



CHAPTER VIII. (Continued.)

"I AM NOT HAROLD WESTCOTT!"

Surely it was not fancy on my part that showed me the figure of Covey Cone on the other side of the street at the moment I emerged from the lower door of my apartments on my way to call upon Miss Lawrence.

At the instant of catching sight of the detective he seemed to have been pausing, as if to fasten his shoe, but immediately resumed his brisk walk in the opposite direction from the one taken by me, and without looking across. I thought nothing more of it though it would have been well had I done so.

I was kept waiting but a brief while in the beautiful reception room at Madison avenue, when I heard a light footstep on the stairs, and the next moment Jeanette Lawrence bounded into the room and into my arms.

There was no helping it. The petite, black-eyed beauty, overflowing with happiness and high spirits, never hesitated, and I could do nothing less than return the fervent kiss and embrace. Then, as I sank into a chair, she did the same close beside me, and, reaching over with her fair-like hand, sent a thrill through every fibre of my being by gently brushing away a curl from my forehead, as doubtless she had done many a time with Harold Westcott.

"Dear Harold, how do you feel?" she asked, in a voice of infinite tenderness. "I never was so frightened in my life after you had forced mother back into my lap and you were thrown from your horse. It must have hurt you dreadfully."

"Yes, I was pretty well shaken up, but I have fully recovered."

"How thankful I am! I sprang out of the carriage as soon as the team was stopped and knelt over you. I wished them to bring you to our house, but the officer said you must go to the hospital, and mother had fainted, and by the time I really comprehended what was going on they had taken you away."

"And how is your mother?"

"Barring a little nervousness, there are no ill effects from the accident. But here she comes."

The beaming, matronly woman walked straight to me with extended hand and implanted a motherly kiss on my cheek.

"You dear, good boy," she said, deliberately seating herself and folding her arms across her ample bosom. "you risked your life for us. If you had not pushed me back into Jeanette's lap, I should have been killed."

"It was a rather alarming time, but it is fortunate that it ended so well. I understand your coachman was badly hurt."

"Quite badly, but he is mending, and the doctor says, will come around if no complication intervenes. You seem to be well, Harold?"

"Yes; better than I had a right to expect. I was considerably bruised, but the only ill effects are a peculiar affection of my memory, due, I suppose, to the violent jar. It plays odd pranks with me at times."

I trust the recording angel blotted out that assertion, for it held not a grain of truth, and its only palliation was in the motive with which it was uttered.

The chat went on in an aimless way for some time, when the mother withdrew, and Jeanette and I were left alone.

"I hope you were not offended," she ventured, with her bewitching smile, "at the deception we played on you."

"Offended? What a strange remark! Of course, I did not expect to see you, and could hardly believe that it was you when I caught a glimpse of your frightened face in the carriage."

"But you must have recognized mother?"

"I had no more expectation of seeing her than of seeing you."

"And you are sure you are glad I am at home?"

She leaned forward and looked up at me. Evidently she yearned for more tenderness, and my good resolutions were becoming demoralized. I took the unresisting hand and pressed it.

"I had not the heart to chill her, and besides it was so pleasant to meet her expectations, even though the right was not mine. What is so ravishing as the taste of forbidden fruit?"

It required only the gentlest of efforts to draw her upon the sofa beside me.

"And are you sure, Harold, that you love me as much as ever? I do you."

"Can you doubt me, dearest?"

"There are so many young women more attractive and better than I that I sometimes fear, just a tiny bit, that they might steal you away from me."

"Aren't you ashamed of such foolish fancies? And how many better, nobler and handsomer men than I you have met abroad?"

"No, sir!" she exclaimed, compressing her pretty lips and speaking with an emphasis that made my blood tingle. "There is none so handsome, so worthy, so noble as my own Harold, and you know it."

I broke into laughter at the comical earnestness of the little divinity. I was playing with fire, but it was delightful.

She nestled close to my side, and I drew her still closer. Then, pricked by conscience, I sat back, and she straightened up.

"But tell me about your experiences abroad."

"Tell you about them," she repeated, with another laugh. "Why, I wrote you by every steamer and omitted nothing."

"But," I stammered, "I mean since your last letter. You know it has been so long since I heard anything from you."

"Not so very long, either. I sent my last from London three days before we sailed from Liverpool. You received it, did you not?"

I wrinkled my brow with thought.

"Let me see. You know, I told you my memory plays me strange pranks at present. What was your letter about?"

"I told of our visit to the Tower of London and—"

"Oh, yes, I recall it now. But, you little rogue, you said nothing about coming home for a long, long time."

"Of course not. That was my plot, which I have explained."

"But suppose I had grown impatient to see you and had sailed for Europe without letting you know anything about it? What then?"

"I never thought of that. Wouldn't it have been awful?" And she sighed and almost shuddered at the picture I had called up.

And yet that was precisely what had taken place.

At this juncture occurred one of those awkward pauses which sometimes stop the flow of conversation when all parties were overrunning with words only a few minutes before.

She looked at me, and I met her glance. Neither spoke. I thought there was a peculiar, unfathomable expression in her countenance and asked myself:—

"Has a shadowy doubt flitted across her consciousness? I hope so, and yet I do not hope so. This is wicked, but it is too sweet for me to yield just yet."

Looking at this adorable creature, a pang of bitter jealousy stung me. What right had Harold Westcott to such unapproachable loveliness? Yet it was his, and he had stolen away like a coward, leaving me to meet the penalty of some wrongdoing that would not bear the light of day.

Would it not be righteous punishment if I should wrest this gem, this diamond, this prize, from him? Had he not basely deserted his post of duty? Would he dare to return before the lapse of a year, by which time he would be safe from the punishment for his wrongdoing?

But when the truth should become known in all its fulness, how this woman would recoil from me! She would loathe me beyond the power of words to express.

But why bother with all this? Sufficient for the day is the good or the evil thereof. I was in her presence. She believed she was mine. I was revelling in bliss. Why, therefore, let any ghost intrude upon the feast?

"Have you decided where you will spend the summer?" was my silly question.

"No place suits mother like Newport. I should wish to go there as soon as the warm weather comes, and of course you will not be much behind us."

"Of course not."

"The season promises to be a gay one, and we shall all enjoy ourselves almost as much as we did before poor father's death."

And she sighed at the remembrance of her grief.

When I turned my face away from the one I loved, my conscience made itself heard. I despised myself for my weakness, and yet when I met the light of those midnight eyes I was helpless, content to drift along the witching tide, with the ravishing music in my ears and beguiling my senses.

My arm stole gently around the willowy waist, and scoundrel that I was, I forgot the dishonour of my position in the happiness of the present.

What would be the feelings of Harold Westcott could he look upon us at that moment? Would he not leap into the sea from very shame and grief? Not because of Jeanette, for she was blameless in her trusting love, but because of the unspokeable baseness of the man whom he had taken out of the gutter, as may be said, and given a taste of comfort and luxury.

But, thank Heaven, though the prickings of conscience may be dulled, they are still felt, and, if resisted, become burning bolts pressed remorselessly into the quivering flesh.

While my lips were parted with the utterances of vows of love which should have blistered them, the words were checked. I gently put the young woman from me.

It was done so gently, indeed, that she saw no meaning in it, but was smiling, radiant, and as trustful as ever.

I looked at her, but did not know how to frame the awful avowal. I was tempted to blurt it out in the fewest words possible, but shrank from the result. It could not be that she was wholly recovered from the shock of a few days before, though she thought so, and my revelation might be fatal to her exquisitely sensitive nature.

"You startled me," she said.

"How?"

"By the expression on your face. You looked as if you were going to say something fearful, something that would take my life from me."

"What a delightful puzzle you are, Jeanette! Do you think you would be alarmed at anything I could say?"

"I hardly think so, and yet I do not know."

Something whispered that Heaven had made this opening. If I let it pass unimproved, it would never return. I was afraid to delay.

"My dear Jeanette, I have something very serious to say to you."

The words were uttered with the utmost tenderness. She gave a faint gasp and drew slightly away from me. Her face paled, and she stared in mute wonder, though she swallowed a lump in her throat, as if making an effort to utter the words that would not come.

"I cruelly waited, looking steadily in

WHY CALLED TUMBLERS.

Curious Origin of the Name of an Article in Daily Use.

Every day we drink out of a tumbler. Why is the large glass that holds our milk and water so called? Years ago Professor Max Muller was giving a luncheon at All Souls' college, Oxford, to the Princess Alice, the wife of the Grand Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt and the second daughter of Queen Victoria. There were not a dozen guests besides the princess and her husband, and a very agreeable luncheon we had, with talk on all kinds of interesting subjects.

But what excited the curiosity of all strangers present was a set of little round bowls of silver, about the size of a large orange. They were brought round filled to the brim with the famous ale brewed in the college. These, we are told, were tumblers, and we were speedily shown how they came by their names—a fitting lesson for the guests of a philologist. When one of these little bowls was empty, it was placed upon the table mouth downward. Instantly, so perfect was the balance, it flew back to its proper position as if asking to be filled again. No matter how it was treated—trundled along the floors, balanced carefully on its side, dropped suddenly upon the soft, thick carpet—up it rolled again and settled itself with a few gentle shakings and swaying into its place, like one of those India rubber tumbling dolls' babies delight in.

This, then, was the origin of our word tumbler, at first made of silver, as are all these All Souls' tumblers. Then, when glass became common, the round glasses that stood on a flat base superseded the exquisitely balanced silver spheres and stole their names so successfully that you have to go to All Souls' to see the real thing.—Philadelphia Times.

(To be Continued.)

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The Quarrelsome Robin.

The robin, that "pious" bird, is very quarrelsome, and it exasperates one to watch him wasting the precious hours of food in hunting another hungry robin up and down and round and round till the sparrows have cleared the board. The blackbirds, too, are very annoying in the way that they snatch up a lump of bread and fly off with it, only to be chased about for the rest of the morning by other blackbirds, while a sparrow makes a square meal of the morsel fallen meanwhile under a shrub, but relentless as they are in pursuit, the curious fact is that they seldom fight. If the pursued turns, the pursuer stops, perks up his tail, and being promptly charged by the other becomes in his turn the pursued, but woe to both when the misadventure occurs. He is pitiless in pursuit, and I have seen them pass my window time after time in the course of a morning, the storm cock hard on the "heels" of the blackbird, and when they overtake them what happens? For myself, as I have often said before, I believe the misadventure is a cannibal. At any rate, I attribute some of the dead blackbirds and thrushes that one finds about the grounds to his cruel beak. He watches for birds for hours at a time, like a bird of prey, and attacks them like one. I have often stopped a chase which I knew could only end one way.—Contemporary Review.

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