

# The Contrabandist: OR One Life's Secret!

A TRUE STORY OF THE SOUTH OF FRANCE

CHAPTER XIII.

It was evening. In the lofty and richly furnished library of the marquis, the silver lamps burned with a soft, subdued glow, blending their moonlight radiance with the deeper and warmer tinge cast by a blazing wood fire upon the broad hearth over the magnificent apartment, with its dark, massive, antique furniture, its broad, high walls, lined with costly and substantial volumes, the crimson draperies of its deep windows, and the polished oaken floor that shone and reflected back the mellow warmth in rippling lines of light.

Beside a table of curiously carved oak, which is strewn with rare and ancient volumes and the writing implements of the marquis, and which occupies the center of the floor, sits Rose. She is leaning forward upon this table, her face hidden in her folded arms—those fair, sculptured arms whose snowy whiteness gleams rarely through the veil of falling tresses. Her graceful form is attired in a robe of shining fabric, its pearl-ued folds sweeping the floor about her and shining, glittering softly in the mellow light shed all around her. She does not move; she is silent—motionless; she hardly seems to breathe even. So quiet is she, as she reclines thus, with her face concealed, that you might think her sleeping.

But Rose is not sleeping. Her errand hither is of too painful a nature for that. Alone, in this swelling silence, she waits; and listening for an approaching footstep, the hour passes in deep and sorrowful reverie. For Rose has a duty, too long deferred, to perform to-night, and its consequences may be only too bitter—bitter to her, inasmuch as they are bitter to her father, and she does not fear the performance of this duty because she shrinks from fulfilling her trust—from keeping her pledged word; but she pictures to herself the disappointment she may be about to inflict on others.

A distant door uncloses, and so softly in its casing of cloth that no sound follows. It is a gentleman who enters; he pauses a moment; his glance takes in the beauty and subdued splendor of the scene before him; but it is accustomed to that. It rests upon the center of the whole—upon the bowed figure of the young girl reclining by the table—shadows of grief resting on once of sorrow and perplexity, rests upon his fine brow. Then closing the door, he advances, and stands beside the table.

"Rose!" he calls, gently.

The young girl raised her head.

"Is it you, Louise?" he asked, with an air of sadness. "I thought you were away."

"I have remained at home, Rose. I could not go. I wished to see you."

"You wished to see me, Louise? We are in each other's presence every day. To-night?"

"Ay, to-night, Rose! To-night, you would say, you have an interview with my uncle, and cannot listen to me. I knew of this interview; my uncle told me; and, forgive me, dear Rose, but I would prevent it."

"He spoke in an subdued, but agitated voice. He seated himself beside her, and leaned, also, forward on the table, with his hands clasping hers, as he uttered these imploring words.

"You would prevent it, Louise—why? Would you bid me neglect the fulfillment of a duty almost too long delayed?"

"Ah, Rose, you are about to seal your fate! Think once more, I beseech you; there is time. Break this ill bondage; be silent, and forget the vows that are no longer binding. Do not bring this great sorrow to my uncle, who loves you so; do not break up this happy household, which can be no more happy when you have sacrificed yourself—when you have left the hearth that is only bright with your presence, to hide yourself in obscurity!"

The tears were filling her sweet eyes; a great cry was struggling for utterance in her breast; but she silenced with a half-despairing effort. She raised her glance to his.

"You are aware, then, Louise, of the object of this interview?"

"Ah, too well—to well!" he answered; "for I knew that it must come, sooner or later, since you adhere to the decision you once made. But again I ask you—do not reveal this secret to my uncle."

"It is not alone my promise to Robin which I regard, Louise."

"You would say that you love him still, then?"

The tears fell from her eyes; a blush stole to her fair cheek; her head was turned aside.

"Ah, no—not to do so, Rose?" he cried, sorrowfully.

"Louise—Louise, this is not kind—it is not like you," said the young girl, turning to him again. "You know I cannot break my promise. Do not add to the sorrow I already feel by asking me to do so. I must acknowledge my betrothal to Robin."

"And render him unhappy, cut Helen Montauban to the very heart, leave me wretched—miserable! Rose, listen to me!"

"Louise, be silent, I entreat," she uttered, withdrawing her hand from his, while the crimson glow of consciousness and timidity suffused her countenance; "have pity on me!"

"Rose, one instant. Let me speak for the last time. I love you; I would ask you to be my wife! Nay—do not start and turn away from me. Hear me to the end. How can I bear to see you—Rose, who should move among the highest and the noblest of France, envied and admired by all—who should have as command the thousand luxuries for which you were born—who should occupy, finally, a position and enjoy advantages suited to your beauty, your grace, your refinement, your intellect—how can I bear to see you the wife of a peasant? Ah, be merciful to me! be just to yourself; awake from this fatal trance; for you are dreaming, Rose."

He spoke with strange energy. His tones thrilled through her; his glance sought hers, waiting for an answer, with an earnestness—an anxiety that confused her. A feeling of faintness stole over her; she put her hand to her brow; all was strange bewilderment about her. Still his eyes were fixed upon her; still he watched eagerly. But over his lips stole the pale of death; his fine brow grew cold and white as marble itself, and on it stood the very dew of agony.

"You yield, then?" he said, in a voice choked with emotion.

"Yield!" She rose slowly from her seat; she clasped her fingers from hers with despairing strength. "Ah, no! You mistake! I love him; I will be true to him."

Louise stood with one hand supporting herself by the table, the other pressed hard against his side, and his face avert-

raising her head and speaking earnestly seriously. "Robin was different from those about him. He was better—more noble than they. He was—She broke off in the midst of her words, blushing and confused at her own animation.

"Nay, my child, you need have no shame," said the marquis, kindly; "this young man was, indeed, something more than those whom one is accustomed to meet in that class to which he was allied. I confess that your preference for him is no mystery to me, and I do not at all disapprove of it."

"Ah, how good you are, monsieur!" uttered the young girl, gratefully, as she pressed his hand to her lips.

"It is no merit to me, Rose, that my own honest convictions force me to acknowledge his superiority, and the good sense you have displayed in your choice. And now," he added, while the old laughing glance shone in his eyes, "I dare say you are dying with curiosity to know how I came into possession of all this knowledge."

"Indeed, sir, it is a matter of curiosity to me," she answered, frankly.

"What, then, will you say, if I assure you that Robin himself told me the greater part of it all, and that I divined only a very little bit—eh, Rose?" he asked.

"Robin, sir? ah, then you have seen him!" said Rose, with hardly suppressed joy.

"I have seen him, my child."

"And lately?"

"Quite lately," he returned, pleased and amused at her innocent betrayal of delight.

"May I ask when it was, monsieur?"

"It was yesterday; nay—I have seen him as lately as to-day."

"To-day? ah, then, he is very near?" she said, in a subdued yet joyful tone, and with her eyes being, in a moment, in meditation. Suddenly raising them, she asked: "Where was it, monsieur?"

"Too many questions, Rose," laughed the marquis—"too many questions. I must keep his whereabouts a matter of mystery for a short time."

"Ah, monsieur," said Rose, gently, and with a pretty air of deprecation.

"Indeed, my dear child, it will do you no harm. Wait till to-morrow, only to-morrow, and I will tell you where he is; nay, more—you shall see him. You will grant me until then?"

"Willingly?"

"Now you can easily tell how I guessed at the object of your errand thither to-night."

"Since Robin told you all about this," she said, with a slight and charming blush, "you must have had little difficulty in divining my purpose, when, at your questioning this morning, I acknowledged that it was to say to you something immediately connected with myself that I desired to meet you here."

"Exactly, Rose," said the marquis, gaily. "Well, my darling, we have made our confessions—have we not? and they were not such to cause any uneasiness. Alas! Robin, I honestly declare to you, I like, and am proud of, if I have invited him here to-morrow. But, Rose, and he took her hand in his. "You must not expect to behold the linen blouse and serviceable garments in which you were wont to see him. Robin is no longer a gardener, and, therefore, you must anticipate quite an alteration in his personal appearance."

"How?—no longer a gardener, monsieur?" iterated Rose, in some surprise.

"No longer, my child; he was offered an employment of an entirely different character, which he immediately accepted; it was much more congenial to his talents and capabilities, as well as to his tastes and desires. He is fast rising in the world, Rose," and the good marquis smiled. "Ah, he will be a great man some day! You would scarcely recognize him now, I'll warrant. Why, child, this rustic lover of yours is as great a gentleman as there is in France this day. The throne itself smiles upon him!"

"He said so!" said Rose, musingly. "He said so—did he not? that he should rise to honor and preferments and wealth? Yet how little I imagined that it would be so soon!"

"Well, you see, I have won my diamonds, Rose," he said, laughing. "You shall give them to me on your wedding day. And now, my darling, let us join our friends. They will be waiting for us."

And Rose went with him, almost in a state of bewilderment, knowing that she had not said half she had intended to say, but she had said enough to reveal to her the truth of this sudden revelation of the marquis.

(To be continued.)

### CITY LIFE WAS DULL.

"Not long ago I had an old gentleman from a rural village to visit me," said the suburbanite, "and he found New York dull. I never realized before how dull our place could be." The New York Times explains why the gentleman from the country found the city less lively than the life to which he had been accustomed. To most persons, particularly to city residents, the old man's point of view will be a new one.

"When at home the old gentleman was accustomed to go after his mail," said the city man; "so after breakfast one morning he said he would just step round to the postoffice and ask for the mail. We had to explain that there was no postoffice within two miles of us, and that we never visited the office; we just waited until the postman came round."

"When the old gentleman was balked of going to the postoffice, he said that he really must get shaved. Would we direct him to a barber shop? Then I had to tell him that I didn't know of a barber shop within a mile of the house. I shaved myself, and when I needed the services of a barber I found one downtown."

"That greatly surprised him, for at home he visits the barber, a cheerful, neighborly talkative fellow, are among the pleasant incidents of the week. It also set him thinking, and we had to confess under cross-examination that we hardly bought so much as a paper of pins in our part of the city. We did not patronize the little shops of the region. Everything we needed we bought in great shops ten miles away. We had to wait for most things twelve or even twenty-four hours, and if an article was urgently needed, we had to make a journey of something like twenty miles to get it."

"That seemed to the old gentleman an excellent joke on city life. His own village is about as far from the only near-by city of any size, as our house is from the heart of New York. It was plain enough that he thought we had returned to something like the conditions of the frontier."

"He was evidently comparing the inconveniences of our situation with the condition of his former friends a few miles from his village. He had always been sorry for them; he was just as sorry for us. Looking round upon the dense shrubbery near the house and the wall of woodland only a few yards away, he said, with a kind of shiver, 'No doubt this is a lovely place in midsummer, but it must be cold here in winter.'"

### ORIGIN OF WORD YANKEE.

It was in Use in New England as early as 1713.

"When you come to think of it there is no special reason, no good reason, at any rate, why the man from the north should feel offended when referred to as a Yankee," says a writer in the New Orleans Times-Democrat, "and yet it is a rather curious fact that men and women from that section of the country do not like the word when it is applied to them. Probably the time was when the use of the word 'Yankee' in the South was meant to carry a sting with it. 'Yankee trick,' for instance, and 'Yankee shrewdness,' meant something not exactly agreeable just after the war. But all that is changed now. I was thinking more particularly of the etymology of the word 'Yankee.' I was turning over the pages of Skeats the other day when I came upon the word. 'Yankee was defined as a 'citizen of New England or of the United States,' and, suggestively, is of Scandinavian origin. It was used in Boston as early as 1765.

"In his history of the American war, published in 1789, Dr. William Gordon says: 'It was a favorite cant word in Cambridge, Mass., as early as 1713, and it meant excellent, as a Yankee good horse.' It is suggested, too, that the word probably spread through New England as the result of its use by the students at Cambridge. It has gradually become part of the common speech at the country. It seems to be related to the late Latin 'Yankie,' meaning 'a sharp, clever, forward woman,' and to 'yanked,' which means an agile girl, an incessant talker, a hair-skin like the leaf of a damask rose, smart stroke." We also have a hint of the word in 'yank,' 'a jerk, to jerk,' a smart boy. So 'yanky' means quick, smart. 'Yank' is from the Scandinavian 'yack,' to talk fast, 'yank,' a blow. But the point I had in mind was that there is nothing offensive about that word in its use now. European speak of the American citizen, no matter what section of the United States he hails from, as a 'Yankee,' and they talk about 'Yankee shrewdness' making serious inroads on the trading rights of foreign countries. 'Yankee' is a good word and the men and women to whom it is applied either in its narrow or in its broad sense are of God."

# Thanksgiving

## WHEN THANKSGIVIN' COMES.

Gold! to have a joyful day  
"But next Thursday down our way;  
Relatives it all be here—  
'Tis not now 'till far away."  
Got a turkey home, I'll bet  
Is the biggest we've had yet;  
Always lots to eat, I've found  
When Thanksgiving comes around.

Pa, he'll carve the noble bird,  
Tells all the jokes he's heard;  
Ma, she'll keep things movin' right,  
Everbody talk a night.  
All except Bill an' me;  
We'll be still as still can be.  
We'll have time to make a sound  
When Thanksgiving comes around.

Godly! but it's bully, though,  
Livin' relatives, you know,  
The best of all, I think,  
Take a second piece of pie;  
Pa, he'll only laugh and roar  
When we pass out plates for more;  
Never's scolded us no more  
When Thanksgiving comes around.

Uncle Jim see me an' Bill  
'S jest about as hard to fill;  
Two elephants, but give  
If they'll only let us be;  
We won't care for what they say,  
But jest grin an' eat away.  
We'll be full clear f, as the ground  
When Thanksgiving comes around.  
—Conrad Ruff's Nonpareil.

## A THANKFUL THANKSGIVING

I DON'T feel as if I should enjoy this Thanksgiving," said Mrs. Joel Nisbett, looking down into the basket of glossy, red cheeked Spitzbergs as if it were a family vault and taking up an apple as if it had been a skull; "no, I don't."

"Then, Sarepta," observed her husband, who had just thrown a huge log on the open fire, "you don't disarr nothing to be thankful for? It's as harnsome a turkey as ever flapped, and I don't know of a year when I've had nicer pumpkins on that ar' corn lot."

"Tain't turkey, or pumpkin pie, or cranberry sauce as makes Thanksgiving," sighed Mrs. Nisbett.

"What is it, then? Ef it's cold weather, I should ha' thought the last frost would ha' done the business for you pretty fairly. Them artemisias by the front door is scorched black, and the old maple is layin' its leaves as if it was rainin' down. Parson Jarvis is comin' all the way from Sloatseville to preach to-morrow, and the quire's larned a bran' new anthem just a-purpose, about bein' thankful for harvest and all that sort of thing. I'm sure I don't know what else you'll have."

Mrs. Nisbett only answered by a sigh.

"I wonder if 'tain't possible Steph' be hum to-night," she said after a pause.

"He wrot not. He thought he'd drop in early to-morrow mornin' if he caught the train in the evening. One think, old woman; it's five years since Steph' was hum to Thanksgiving."

Old Nisbett rubbed his horny hands, with a chuckle, adding:

"And I s'pose, if all accounts is true, he's gettin' to be a great man out in the western country. It was kind of a hard pull when he went off and left us, but maybe the boy was in the right."

"Yes," said Mrs. Nisbett dolorously, "but somehow I can't get reconciled to the idea of his marryin' a strange gal out there."

Joel scratched his head. This was a phase of the subject that he scarcely felt competent to discuss.

"Maybe you'll like her. Stephen says she's a nice gal."

"Stephen says! As if a man over head and ears wouldn't say anything."

"I wish he told us who she was."

Mrs. Nisbett groaned again. Joel went to the woodpile, the everyday shrine whence he generally derived what little of philosophic inspiration he had.

"Mrs. Nisbett!"

It was a soft little voice, and the old lady's face relaxed instinctively as it sounded on her ears.

"Why, Lida Tremaine—'tain't you?"

"It is. I've done everything that Aunt Constance wanted, and now I've just run over to see if you don't need a bit of help."

She stood in the doorway, a fair little apparition, all flushed and rosy with the November wind, while her blue eyes sparkled as if they were twin sapphires hidden away under her long, dark lashes. She was neither blond nor brunette, but rosy cheeked girl, with nut brown hair, skin like the leaf of a damask rose, a straight, refined nose and lips as ripe as a red crabapple, though by no means so sour. Generally she had a demure sort of gravity lingering about her face, 'yack,' to talk fast, 'yank,' a blow. But the point I had in mind was that there is nothing offensive about that word in its use now. European speak of the American citizen, no matter what section of the United States he hails from, as a 'Yankee,' and they talk about 'Yankee shrewdness' making serious inroads on the trading rights of foreign countries. 'Yankee' is a good word and the men and women to whom it is applied either in its narrow or in its broad sense are of God."

Not Dead, but a New Yorker.

"How clever the ladies of your town are!" said Marion Crawford to a Western Mayor.

"Yes!"

"I was the guest of their literary club. We had a delightful afternoon with Aristophanes."

"Indeed! I thought that chap was dead." "No; he ain't dead," added the Mayor; "he's that Hindu Babu from New York."

Mark Twain and a Poet.

A new story is going the rounds about Mark Twain and a young poet. "How long does it take to get fame from a poem?" asked the poet.

The sage thought and in a few minutes said:

"Well, it takes about four hours to write one and nineteen years eleven months thirty days twenty-four hours and fifty-five minutes to get it published. Then it's a toss-up whether it's famous or infamous."—New York Times.

The man who is always telling how much more work he does than his associates, should be watched. Screw loose somewhere.

It is easier for some butchers to get six hams out of one hog than it is to get one truthful word out of some men.



but there's somethin' reserved about her, and I didn't like to ask about you—whether you had decided to go out as a governess or not; because, my dear, Joel and I were talkin' last night, and we both thought what a comfort it would be to have you here."

"To have me here?"

"We're old and we're alone, and somehow we're both took a fancy to you, my child. So when your Aunt Constance goes back to the city, if you choose to come here—"

Mrs. Nisbett paused abruptly and burst into tears.

"We had a little girl once, my dear, and if she'd lived she would ha' been right about your age."

Lida let the leaves drop down on the floor as she sprang up and threw both arms round the old woman's neck.

"Oh, Mrs. Nisbett," she whispered softly, "you are so very, very kind. Believe me, I appreciate it all, but—I hardly know how to tell you."

Mrs. Nisbett listened intently. Lida smiled and cried a little and then whispered so low it was scarcely audible.

"I am going to be married."

"Married!" ejaculated Mrs. Nisbett, with all a woman's interest in this important piece of information. "And who to?"

"Your son lives in Iowa—in Paring-ton?"

"Yes."

"Well, did he ever mention the name of Lida?"

Lida paused, her cheeks glowing roses. Old Nisbett had come in with an armful of wood, bringing a gale with him from the frosty outer world.

"I'll tell you by and by," whispered Lida as she went back to her work.

"Joel'll go out again arter awhile," thought Mrs. Nisbett, "and then I'll hear about Lida's beau."

But Joel set down before the fire with a complacent satisfaction which boded ill for the gratification of his wife's curiosity, and finally accompanied Lida home, thus frustrating all his wife's designs and cutting off her chance of hearing Lida's story.

"Dear me!" thought she. "I don't believe the man was ever born who knewed when he wasn't wanted! How lonesome it seems when Lida's gone! What does the girl want to get married for when I could ha' took such a sight of comfort with her? Oh, dear, dear! It does seem as if the world was all askew!"

The next day, in spite of the weather prophet's prediction of snow, dawned clear and brilliant as the dying smile of Indian summer. By 11 o'clock Mrs. Nisbett was dressed in her best silk and cap, with the turkey browning beautifully in the oven and the cranberry tart done to the maker, the table set, the fire hissing with crackling logs and the plates dressed with coronals of autumn leaves. Aunt Constance, a tall, prim maiden lady of uncertain age, stood before the bedroom looking glass arranging her coiffure. Lida, in a blue dress with a late

autumn rose in her hair, was tripping lightly and thither as light footed and helpful as half a dozen household fairies merged into one, while Mrs. Nisbett stood regarding her with a loving eye, murmuring to herself:

"Well, well, it seems like it was the Lord's will to deny us of just what we most want, but if I had a daughter I could wish she was like Lida."

As the old kitchen clock struck 1 Mrs. Nisbett, looking from the window, gave a little cry.

"There he comes—there comes Joel, and, as I live, there's the boy with him!" Lida ran into the bedroom.

When she returned, Mrs. Nisbett was clasped in the arms of a tall, handsome man of four or five and twenty.

"Lida," said the proud matron, striving to disengage herself from the affectionate clasp, "this is my son Stephen, and—why, what's the matter?"

For Stephen had dropped her hands with an exclamation of surprise and amazement, and Lida stood there glowing crimson.

"Lida! Why, mother, this is a surprise indeed that you have prepared for me!"

"I prepared!" echoed the astonished old lady. "Well, that's a good un, when I'm ten times as much surprised as you be! Lida, what does this mean?"

"It means," said Lida, with a demure smile—she was beginning to recover her scattered self-possession—"it means that this is the gentleman I am to be married to!"

"Stephen!" cried Mrs. Nisbett, "is Lida to be your wife?"

"She has given me her promise to that effect, at least," said Stephen, looking proudly down upon his lovely little fiancée.

"Well, if it don't beat all how queer things do happen!" said Mrs. Nisbett, her face radiant. "And you've been livin' together for these six weeks and I never knowed it. Lida, why didn't you tell me?"

"Because I never dreamed that Stephen Rivingham, my betrothed western lover, was anything to Mrs. Nisbett," said Lida, laughing.

"There 'tis, now!" ejaculated the farm-house. "How was she to know that he was only my nephew, adopted when his parents died, twenty good years ago? We've always called him son, and he's always been a son to us. But Lida didn't know. Old woman, what do you say to Stephen's wife?"

Mrs. Nisbett clasped Lida to her heart.

"I do say," she ejaculated, "this is the thankfullest Thanksgiving I ever lived to see!"—New York Daily News.

## THANKSGIVING DAY IS A GOOD TIME FOR EVERYONE TO CHEER UP.

It is a poor man, indeed, who has nothing for which to be thankful. Pitiably meager is the life that contains nothing which on this day of prayer and praise creates a glow of joy or an impulse of gratitude. Shallow is the soul that can reflect no sunshine of blessings and is ever gloomy with worries and wrongs.

But there is none such. The narrowest, the shallowest, the most darkly pessimistic among us all may sometimes be surprised into a smile and plashed into at least a whisper of thanks. They who can find nothing else to be glad about may at least be glad they are still alive and not yet passed to that world of gloom and despair especially fitted to such temperaments.

The depth of possible human misery has never yet been reached. Perhaps old Job came nearest to it, and even Job was no croaker. It is easy to imagine that old Job, with all his boils and other troubles, would still be a lively figure at a modern Thanksgiving service. He would at least find words of thanks that his body was no larger and so could hold no more bolts. Job would be positively jolly in comparison with some of the living grouches who exist only in their own little lives.

It is said that man differs from the lower animals chiefly in his being able to laugh. But the dog's wagging tail, that tells us he would like to laugh if he could, proves him to be better in heart than the human grouch who seems to feel that he could not laugh if he would.

Cheer up! You can't spite God by refusing to give him thanks. God will go right on doing business just the same. But you spite yourself by shutting your eyes to the blessings within your reach and by your complaining you make a nuisance of yourself to everybody else.

Cheer up! One of the very lowest forms of consciousness—that of the seed sprout—instinctively seeks the light, somehow knowing that life is there, while deeper down is naught but gloom and death.

Is any man to show less sense and less appreciation of the eternal law than does the seed sprout? Is he alone, of all wonderful creation, to willfully seek the gloom, to narrow his mind, to shut off his supply of energies, to dam up the sources of his health and to force his life back through a thousand cycles of evolution and into a mussel shell of little woe? We can all find cause to be glad and thankful if we look for it.

Thanksgiving day is a good time to throw open the window of the soul and look out and up, taking a long, deep draught of the pure air with which the heavens are filled—the breath of hope and happiness.

Everybody has cause to be thankful—everybody but the turkey, and even the turkey may be thankful that his last days were passed in bounteous plenty.