

# A SISTER'S VENGEANCE

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)  
"Abel, mate, I'm ready for anything now," said Bart, as they went that morning to their work. "Only say again as you forgive our lass."

"Bart, old lad," said Abel, hoarsely, "I've naught to forgive."  
"Ha!" ejaculated Bart, and then he began to whistle softly, as if in the highest of spirits, and looked longingly in the direction of the jungle beside the mud creek; but three days elapsed before they were set to hoe among the coffee bushes again.

When they approached the jungle at last, hoeing more slowly—for, much as they longed to go up at once, they knew that any unusual movement on their part might be interpreted by watchful eyes into an attempt at escape and bring down upon them a shot—Bart's voice trembled and sounded hoarsely as he said, playfully:

"Now, Abel, my lad, I'm going to talk to that there poll parrot. Now, then, Polly! Pretty Polly, are you there?"  
"Yes, yes, Bart, Abel, dear brother, at last, at last!" came from the jungle.

"Mary—Polly, my girl!" cried Abel, hoarsely, as he threw down his hoe; and he was running toward the jungle, where a crashing sound was heard, when Bart flung his strong arms across his chest and dashed him to the ground.

"Are you mad?" he cried. "Mary, for God's sake keep back!"  
The warning was needed, for from across the plantation the overseer and a couple of soldiers came running, every movement on the part of the prisoners being watched.

"Sham ill, lad; sham ill," whispered Bart, as a piteous sigh came from the depths of the jungle.

"Fighting, sir?" growled Bart: "rum fighting. He nearly went down."  
"He was trying to escape."  
"Escape!" growled Bart. "Look at him. Sun's hot."

The overseer bent down over Abel, whose aspect helped the illusion, for he looked ghastly from his emotion; and he had presence of mind enough to open his eyes, look about wildly from face to face and then begin to struggle up, with one hand to his head.

"Is it the fayer, sor?" said one of the soldiers, whose name was Dinny Kelly. "No. Touch of the sun, said the overseer. 'They're always getting it. There, you're all right, ar'n't you?'"

"Yes, sir," said Abel, slowly, as he picked up his hoe.

"Sit down under the trees there for a few minutes," said the overseer. "Lend him your water bottle, soldier. And you stop with him till he's better."

Bart took the water bottle, and the overseer went off with his guard Abel was assisted to the edge of the jungle where a huge cotton tree threw its shade; and here Bart held the water to his companion's lips.

It was hard work to keep still while the others went out of hearing; but at last it seemed safe, and Abel panted out: "Mary, dear, are you there?"

"Yes, yes, Abel. Oh, my dear brother, say one kind word to me!"  
"Kind word? Oh, my lass, my lass, say that you forgive me!"

"Forgive you? Yes. But quick, dear, before those men come back."  
"Tell me, then," said Abel, speaking with his back to the jungle, and his head bent down as if ill, while Bart leaned over him, trembling like a leaf, "tell me how you came to be here."

"I came over in a ship to Kingston. Then I went to New Orleans. Then to Honduras. And it was only a fortnight ago that I found you."

"But how did you come here?"  
"I've got a small boat, dear. I asked and asked for months before I could find out where you were. I've been to other plantations, and people have thought me mad; but one day I stumbled across the hull of a ship that comes here with stores from the station, and I heard them say that there were a number of prisoners working at this place; and at last, after waiting and watching for weeks, I caught sight of you two, and then it was a month before I could speak to you as I did the other day."

"And now you have come," said Abel, bitterly, "I can't even look at you."  
"But you will escape, dear," said Mary. "Escape!" cried Abel, excitedly.

"Steady, lad, steady. Member you're ill, growled Bart, glancing toward the nearest sentry, and then holding up the bottle as if to see how much was within.

"Yes, escape," said Mary. "I have the boat ready. Can you come now?"  
"Impossible! We should be overtaken and shot before we had gone a mile."

"But you must escape," said Mary. "You must get down here by night."  
"How?" said Bart, gruffly.

"You two must settle that," said Mary, quickly. "I'm only a woman; but I have found means to get here with a boat, and I can come again and again till you join me."

"Then be cautious. Only come by night."  
"I know. Trust me. I will not be seen. I will do nothing rash. To-night, as soon as it grows dark, I shall be here expecting you, for I shall not stir. At daybreak I shall go, and come again at night."

"And mind the overseer."  
"Trust me, Abel. I shall not come now by day for six days. If at the end of six nights you have not been able to escape, I shall come for six days by day, hoping that you may be more successful in the daylight; for perhaps you will find that a bold dash will help to get you away."

"But the risk—the risk, girl, to you?"  
"Abel, dear, I am here to risk everything. I have risked everything to join you."

"Yes, she said, hoarsely. "But afterward, if we do escape?"  
"Leave the plan to me," she said, with a little laugh. "I have boat and sail, and the world is very wide. Only escape. Take care; the men are coming back."

Five days passed, and the prisoners were not sent again to the dozing, while in spite of every effort, they found that their chances of eluding the guard were not over them by night were small indeed.

Fettered by day, they were doubt chained by night. The building where they slept was strongly secured and guarded, and in spite of the newness of the settlement it was well chosen for its purpose, and stronger even than the prisoners thought.

During the following week the prisoners were only once in the coffee plantation, and so strictly watched that they felt that to attempt an evasion was only to bring destruction upon their hopes, perhaps causing Mary's imprisonment for attempting to assist prisoners to escape.

"It's of no use, Bart," said Abel at last, despondently. "Poor girl! Why did she come?"

"Help us away," said Bart, gruffly.

"Pshaw!" cried Bart again, "when you know she'll keep on coming till she's an old gray-haired woman, or she gets us away."

Abel shook his head, for he was low-spirited, and not convinced; but that night his heart leaped, for as he lay half asleep, listening to the thin, buzzing hum of the mosquitoes which haunted the prisoners' quarters, and the slow, regular pace of the sentry on guard outside, there was the faint rattle of a chain, as if some prisoner had turned in his unquiet rest, and then all was silent again, till he started, for a rough hand was laid upon his mouth.

His first instinct was to seize the owner of that hand, to engage in a struggle for his life; but a mouth was placed directly at his ear, and a well-known voice whispered:

"Don't make a sound. Tie these bits of rag about your irons so as they won't rattle."

Abel caught at the pieces of cloth and canvas thrust into his hand, and sitting up in the darkness he softly bound the links and rings of his fetters together, hardly daring to breathe, and yet with his heart beating tumultuously in his anxiety to know his companion's plans. As he was tying the last knot he felt Bart's hand upon his shoulder, and his lips at his ear.

"Quiet, and creep after me. Keep touching my foot so's not to miss me in the dark."

Abel's heart thumped against his ribs as he obeyed, taking Bart's hand first in a firm grip, and then feeling a short iron bar thrust between his fingers.

Then he became conscious from his companion's movements that he had gone down upon his hands and knees, and was crawling toward the end of the long, low stone-walled building that served as a dormitory for the white slaves whose task was to cultivate the rough plantation till they, as a rule, lay down and died from fever.

Just then Bart stopped short, for there were steps outside, and a gleam of light appeared beneath the heavy door. Voices were heard, and the rattle of a soldier's musket.

"Changing guard," said Abel to himself; and he found himself wondering whether the sergeant and his men would enter the prison.

Then there was a hoarsely uttered command; the light faded away, the steps died out upon the ear; there was a clink or two of chains, and a heavy sigh from some restless sleeper, and once more in the black silence and stifling heat there was nothing to be heard but the loud trumpeting buzz of the mosquitoes.

Softly, as some large cat, Bart resumed his crawling movement, after thrusting back his leg and touching Abel on the chest with his bare foot as a signal.

The building was quite a hundred feet long by about eighteen wide, a mere gallery in shape, which had been lengthened from time to time as the number of convicts increased, and the men had about two-thirds of the distance to traverse before they could reach the end, and at their excessively slow rate of progress the time seemed interminable before, after several painful halts, caused by movements of their fellow prisoners and dread of discovery, the final halt was made.

"Now, then, what is it?" whispered Abel.

Bart was slowly drawing out rough pieces of badly cemented stone—rough fragments really of coral and limestone from the nearest reef, of which the prison barrack was built.

At last, after what seemed an age, a faint breath of comparatively cool air began to play upon Abel's cheek, as Bart seemed to work steadily on. Then his hand was seized and guided where it hardly wanted guiding, for the young man's imagination had painted all to a rough opening level with the floor, a hole little larger than might have been made for fowls to pass in and out of a poultry yard.

They crept on in silence, and in the midst of the still darkness matters seemed to be going so easily for them that Abel's heart grew more regular in its pulsation, and he was just asking himself why he had not had invention enough to contrive this evasion, when a clear and familiar voice cried, "Stand!" and there was the click of a musket lock.

What followed was almost momentary. Bart struck aside the bayonet leveled at his breast, and leaped upon the sentry before him, driving him backward and clapping his hand upon his mouth as he knelt upon his chest; while, ably seconding him, his companion wrested the musket from the man's hand, twisted the bayonet from the end of the barrel, and holding it daggerywise, pressed it against the man's throat.

"Another word, and it's your last!" hissed Abel.

"Sure, and I'm as silent as Peter Molloney's grave, sor," whispered the sentry; "but it's a mother I have over in the owd country, and ye'd break her heart if ye killed me."

"Look here," whispered Bart; "it's neck or nothing, my lad. If you give the alarm, it will be with that bayonet struck through you."

"And would a Kelly give the alarm, after he said on his honor? Sure, you might thrust me."

"Over with you, then, Bart," whispered Abel; "I'll stand over him here. Take the gun."

Bart obeyed, and Abel stood with one

hand upon the sentry's shoulder, and the bayonet close to his throat.

The man scaled the gate as easily as Bart had done before him, and then Abel followed; but as he reached the top and shuffled sideways to the wall, which he strode, there was the sound of a shot, followed by another, and another, and the fierce baying of dogs.

"Bedad, they've seen ye," said the sentry, as Abel dropped down.

"Silence!" hissed Abel, as there was the loud clanging of a bell with the fierce ringing of dogs, and they dashed off, hand joined in hand, for the coffee plantation, away down by the cane-brake and the swamp.

In the swamp they found men with a boat and pole ready and waiting for them, and thus made good their escape.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Had he been asleep and dreamed that he and Abel had escaped, and then that he was in the Dells' boat, with Mary poling it along?

What did it all mean? Bart was in a boat, and behind him lay back the soldier with his mouth open, sleeping heavily. On his left was Abel Dell, also sleeping as a man sleeps who is utterly exhausted by some terrible exertion. But that was not the Devon coast upon which the sun was shedding its early morning rays. Dense belts of mangrove did not spread their muddied roots like intricate rustic scaffolding on southern English shores, and there were no clusters of alligators lying here and there among the mud and ooze.

It was true enough. They did escape in the night, and Mary had been there to help them with a boat; but where was she now? and who was this sturdy youth in loose petticoat-canvas trousers and heavy fisherman's boots?

Bart started till his eyes showed a ring of white about their pupils, and his mouth opened roundly in unison for a time. Then eyes and mouth closed tightly, and wrinkles appeared all over his face, as he softly shook all over, and then, after glancing at Abel and the Irish soldier, he uttered a low—

"Haw, haw!"  
The figure in the boat swung round and faced him sharply, glancing at the two sleeping men, and holding up a roughened brown hand to command silence.

"All right," said Bart, half choking with mirth; and then, "Oh, I say, my lass, you do look rum in them big boots!"

"Silence, idiot!" she whispered, sharply. "Do you want that strange man to know?"

"Nay, my lass, nay," he said, becoming sober on the instant. "But you do look so rum. I say, though," he cried, sharply, "what's gone of all your beautiful long hair?"

"Fire!" said Mary, coldly.

"Fire! what—you've cut it off and burned it?"

Mary nodded.

"Oh!" ejaculated Bart, and it sounded like a groan.

"Could a girl with long hair have worked her passage out here as a sailor boy, and have come into that cane-brake and saved you two?" said Mary, sharply; and as Bart sat staring at her with dilated eyes once more, she bent down after gazing at Dinny, still soundly sleeping, and laid her hand with a firm grip on her brother's shoulder.

He started into wakefulness on the instant, and gazed without recognition in the face leaning over him.

"Don't you know me, Abel?" said Mary, sadly.

"You, Mary—dressed like this?"

He started up angrily, his face flushing as he flushed, and his look darkened into a scowl.

"What else could I do?" she said, repeating her defense as she had pleaded to Bart. Then, as if her spirit rebelled against his anger, her eyes flashed with indignation, and she exclaimed hoarsely, "Well, I have saved you, and if you have done with me—there is the sea."

"But you—dressed as a boy?" said Abel.

"Hush! Do you want that man to know?" whispered Mary softly. "My brother was unjustly punished and sent out here to die in prison, while I, a helpless girl, might have starved at home. What could I do?"

There was only one of the two equal to the emergency as the soldier woke up, and that was Bart, who gave his knee a sounding slap and cried aloud:

"Jack Dell, my lad, you've behaved like a trump, and got us away splendid. I only wish, Abel, I had such a brother. Ha! loo, soger, where shall we set you ashore?"

"Set me ashore?" said the Irishman, nodding at Mary: "what for?"

"What for?" cried Bart. "To go back." "I'm not going back," said the Irishman, laughing. "Sure, I want a change." "You can't go with us."

"Sure, and you forced me to come, and ye wouldn't behave so dirlly as to send me back?"

"But we're escaping," said Bart.

"Sure, and I'll escape too," said Dinny, smiling. "It's mighty dull work stopping tax."

"But you're a soldier," said Abel.

"I be sure I am—a soldier of fortune."

"You'll be a deserter if you stop with us," growled Bart.

"Ye made me a prisoner, and I couldn't help myself."

"Why, I wanted you to go back last night!" growled Bart.

"To be set up entirely by the ugly bastards of dogs! Thank ye kindly, sor. I'd rather not."

"They transported them two boys to this baste of a place, and put chains on their legs, for giving a spalpeen like that a big bating? Gintlemen, I'm proud of ye!"

He held out his hands to both, and, intruder, as he was, it seemed impossible to resist his frank, friendly way, and the escaped prisoners shook hands with him again.

"And now what are ye going to do?" said Dinny, eagerly.

"We don't know yet," said Abel, rather distantly.

"That's jist me case," said Dinny. "I'm tired of sogering and walking up and down with a musket kaping guard over a lot of poor fellows chained like wild beasts. I tuk the shilling because I'd been in a skrimmage, and the bowid sergeant said there'd be platts of fighting. Now, ye'll tak me wid ye, only I must get rid of these soger clothes, and—look here, what are ye going to do with them chains?"

"Get rid of them," said Abel, "when we can find a file."

"I did not think of a file," said Mary, with a disappointed look.

## IN STATU QUO.

Passenger's Clever Little Scheme That Did Not Work.

Most people have experienced the embarrassment of meeting some one whose face is familiar but whose name for the moment has slipped from memory. A popular comedian traveling by a Cunarder to America once felt the awkwardness of such a recourte and thus relates the incident:

"On the first day out, as I came on deck, I saw a man whose face was familiar, but I could not remember his name. I saw he had recognized me, and as I could not recall his name, I kept out of his way and pretended not to have seen him.

"Every time I took the other side of the deck he followed, and I was kept dodging so constantly that on the third day it occurred to me to look over the passenger list in the hope of finding the name that fitted my unknown friend. I read the list, but failed to see a familiar one.

"I kept on trying to avoid the man and felt most uncomfortable till a brilliant idea struck me. I would put the passenger list in my pocket, go boldly up to him, shake hands, and before he had time to open the conversation I would bring out the list and say, 'They have omitted your name from the passenger list.' Of course he would say, 'Oh, no—there it is!' and point it out.

"I did this. I went up to him boldly and grasped his hand.

"'Why,' said he reproachfully, 'I thought you were going to cut me!'"

"'Oh, dear no!' said I. 'I thought you didn't remember me. By the way, they have omitted your name from the passenger list.'"

"He looked at the list a minute or so. 'Yes,' said he, 'so they have!'"

Had Not Studied Long Enough.

Mr. Bascom had been looking at his son's German grammar, and had found therein much food for thought. "That idea of giving sex to inanimate objects—now that isn't a bad idea, if 'twas carried far enough," he said in an indulgent tone to Mrs. Bascom as he put the book down. "Of course there are some foolish mistakes, but they could be corrected if some real intelligent person was to take hold of the system."

He moved a little nearer the table on which Mrs. Bascom was placing a pan of hot ginger cookies, and glanced at them with appreciation.

"Now a table," he continued, genially, "a table ought to be masculine, not feminine. A solid, useful, steady article like that belongs to the masculine gender by rights; anybody could tell that. But now take a window—"

Mrs. Bascom's back was turned, and she moved a trifle nearer the cookies.

"A window ought to be masculine, because folks that have eyes can see right through it," said Mrs. Bascom, with great briskness, turning from the stove and stepping to the table. "These cookies are for the children's picnic," she said, with apparent irrelevance, as she bore the pan away to safety. "Well, pa, what else ought to be masculine, according to your notions?"

"Mebbe I'll look through the book some other time, with a view to the feminine objects," said Mr. Bascom, joylessly. "I guess that will be my best plan."

The Right Place.

"Is this where you make trouble?" asked the little man at whose elbow stood an aggressive looking woman.

"This is the Marriage License Bureau," answered the man behind the desk.

"That's what I meant," said the little man, as he sighed and reached into his pocket for \$2.—Chicago Post.

The Difficulty.

"I don't see why there should be any difficulty about arbitration," said the social economist.

"Neither do I," answered the man who delights in paradoxes. "Arbitration would be very easy—if some people were not so arbitrary."—Washington Star.

Trying to Shift the Blame.

Anxious Father—Do the best you can for him, doctor. That is all I can ask. If it is the will of providence—

Surgeon—Don't try to place the responsibility on providence in this case, Mr. McJones. You brought the toy pistol for the boy yourself.—Chicago Tribune.

Be patient with your boys when they are between the ages of 16 and 18. They are crazy, and can't help it. You were.

The grocery taster occasionally gets the worst of it; occasionally he gets a black bag with a stolen soapbox.

## SOLDIERS' STORIES.

### ENTERTAINING REMINISCENCES OF THE WAR.

Graphic Account of Stirring Scenes Witnessed on the Battlefield and in Camp—Veterans of the Rebellion Relate Experiences of Thrilling Nature.

"I was in forty-two engagements and was scared every time," remarked Colonel George B. Van Norman, of the Eighth Wisconsin regiment, to a number of his comrades at the Sherman House. Colonel W. B. Britton spoke up, saying: "Van, you are an honest man; go ahead and tell us something about the Eighth."

"At Corinth, Miss., I got the biggest scare in my life," said Colonel Van Norman. "It was the day Price and Van Dorn undertook to capture Corinth from General Rosecrans. Our regiment had been on a forced march of about fifteen miles and was making double-quick time the last three or four miles, in order to get to the fort before we should be cut off by the Confederates. About this time General Mower was ordered to take the Second Brigade and advance a skirmish line on the outskirts of Corinth in front of Fort Robinette and Fort Williams. During this engagement General Mower was captured. He told the Confederates that he was badly wounded and so was left near where some horses were picketed. A little later, when the opportunity offered, he sprang upon a horse and escaped. When a little later he rode into our lines there was

as it is possible," with a twinkle in his eyes, "that the documents are not there."

Promptly turning, with his troopers at his heels, Van Dorn clattered down the stairway and left the premises. Twenty-four hours later Grant returned, and heard of the Confederates' call. Knowing what an uncompromising Southerner Mrs. Goran was, he said to her:

"Mrs. Goran, I owe you a debt of gratitude, for you have unconsciously done me a great service. You have saved my campaign papers. All the documents General Van Dorn wished were in the drawer of my wife's dresser."

Mrs. Goran's womanly impulse, which prompted her to shield the wife of a generous foe, and Van Dorn's chivalrous deference to her wishes, had injured the cause for which they were willing to give their lives; but both acts were typical of the high-bred courtesy of the South of that day.

It is pleasant to add that General Grant paid his "debt of gratitude" in the coin of kindness. When he left Holly Springs he gave Mrs. Goran protection papers, which are still in possession of her eldest son. Several times thereafter the house was fired by Union soldiers, but the fire was quickly extinguished when Grant's orders were exhibited.

The Tattered Flag.

In the sun-bright dust of the street below Gittered the bayonets all a row, And the muffled tread of a thousand feet Deepened the roll of the war-drum's beat, And the gray old sergeant roused to hear, With his hollowed palm to his deafened ear,

While the life shrilled loud and the drums kept time To the nation's heart beats hid in rhyme.

He lifted himself from his old armchair And gazed on the regiment marching there In a glory of scarlet, and blue, and gold, And high overhead, like a torn-out fold Of Liberty's robe, with its glimmering stars—

Heaven's glorious blue on a field of Mars— The old flag fluttered, half shot away In the storm and stress of that judgment day, When through blood-dyed stream, by threatening erg, The Old Line Regiment carried the flag.

The veteran looked; and his face turned gray With the spectre light of a bygone day, He fingered his old gun's rusty lock, He felt the thrill of the battle's shock, And he lifted his head like a startled stag As he saw the ghosts by the tattered flag, Some were withered and bent and gray, Some were blithe and bonny and gay, And their voices shrilled through the martial din—

"Comrade, comrade, where have ye been? Ye have missed the drill this many a year!" The call rang sweet to his deafened ear, And his soul broke loose from the crippled form That had weathered a nation's years of storm, And he joined the soldiers who never lag— The ghosts that march by the tattered flag.

—Washington Times.

A Canteen of Applejack.

Several old soldiers were sitting in the lobby of the Palmer House relating their war experiences, when one of them turned to George Burghardt, who served for two years as one of the escort of Gen. John A. Logan, and said, "Come, George, tell us that canteen story."

"It ain't much of a story," he replied. "It was in the early summer of 1862 and our regiment was on its way to Vicksburg. We had reached Champion Hill and gone into camp to the left of 'Joe Davis' home. Along about dusk General Logan sent out a squad to scout around and see what was going on. We came upon a settler's cabin which had been deserted. Some of the boys, including myself, went inside where we found several kegs of applejack. Of course we all filled our canteens and incidentally put a little under our belts. An hour later we returned to camp and when 'taps' sounded we were feeling pretty good and rolled in. Early the next morning General Logan, who had heard about the applejack, sent for me and I was a trifle scared for fear he was going to reprimand me. When I appeared at his headquarters he was standing at the door waiting for me. As I drew up in front and saluted the general said: 'Burghardt, I want a drink of that applejack!'"

"I felt flattered that the general should wish to drink from my canteen, so I unsling it and handed it to him. As he raised it to his lips there was a crash and the next instant it went flying over his head. A spent ball from some unknown quarter had struck it full on the side, making a big dent in it."—Chicago Record.

Light as a Healing Agent.

In view of the growing importance of the application of light as a healing principle in medical science, the medical congress which recently convened at Wiesbaden invited Professor Bis, of Copenhagen, to read a paper on the subject. The lecturer explained the principle of employing light for healing purposes after excluding its chemical effects. The results obtained by this method in cases of smallpox, according to the lecturer, are such that the question is raised whether the light treatment shall not be made compulsory. Professor Bis approves the apparatus invented by Dr. Finsen, of Copenhagen, with which the latter has achieved such remarkable success in cases of lupus, but urges that no one but qualified doctors should be allowed to apply the light treatment, as disturbances are apt to occur which render it necessary to break it off suddenly.

One golden day redeems a weary year.—Calla Thaxter.

He lifted himself from his old armchair And gazed on the regiment marching there

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