

Bound by a Spell

CHAPTER I.

Before commencing the narration of that strange, extraordinary series of events which began in my fourteenth year, I must glance back at the earlier years of my childhood, and at those who influenced it.

My earliest recollections are of Tabernacle House; previous to that, all is dim and shadowy. Tabernacle House was an establishment kept by the Rev. Obadiah Porter, for the reception of some half dozen boys.

The Reverend pedagogue was a man whose satyr-like face greatly belied his professions of profound piety. I could not understand, child as I was, how it ever came into his head to set up as a tutor, or how parents or friends could be induced to confide the education of children to the care of a man deficient in the commonest rudiments of learning. His original occupation was that of a shoemaker, and his hands still retained a coarse, grimed look. His bullet-shaped head was covered with a thick mass of hair, which had a shaggy, ragged appearance, from being cut in irregular lengths, or rather chopped away in pieces. His forehead was very low. He had thick, shaggy eyebrows, and small, snake-like eyes. In stature he was short, thickest, bull-necked; his arms were remarkably long, his feet splay and ill shaped.

Obadiah Porter was a widower, with one daughter. So powerfully have terrible events engraven her after-image upon my mind, that I can scarcely recall its first impressions. I think she must have been about fifteen or sixteen. I being some five or six, when I first saw her. She did not bear the slightest resemblance to her father; she was tall, thin; her hair was bright red, her complexion pale, her eyes large, her features delicate, and sharply cut. To this young lady was handed over the tuition of her father's pupils.

There were five besides myself. There was a strange bond of sympathy between us all—not one of us knew anything of our parents. One knew an aunt, another an uncle, a third a grandmother, or a grandfather, or a guardian, but no father or mother.

It was a peculiarity of Mr. Porter's establishment that he did not take boys who had parents. His advertisement in the newspapers ran thus: "The Reverend Obadiah Porter undertakes the care, education and religious training of orphan boys from the earliest age. Unexceptional references as to piety and discretion will be given. N. B.—No holidays."

It is not my intention to linger upon this period, or enter into any minute descriptions of our uninteresting, monotonous life. The years crept on, and were almost wholly passed within the precincts of Tabernacle House. It was a fine, old-fashioned dwelling, it had large gardens back and front—the latter being screened from the road by a high wall—besides an extensive orchard and a paddock. Altogether, it was quite a gentleman's house. But rents are wonderfully low in these parts. Mr. Porter was very well-to-do. His boarders alone brought him in a respectable income; his chapel was well attended; and he numbered many of the most prosperous Mawworms of the town among his congregation, to one of whom—Mrs. Humphries—this house belonged.

By and by there were changes. One boy left, and then another; but others took their places. Grim-looking persons came to take them away; but, except in one case, we knew nothing of their future destiny or destination, and they dropped out of our lives completely. It seemed as though we were interlopers upon the world, and ought never to have been born.

The exceptional case I mention was that of a boy named Josiah Cook, whom Mr. Porter had transferred from his care to that of a printer in the town, as an apprentice. I little thought that Cook's transference to Bury would so materially influence my own future life—that out of that event would spring an incident destined to shape its whole future course.

There was one large room at the top of the house, in which we six boys slept, two in each of the three beds. Cook was my bed fellow, and we were fast friends and companions. He was a bold, venturesome boy, and on the last night of his sojourn amongst us he proposed the daring plan of some night paying us a secret visit and relating all the "adventures" he should experience in his new home.

"I can easily climb over the garden wall from the next field," he said; "so look out, boys; if you hear a stone thrown up at your window, it will be me."

Six months passed away and we heard nothing more of Cook. He was rapidly fading out of our thoughts, when, one autumnal night we heard a sharp crack at our bedroom window. The boldness of our number gently lifted the sash, and peered out. It was a bright moonlight night, and he saw, standing in the garden beneath the well-known figure of our old companion.

The back of the house was covered with a fine old pear tree. It had not been pruned for several years, and had thrown out its wood somewhat wildly. A few whispered words, and Cook was mounting the tree with hand and foot, almost as easily as though he had been ascending a ladder. When he clambered into the room we all gathered round him in a sort of awe-struck manner.

"Now, look here, boys," he said; "what do you think has brought me here to-night?"

"See us," we supposed. "Well, that of course; but do you think it would be the thing in me to come and make your mouths water with the story of all these nice things, unless I had something to pop into them?"

"He has brought us something nice to eat," was the first suggestion. But when he unfolded the meaning of his symbolic speech, our hearts positively stood on end. Of all the delights experienced by him in his new sphere of life, that upon which he most glowingly placed was the theater. His master presided at the

face of a beautiful girl, but so pale, so right, that, for an instant, I thought they were those of a statue. She was crouching in the deep shadow of the black walls. For a moment I stood spell-bound, my eyes fixed upon hers. She was the first to break the spell. Rising from her crouching position, she timidly advanced towards me, and laid a small white hand upon my arm. The touch thrilled me like an electric shock.

"You will not hurt me, will you?" she said in a soft, pleading voice. She was a slight, delicately formed child, about my own age, my own height, clothed in a dark gray dress. Her features were so delicately moulded that they seemed rather those of a wax doll than of a human being, except in their expression, which was full of soul. Her eyes were wonderful; I have never seen eyes like theirs—they were so sad, so abstracted, in their far-off gaze; and, as she fixed them upon mine, they thrilled my very soul.

"Hurt you?" I echoed. I knew not what to say; my brain was too confused. "Can you tell me the road to the city?" she asked, in the same low voice. I answered that I had no idea—that I had lost my way, and knew not where I was.

"What part do you want?" she asked, with a look of deep interest. "I want to get to Little Bethlehem Chapel; then I can find my road," I answered.

At those words she drew back a few steps, and something of mistrust crept into her face. "How strange that we should meet!" she said, in a dreamy voice. "I think I can show you your way. I would take you, but I dare not," she added, with a shudder. "But first look out in the street, and see if any one is about."

I went to the opening of the gateway, and looked out. Not a soul was in sight. I beckoned to her and she glided to my side and pointed out the way I was to take.

"I think this is my way," she said, indicating an entirely opposite direction; then added, in an anxious tone, "But you will not tell any one that you have seen me?"

I assured her I would not. She took my hand, and we stood in the silent street, with the full moonlight shining down upon us. I could not talk. I felt like one deprived of the power of speech and volition.

"I wonder if we shall ever meet again? It is not likely," she went on, with a sigh. "That is your way. Good-by."

She slightly pressed my hand, and with one more glance from those sad eyes she hurried away.

In less than half an hour I was in the garden. As I began to climb the tree the bedroom window was cautiously raised; my companions were sitting up for me. The clock struck twelve. My escape had escaped detection. I was overwhelmed with eager questions. I do not know what I answered. I had fallen back into my dream. I do not know whether I slept at all that night; my senses were steeped in a delicious languor, in which the play and the after-incident were inextricably woven together—in which I had changed my identity; I was Romeo, and she whom I had so mysteriously met was Juliet. With her I acted all the scenes of love that I had witnessed; but mingled with them were new elements, shadowy, intangible; fitting too quickly to be grasped, but in which Judith Porter's face was strangely mingled. And so these phantasms chased each other through my brain, until at the last a fair head, with delicate waxen features, wan and colorless, lay dead in my arms.

(To be continued.)

WARRING CATS SEEK TRUCE.
Presence of an Hereditary Enemy Reconciles the Two Tabbies.

Two Staten Island Thomas cats were settling their difficulties the other day in the manner approved among Thomas cats, while the cause of the disagreement sat on a neighboring doorstep washing her face and disinterestedly watching the fray. In the next yard a third Thomas lurked behind a tree, taking in the contest from a safe distance.

Finally the smaller of the combatants was worsted, and with a last desperate yowl broke away from his enemy and darted for the back of the yard. The victor was not yet satisfied with glory, however, and immediately put out after his late rival.

A tree in a neighboring yard was evidently the destination of the fleeing cat, but so intent was he on reaching it before his pursuer overtook him, so intent was the pursuer on overhauling him that they both failed to observe a large white bulldog slumbering under the tree.

The first cat landed full upon him, but managed to scuttle up the trunk before the dog recovered from his surprise. The second cat was going too fast to stop when he saw the rampant terror with bristling back and snarling teeth at which he was hurling himself full tilt.

There was only one thing for him to do, and, like a general, he did it. He cleared the dog with a mighty bound, landing half way up the tree and scrambling the rest of the way before the dog could turn.

Cautiously and gently, with all the fight gone from him, he ventured out on the same limb with his late rival. All cause of enmity was forgotten. United against the common danger, they sat there, huddled close together, craning their necks down at the leaping, barking dog.

Back in the yard they had left the third Thomas ventured forth from seclusion, and after a few preliminary advances ambled serenely off down the street with the sickle cause of the disturbance at his side.—New York Sun.

Booksellers in Turkey never sell the Koran. The Turkish bible is deemed too precious to be sold. It is given away to the person who desires it, but the tradesman first insists he receive a nice little present in money.

The pleasantest things in the world are pleasant thoughts, and the greatest art in life is to have as many of them as possible.—Emerson.

THREAT TO CHILE.

Japan Warns Her Not to Sell Warships to Russia.

Paris, Jan. 12.—Japan has informed Chile that further sale of vessels to Russia will be followed by summary punitive measures. This information comes directly from the foreign office, but has not yet been published in Paris.

According to an official of the office, Japan is greatly irritated over the matter, and has even gone so far as to hint broadly that the Chilean coast would make a fine target for Japanese war ships.

At the same time a similar protest was made to the Argentine Republic, in spite of the fact that such a threat might be considered an offense against the Monroe doctrine. The source of this information leaves no doubt as to its correctness.

Dr. Motono, the Japanese minister here, says he has no knowledge of any such communication on the part of his government. At the same time he took occasion to criticize the two republics. A member of the Japanese legation said that, if the United States should take no measures to prevent any further action of this sort, it would not be fair to invoke the Monroe doctrine against Japan.

Speaking unofficially, members of government circles say this incident shows that Japan has grown so self-complacent over her victories that she can run the risk of losing the good will of even the United States.

HOLD-UP GAME BLOCKED.
Fulton Puts Spoke in Wheel of Klamath Irrigation Company.

Washington, Jan. 12.—The chief of engineers, at the request of Senator Fulton, today decided to grant no authority to the Klamath irrigation company to divert water from Klamath lake for irrigation purposes. This company, with purely speculative intent, has begun the construction of an irrigation canal within the proposed government irrigation project, its purpose being to sell out to the government at a large profit.

Fortunately for the government, it proposes utilizing the water of a navigable stream, and this cannot be done except by authority of congress. The company had applied for permission from the War department, contending that Klamath lake and Link river are not navigable. Senator Fulton showed that both bodies are navigable and navigated.

While the government will probably recompense the Klamath irrigation company for the work which it may acquire, it will only pay a fair price. It will not be held up and robbed.

IRRIGATION IN WASHINGTON.
Government will Carry Out Palouse Project if O. R. & N. Helps.

Washington, Jan. 12.—The Washington delegation had a conference this morning with officials of the reclamation service, during which T. A. Noble, in charge of examinations in Washington, explained the progress of work in that state. In brief, he showed that government irrigation is not practicable on the Okanogan river, and intimated that the whole Okanogan project would be abandoned. Because of numerous vested interests in the Yakima valley, the government has not yet found an attractive project in that vicinity.

The Big Bend project, which contemplates the reclamation of 1,000,000 acres or more at a cost of \$30,000,000, is too gigantic to be considered seriously at this time, but there is a strong probability that the government will next year begin work on the Palouse project, which contemplates the reclamation of 80,000 acres, mostly in Franklin county, at a cost of \$5 per acre. This project has been found entirely feasible. All preliminary surveys are completed, and it only waits for the O. R. & N. Co. to consent to remove its tracks from Washuena canal, which it is proposed to convert into a storage reservoir. This consent is expected to be given, negotiations to that end being now under way.

Withdraw Fort Lands.
Washington, Jan. 12.—President Roosevelt today transmitted to congress a communication from the secretary of the interior requesting the withdrawal of certain lands in the abandoned Fort Sherman military reservation, Washington, in view of the contemplated use of the lands in connection with irrigation works. With this communication was a protest from Senator Heyburn, of Idaho, against the diversion of the water of Lake Coeur d'Alene for use in an irrigation project in Washington.

Sea Sown with Mines.
Tokio, Jan. 12.—The navy department says that the district covered with submarine mines had a radius of 40 miles outside of Port Arthur. It reports the destruction and explosion of 696 of these mines to date. Ten additional survivors of the third expedition of the Japanese to blockade the entrance of Port Arthur have been discovered in Russian hospitals. They have been transferred to the Japanese hospitals.

To Open Mineral Lands.
Washington, Jan. 12.—A provision was inserted in the Indian appropriation bill that all mineral lands within Indian reservations shall be declared open, subject to location, development and entry under the mineral land law. This provision will apply to all reservations where it has been enforced without infringing on the rights of Indians.

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8:38	9:35	0	0
8:44	9:40	0	0
8:50	9:50	0	0
8:58	10:00	0	0
9:08	10:10	0	0
9:18	10:21	0	0
9:27	10:30	0	0
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10:08	11:05	0	0
10:20	11:15	0	0
10:30	11:20	0	0

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