

YOLANDE

BY WILLIAM BLACK

CHAPTER V.—(Continued.)

"I hope you will give me a dance, Miss Winterbourne," said he.

"Oh, yes, with pleasure," said she, in the most friendly way.

"There are no programs, of course," said he. "And one can't make engagements; but I think a very good rule in a thing like this is that one should dance with one's friends. For myself, I don't care to dance with strangers. It doesn't interest me. I think when people form a party among themselves on board ship—well, I think they should keep to themselves."

"Oh, but that is very selfish, is it not?" Yolande said. "We are not supposed to be strangers with any one after being on board ship so long together."

"Miss Winterbourne, may I have the pleasure of dancing this waltz with you?" said a tall, solemn man, with an eyeglass, and the next minute the Master of Lynn beheld Yolande walking toward that cleared space with Major MacKinnon of the Seaforth Highlanders; and as to what he thought of the Seaforth Highlanders, and what he hoped would happen to them, from their colonel down to their pipe major, it is unnecessary to say anything here.

But Yolande did give him the next dance, which mollified him a little—not altogether, however, for it was only a square. The next was a Highland schottische; and by ill luck he took it for granted that Yolande, having been brought up in France, would know nothing about it, so he went away and sought out his sister. Their performance was the feature of the evening. No one else thought of interfering. And it was very cleverly, and prettily, and artistically done; inasmuch that a round of applause greeted them at the end—even from the Highland officers, who considered that young Leslie might just as well have sought a partner elsewhere, instead of claiming his own sister. Immediately after the Master of Lynn returned to Yolande.

"Ah, that is very pretty," she said. "No wonder they approved you and clapped their hands. It is the most picturesque of all the dances—especially when they are only two and you have the whole deck for display. In a ball room, perhaps not."

"You must learn it, Miss Winterbourne, before you come north," said he. "We always dance it in the north."

"Oh, but I know it very well," said Yolande, quietly.

"You?" said he, in an injured way. "Why didn't you tell me? Do you think I wanted to dance with my sister and leave you here?"

"But Mrs. Graham and you danced it so prettily—oh, very well, indeed—"

There was somebody else approaching them now—for the lady at the piano had that instant began another waltz. This was Captain Douglas, also of the Seaforth Highlanders.

"Miss Winterbourne, if you are not engaged, will you give me this waltz?" Yolande did not hesitate. Why should she? She was not engaged.

"Oh, yes, thanks," said she, with much friendliness, and she rose and took Captain Douglas' arm.

But young Leslie could not bear this perfidy, as he judged it. He would have no more to do with the dance or with her. Without a word to any one, he went away to the smoking room, and sat down there savage and alone.

"Polly talks of men being bamboozled by women," he was thinking bitterly. "She knows nothing about it. It is women who know nothing about women; they hide themselves from each other. But she was right on one point. That girl is the greatest flirt that ever stepped the earth."

And still, far away, he could hear the sound of the music, and also the stranger sound—like a whispering of silken wings—of feet on the deck. He was angry and indignant. Yolande could not be blind to his constant devotion to her; and yet she treated him exactly as if he were a stranger—going off with the first comer! Simplicity! His sister was right—it was the simplicity of a first-class flirt.

And still the waltz went on; and he heard the winnowing sound of the dancers' feet; and his thoughts were bitter enough. He was only five-and-twenty; at that age, hopes and fears and disappointments are emphatic and near; probably it never occurred to him to turn from the vanities of the hour, and from the petty throbbing anxieties and commonplace of every day life, to think of the awful solitudes all around him there—the voiceless, world-old desert, lying so dim and strange under the moonlight and the stars, its vast and mysterious heart quite pulseless and calm.

CHAPTER VI.

One morning there was much hurrying to and fro on board the dahabeah, in anticipation of the visit of the Governor; so that Mrs. Graham had no chance of having an extended talk with her brother. Nevertheless she managed to convey to him a few covert words of information and counsel.

"Archie," said she, "I have spoken to Yolande—I have hinted something to her."

"No," he said, looking rather frightened.

"Oh, you need not be much alarmed," she said, with a significant smile. "Rather the other way. She seems quite to know how you have wished to be kind and attentive to her—quite sensible of it, in fact; and when I hinted something—"

"She did not say 'no' outright?" he interrupted, eagerly; and there was a flush of gladness on his face.

His sister glanced around.

"I thought there could be no harm if I told her that Jim and I would like to have her for a sister," she answered, demurely.

"And she did not say 'no' outright?" he repeated.

"Well," Mrs. Graham said, after a second, "I am not going to tell you anything more. It would not be fair. It is your business, not mine. I'm out of it now. I have intermeddled quite enough. But I don't think she hates you. And she seems rather pleased to think of living in the Highlands, with her father having plenty of amusement there, you know; and perhaps she might be brought to consider a permanent arrangement of that kind not so undesirable; and—and, well, you'd better see for yourself."

She could not say more then, at all events; for at this moment Col. Graham appeared on the upper deck with the intelligence that the Governor's barge was just then coming down the river. Mr. Winterbourne and Yolande were instantly summoned from below; some further disposition of chairs and divans was made; some boxes of cigarettes were sent for; and presently the sound of oars alongside announced the arrival of the chief of nobles of Merhadj.

The Master of Lynn saw and heard little of what followed; he was far too busy with the glad and bewildering prospects that his sister's obscure hints had placed before him. And again and again he glanced at Yolande, timidly, and yet with an increasing wonder. He began to ask himself whether it was really true that his sister had spoken to her. The girl betrayed no consciousness, no embarrassment; she had greeted him on that morning just as on other mornings; at this moment she was regarding the arrival of those grave officials with an interest which seemed quite oblivious to his presence. As for him he looked on impatiently. He wished it was all over. He wished to have some private speech with her; to have some inquiry of her eyes—surely her eyes would make some tell-tale confession?

After the dignitaries were gone, Yolande betrayed not the slightest embarrassment at his sitting quite near her; it was he who was nervous and awkward in his speech. She was engaged in some delicate needlework; from time to time she spread it out on her lap to regard it; and all the time she was chatting freely with Mrs. Graham about the recent visitors and their grave demeanor, their almost European costume, their wonderfully small feet, and so forth.

"Why do you not go ashore?" she said, turning her frank eyes to the Master of Lynn. "It is so interesting to see the strange birds, the strange plants."

"It is cooler on the river," said he.

The midday went by, and he found no chance of addressing her. His sister and she sat together, and sewed and chatted, or stopped to watch some passing boat and listen to the boatmen singing a long and melancholy chorus to the clanking of the oars. At lunch time, Mr. Winterbourne and Col. Graham turned up. Then, in the afternoon, the whole of them got into a boat and were rowed away to a long and flat and sandy island on the other side of the Nile, which they explored in a leisurely way.

It was not until the end of the day that the long-looked-for opportunity arrived; indeed, nearly every one had gone below to get ready for dinner; but Yolande had lingered above, to watch the coming over of the twilight. It was a strange enough sight in its way. For after the yellow color had died out of the bank of bearded corn above the river's edge, and while the strip of acacia-trees over that again had grown solemn and dark against the clear, pallid, blue-gray sky of the south, far away in the northwestern heavens there still lingered a glow of warmer light, and a few clouds high up had caught a saffron tinge from the sinking sun. It seemed as if they here were shut in with the dark, while far away in the north—over the Surrey lanes, and up among the Westmoreland waters, and out amid the distant Hebridean Isles, the summer evening was still fair and shining. It led one to dream of home. The imagination took wings. It was pleasant to think of those beautiful and glowing scenes, here where the gloom of the silent desert was gathering all around.

She was standing by the rail of the deck, and when the others had gone he quietly went over to her and began talking to her—about the Highlands mostly, and of the long, clear twilights there, and how he hoped she would accept his sister's invitation to go back home with them when they returned to England. And when she said something very pretty about the kindness of all of them to her, he spoke a little more warmly, and asked if there was any wonder? People got to know one another intimately through a constant companionship like this, and got to know and admire and love beautiful qualities of disposition and mind. And then he told her it would not be honest if he did not confess to her that he was aware that his sister had spoken to her—it was best to be frank; and he knew she was so kind she would not be angry if there had been any indiscretion; and he begged for her forgiveness if she had been in any way offended. Then she managed to say, rather hurriedly and breathlessly:

"Oh, no, I am not offended. Why? It is—a great honor—I—I knew it was

your sister's kindness and friendship that made her speak to me—please let me go away now—"

He put his hand on her arm, unwittingly.

"But may I hope, Yolande? May I hope?" he said, and he stooped down to listen for the faintest word. "I don't want you to pledge yourself altogether now. Give me time. May I try to win you? Do you think some time—some time of your own choosing—as far ahead as you may wish—you will consent? May I hope for it? May I look forward to it—some day?"

"Oh, but I cannot tell you—I cannot tell you now," she said, in the same breathless way. "I am sorry if I have given any pain—any anxiety—but—some other time I will try to talk to you—or my papa will tell you—but not now—you have always been so kind to me that I ask it from you—"

She stole away in the gathering darkness, her head bent down; she had not once turned her eyes to his. And he remained there for a time, scarcely knowing what he had said or what she had answered; but vaguely and happily conscious that she had not, at all events, refused him.

Yolande's self-confidence seemed to have strangely forsaken her that evening. When they were all up on deck, taking their coffee in the red glow shed by the lanterns, she got hold of her father and drew him aside into the darkness.

"What is it, Yolande?" said he, in surprise.

She took hold of his hand; both hers were trembling.

"I have something to tell you, papa—something serious."

Then he knew; and for a moment his heart sank; but he maintained a gay demeanor. Had he not reasoned the whole matter out with himself? He had foreseen this crisis; he had nerved himself by anticipation.

"Oh, I know. I know already, Yolande," said he, very cheerfully. "Do you think I can't spy secrets? And of course you come to me, with your hands trembling; and you think you have something dreadful to confess; whereas it is but the most ordinary and commonplace thing in the world. You need not make any confession. Young Leslie has spoken to me—quite right; very right; I like frankness; I consider him a very fine young fellow. Now, what have you got to say—only I won't listen if you are going to make a fuss about it and destroy my nervous system, for I tell you it is the simplest and most ordinary affair in the world."

"Then you know everything—you approve of it, papa—it is your wish?" she said bravely.

"My wish?" he said; "what has my wish to do with it, you stupid creature!" But then, he added, more gently: "Of course you know, Yolande, I should like to see you married and settled. Yes, I should like to see that; I should like to see you in a fixed home, and not liable to all the changes and chances of the life that you and I have been living. It would be a great relief to my mind. And then it is natural and right. It is not for a young girl to be a rolling stone like that; and, besides, it couldn't last; that idea about our always going on traveling wouldn't answer. So whenever you think of marrying; whenever you think you will be happy in choosing a husband—just now, to-morrow, or any time—don't come to me with a breathless voice, and with trembling hands as if you had done some wrong, or as if I was going to object, for to see you happy would be happiness enough for me; and as for our society together, well, you know, I could pay the people of Slapgood a little more attention, and have some more occupation that way; and then you, instead of having an old and frail and feeble person like me to take care of you, you would have some one whose years would make him a fitter companion for you, as is quite right and proper and natural. And now do you understand?"

"Oh, yes, I think so, papa," said she, quite brightly; and she regarded him with grateful, loving eyes. "And you would be quite happy, then?"

"If you were, I should be," said he.

During the rest of the evening, the Master of Lynn, seeing that Yolande seemed no longer in any trouble, kept near her, with some vague hope that she would herself speak, or that he might have some chance of reopening the subject that engrossed his mind. And indeed, when the chance arrived, and he timidly asked her if she had not a word of hope for him, she spoke very frankly, though with some little nervousness, no doubt. She made a little apology, in very pretty and stammering phrases, for not having been able to give him an answer; but since then, she said, she had spoken to her father, without whose approval she could not have decided.

"Then you consent, Yolande—you will be my wife?" he said, in a low and eager tone, upsetting in his haste all the continuity of those hesitating sentences.

"But is it wise?" said she, still with her eyes cast down. "Perhaps you will regret—"

He took her hand into his, and held it tight.

"This has been a lucky voyage for me," said he, and that was all that he had a chance of saying just then; but it was enough.

(To be continued.)

Literally Speaking.

Ascum—What did you find out about that new magazine?

De Ritter—Well, all the poets and novelists are crazy to write for it.

Ascum—I didn't suppose it would pay so very well.

De Ritter—It doesn't pay at all. That's what I mean.—Philadelphia Press.

"Four things come not back—the spoken word, the speed arrow, the past life, the neglected opportunity.—Hazzlitt.

Ungratefulness is the very poison of manhood.—Sir P. Sidney.



Surprise Biscuit.

Bake large, light biscuit, and when done take from the oven, split each one partly open, and with a fork scoop or draw out the soft center. Fill with strawberries which have been hulled, quartered and sprinkled with sugar. These biscuits are in reality little strawberry shortcakes. Muffins made according to the following rule and served in this way are even better than the biscuit. Sift two cups of flour, add two eggs and a cup of sour milk in which a very scant teaspoonful of soda is dissolved. Mix and beat quickly. Bake in a hot oven. On taking them from the oven fill with strawberries previously prepared as above.

Asparagus Soup.

One bundle of asparagus, one pint of water, one pint of milk or thin cream, one-half an onion, one tablespoonful each of butter and flour, salt and pepper. Cut the heads from the asparagus and cook for twenty minutes in boiling salted water. Cook the stalks and onion in one pint of water for twenty minutes. Rub this through a sieve. Blend butter and flour, add one pint of boiling milk, pepper and salt to taste. Mix with the cooked asparagus and boil for five minutes. Strain again, add the asparagus heads and serve very hot.

Cheese Custards.

Butter some small cups thoroughly, and cut some thin slices of bread and butter into small dice, arranging them in a pattern on the sides of the cup. Scatter grated cheese—Parmesan, if possible—over all. Make a good custard with the yolks of two eggs and three-quarters of a pint of milk. At the last minute before cooking add the whites, beaten to a froth. Season with salt, white pepper and cheese. Fill up the molds, and steam very slowly till set. Turn out to serve, and garnish with chopped parsley or truffles.

Gooseberry Pudding.

You will find this a welcome dainty for the children, and one which is extremely wholesome also. Stew until tender a pint of the berries, and add sugar to taste. When cold stir in an ounce of butter, four eggs well beaten, and a little grated lemon peel. Now butter a mold, and sift in some bread crumbs and sugar; pour in the fruit gradually, strew more crumbs and sugar on the top, and bake for an hour. It may be eaten either hot or cold.

Bean Soup.

Soak half a pint of beans in cold water over night; boil in a quart of water with an onion and a little salt. When the beans are tender, rub them through a sieve; dilute with the water in which they were boiled, and add half a pint of hot milk. Season to taste and serve with fried croutons. A teaspoonful of corn flour mixed with a little cold water poured into the soup and boiled for a few minutes gives it a smooth taste.

Tomato Curry.

To the contents of a quart can of tomatoes add a little curry powder and a few sprinklings of toasted cracker crumbs. Line a baking dish with this mixture and cover it with some cold boiled rice; next a layer of tomato, then another of rice, and so on, until the dish is filled, the last layer being of tomato, and sprinkle liberally with bits of butter, pepper, salt and cracker crumbs. Bake twenty minutes and serve hot.

A Nice Salad Dressing.

Mix together one teaspoonful of dry mustard, one salt spoonful of salt, half a saltspoonful of pepper, and one teaspoonful of fine sugar; add very slowly one teacupful of thick cream, working it gradually into the other ingredients with a wooden spoon. Now add, also by degrees, one tablespoonful of tarragon vinegar, and continue stirring until you mix your salad.

Onion and Beet Salad.

Bermuda onions and new beets make a delicious salad. Slice the onions very thin, and, unless a pronounced onion flavor is liked, soak the slices in a very little salt and vinegar. Cook the beets and chop them fine. When chilled sprinkle thickly over the onion slices, which have been laid on white lettuce leaves. Serve with a French dressing.

Mock Duck.

Purchase a generous slice of beef-steak cut thick; sprinkle with pepper and salt and bits of butter; then make a stuffing, season it highly and roll up in the steak; pin together and place in a dripping pan with a little water that it may steam slightly as it bakes, and bake until the meat is tender. When done serve as a roast, cutting across the end.

YANKEE BOAT WHICH BEAT THE WORLD IN YACHT RACE.

The Yacht Atlantic, which beat the world in the recent race across the Atlantic ocean, was completed in the last days of 1903 and in the early winter made her maiden cruise to the West Indies and the Caribbean Sea. The Atlantic, according to her designer's plans, is 137 feet on the water line, 188 feet over all and 29 feet beam. The mizzenmast is 80 feet from deck to hounds, the mainmast 77 feet and the foremast 74 feet. When she was cruising last summer the distance from the after ends of the mizzenboom to the forward end of the bowsprit was 227 feet. From deck to truck the mizzenmast is 137 feet; same measurement of mainmast is 132 feet and the foremast 125 feet. The mizzenboom in ordinary cruising is 79 feet and the mizzenmast 50½ feet. The mizzenmast is 70 feet in the luff and 106 feet on the leach. The main and fore booms are each 35 feet, the spinnaker boom is 76 feet and the bowsprit outboard 31 feet.

The Atlantic has the complete propelling machinery of a steam yacht and, her designer says, has made eleven knots an hour under steam. The



THE ATLANTIC.

propelling machinery consists of a triple expansion engine of about 300 horse power, two Almy boilers and a Bevis feathering screw, which fills completely her aperture when feathered for sailing. The sails are ordinarily raised with steam. The yacht is lighted with electricity and has one large dynamo and engine and capacious storage batteries. She has also an acetylene gas plant, a two-ton refrigerating machine and tiled ice boxes with a capacity of 800 cubic feet. There are three skylights over the engine and boiler room. Steering is done from a raised quarter deck aft. The stack is telescopic. The accommodations consist of a large saloon, five staterooms, chart and gun room and three bath-rooms, which are porcelain tiled. The deckhouse is used as an observation-room and is connected with stairs to a spacious lobby below.

Just now this Yankee boat is the most talked of boat in the world, as she went from Sandy Hook lightship to the Lizard as if two lines of buoys like picker fences to sail between marked the way across. Her story will always be gratifying to American yachtsmen if those at the helm learn to know her and treat her well.

A MILLIONAIRE FARMER.

Began with Little Money and Is Now Worth \$1,500,000.

After making \$1,500,000 in the last fourteen years out of the soil, L. D. Smith, of Madison, S. D., the richest exclusive farmer in the United States, has retired from active life. He began farming in Illinois with a few hundred dollars. With this he made a payment on his first farm and then earned enough money on the farm to pay off the entire debt. Then he bought a second farm, earning enough money with the two to pay off the second debt. When in 1891 he moved to South Dakota he had \$100,000, which he invested in farming lands. As fast as he made money he bought more lands. In time the value of the lands greatly increased and Mr. Smith sold at big profits. To-day he owns ninety-four magnificent farms in central South Dakota, 3,000 acres in Iowa and much stock in banks and other real estate. He is worth more than \$1,500,000.

To three of his tenants whose methods of farming pleased him he made a deed outright of the farms occupied by them. His riches have not changed his tastes. To-day his life is as simple as it was years ago when he was laying the foundation of his fortune.

The Retort Proper.

"Ah, you poor chaps of bachelors! Now, when a married man gets a little rent in his clothes—"

"He's got to pay it to the landlord! I see!"—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Brevity is said to be the soul of wit; but the man who is short doesn't feel funny.