

A Brave Coward.

By Robert Louis Stevenson.

CHAPTER V.—(Continued.)

"Miss Huddlestone—" I was beginning to interrupt him when he, in turn, cut in brutally:

"You hold your tongue," says he; "I am speaking to that girl."

"That girl, as you call her, is my wife," said I, and my wife only leaned a little nearer, so that I knew she had affirmed my words.

"Your what?" he cried. "You lie!" "Northmour," I said, "we all know you have a bad temper, and I am the last man to be irritated by words. For all that I propose that you speak lower, for I am convinced that we are not alone."

He looked round him, and it was plain my remark had in some degree sobered his passion. "What do you mean?" he asked.

I only said one word, "Italians." He swore a round oath and looked at us from one to the other.

"Mr. Cassilis knows all that I know," said my wife.

"What I want to know," he broke out, "is where the devil Mr. Cassilis comes from, and what the devil Mr. Cassilis is doing here. You say you are married; that I do not believe. If you were, Graden Floe would soon divorce you; four minutes and a half, Cassilis, I keep my private cemetery for my friends."

"It took somewhat longer," said I, "for that Italian."

He looked at me for a moment half daunted, and then, almost civilly, asked me to tell my story. "You have too much the advantage of me, Cassilis," he added. I complied, of course, and he listened, with several ejaculations, while I told him how I had come to Graden; that it was I whom he had tried to murder on the night of the landing; and what I had subsequently seen and heard of the Italians.

"Well," said he, when I had done, "it is here at last; there is no mistake about that, and what may I ask, do you propose to do?"

"I propose to stay with you and lend a hand," said I.

"You are a brave man," he returned, with a peculiar intonation.

"I am not afraid," said I.

"And so," he continued, "I am to understand that you two are married? And you stand up to it before my face, Miss Huddlestone?"

"We are not yet married," said Clara, "but we shall be as soon as we can." "Bravo!" cried Northmour. "And the bargain? D— it, you're not a fool, young woman; I may call a spade with you. How about the bargain? You know as well as I do what your father's life depends upon. I have only to put my hands under my coat-tails and walk away, and his throat would be cut before the evening."

"Yes, Mr. Northmour," returned Clara, with great spirit; "but that is what you will never do. You made a bargain that was unworthy of a gentleman; but you are a gentleman for all that, and you will never desert a man whom you have begun to help."

"Aha!" said he. "You think I will give my yacht for nothing? You think I will risk my life and liberty for love of the old gentleman; and then, I suppose, he best man at the wedding, to wind up? Well," he added, with an odd smile, "perhaps you are not altogether wrong. But ask Cassilis here. He knows me. Am I a man to trust? Am I safe and scrupulous? Am I kind?"

"I know you talk a great deal, and sometimes, I think, very foolishly," replied Clara, "but I know you are a gentleman, and I am not in the least afraid."

"She's a trump!" cried Northmour. "But she's not yet Mrs. Cassilis. I say no more. The present is not for me."

"Then my wife surprised me." "I leave you here," she said, suddenly. "My father has been too long alone. But remember this: you are to be friends, for you are both good friends to me."

"See here, Northmour," said I; "we are all in a tight place, are we not?" "I believe you, my boy," he answered, looking me in the eyes, and with great emphasis. "We have all hell upon us, that's the truth. You may believe me or not, but I'm afraid of my life."

"Tell me one thing," said I. "What are they after, these Italians? What do they want with Mr. Huddlestone?" "Don't you know?" he cried. "The black old scamp had Carbonari funds on a deposit—two hundred and eighty thousand; and, of course, he gambled it away in stocks. There was to have been a revolution in the Tridentino, or Parma, but the revolution is off, and the whole waps' nest is after Huddlestone. We shall all be lucky if we can save our skins."

"The Carbonari!" I exclaimed; "God help him, indeed!" "And now let us go directly to the fort," said Northmour, and he began to lead the way through the rain.

CHAPTER VI.

We were admitted to the pavilion by Clara, and I was surprised by the completeness and security of the defenses. A barricade of great strength, and yet easy to displace, supported the door against any violence from without; and the shutters of the dining-room, into which I was led directly, and which was feebly illuminated by a lamp, were even more elaborately fortified. The panels were strengthened by bars and cross-bars; and these, in their turn, were kept in position by a

system of braces and struts, some abutting on the floor, some on the roof, and others, in fine, against the opposite wall of the apartment.

Northmour produced some cold meat, to which I eagerly set myself, and a bottle of good Burgundy, by which, wet as I was, I did not scruple to profit. I have always been an extreme temperance man on principle; but it is useless to push principle to excess, and on this occasion I believe that I finished three-quarters of the bottle. As I ate, I still continued to admire the preparations for defense.

"We could stand a siege," I said at length.

"Ye-es," drawled Northmour; "a very little one, per—haps. It is not so much the strength of the pavilion I misdoubt; it is the double danger that kills me. If we get to shooting, wild as the country is, some one is sure to hear it, and then—why, then, it's the same thing, only different, as they say, caged by law, or killed by Carbonari. There's the choice. It is a devilish bad thing to have the law against you in this world, and so I tell the old gentleman up stairs. He is quite of my way of thinking."

"Speaking of that," said I, "what kind of person is he?"

"Oh, he?" cried the other; "he's a rancid fellow as far as he goes. I should like to have his neck wrung tomorrow by all the devils in Italy. I am not in this affair for him. You take me? I made a bargain for Missy's hand and I mean to have it, too."

"That, by the way," said I, "I understand. But how will Mr. Huddlestone take my intrusion?"

"Leave that to Clara," returned Northmour.

I could have struck him in the face for this coarse familiarity; but I respected the truce, as I am bound to say, did Northmour, and so long as the danger continued not a cloud arose in our relation. I bear him this testimony with the most unfeigned satisfaction; nor am I without pride when I look back upon my own behavior. For surely no two men were ever left in a position so invidious and irritating.

As soon as I had done eating we proceeded to inspect the lower floor. Window by window we tried the different supports, now and then making an inconsiderable change; and the strokes of the hammer sounded with startling loudness through the house. I proposed, I remember, to make loopholes; but he told me they were already made in the windows of the upper story.

It was an anxious business, this inspection, and left me down-hearted. There were two doors and five windows to protect and counting Clara, only four of us to defend them against an unknown number of foes. I communicated my doubts to Northmour, who assured me with unmoved composure that he entirely shared them.

"Before morning," said he, "we shall all be butchered and buried in Graden Floe. For me that is written."

I could not help shuddering at the mention of the quicksand, but reminded Northmour that our enemies had spared me in the wood.

"Do not flatter yourself," said he. "Then you were not in the same boat with the old gentleman; now you are. It's the foe for all of us, mark my words."

I trembled for Clara, and just then her dear voice was heard calling us to come upstairs. Northmour showed me the way, and, when he had reached the landing, knocked at the door of what used to be called "My Uncle's Bedroom," as the founder of the pavilion had designed it especially for himself.

"Come in, Northmour; come in, dear Mr. Cassilis," said a voice from within.

Pushing open the door, Northmour admitted me before him into the apartment. As I came in I could see the daughter slipping out by the side door into the study, which had been prepared as her bedroom. In the bed, which was drawn back against the wall, instead of standing, as I had last seen it, boldly across the window, sat Bernard Huddlestone, the defaulting banker. Little as I had seen of him by the shifting light of the lantern on the links, I had no difficulty in recognizing him for the same.

He had a long and sallow countenance, surrounded by a long beard and side whiskers. His broken nose and high cheek-bones gave him somewhat the air of a Kalmuck, and his light eyes shone with the excitement of a high fever. He wore a skull-cap of black silk; a huge Bible lay open before him on the bed, with a pair of gold spectacles in the place, and a pile of other books lay on the stand by his side. The green curtains lent a cadaverous shade to his cheek, and, as he sat propped on pillows, his great stature was painfully hunched, and his head protruded till it overhung his knees. I believe if he had not died otherwise, he must have fallen a victim to consumption in the course of but a very few weeks.

He held out to me a hand, long, thin and disagreeably hairy. "Come in, come in, Mr. Cassilis," said he. "Another protector—ahem!—another protector. Always welcome as a friend of my daughter's, Mr. Cassilis. How they have rained about me, my daughter's friends! May God in heaven bless and reward them for it!"

I gave him my hand, of course, because I could not help it, but the sympathy I had been prepared to feel for Clara's father was immediately soured by his appearance and the wheedling, unreal tones in which he spoke.

"Cassilis is a good man," said Northmour, "worth ten."

"So I hear," cried Mr. Huddlestone eagerly; "so my girl tells me. Ah, Mr. Cassilis, my sin has found me out, you see! I am very low, very low; but I hope equally penitent. We must all come to the throne of grace at last, Mr. Cassilis. For my part, I come late indeed, but with unfeigned humility, I trust."

"Fiddle-de-dee!" said Northmour roughly.

"No, no, dear Northmour!" cried the banker. "You must not say that; you must not try to shake me. You forget, my dear, good boy, you forget I may be called this very night before my Maker."

His excitement was pitiful to behold, and I felt myself growing indignant with Northmour, whose infidel opinions I well knew and heartily derided, as he continued to taunt the poor sinner out of his humor of repentance.

"Pööh, my dear Huddlestone!" said he. "You do yourself injustice. You are a man of the world inside and out, and were up to all kinds of mischief before I was born. Your conscience is tanned like South American leather—only you forget to tan your liver, and that, if you will believe me, is the seat of the annoyance."

"Rogue! rogue! bad boy!" said Mr. Huddlestone, shaking his finger. "I am no precisian, if you come to that; I always hated a precisian; but I never lost hold of something better through it all. I have been a bad boy, Mr. Cassilis; I do not seek to deny that; but it was after my wife's death, and you know, with a widower, it's a new thing. Sinful—I won't say so, but there is a gradation, we shall hope. And talking of that—Hark! he broke out suddenly, his hand raised with interest and terror. "Only the rain, bless God!" he added, after a pause, and with indescribable relief.

For some seconds he lay back among the pillows like a man near to fainting; then he gathered himself together, and, in somewhat tremulous tones, began once more to thank me for the share I was prepared to take in his defense.

"One question, sir," said I, when he had paused. "Is it true that you have money with you?"

He seemed annoyed at the question, but admitted with reluctance that he had a little.

"Well," I continued, "it is their money they are after, is it not? Why not give it up to them?"

"Ah!" replied he, shaking his head. "I have tried that already, Mr. Cassilis; and alas! that it should be so, but it is blood they want."

"Huddlestone, that's a little less than fair," said Northmour. "You should mention that what you offered them was upward of two hundred thousand short. The deficit is worth a reference; it is for what they call a cool sum, Frank. Then, you see, the fellows reason in their clear Italian way; and it seems to them, as indeed it seems to me, that they may just as well have both while they are about it—money and blood together, by George, and no more trouble for the extra pleasure."

(To be continued.)

PRIDE OF THE LITTLE FINGER.

It Can Point Back to Your Grandfather's Station in Life.

The fact that the hand looks shapelier and more graceful when the middle and third fingers are slightly curved in and away from the index and little finger is shown by the models in the glove store windows, and while it is affection to hold the hands in such a position, yet this exercise, to make the proper natural, should be practiced," writes Katharine Eggleston Junker-mann in the course of an article on "Physical Culture for Girls" in the Woman's Home Companion, which discusses how to secure pretty hands and to retain a natural grace of motion. "Some one has said somewhere that the number of cultured generations back of an individual may be judged by the degree of curve in the little finger. Observation will prove this more or less true. When one sees a person holding a glass or cup with the little finger thrust out and curved until it resembles a hook, a little investigation will almost invariably show that the desire for culture has only just awakened in that particular family, and in its newness is somewhat overstepping the mark. Affection is a sign of lack of breeding. Some of the old painters understood hands to perfection. Long, rounded hands, with slightly curved fingers and gently bent wrists, are characteristic of the women whose beauty they have made memorable. Sometimes, perhaps, the beautiful hands were those of some other model than the pictured one; but the painters knew that beautiful faces were as necessary as beautiful hands in order to make a harmonious picture. The people of almost every other nation have more graceful hands than we have; and those who use their hands most freely when conversing are by far the most graceful. The hands which make no superfluous movements, which appear to obey readily and easily their owner's will, whose movements are free, rhythmic and gentle, are the really graceful ones."

Natural Advice.

"Sall in sight, sir," sang out the look-out. "Fire or bargain?" asked the captain, who had been lost in thought of home and wife.

FOR WOMAN AND HOME

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR MAIDS AND MATRONS.

Choosing the Wedding Gown.—Flowers Not Permitted at Military Funerals.—Finery of the Winsome Girl Graduate.—Household.

Serenade.

Look out upon the stars, my love,
And shame them with thine eyes,
On which than on the light above
There hang more destinies.
Night's beauty is the harmony
Of blending shades and light,
Then, lady, up—look out and be
A sister to the night.
Sleep not, thine image wakes for aye
Within my watching breast!
Sleep not! from her soft sleep should fly
Who robs all hearts of rest.
Nay, lady, from thy slumbers break
And make the darkness gay
With looks whose brightness well might
make
Of darker night a day.
—Edward C. Pinkney in Indianapolis News.

Choosing the Wedding Gown.

Of course the proverbial wedding-gown has been white satin from time immemorial, than which nothing is prettier. The new poplins are much used for this purpose, and universally becoming and inexpensive. A fine quality can be had for two dollars a yard, and is quite wide. Berege, an old-time material newly sprung into fashion, an open weave silk and wool, is much used for bridal gowns, and comes in delicate tints as well as white, hanging in pretty soft folds. It is made double width, costing from \$1.50 to \$2.50 a yard. For a simple home wedding, organdies made over surah or some of the soft mullis and India silks are in taste.

Going-away gowns are often used for the wedding gown, especially for a morning or high-noon wedding, and are made of ladies' cloth or some soft wool goods in semi-tailor made style; or they may be strictly tailor made.

Vells are usually of tulle, and reach the edge of the dress skirt in the back.

true military style. If she is fortunate enough to have an army belt, of course it must be donned, and rows of small army buttons sewed on the sleeves and collar. A late military suit is of Napoleon blue with a blouse opening over a broad vest of cardinal and bright rows of brass buttons used in every conceivable way as trimmings. But the really patriotic young women will have gowns of gray, the color that possibly our soldier boys may soon be wearing. It is a cross between the navy blue and Confederate gray. The wife of an army officer just received her new tailor-made bicycle suit the other day. It is of the new gray and has a blouse coat, that ends at the waist, with narrow revers and two rows of brass buttons. The belt is held by an army buckle and the short skirt is trimmed on each side with buttons.

A Tea Gown.



Finery of a Winsome Girl Graduate.

White dotted Swiss is always used, and is simple and girlish when combined with Valenciennes lace and



SUMMER EVENING HOME GOWNS.

having a short face veil reaching half way to the knees in front, which is detachable and is removed directly after the ceremony. It is fastened with orange blossoms or a standing bow of narrow satin ribbon. Shoes and gloves match the white and tinted gown.—Woman's Home Companion.

A House Gown for Summer.



Her Military Touches.

Even if they can't go to war, the women are going to be just as military as possible. The military hairpin, long since discarded, has been brought forth and all the buttons have been cut from Jack's West Point coat and are now displayed in a grand array on the front of his sister's new tailor gown, and they are quite effective. They begin at the shoulders and end almost at a point at the waist line in

high, and the skirts rather narrow and very full. Figured organdies are also used, but they are not so effective as the plain. Dealers say that golfing girls, bicycle girls and athletic girls generally are taking to the bonnets, but that is hard to believe, since the girl who really loves out-door life does not object to a coat of tan. More likely it is the girls that pretend to like these sports who are the purchasers of the bonnets.

No Flowers Allowed at a Military Funeral

"Flowers can play no part in a military funeral, the rules of army or navy burials forbidding them," explained an army officer to a Star reporter. "While I was down at Chickamauga recently, it was rumored that one of the soldiers in camp there had died. Indeed it was so printed in a local paper. The result was that on the following day a large quantity of flowers were sent by sympathetic ladies and others with a request that they should be placed on the coffin of the dead soldier. Now the fact was that no soldier had died, and the officers had the flowers sent to their quarters. If there would be a death in the camp the flowers could not be used, for they are not military in any sense. The only thing allowed on the coffin of a soldier or a sailor is a flag. That has been decided to be decoration enough, and among military men I have never heard the slightest objection to the custom, which has always prevailed."

Utility of Clean Collars.

Men often assert that the average man is neater in his every-day appearance than the average woman. White linen collars and cuffs have procured this reputation for men. Take a man with a shabby, hand-me-down suit of clothes on his back, and let him put on a spotless shirt, cuffs and collar, and he looks spick and span. Put ever so cheap a ready-made dress on a woman, with a white linen collar, white wash tie, and snowy cuffs, and she'll look just as neat as her brother. There's one weakness that nine out of ten women have, though, when it comes to cuffs and collars. They will think that a collar will do to wear one more time, when a man would toss it into his laundry bag. Nothing gives one so untidy an appearance as soiled linen, and there is no excuse for women economizing in this particular.

Bracelets Are Worn Again.

Bracelets are fashionable again. Style is not limited to one design, and the girls can dive down into their boxes and chamois bags where they thrust pins, necklaces, chains, buckles and all sorts of gew-gaws as fashion sets her seal of disapproval on them, and bring out just the first bracelet they happen to lay their hands on and don it, and it is sure to be in the top of style. Bright and burnished gold are both much used, and some of the heavy, round bracelets, which slip over the hand and fit loosely around the wrist, are elaborately carved. Others, which hug the arm closely, are nothing more than a gold wire embellished with a single gold leaf frosted, or a flower with a precious stone in the center.

To Wash Corsets.

Remove the steels and scrub with a warm suds made of white soap and soft water. When all the stains have been removed hold the corsets under a faucet and allow the water to run through them, or dip them up and down in water to remove the soap; squeeze but do not wring them; wet the corsets in boiled starch of moderate thickness. Now squeeze them again, pull them into shape and dry in the air, but not in the sun. When nearly dry again pull them into shape. Do not iron, as the process is injurious.

To Keep Fine Lace.

Drop it loosely without folding into a blue-lined box and cover it to prevent crushing. If it is to be laid away for storage, spread it flat upon a blue paper that can be bought for the purpose. This will prevent it from turning yellow. Fine embroideries, if white, should also be kept in blue paper.

Household Lore.

The light iron or brass bedstead, with a mattress that can be easily aired, deserves its present popularity from a hygienic standpoint.

The walls of a sleeping room should be hard-plastered and painted. If paper is used it should be of the washable, non-absorbent quality which is seen frequently nowadays in bathrooms.

Fresh air and sunlight are indispensable to the healthful bedroom. Alcoves and recesses for beds are objectionable, unless there is sufficient space for a free circulation of air all around them.

Protect the mattress by laying over it an old blanket, which is far better than a sheet, because, being woolen, it absorbs perspiration without giving a chill, and also can be aired more easily than cotton.

Feather pillows should never be exposed directly to the sun's rays, as they melt or soften the oil in the feathers and frequently cause an unpleasant odor. The pillows should, however, be aired and beaten with a light cane.

Physicians claim that sleep is more refreshing in a darkened room; therefore it is best to have inside shades of dark green holland under the ordinary shades. These are more easily adjusted than blinds. It is well to accustom children from infancy to sleep in the dark.

A new garter buckle is embellished with two enameled flags crossed. It is useless to say what flags they are. A new silver pencil case is shaped like a cannon. Jewelers say that it is an exact miniature of the ten-inch guns on the Maine. Whether this is true or not makes little difference, but it sells the pencils like hot cakes.