

# A SISTER'S VENGEANCE

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN

## CHAPTER III.

About a month after the marriage Capt. Armstrong was returning one night on horseback from Dartmouth to the home of his wife's family, where he was sojourning prior to setting off upon a long voyage. He had been to the principal inn to dine with some officers whose vessels had just touched there from Falmouth, and Humphrey, who had been present, had felt some doubt about letting him go home alone.

"You can get a good bed here, and ride home in the morning," he said. "You had better stay."

"Mind your own business, upstart," cried the captain, and ordering his horse, he mounted and set off with a lurch, first on one side, and then on the other, each threatening to send him out of the saddle.

"He'll be all right, Armstrong," said a jovial-looking officer, laughing.

"Perhaps so," said Humphrey, aloud. Then to himself, "I don't half like it, though. The road's bad, and I shouldn't care for anything to happen to him, even if it is to make me heir to his estate. I wish I had not let him go."

He returned to the room where the officers were. They had no longer journeyed before them than upstairs to their rooms, and there were plenty of servants to see them safely into bed.

"I've done wrong," said Humphrey Armstrong. "He was not fit to go home alone. It's a long walk, but I shall not feel comfortable unless I see whether he has got home safely. Here goes."

He slipped out of the room, and, taking a stout stick which was the companion of his hat, he started forth into the cool night air, and walked steadily away in the direction of his cousin's house.

About half an hour later the drowsy groom who was sitting up for the captain's return, rose with a sigh of satisfaction, for he heard the clattering of hoofs in the stable yard.

"At last!" he cried, and, taking a lighted lantern, he hurried out, to stand in dismay staring at the empty saddle, at the trembling animal, breathing hard and shaking its head.

"Why, she's all of a muck," muttered the man; and the captain ain't on her. He be fallen off, I'd swear."

The man stood staring for a few minutes, while the horse pawed impatiently, as if asking to be admitted to its stable. Then he opened the door, the weary beast went in, and the man stood staring with true Devon stolidity.

It suddenly occurred to him something ought to be done about the captain, and he roused up the coachman to spread the alarm in the house.

"Nay, we'll only scare the poor ladies to death," said the Jehu of the establishment, gray hairs having brought him wisdom. "Let's see first, lad, if there be anything really bad."

The horses were quickly saddled, and the two men servants trotted along the Dartmouth road till about half way, where, in one of the gloomiest parts, their horses began to snort and exhibit signs of fear, and as they drew up a voice shouted:

"Help! Who's that? Help!"

"Why, it be Mr. Humphrey," said the old coachman, and dismounting, he gave his rein to his companion, and ran forward. "What's wrong, sir?"

"The captain. Much hurt," was the reply.

"I thought so, sir. His horse comed home without him. He's been thrown—or pulled off," he added to himself.

"It's something worse, I'm afraid. Here, help me, and let's get him home."

The old coachman lent his aid, and with some difficulty the captain was placed across one of the horses, the lieutenant mounting to hold him on and support him, while the two servants followed slowly behind.

"Pulled off?" whispered the groom.

"Mebbe," said the old coachman; and then to himself, "Looks bad for Mr. Humphrey; and if he died, what should I say to them as asked how I found 'em?"

The old man walked slowly on for half an hour before he answered his mental question, and his answer was:

"They'd make me tell 'em the truth, and it might bring Mr. Humphrey to the gallows; and if it did, it would be all through me."

After leaving his companions at the inn Captain Armstrong had descended into a narrow pass where the road had been cut down in the hillside, leaving a high well-wooded bank on either hand, and here it was far more dark than out in the open, and the mare, after walking steadily on for some distance with her well-wooded hoofs clinking upon the loose stones, suddenly shied, stopped short, and snorted.

"What's the matter with you, stupid? Can't you stand straight?" cried the captain, striking the beast angrily with his heels. "Go on."

The horse, however, backed and swerved from side to side, making as if to turn sharply and gallop back to Dartmouth; but just at that moment there was a rustling sound heard overhead, where the rough bushes fringed the bank, and directly after a rush and the sound of some one leaping down into the lane between the captain and the town.

This had the effect of starting the horse more and more, but instead of making now for the way by which they had come, it willingly obeyed the touch of the rider's spur, and continued its journey for half a dozen yards. Then it stopped short once again, for a dark figure leaped down into the lane just in front, and the captain found himself hemmed in.

"Stand back, you scoundrels!" roared the captain. "I'll blow your brains out!"

A mocking laugh was the response, and as he dragged at the bridle a smart blow from a cudgel fell upon his hand, making him utter a yell of pain. The next moment one of the men had leaped up behind him and clasped his arms to his side, and in the struggle which ensued both came down off the horse, which uttered a loud snort of fear and dashed off at a gallop down the hill for home, while, moved to action now by his position and stung by the blows he had received from his assailant, the captain wrested himself free and dragged his sword from its sheath.

He had hardly raised it in the air when a tremendous blow fell upon the blade close to the hilt, the sword snapped in two, and the captain was defenseless.

"I give in," he cried, backing away to the side of the lane and facing the two dimly seen figures in the darkness; "what do you want?"

One of the men burst into a hoarse laugh.

"I've hardly any money," cried the captain; "a guinea or two. If I give you that will you go on?"

"Curse your money, you cowardly hound!" cried the second man.

"How dare you, dog?" cried the captain.

"Do you know who I am?"

"James Armstrong," said the same speaker. "Now, lad, quick!"

"You shall—"

The captain's words turned into a yell of agony as he received a violent blow from a stick across one arm, numbing it, and before its echo rose from the steep slope of the hill a second and a third blow fell, which were followed by a shower of the unfortunate man yelling, beseeching, and shrieking with agony and fear.

He dropped upon his knees and begged piteously for mercy; but his tormentors laughed and seized the opportunity he offered to apply their blows more satisfactorily. Back, arms, legs, all in turn, were belabored as two men beat a carpet, till the victim's cries grew hoarse, then faint, and finally ceased, and he lay in the trampled road, crushed almost to a mummy and unable to stir hand or foot, and then, and then only, did his assailants cease.

"Ain't killed him, have we, Abel, lad?" said the bigger of the two men.

"Killed? We never touched his head. It would take a deal to kill a thing like him, Captain," he said mockingly. "What a cowardly whelp to command men!"

"What shall we do now?" whispered the bigger man.

"Do! I'm going to make my mark upon him, and then go home."

"Well, you have, lad."

"Ay, with a stick, but I'm going to do it with my knife," and, as he spoke, the lesser of the two men drew his knife from its dagger-like sheath.

"No, no, don't do that. Give him a good 'un on the head. No knife."

"Ay, but I will," said the other, hoarsely, and, dropping on his knees, he seized the prostrate man by the ear, while the trembling wretch uttered a shriek of agony, making his assailants start away.

"Did you do it, lad?"

"Yes, I done it. I'm satisfied now. Let's go."

"And leave him there?"

"Why not? What mercy did he show? He was only shamming. Let him call for help now till someone comes."

The bigger man uttered a grunt and followed his companion as he mounted the steep side of the lane, while, faint, exhausted and bleeding now, Captain James Armstrong sank back and fainted away.

## CHAPTER IV.

"You dare not deny it!" cried Mary Dell, furiously, as she stood in the doorway of the cottage, facing her brother and Bart Wrigley, who attempted to escape, but were prevented by her barring the way of exit. "You cowardly—lying wait for an unarmed man!"

"Why, he's got a sword and pistols," cried Bart.

"There!" shrieked Mary, triumphantly; "you have betrayed yourself, Bart. Now perhaps my brave brother will confess that he lay in wait in the dark for an unarmed man, and helped to beat him nearly to death."

"You're a nice fellow to trust, Bart," said Abel, looking at his companion. "Betrayed yourself directly."

"Couldn't help it," grumbled Bart. "She's so sharp upon a man."

"You cowards!" cried Mary again.

"Well, I don't know about being cowards," said Abel, sullenly. "He was mounted and had his weapons, and we had only two sticks."

"Then you confess it was you? Oh! what a villain to have for a brother!"

"Here, don't go on like that," cried Abel. "See how he has served you."

"What is that to you?" cried Mary, fiercely. "If he jilted me and I forgave him, how dare you interfere?"

"Phew!" whistled Bart to himself.

"What a way she has!"

"Why, any one would think you cared for him, Polly," said Abel, starting, while Bart whistled softly again, and wiped the heavy dew from his forehead.

"Care for him—I hate him!" cried Mary, passionately; "but do you think I wanted my own brother to go and take counsel with his big vagabond companion?"

"Phew!" whistled Bart again, softly, as he perspired now profusely, and wiped his forehead with his fur cap.

"And then go and beat one of the king's officers? But you'll both suffer for it. The constables will be here for you, and you'll both be punished."

"Not likely—eh, Bart?" said Abel, with a laugh.

"No, lad," growled that worthy. "Too dark."

"Don't you be too sure," cried Mary. "You cowards! and if he dies?"

There was a hysterical spasm here—"if he dies, you'll both go to the gibbet and swing in chains!"

Bart gave his whole body a wriggle, as if he already felt the chains about him as he was being made into a scare scamp.

"Didn't hit hard enough, and never touched his head," he growled.

"And as for you," cried Mary, turning upon him sharply, "never you look me in the face again. You are worse than Abel; and I believe it was your mad, insolent jealousy set you persuading my foolish brother to help in this cowardly attack."

"Never mind what she says, Bart, lad," said Abel; "she'll thank us some day for half killing as big a scamp as ever stepped."

"Thank you!" cried Mary, with her eyes flashing and her handsome face distorted, "I hope to see you both well punished and—"

"Who's that coming?" said Abel, sharply, as steps were heard approaching quickly.

As Mary turned round to look, Abel caught sight of something over her shoulder in the evening light which made him catch his companion by the arm.

"Quick, Bart, lad," he whispered; "through her room and squeeze out of the window. The constables!"

He opened the door of his sister's little room, thrust his mate in, followed, and shut and bolted the door; but as he turned then to the window, a little strongly made frame which had once done duty in a vessel, Mary's voice was heard speaking loudly in conversation with the new arrivals in the outer room, and then there was a loud knocking at the door.

"Open in the king's name!"

"Open it, yourself," muttered Abel.

"When we're gone, Quick, Bart, lad!"

"Can't," growled his companion. "I'm ketching just across the hips, and can't move."

As Abel seized an old sea chest and was about to drag it before the door, there was a tremendous kick, the bolt was driven off, the door swung open, and the Dartmouth constable and a couple of men rushed forward, and, in spite of Abel's resistance, dragged him into the outer room.

"Now, Dell, my lad," said the head man, "I've got you at last."

"So it seems," said Abel, who stared hard at his sister as she spoke; while she stood with her hands clasped before her and a peculiarly rigid look in her face, staring wildly back.

"Smuggling and wrecking weren't enough for you, eh?"

"What do you want here?" said Abel, giving his sister a final scowl and then facing the head constable.

"You, my lad," said that individual, with a grin.

"Attempted murder and robbery on the king's highway, my lad."

"It's a lie! Who says so?" cried Abel, setting his teeth and fixing his sister again with his dark eyes as she gave him an imploring look.

"Never mind who says so, my lad. Information's laid all regular against you and Master Bart Wrigley. You're both captured neatly. Here, how long are you going to be bringing forward the other?" cried the constable.

"We can't get him out," shouted a voice. "He's stuck in the little window."

"I'll soon see to that," said the constable, backing Abel into the little bedroom which was darkened by Bart's body filling up the window. "Here, lay hold of his legs and give a good jerk."

There was a sharp jerk, and Bart's body was snatched out of the imprisoning frame so suddenly that five men went down on the floor together, while the first to rise was Bart, who kicked himself free, made for the door in spite of a pistol leveled by the head constable, and passed through.

"Come on, Abel!" he shouted as he went.

Abel made a dash to follow, but he only struck his face against the muzzle of a pistol, and the head constable held on.

There was a rush after Bart, but it was needless, for the great, stolid fellow had seen the state of affairs, and come back.

"All right, Abel, lad," he growled; "I won't leave you in the lurch. What's it mean—look up?"

"Yes, my lad; charge of attempted murder and robbery," said the head constable.

Abel was gazing fiercely at his sister, who met his angry eyes with an imploring look.

"And my own sister, too, Bart," he said, bitterly. "We fought for her, lad, and she gave information to the police."

"No, no, Abel," cried Mary, running to him to fling her arms about his neck; but he gave her a rough thrust which sent her staggering back, and her countenance changed on the instant, for her eyes flashed vindictively, and she stood before him with folded arms.

"Prisoner confessed in the presence of you all that he committed the act," said the constable; and his words were received with a mutter of assent, in chorus.

Mary stood with her arms folded across her breast and her brow wrinkled while the party moved out of the cottage; but the next instant the scene which followed made her rush outside and gaze wildly with eyes dilated and breast heaving, and her hands now clasped as she watched the chase.

For as the little party stood outside, Bart still with his hand upon his companion's shoulder, Abel said quickly:

"The boat. Run!"

Bart was, as a rule, rather slow of comprehension; but at that moment the same idea was filling his mind. That is to say, it was already charged, and Abel's words were as so many sparks struck from steel to fire that charge. Consequently, as the young fellow struck the constable to the left, Bart did the same to the right, and they dashed off as one man toward where, just round the western point of rock which helped to form the little bay, they knew that their boat was lying, swinging with the tide to a grapple lying on the sands.

"They'll escape—they'll escape!" cried Mary, clapping her hands joyously.

"They'll get to the boat; the sails in, and there's a good breeze. Oh, if I were only with them!"

A sudden thought struck her, and she caught up a sun-bonnet from where it lay on the open window sill.

"I'll go," she thought. "They'll sail west. I could reach Mallow's Cove across the fields, and signal to them. They'd come in and would pick me up, and we could escape together far, far from here."

All this with her cheeks flushing, her handsome eyes sparkling, and her breast rising and falling in the height of her emotion.

Then a change came over her. Her eyes looked heavy; her forehead wrinkled again.

"Escape! Where?" she said, half aloud. "I'd gladly go—away from all this torture; but they think I betrayed them, and would not come in."

The elasticity was gone out of her step, as she slowly climbed the face of the huge scarp rock which towered above the cottage—a risky ascent, but one to which she was, as it were, born; and with her eyes fixed upon the pursuers and the fugitives, she trusted to her hands and feet to take her safely to the top, passing spot after spot where one unused to climbing would have stopped and turned back, so giddy was the ascent. Higher and higher, past clinging ivy, fern and clusters of yellow ragwort, with patches of purple heath and golden gorse, till the further side of the rocky point was opened up, with the boat lying like a speck aloft beyond the line of foam.

Mary paused there with her sun-bonnet in her hand to watch the result; but there was no exultation in her eyes, only

a look of stony despondency, for from where she stood she could see now that the effort of her brother and his companion was in vain.

The pursuers were now all together, and settled down to a steady trot, which pace they increased as Bart and Abel reached the rocks, and, instead of going right round, began to climb over some fifty yards from where the water washed the point.

"We're too many for him this time, Bart, my lad," cried Abel. "You weren't hit, were you?"

"Hit? No. Shot never went within a mile of me."

"Then why are you dowsing your jib like that?"

"I were a-thinking about she, mate," said Bart, in a low growl.

"Curse her for a woman all over!" said Abel. "They take to a man, and the more he'll use 'em they fight for him the more."

"Ay, lad; but to think of her putting them on to us! It don't seem like she."

(To be continued.)

## BONNER AS A TYPESETTER.

How the Ledger Man Once Worsted a "Tourist" Printer.

"One of the old-time compositors who holds down a case in the Government printing office once worked on the Hartford Courant with the late Robert Bonner when he was blue-slitter in that office. He says that one day a tourist came along, and, after miking around in the composing room and doing the panhandling act to the queen's taste, announced that he was about the swiftest printer that ever came down the pike or counted crosties. He said he was spooling for a contest with some swift, and understood that Bonner was one of the men who found it necessary to drop water in his space-box to prevent setting his case on fire."

Mr. Bonner finally grew tired of the tourist's bluffs, and said that while he was not a betting man he would go him a ten-spot for a little trial of speed. Strange to say, the tourist produced a ten, which Bonner covered, and the two men got down to their knitting.

In twenty hours and twenty-eight minutes Mr. Bonner had set and corrected 25,000 ems of solid minion, besides taking time to store away three pieces of pie and two glasses of milk. The tourist was snowed under by more than 4,000 ems. Mr. Bonner was the first man to enter a typesetting contest in America, and it is a coincidence that Leo Monheimer, the last to win one, died within one week of Mr. Bonner. The greatest record Mr. Bonner ever made was setting and correcting 33,000 ems in twenty-four hours, an average of about 1,375 ems an hour.—Washington Post.

## Pays the Farmers Well.

Gardeners and fruit growers, especially those residing near the larger cities of the country, have been enjoying a profitable business of late years and the demand for their products is still on the increase. The handling of these articles, too, has developed and is a great business enterprise, commanding millions of dollars of capital. Already North America is the greatest fruit-growing country in the world, practicing the most scientific and progressive methods. The flower-growing interest is itself an important source of national wealth. Where once we grew tomatoes in an amateurish way as a garden product, we now grow them in blocks of hundreds of acres. So great have become the horticultural interests in this country that departments of horticulture have been established even in many small as well as the large schools. The generation to come will see the different branches of horticulture, each in itself a department of the institution. The extent to which these special industries are singled out and emphasized measures the increasing importance of agriculture as a whole.

## Cheap Living.

Mexican laboring men work for twelve cents a day, and yet secure the necessities of life and some of what they consider its comforts. This may seem incredible, but it is a fact. You see more copper cents in that country and more are used, perhaps, than in any country on the globe. It is not uncommon to see a Mexican woman go to market and buy a cent's worth of wood, a cent's worth of corn or coffee and a stalk of cane. She will make a fire in the center of her adobe house and prepare a meal for the family. They eat cane as we would an apple.

## The Man and His Message.

"Did you see that distinguished-looking man who came down the aisle of the theater and whispered in Mrs. Giddypate's ear?"

"Yes, I saw him."

"He looked like a perfect strange too."

"Guess he was."

"It's astonishing the way that woman goes on. Could you hear what the man said?"

"Yes, I heard it."

"What did he say?"

"He said, 'Madam, please remove your hat.' It was the chief usher."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

## Valuable Oestry Glasses.

One of the most costly pair of opera glasses in the world is owned by Queen Alexandra, for whom they were especially made in Vienna. The barrels are of platinum and set with diamonds, sapphires and rubies. Various estimates have been made as to its probable worth. An expert in such matters fixes the value of the lorgnette at \$25,000.

## Neutralizing the Nicotine.

It is announced that "eminent French physicians have discovered a way to entirely neutralize the nicotine in tobacco." Dr. Grutier certifies that he has smoked "thirty large black cigars in twelve hours without any bad effect, whereas in their unsterilized state three make him ill."

# DOINGS OF WOMEN

## "NEW" WOMAN ON THE FARM.

THERE is considerable significance in the fact that this year over fifty girls have taken up the study of scientific farming at the Minneapolis College of Agriculture and have thus announced their intention to adhere to country life. The college, it seems, has been in existence for the past decade, but girls have only recently been admitted. The character of the instruction available to the girl students is suggestive. The course presented emphasizes the sciences of botany, chemistry, physics and geology requiring during the freshmen and sophomore years at least two terms' work in each of them. Boys and girls work together, it seems, throughout about two-thirds of the entire course, which includes study in language, mathematics, science, civics, and considerable technical work. In the case of the girls cooking, laundrying and sewing are substituted for carpentry, blacksmithing and veterinary science. The girls, too, give more attention to household art, home economy and domestic hygiene than to the business aspect of farming.

It is happily the chief purpose of the college to awaken in its entire student body a keen interest in farming, farm life, the farm house and farm society. Both boys and girls are taught to plan farm buildings and how to lay out the grounds artistically. Considerable attention is given to the furnishing of houses, to literature, music and social culture, with the general thought "of making the farm home the most attractive spot on earth." The result of the new movement is being watched with keen interest by agriculturists and educators. It is evident that should it prove successful the innovation will spread to other agricultural States. Its influence, one readily apprehends, is apt to be social as well as agricultural in character. Heretofore one great drawback to farming has been the difficulty of keeping the farmers' sons on the farm. With trained and educated girls enthusiastically taking up the profession of farming, it is pointed out that life in the country would take on a new charm and that the exodus of young men to cities would be materially lessened. It is difficult to forecast the outcome. But it is pleasant to think that we may be coming close to the long-sought solution of the problem of cities.—Boston Transcript.

## Woman Holds Office in Alabama.

For the first time in its history a woman holds a State office in Alabama. She is Miss J. Nicholene Bishop, and she was recently appointed a member of the State Examining Board of School Teachers.

Her selection for the position caused considerable surprise and considerable gratification, too, and now that the ice has been broken it is expected that women officeholders in Alabama will soon become numerous.

The right to hold such office, however, does not imply the right to vote, the Alabama law apparently being the same as that in Indiana, under which women may hold any office under the school laws, but cannot vote for any public office. The only States in the American Union where the full right of suffrage exists are Colorado, Idaho, Utah and Wyoming, and there women can vote for all public officers, including Presidential electors. Indeed in Utah and Wyoming woman suffrage is a constitutional provision.

## Where Women May Not Pray.

There is a practically universal prohibition against women praying in Mohammedan countries. They are not admitted beyond the thresholds of the mosques; but, on the other hand, the Koran distinctly encourages women to pray in private. Some Hindoo congregations deny the privilege of prayer to their women altogether. Among the Aino, a race supposed to be the aboriginals of Japan, women are not permitted to pray or offer sacrifice except in rare cases as the deputies of their husbands. The reason for this practice is that the Aino women are not supposed to possess souls, and therefore their prayers would be quite unavailing. Among the natives of Madagascar women are permitted to pray, but only to the powers of evil, a kind of intercessory prayer. Only men are permitted to address prayers directly to the Supreme Being.

## System in Housework.

The good housewife makes plans over night for the work which must be done the following day. Probably a considerable share of it falls to a special day in each week, but there will be a number of things to do which are out of the regular routine, and for these she must plan so that she will not have them all crowding upon her at once and either being neglected because they are so many or taken in hand and carried through at the cost of health and spirits.

## A Desire for Economy Sometimes Will

incite a woman to a most foolish expenditure of energy, which is really a very bad kind of extravagance. For instance, she has been particularly busy all day and is feeling tired, when in comes a neighbor who tells her of the great flannel sale. In a moment she thinks of little Popsy's flannel petticoats—the child really must have new ones—and off she rushes to secure the material and returns, delighted to have got it at a few pennies under the usual price. As a matter of fact, that flannel was a dear purchase. It was like the proverbial straw which broke the camel's back, for the next day the housewife is either moping about, feeling incapable of work, or she is prostrated with a severe headache. Planning would save this kind of thing and prevent the crowding into one day the work of two.

In planning and estimating a day's work some allowance should always be made for interruptions and for the work taking longer than was anticipated. With too many "irons in the fire" such hindrances as a visitor or having to console a crying child in some little trouble make it difficult to keep that calm, sweet temper which is necessary to the woman who is not merely the mangle of the machinery of the household, but its good angel, who makes it home indeed to all who dwell there.



Wooden kneading boards for bread are declared unsanitary.

Nut and fruit sandwiches should go into the school lunch basket.

Pour boiling water over raisins before seedling them. It's easier.

Dates stuffed with marshmallow paste make a tempting dessert.

Sugar added to the water used for basting meat adds to the flavor.

For quick breads and batters baking powder instead of yeast is used.

Almost any cold vegetable makes a delicious salad if attractively arranged.