

YOLANDE

BY WILLIAM BLACK

CHAPTER XII.—(Continued.)

"Well," said he, uneasily, "possibly your father imagined that Archie Leslie might think that he had been unfairly treated if he were not told—and then, I was his friend, don't you see, and they mentioned the matter to me—and—and being an outsider, I was reluctant to interfere at first—but then, when they spoke of telling you, I said to myself that I knew, or I fancied I knew, what a girl like Yolande Winterbourne would be sure to do in such circumstances—and so I thought I would venture the suggestion to them, and—and if it turned out to be so, then I might be of some little help to you."

That was cleverly done; he had not told her it was the Master of Lynn who had insisted on that disclosure. And now she was gathering her courage to her; though still she maintained a curious sort of constrained reserve, as though she were keeping a tight hold of her feelings.

"I suppose," she said, slowly, "it is your idea I should go there—alone?"

"If you are not afraid," Yolande, if you are not afraid!" he said, anxiously. "I am going to-morrow," she said, "if Mrs. Bell will be so kind as to come and take my place."

"Don't be so precipitate, Yolande," he said, with some anxiety. "I have put all this before you for your consideration; and I should feel I was burdened with a terrible responsibility if you were to do anything you might afterward regret. Will you consult Mr. Shortlands? Will you take a week to think over it?"

"No; why?" she said, simply. "Did I not consider when you were telling me the story of this imaginary girl? Had I any doubt? No. I knew what she would decide. I know what I have decided. What use is there in delay? Ah, if there is to be the good come out of it that you have imagined for me, should I not haste? When one is perishing, you do not think twice if you can hold out your hand. Do you think that I regret—that I am sorry to have a little comfort behind—that I am afraid to take a little trouble? Surely you do not think that of me. Why I am anxious to go now is to see at once what can be done; to know the worst or the best; to try. And now—I shall not be speaking to my papa about it; that would only give pain—will you tell me what I should do, in all the small particulars? I am not likely to forget."

That he could do easily; for he had thought enough over the matter. He gave her the most minute instructions; guarding against this or that possibility; and she listened mutely and attentively, with scarcely the interruption of a question. Then, at length, he rose to say good-by; and she rose too. He did not notice that as she did so her lips quivered for the briefest second.

"If you are going to-morrow, Yolande," said he, "I will see you as you pass. I will look out for you. I should like to say good-by to you; it may be for a long time."

"It may be for always," she said, with her eyes cast down; "perhaps I shall never be back here again."

"And I am sending you away into all this trouble and grief. How can I help knowing that it is I who am doing it? And perhaps, day after day, and night after night, I shall be trying to justify myself—when I am thinking over it, and wondering where you are; and perhaps I shall not succeed very well."

"But it is I who justify you—that is enough," she said in a low voice. "Did I not decide for myself? And I know that in your heart you think I am doing right; and if you are afraid for me—well, that is only kindness—such as that you have always shown to me."

Here she stopped; and he did not see that her hands were clenched firm, as she stood there opposite him, with her eyes cast down.

"And whatever happens, Yolande—you may be in pain and grief—and perhaps all you may endure may only end in bitter disappointment—well, I hope you will not imagine that I came to you with my proposal unthinkingly. I have thought over it night and day. I did not come to you off-hand."

"Ah, then," she said, quickly, "and you think it is necessary to justify yourself—you, to me, as if I did not know you as well as I know myself! Do you think I do not know you and do not understand you—because I am only a girl? Her forced composure was breaking down altogether; she was trembling somewhat; and now there were tears running down her cheeks, despite herself; though she regarded him bravely, as if she would not acknowledge that. "And now, just as you and I are about to say good-by, perhaps forever, you think it necessary for you to justify yourself to me—you, my best friend—my more than friend—"

And then—ah, who can tell how such things happen, or which is to bear the blame?—his arms were round her trembling figure, and she was sobbing violently on his breast. And what was this wild thing she said in the bewilderment of her grief. "Oh, why, why was my life given away before I ever saw you?"

"Yolande," said he, with his face very pale, "I am going to say something; for this is our last meeting. What can a few words matter, my darling, if we are never to see each other again? I love you. I shall love you while I have life. Why should I not say it for this once?"

I blinded myself; I tried to think it friendship—friendship, and the world was just filled with light whenever I saw you! It is our last meeting; you will let me say this for once—how can it harm you?"

She shrank out of his embrace; she sank down on the couch there; and turned away her head and hid her face in her hands.

"Go, go!" she murmured. "What have I done? For pity's sake, go, and forget! Forget!"

He knelt down by the side of the couch; and he was paler than ever now. "Yolande, it is for you to forget and forgive. I have been a traitor to my friend; I have been a traitor to you. You shall never see me again. God bless you and good-by."

He kissed her hair, and rose, and got himself out of the house. As he went down that wide strath, his eyes fixed on nothing, like one demented; and his mind whirling this way and that amid clouds of remorse and reproach and immeasurable pity, it seemed to him that he felt on his brow the weight of the brand of Cain.

CHAPTER XIII.

And as for her; she was stunned almost into unconsciousness by this shock of self-abasement and distress. She lay on the sofa, her face covered with her hands; she could not face the light. What was she, then?—she who hitherto had been so fearless and so proud. A flirt, a jilt, a light-o'-love—that was how she saw herself; and then there was a kind of despair over the misery she had wrought, and a yearning to have him back to implore his pity and his forgiveness; and then sudden resolves to free herself in another direction, at any cost of penitence and humiliation. She began to compose hurried brief messages, though the throbbing brain and the shame-stricken soul could scarce decide between the fitness of them. These were some of them:

"Dear Papa—I have gone away. Tell Archie not to think any more about me. 'YOLANDE.'"

And then again: "Dear Archie—I send you back the engagement ring; I am not worthy to be your wife. I am sorry if I have caused you any disappointment, but you have less to regret than I have."

And then again—to one not named at all:

"To-day I go away. Never think of me again, or of what has happened. Forgive me; that is all."

And then she began to think—if this wild torture of suggestions could be called thinking—of the undertaking that lay before her, and the thought of it was something of a relief. There would be an occupation, urgent, continuous, demanding all her attention; in time, and in a measure, she might school herself to forget. Perhaps, if this duty turned out to be a very mad and painful one, it might be taken by those whom she had wronged as a sort of penance. She was prepared to suffer. She thought she deserved to suffer. Had she not proved a traitor to the man whom she had promised to marry? Had she not brought misery to this best and dearest of all her friends, to this fine and noble nature that she had learned to know, and that by her idleness and carelessness—the carelessness of a vain coquette, heedless of consequences? What would he think of her? She could only vaguely recall the reproaches he had heaped upon himself; but she knew that he was in distress, and that she was the cause of it. And perhaps if there were trials in store for her, if there was suffering in store for her, perhaps he would never know that she rather welcomed that, and was content to receive her punishment. Perhaps he would never know how grieved she was. It was over and done, and past recall. And she knew that henceforth her life would be quite different to her.

Mr. Winterbourne and John Shortlands were on their way back from the hill.

"I scarcely know what has happened to-day," Mr. Winterbourne was saying. "All the time I have been thinking of our going back. And I know what I shall find when I go back—the wreck of the happiness that I have so carefully nursed all through these years. It is like hedging round a garden, and growing flowers there, and all at once, some morning, you find the place trampled down and a wilderness. I hope I am not unjust, Shortlands, but I think he might have spared her."

"Who?"

"Young Leslie. I think he might have spared her. It was not much. Don't you think—out of consideration—"

"Nonsense, man. What Young Leslie has done seems to me on reflection, perfectly just, and right, and reasonable," said John Shortlands, telling a lie in the calmest manner possible. "The young couple ought not to be hampered in starting life. A little trouble now—what is that? And it will be better for you too, Winterbourne. You would have kept on worrying yourself. You would have been always apprehensive about something. You would have reproached yourself for not telling him."

When they reached the lodge, Yolande was not, as usual, standing in the porch to welcome them home from the hill.

"Please, sir," said the maid, "Miss Winterbourne has a headache, and says

would you excuse her coming down to dinner."

He stood irresolute for a second or two, obviously greatly disturbed, then he slowly and thoughtfully went up the stairs, and gently knocked at the door of her room.

"May I come in, Yolande?"

She had just time to untie the wet towel from her head, to smooth her hair, and sit up in bed.

"Yes, papa."

He entered, went over and drew a chair near to her, and sat down.

"I am sorry for you, Yolande," he said, in a low voice, and his eyes were nervously bent on the ground.

"Why, papa?"

She spoke in quite a cheerful way; and as he had not suffered his eyes to meet hers, he was unaware how that cheerfulness was belied by the strange expression in them. She was forcing herself to make light of this matter; she would not have him troubled. And perhaps, indeed, to her this was in truth a light matter, as compared with that tragic disclosure and its consequences, which seemed to have cut away from her at once and forever the shining and rose-colored years of her youth.

"If I erred, Yolande," said he, "in keeping all this back from you, I did it for the best."

"Do you need to say that to me, papa?" she answered, with some touch of reproach.

"You are going, Yolande?" he said, with a sinking of the heart.

"That, again, it is unnecessary for you to ask me," the girl said, simply.

"But not at once, Yolande?" said he, glancing at an open trunk. "Not at once?"

"To-morrow morning, papa," she answered. "Oh, but I assure you, you will be put to no trouble—no trouble at all. Mrs. Bell is coming from Greas to see everything right. And I have made out lists for her, it is all arranged, you will not know any difference."

"Listen now, Yolande. I don't disapprove of your going. We have tried everything, and failed; if there is a chance of your succeeding—well, perhaps one might say it is your duty to go. Poor child, I would rather have you know nothing about it; but that is all over now. Well, you see, Yolande, if you go, there must be no unnecessary risk or trouble about your going. I have been thinking that perhaps Mr. Melville may be a little too imaginative. He sees things strongly. And in insisting that you should go alone, why, there may be danger that he has been carried away by a—by a—well, I don't know how to put it, except that he may be so anxious to have this striking appeal made to your poor mother as to be indifferent to ordinary precautions. Why should you go friendless and alone? Why should I remain amusing myself here?"

"Because you would be of no use to me, papa," said she, calmly. "I know what I have to do."

"Yolande, you cannot be left in London with absolutely no one to whom you can appeal. The least you must do is to take a letter to Lawrence & Lang. They will do anything you want; they will let you have what you want; if there is any hiring of lodgings or anything of that kind, they will send one of their clerks. You cannot be stranded in London without the chance of assistance. You must go to Lawrence & Lang."

"I may have to go to them—that also is arranged. But they must not interfere; they must not come with me; that was not Mr. Melville's idea," she said; though the pale face turned still paler as she forced herself to utter the name.

"Mr. Melville!" he said, angrily. "You seem to think the whole wisdom of the world is centered in Mr. Melville! I don't at all know that he has right in coming to put all this trouble on you. Perhaps he would not have been so quick if it had been his own sister or his own daughter—"

Then a strange thing occurred. She had flung herself down on the pillow again, her face buried, her whole frame shaken by the sudden violence of her crying.

"Don't—don't—don't!" she sobbed, pitifully. "Don't speak like that, papa! there is enough trouble—there is enough."

"What is it, Yolande?" said he. "Well, no wonder your nerves have been upset. I wonder you have taken it so bravely. I will leave you now, Yolande; but you must try and come down to dinner."

Dinner was put on the table; but she did not make her appearance. A message was sent up to her; the answer was that she merely wished to have a cup of tea by and by. Jane on being questioned, said that everything had been got ready for their departure the following morning, even to the ordering of the dog-cart for a particular hour.

(To be continued.)

A Bad Fit.

Now that nature lessons are in fashion, children have learned much that is new to their elders, and that, when suddenly displayed, is embarrassing. The New York Tribune tells a story of a Western town where oysters are often seen in cans than in shells.

One economical housekeeper conceived a brilliant plan of making one set of half shells serve for two meals. She was to give one dinner on one evening and another the next night.

At the first dinner oysters were served on the half shell. The next day the hostess bought oysters in bulk, and gave orders that they should be placed on the shells used the day before.

Little Johnny was a close student of nature in his small way. He looked at the plate before him. Then he said in a loud, shrill voice:

"Mamma, look! What funny oysters! All of mine grow the wrong way in the shell."

OREGON STATE ITEMS OF INTEREST

FIRE WARDEN IS WIDE AWAKE.

Arrests Farmers for Burning Slashing Without a License.

Oregon City—F. Hendricks, deputy fire warden, discovered J. R. Hunt, A. M. Lull and D. O. Leavens, of Williamette, burning slashing for which no permit had been procured of the county clerk. The men appeared before the acting deputy district attorney and pleaded ignorance of the amended law with the provisions of which the people of this county are not acquainted. Agreeing to immediately obtain the required permit the men were not prosecuted.

Mr. Hendricks is patrolling the entire county and posting notices warning settlers against the miscellaneous starting of fires. In order to get around the objectionable feature of the law which requires a permit to be obtained ten days prior to the time the fire is to be started, the same to be burned only three days, a great many farmers are renewing their applications for permits every three days, thus giving them practically indefinite time in which to wait for favorable weather.

Otherwise, the weather during the three days covered in the original application on which the permit is granted being unfavorable, the settler must experience a further delay of at least ten days intervening between the issuance of the permit and the starting of the fire authorized thereby.

Union Forests Aflame.

La Grande—Word comes from Elgin that forest fires are raging in that vicinity, and that a large force of men is at work trying to check the fire and to protect and save property. The most damaging fires are in the neighborhood north of Elgin. The sawmills belonging to the First National bank, Galloway Bros. and the Elgin Lumber company are in danger and the mill hands are working night and day to protect the mills and to arrest the progress of the flames. Every available man has been pressed into service.

Sugar Beets Don't Hurt Land.

La Grande—Al Good, a farmer who lives two miles north of La Grande, has threshed two acres of oats which yielded 202 bushels. The seed for this ground was less than a sack of oats. It was also sown in alfalfa this spring, and Mr. Good expects to get a couple of tons of hay from this same ground besides the crop of oats. Previous to this season the ground was planted in sugar beets, and the above result shows how much beet raising injures the soil for other crops.

Farmers Fight Fire.

Grants Pass—Forest fires have reached the farming districts of Western Josephine county, and are doing much damage in the vicinity of the Rymer farm and the big apple orchard of Eisman Bros. In order to keep the flames from the orchards, fields and buildings, the people of that district, men and women, are fighting fire day and night. For the past three days and nights entire families have been working heroically at all hours to subdue the flames.

State Loses Grain by Fire.

Salem—The state of Oregon lost 1,600 bushels of new grain in a threshing machine fire at the penitentiary farm the first of the week. The Morris threshing outfit, from Albany, had just finished threshing the grain when a spark from the engine caught in the separator and the flames spread so rapidly that no grain could be saved. The loss to the state is about \$1,200 and to Morris about \$900.

One Woman Hunter in Union.

La Grande—Two hundred hunters' licenses have been issued by the county clerk. The only woman to take out a license is Mrs. George Ackles, of this city. The oldest applicant for a license is L. M. Fulton, of Elgin, aged 78 years, and the youngest licensed hunter is Miles Borth, of Union, who is 13 years old.

Vote for Long School Term.

Cottage Grove—A special school meeting was held here last week for the purpose of voting on a 10-month tax to run the school nine months, and other incidental expenses. A large crowd was present and many spirited arguments were presented. The tax was voted by ten majority.

Crop Turning Out Well.

La Grande—Threshing is well under way and the yield is far better than was expected. The hot weather cut the spring grain some, but notwithstanding the crop in general will be better than for the past two seasons.

New Oregon Postmasters.

Washington—These Oregon postmasters have been appointed: Mayville, F. J. Parson, vice Ella N. Angell, resigned; McKee, Harry L. Shaner, vice G. D. Ebner, resigned.

MACHINERY FOR ST. HELENS

European Capital Secured to Explore Promising Property.

R. C. Lange, who recently returned from Europe, where he disposed of a large block of stock for the St. Helens Mining company, has gone to Denver to purchase machinery for the St. Helens mines. The machinery will be thoroughly modern in all details, and will be installed just as soon as it arrives.

The holdings of the company are considered valuable, and workings on a much larger scale than heretofore will be begun at once. Two shifts will be maintained, and water power in plenty can be obtained close to the mines. Surface work has shown a strong vein which yields high copper values in all the adits and shallow shafts sunk. Some of these copper samples run from 12 to 20 per cent in the red metal and carry some gold.

The vein has been established as a permanent fissure and will no doubt be found with high grade ore at greater depth. Tunneling will begin at once to get at the ore at great depth.

Fined for Illegal Liquor Selling.

Oregon City—Mr. and Mrs. A. Corrigan and Mr. Cunningham, proprietors of a saloon at Estacada, were found guilty of selling liquor without a municipal license and were fined \$30 each. Cunningham paid his fine, but Corrigan and wife will appeal. The defendants contend that under the provisions of a license obtained from the County court last April they were regularly licensed to sell liquors, but the Estacada city charter provides that the state law shall not apply in the licensing of saloons and the traffic in liquor.

This provision of the charter became operative January 31, and the city's attorneys held that the license granted by Clackamas county was void.

Fires Near Mount Jefferson.

Albany—Fires in the timber east of Detroit, at the foot of Mount Jefferson, are spreading and doing great damage. A considerable tract of timber is already burned and the flames are spreading eastward. A large force of men is fighting the fire, but making little headway against it, owing to the high wind usually blowing up the Santiam canyon.

Get Bridge Contract.

Astoria—The board of commissioners of Wabikiam county, Washington, at its recent meeting awarded a contract to Ferguson & Houston, of this city, for the construction of a bridge across Gray's river, near the Bergman place. The cost of the structure will be about \$3,000.

New Rural Carriers.

Washington—Rural carriers have been appointed as follows: Carlton route 2, Thomas E. Merchant, carrier; Solon K. Hoffman, substitute.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—New club, 70¢71¢ per bushel; new bluestem, 73¢75¢ per bushel; new valley, 77¢.

Barley—Old feed, \$21.50@22 per ton; new feed, \$20@21; rolled, \$23@24.

Oats—No. 1 white feed, \$29@30 per ton; gray, \$29.

Hay—Timothy, old, \$13@15 per ton; new, \$11@12.50; clover, \$8@9.

Fruits—Apples, new, 90¢@1.75 per box; apricots, 90¢ per crate; peaches, 40¢@55¢ per crate; plums, 75¢ per crate; blackberries, 5¢@6¢ per pound; cherries, 50¢@55¢ per box; pears, \$2 per box; prunes, 85¢@1; raspberries, \$1.25 per crate; watermelons, 1@1½¢ per pound; crabapples, 50¢ per box.

Vegetables—Beans, 1@4¢ per pound; cabbage, 1@1½¢ per pound; cauliflower, 75¢@90¢ per dozen; celery, 75¢@85¢ per dozen; corn, 50¢@75¢ per bag; cucumbers, 15¢@25¢ per box; lettuce, head, 10¢ per dozen; parsley, 25¢ per dozen; peas, 2@5¢ per pound; tomatoes, 65¢@1 per crate; squash, 5¢ per pound; turnips, \$1.25@1.40 per sack; carrots, \$1.25@1.50 per sack; beets, \$1@1.25 per sack.

Onions—Red, \$1.25 per hundred; yellow, \$1.25.

Potatoes—Oregon new, 75¢@90¢.

Butter—Fancy creamery, 25¢@30¢.

Eggs—Oregon ranch, 22¢@22½¢ per dozen.

Poultry—Average old hens, 12½¢@13; mixed chickens, 12@12½¢; old roosters, 9½¢@10¢; young roosters, 11@11½¢; springs, 1½¢ to 2 pounds, 14¢; 1 to 1½ pounds, 15¢; turkeys, live, 18@19¢; geese, live, per pound, 6@7¢; ducks, old, 13¢; ducks, young, 10@14¢.

Hops—Choice, 1904, 17@19¢ per pound.

Wool—Eastern Oregon average best, 19@21¢; lower grades, down to 15¢, according to shrinkage; valley, 25@27¢ per pound; mohair, choice, 31¢ per pound.

Beef—Dressed bulls, 1@2¢ per pound; cows, 3¼¢@4¼¢.

Mutton—Dressed, fancy, 6¢ per pound; ordinary, 4@5¢.

Veal—Dressed, 3@7¢ per pound.

Pork—Dressed, 6¼¢@7¢ per pound.