

YOLANDE

BY WILLIAM BLACK

CHAPTER XXIV.

But next morning the mother was ill—nay, as Yolande in her first alarm imagined, seriously ill. She could hardly speak; her hands and forehead were hot and feverish; she would take nothing in the shape of a breakfast; she only turned away her head languidly. Yolande was far too frightened to stay to consult her mother's nervous fancies or dislikes; a doctor was sent for instantly—the same doctor, in fact, who had been called in before. And when this portly, rubicund, placid person arrived his mere presence in the room seemed to introduce a measure of calm into the atmosphere; and that was well. He was neither excited nor alarmed. He made the usual examination, asked a few questions, and gave some general and sufficiently sensible directions as to how the patient should be tended. And then he said he would write out a prescription—for this practitioner, in common with most of his kind, had retained that simple and serene faith in the efficacy of drugs which has survived centuries of conflicting theories, contradictions in fact, and scientific doubt, and which is perhaps more beneficial than otherwise to the human race, so long as the quantities prescribed are so small as to do no positive harm. It was acute, this time, that he chose to experiment with.

However, when he followed Yolande into the other room, in order to get writing materials, and when he sat down and began to talk to her, it was clear that he understood the nature of the case well enough; and he plainly intimated to her that, when a severe chill like this had caught the system and promised to produce a high state of fever, the result depended mainly on the power of the constitution to repel the attack and fight its way back to health.

"Now I suppose I may speak frankly to you, Miss Winterbourne?" said he.

"Oh, yes; why not?" said Yolande, who was far too anxious to care about formalities.

"You must remember, then, that though you have only seen me once before, I have seen you twice. The first time you were insensible. Now," said he, fixing his eyes on her, "on that occasion I was told a little, but I guessed more. It was to frighten your mother out of the habit that you took your first dose of that patent medicine. May I assume that?"

"Well, yes," said Yolande, with downcast eyes—though, indeed, there was nothing to be ashamed of.

"Now, I want you to tell me honestly whether you believe that warning had effect."

"Indeed, I am sure of it," said Yolande, looking up, and speaking with decision.

"You think that since then she has not had recourse to any of those opiates?"

"I am positively certain of it," Yolande said to him.

"I suppose being deprived of them cost the poor lady a struggle?"

"Yes, once or twice—but that was some time ago. Lately she was growing ever so much more bright and cheerful, but still she was weak, and I was hesitating about risking the long journey to the south of France. Yes, it is I that am to blame. Why did I not go sooner? Why did I not go sooner?" she repeated, with tears coming into her eyes.

"Indeed, you cannot blame yourself, Miss Winterbourne," the doctor said. "I have no doubt you acted for the best. The imprudence you tell me of might have happened anywhere. If you keep the room warm and equable, your mother will do as well here as in the south of France—until it is safe for you to remove her."

"But how soon, doctor? how soon? Oh, when I get a chance again I will not wait."

"But you must wait—and you must be patient and careful. It will not do to hurry matters. Your mother is not strong. The fight may be a long one. Now, Miss Winterbourne, you will send and get this prescription made up, and I will call again in the afternoon."

Yolande went back to her mother's room, and sent away Jane; she herself would be nurse. On tiptoe she went about, doing what she thought would add to her mother's comfort; noiselessly tending the fire that had been lit, arranging a shutter so that less light should come in, and so forth. But the confidence inspired by the presence of the doctor was gone now; a terrible anxiety had succeeded; and when at last she sat down in the silent room, and felt that she could do nothing more, a sense of helplessness, of loneliness, entirely overcame her, and she was ready to despair. Why had she not gone away sooner, before this terrible thing happened? Why had she delayed? They might now have been walking happily together along some sunny promenade in the south—instead of this—this hushed and darkened room, and the poor invalid, whom she had tended so carefully, and who seemed to be emerging into a new life altogether, thus thrown back and rendered once more helpless. Why had she gone out on that fatal morning? Why had she left her mother alone? If she had been in the room there would have been no venturing into the snow, whatever dreams and fancies were calling. If she had but taken courage and set out for the south a week sooner—a day sooner—this would not have hap-

pened; and it seemed so hard that when she had almost secured the emancipation of her mother—when the undertaking on which she had entered with so much of fear, and wonder, and hope was near to being crowned with success—the work should be undone by so trifling an accident. She was like to despair.

But patience—patience—she said to herself. She had been warned, before she had left Scotland, that it was no light matter that lay before her. If she was thrown back into prison, as it were, at this moment, the door would be opened some day. And, indeed, it was not of her own liberty she was thinking—it was the freedom of light and life and cheerfulness that she had hoped to secure for this stricken and hapless creature whom fortune had not over-well treated.

Her mother stirred, and instantly she went to the bedside.

"What does the doctor say, Yolande?" she asked, apparently with some difficulty.

"Only what every one sees," she said, with such cheerfulness as was possible. "You have caught a bad cold, and you are feverish; but you must do everything that we want you to do, and you will fight it off in time."

"What kind of a day is it outside?" she managed to ask again.

"It is fine, but cold. There has been some more snow in the night."

"If you wish to go out, go out, Yolande. Don't mind me."

"But I am going to mind you, mother, and nobody else. Here I am, here I stay, till you are well again. You shall have no other nurse."

"You will make yourself ill, Yolande. You must go out."

She was evidently speaking with great difficulty.

"Hush, mother, hush!" the girl said. "I am going to stay with you. You should not talk any more—it pains you, does it not?"

"A little." And then she turned away her head again. "If I don't speak to you, Yolande, don't think it is unkind of me. I—I am not very well, I think."

And so the room was given over to silence again, and the girl to anxious thoughts as to the future. She had resolved not to write to her father until she should know more definitely. She would not unnecessarily alarm him. At first, in her sudden alarm, she had thought of summoning him at once; but now she had determined to wait until the doctor had seen her mother again. If this were only a bad cold, and should show symptoms of disappearing, then she could send him a reassuring message. At present she was far too upset and anxious and disturbed to carefully weigh her expressions.

About noon Jane stole silently into the room and handed her a letter and withdrew again. Yolande was startled when she glanced at the handwriting, and hastily opened the envelope. The letter came from Inverness, and was dated the morning of the previous day; that was all she noted carefully—the rest seemed to swim into her consciousness all at once, she ran her eyes over the successive lines so rapidly, and with such a breathless agitation.

"My Dear Yolande," Jack Melville wrote, "I shall reach Worthing just about the same time as this letter. I am coming to ask you for a single word. Archie Leslie has told me—quite casually, in a letter about other things—that you are no longer engaged to him; and I have dared to indulge in some vague hopes. Well, it is for you to tell me to put them aside forever, or to let them remain, and see what the future has in store. That is all. I don't wish to interfere with your duties of the moment—how should I?—but I cannot rest until I ascertain from yourself whether or no I may look forward to some distant time, and hope. I am coming on the chance of your not having left Worthing. Perhaps you may not have left, and I beg of your kindness to let me see you, for ever so short a time."

She quickly and quietly went to the door and opened it. Her face was very pale.

"Jane!"

The maid was standing at the window, looking out; she immediately turned and came to her mistress.

"You remember Mr. Melville who used to come to the lodge?"

"Oh, yes, miss."

"He will be in Worthing to-day—he will call here—perhaps soon. He will ask to see me—well—you will tell him I cannot see him. I cannot see him. My mother is ill. Tell him I am sorry—but I cannot see him."

Then Yolande quietly slipped into the room again—glancing at her mother, to see whether her absence had been noticed; and her hand was clutching the letter, and her heart beating violently. It was too terrible that he should arrive at such a moment—amid this alarm and anxiety. She could not bear the thought of meeting him. And so she sat in the still and darkened room, listening with a sort of dread for the ring at the bell below; and then picturing to herself his going away; and then thinking of the years to come.

This was what happened when Melville came to the door. To begin with, he was not at all sure that he should find Yolande there, for he had heard from Mrs. Bell that she and her mother were leaving England. But when Jane,

in response to his ringing of the bell, opened the door, then he knew that they were not gone.

"Miss Winterbourne is still here, then?" he said quickly, and indeed with some appearance of anxiety in the pale, handsome face.

"Yes, sir."

"Will you be good enough to ask her if I can see her for a moment?" he said, at length. "She knows that I meant to call on her."

"Please, sir, Miss Winterbourne told me to say that she was very sorry, but that she cannot see you. Her mother is ill, sir," said Jane. "I think she is very ill, sir, but I would not say so to my young mistress, sir."

"Of course not—of course not," he said, absently; and then he suddenly asked, "Has Miss Winterbourne sent for her father?"

"I think not, sir. I think she is waiting to hear what the doctor says."

"Who is the doctor?"

She gave him both the name and address.

He sent her a message—some half hour thereafter. It was merely this:

"Dear Yolande—I am deeply grieved to have intruded upon you at such a time. Forgive me. I hope to hear better news; but do not you trouble; I have made arrangements so that I shall know.—J. M."

And Yolande put that note with others—for in truth she had carefully preserved every scrap of writing that he had ever sent her; and it was with a wistful kind of satisfaction that at least he had gone away her friend.

The doctor did not arrive till nearly three o'clock, and she awaited his verdict with an anxiety amounting to distress. But he would say nothing definite. The fever had increased, certainly; but that was to be expected. She reported to him—as minutely as her agitation allowed—how his directions had been carried out in the interval, and he approved. Then he begged her not to be unduly alarmed, for this fever was the common attendant on the catching of a sudden chill; and with similar vague words of reassurance he left. But the moment he had gone she sat down and wrote to her father.

Mr. Winterbourne came down next morning—rather guessing that the matter was more serious than the girl had represented—and went straight to the house. He sent for Jane, and got it arranged that, while she took Yolande's place in the sick room for a few minutes, Yolande should come downstairs and see him in the ground floor parlor, which was unoccupied. It is to be remembered that he had not seen his daughter since she left the Highlands.

When Yolande came into the room his eyes lighted up with gladness; but the minute they were dimmed with tears—and the hands that took hers were trembling—and he could hardly speak.

"Child, child," said he, in a second or so, "how you are changed! You are not well, Yolande; have you been ill?"

"Oh, no, papa, I am perfectly well."

As she desired, he went and saw the doctor, who spoke more plainly to him than he had done to the girl of the possible danger of such an attack, but also said that nothing could be definitely predicted as yet. It was a question of the strength of the constitution. Mr. Winterbourne told him frankly who he was, what his position was, and the whole sad story; and the doctor perfectly agreed with Yolande that it was most undesirable to risk the agitation likely to be produced if the poor woman were to be confronted with her husband.

As the days passed the fever seemed to abate somewhat, but an alarming prostration supervened. At length the doctor said, on one occasion when Mr. Winterbourne had called on him for news:

"I think, Mr. Winterbourne, if you have no objection, I should like to have a consultation on this case. I am afraid there is some complication."

"I hope you will have the best skill that London can afford," said Mr. Winterbourne, anxiously; for although the doctor rather avoided looking him in the face, the sound of this phrase was ominous.

But all the skill in London or anywhere else could not have saved this poor victim from the fatal consequences of a few moments' thoughtlessness. The wasted and enfeebled constitution had succumbed. But her brain remained clear; as long as she could hold Yolande's hand, or even see the girl walking about the room or seated in a chair, she was content.

"I don't mind dying now," she said, or rather whispered, on one occasion. "I have seen you and know you; you have been with me for awhile. It was like an angel that you came to me; it was an angel who sent you to me. I am ready to go now."

"Mother, you must not talk like that!" the girl exclaimed. "Why, the nonsense of it! How long, then, do you expect me to be kept waiting for you, before we can start for Bordighera together?"

"We shall never be at Bordighera together," the mother said, absently—"never! never! But you may be, Yolande; and I hope you will be happy there, and always, for you deserve to be. Ah, yes, you will be happy! Surely, it cannot be otherwise—you, so beautiful and so noble-hearted."

(To be continued.)

Another One.

"Do you know what you are trying to say," queried the editor, as he glanced over the copy, "when you speak of a man going to his long rest at the untimely age of 80?"

"Sure," answered the new reporter. "He ought to have been chloroformed twenty years ago."

Strange as it may seem there are a number of prominent men living today whose fathers' wives never had an opportunity to attend a mothers' congress.

OREGON STATE ITEMS OF INTEREST

HIGH PRICED PEARS.

Fruit of Rogus River Valley Secures Record Figure in New York.

Medford—Telegraphic advices from New York state that a car of Medford pears, from the orchard of J. W. Perkins, sold for \$3,429, the highest price ever realized for a carload of pears in America. Part of the car brought \$7.70 per box, the highest price ever recorded for single boxes of the fruit.

They were the Doyenne du Comice pear, of which not more than 15 cars are as yet grown on this continent. The variety has for two or three years been in vogue at the leading metropolitan hotels. It has proven especially well adapted to Southern Oregon, and, while the orchards are yet young, the quality is unequaled and the yield is heavy.

The average price for the entire car was \$5.40 per box. The pear box is 50 pounds, but, realizing he had something strictly fancy, Mr. Perkins used clear half-boxes and wrapped the tender pears in paper with lace border and a lithographed "top knot." He also had lithographed end labels on the boxes, which were made of clear lumber. His success justifies, in his mind, the expenditure necessary to effect this fancy pack.

WEED ROAD IN NEW HANDS.

Lack of Laborers Delays Extension Toward Klamath Falls.

Klamath Falls—The Weed railroad has passed into other hands. Theodore Saul, of Weed, a large stockholder in the Weed Lumber company, the former owner of the road, is authority for the statement. The purchasing company is a corporation known as the California Northeastern Railway company.

This sale not only includes the present Weed railroad, which extends 24 miles this way from Weed, where it connects with the Southern Pacific with eight miles more graded, but the Weed project to extend the road to Klamath Falls.

Work just now is almost at a standstill on the extension of the road to this city, owing to the scarcity, it is said, of laborers, but men are being sought and a large crew will be put to work at an early date when the road will be pushed to this city rapidly.

E. D. Dunn is manager of the California Northwestern, and he, with a staff of assistants, is now at Weed, where he has taken the management of the road from A. D. Evans, former manager, and who is also manager of the Weed Lumber company's interests.

New Reduction Plants Installed.

Sumpter—Extensive improvements at the standard mine are under way. A large crew of carpenters has been employed there for some time past on sawmill construction, and lately on the reduction plant building. The Imperial, in the Cable Cove section, is also employing a crew of carpenters on a new reduction plant. This property has been an extensive shipper for several months past, and bids fair to become one of the largest producers in this district.

Work Mines All Winter.

Sumpter—Since the strike made in the Gold Nugget group, in the Bald mountain district, a few weeks ago, there has been much development done on the property by the locators, Bessler and Dunn. Cabins for use during the winter have been erected, and the main tunnel or drift started on the ledge. An crear and track have been delivered and extensive work will be done this winter. Supplies for a long period are on the ground. The Sunnybrook group, an extension of the Gold Nugget, is also being developed.

Oregon's School Debt \$764,664.50.

Salem—The secretary of the state and board reports the total loans and interest bearing indebtedness of the various educational institutions of the state, outstanding October 1, as \$764,664.50, divided as follows: Interest bearing school land indebtedness, \$562,128.85; college lands, \$23,550.57; university lands, \$688; school farm loans, \$167,575.08; college farm loans, \$7,085; university farm loans, \$3,455.

In Weston Grain Fields.

Weston—Farmers in this vicinity are getting well along with their summer fallowing, and the land is in prime condition for seeding since the recent rains. The seed drills will follow closely the last cultivating and will begin work about the middle of the month. About one half of the wheat lands in this locality are summer fallowed each alternate year, except lands near the foothills, which are put into winter wheat every third year.

Big Wheat Sales at Adams.

Adams—Three hundred and twenty thousand bushels of wheat has been handled through warehouses here. Over one-half of this has been sold at an average price of 61 cents per bushel—about one half going to the Athens mill and the balance to Portland.

WATER USERS WANT ATTORNEY

Milton and Freewater Settlers Make Move of Precaution.

Milton—A meeting of the users of water on all the streams and ditches in Milton and Freewater, excepting the Tumalum river and Hudson Bay ditch, was held here to formulate plans for the employment of counsel to look after the interests of all parties interested. A committee of three was appointed, William Nichols, S. A. Miller and J. H. Piper. Attorney Stillman, of Pendleton, submitted a proposition to take the case and look after every right and secure a record for each. He wants about \$600. It was decided that the committee should have full power to act for and determine, by the assistance of the individuals, each one's claim, whether it be riparian or right by appropriation. The papers in the case must be prepared by October 15.

CANNOT CANCEL LICENSE.

Oregon Law Prevents Exclusion of New York Life From State.

Salem—There is no authority in the Oregon statutes for the cancellation of a life insurance company's license because of mismanagement is the reply made by Secretary of State Dunbar to a request for such action against the New York Life. The request was made by C. H. Jenner, a New York banker, who has asked all insurance commissioners to revoke that company's license unless John A. McCall resigns the presidency and George W. Perkins the vice presidency. Mr. Dunbar explained in his reply that the Oregon law authorizes cancellation for only two reasons—non-payment of money due on a policy or inability to pay losses—and that he is not advised that the New York Life comes under either case.

Experts Report Small Shortage.

Pendleton—The experts now auditing the county books are declared to have found a small shortage in the clerk's office. However, according to Expert Beckwith, there has been no failure on the part of anyone to turn over money received; but there has been failure to charge for some things which, under the law, should have been charged for. Also, he says, that subsequent findings may offset the shortage that has been found. Under whose regime the irregularities come will not be divulged, nor the amount of the deficiency.

Freewater's Big Crop of Hay.

Freewater—In addition to the excellent fruit and grain crops raised upon winter and spring irrigated lands in this locality a large amount of hay is grown. The crop of alfalfa last spring was light, but the two last cuttings have made a good yield, aggregating seven tons to the acre, worth in the local market \$5 per ton. Without irrigation this land is practically worthless.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Club, 71c per bushel; blue-stem, 74c; valley, 71@72c.

Oats—No. 1 white feed, \$24@24.50; gray, \$24@24.50 per ton.

Barley—Feed, \$20.50@21 per ton; brewing, \$21.50@22; rolled, \$21.50@22.

Rye—\$1.40@1.45 per cental.

Hay—Eastern Oregon timothy, \$14@15 per ton; valley timothy, \$11@12; clover, \$8@9; grain hay, \$8@9.

Fruits—Apples, \$1@1.75 per box; peaches, 85c@1 per crate; plums, 50@75c per crate; cantaloupes, 75c@1.25 per crate; pears, \$1.25@1.50 per box; watermelons, 3/4@1c per pound; crabapples, \$1 per box; quinces, \$1 per box.

Vegetables—Beans, 1@4c per pound; cabbage, 1@1 1/4c per pound; cauliflower, 75c per dozen; celery, 75c per dozen; corn, 65c per sack; cucumbers, 10@15c per dozen; pumpkins, 1 1/2@1 3/4c per pound; tomatoes, 30@40c per crate; squash, 5c per pound; turnips, 90c@1 per sack; carrots, 65@75c per sack; beets, 85c@1 per sack.

Onions—Oregon Yellow Danvers, \$1.25 per sack.

Potatoes—Oregon fancy, 65@85c per sack; common, nominal.

Butter—Fancy creamery, 25@30c per pound.

Eggs—Oregon ranch, 27@27 1/2c per dozen.

Poultry—Average old hens, 11 1/2@12c per pound; mixed chickens, 11@11 1/2c; old roosters, 9@9 1/2c; young roosters, 10@11c; springs, 11 1/2@13c; dressed chickens, 14@15c; turkeys, live, 16@17c; geese, live, 8@9c; ducks, 13@14c.

Hope—Oregon, 1905, choice, 12@13c per pound; olds, 10@12c.

Wool—Eastern Oregon average best, 19@21c per pound; lower grades down to 15c, according to shrinkage; valley, 25@27c; mohair, choice, 30c.

Beef—Dressed bulls, 1@2c per pound; cows, 3@4c; country steers, 4@4 1/2c.

Veal—Dressed, 3@7 1/2c per pound.

Mutton—Dressed, fancy, 6 1/2@7c per pound; ordinary, 4@5c; lambs, 7@7 1/2c.

Pork—Dressed, 6@7 1/2c per pound.