss Van de Werve wishes to recompense you herself for the assistance you gave me against Bufferio and his camrads. The day of my marriage you will receive a new cloak, a new doublet, new small-clothes of fine cloth and silk, such as a servant has never worn."

Julio, touched by this proof of kindness, stammered his thanks indistinctly. He heard young man speaking to him and telling him how richly he deserved such a present, but he paid no attention to the words; he was endeavoring to bring himself to the degree of audacity requisite to fulfill his master's orders. Geronimo stood immediately in front of the arm-chair.

With bitter repugnance, but incited by the fear that no more favorable opportunity would present itself, he approached Geronimo as though to express his thanks anew. With one bound he sprang upon him, placed a hand on either shoulder, and pushed him forcibly into the chair.

The seat of the deceptive piece of furniture sank down; from the arms started two powerful springs, which caught the young man around the waist, and held him so tightly against the back of the chair that it was impossible for him to move.

"Julio, Julio, what horrible jest is this?" he exclaimed. "Is it a trap?" Do you act by your master's orders?"

But the servant, without saying a word in reply, left the room, closing the door behind him.

"Tell me, Julio," asked Turchi, descending the staircase to meet his servant, "is he caught?"

"The chair has done its work," replied Julio; "go do yours. Lose no time; he might give an alarm which would betray us. The fear of death gives superhuman strength to a man's lungs. Signor, it seems to me that my head is not safe on my shoulders. How does yours feel?"

But Simon Turchi heeded not this jest. He muttered a few indistinct words, drew his sword, and rushed down the steps to wreak his vengeance on the unfortunate Geronimo.

The servant remained where his master left him, listened to his footsteps until he heard the door of the fatal room open and then close again.

TO BE CONTINUED.