

Dark Hollow

By Anna Katharine Green

Illustrations by C. D. Rhodes

CHAPTER XVII.—Continued.

And so with each new arrival. He neither turned nor moved at any one's entrance, but left it to Mr. Black to do the honors and make the best of a situation, difficult, if not inexplicable to all of them. Nor could it be seen that any of these men—city officials, prominent citizens and old friends, recognized his figure or suspected his identity. Beyond a passing glance his way, they betrayed neither curiosity nor interest, being probably sufficiently occupied in accounting for their own presence in the home of their once revered and now greatly maligned compeer. Judge Ostrander, attacked through his son, was about to say or do something which each and every one of them secretly thought had better be left unsaid or undone. Yet none showed any disposition to leave the place; and when, after a short, uneasy pause during which all attempts at conversation failed, they heard a slow and weighty step approaching down the hall, the suspense was such that no one but Mr. Black noticed the quick whirl with which Oliver turned himself about, nor the look of mortal anguish with which he awaited the opening of the door. No one noticed, I say, until, simultaneous with the appearance of Judge Ostrander on the threshold, a loud cry swept through the room of "Don't! don't!" and the man they had barely noticed, flashed by them all, and fell at the judge's feet with a smothered repetition of his appeal: "Don't, father, don't!"

Then, each man knew why he had been summoned there, and knowing, gazed earnestly at these two faces. Twelve years of unappreciated longings, of smothered love, rising above doubts, persisting in spite of doubts, were concentrated into that one instant of mutual recognition. The eye of the father was upon that of the son and that of the son upon that of the father and for them, at least in this first instant of reunion, the years were forgotten and sin, sorrow and on-coming doom effaced from their mutual consciousness.

Then the tide of life flowed back into the present, and the judge, motioning to his son to rise, observed very distinctly: "Don't is an ambiguous word, my son, and on your lips, at this juncture may mislead those whom I have called here to hear the truth from us and the truth only. You have heard what happened here a few days ago. How a long-guarded, long-suppressed suspicion—so guarded and so suppressed that I had no intimation of its existence even, found vent at a moment of public indignation, and I heard you, Oliver Ostrander, accused to my face of having in some boyish fit of rage struck down the man for whose death another has long since paid the penalty. This you have already been told."

"Yes." The word cut sharply through the silence; but the fire with which the young man rose and faced them all showed him at his best. "But surely, no person present believes it. No one can know you and the principles in which I have been raised. This fellow whom I beat as a boy has waited long to start this damnable report. Surely he will get no hearing from unprejudiced and intelligent men."

"The police have listened to him, Mr. Andrews, who is one of the gentlemen present, has heard his story and you see that he stands here silent, my son. And that is not all. Mrs. Scoville, who has loved you like a mother, longs to believe in your innocence, and cannot."

the voice of Algernon Etheridge, demanding vengeance for his untimely end. It will not be gained. Not satisfied with the toll we have both paid in these years of suffering and repression—unmindful of the hermit's life I have led and of the heart disappointments you have borne, my cry for punishment remains insistent. Gentlemen—hush! Oliver, it is for me to cry "Don't" now—John Scoville was a guilty man—a murderer and a thief—but he did not wield the stick which killed Algernon Etheridge. Another hand raised that. No, do not look at the boy. He is innocent! Look here! Look here!" And with one awful gesture, he stood still—while horror rose like a wave and engulfed the room—chocking back breath and speech from every living soul there, and making a silence more awful than any sound—or so they all felt, till his voice rose again and they heard:

"You have trusted to appearances; you must trust now to my word. I am the guilty man, not Scoville, and not Oliver, though Oliver may have been in the ravine that night and even handled the budgeon I found at my feet in the recesses of Dark Hollow." Then consternation spoke, and muttered cries were heard of "Madness! It is not we who are needed here, but a physician!" and dominating all, the ringing shout:

"You cannot save me so, father. I hated Etheridge and I slew him. Gentlemen, he prayed in his agony, coming close into their midst, 'do not be misled for a moment by a father's devotion.'"

His lifted head, his flashing eye, drew every look. Honor confronted them in a countenance from which all reserve had melted away. No guilt showed there; he stood among them, a heroic figure.

Slowly, and with a dread which no man might measure, the glances which had just devoured his young but virile countenance passed to that of the father. They did not leave it again. "Son?" With what tenderness he spoke, but with what a ring of desolation. "I understand your effort and appreciate it; but it is a useless one. You cannot deceive these friends of ours—men who have known my life if you were in the ravine that night, so was I. If you handled John Scoville's stick, so did I, and after you! Let us not struggle for the execution of mankind; let it fall where it rightfully belongs. It can bring no sting keener than that to which my breast has long been subject. Or—" and here his tones sank, in a last recognition of all he was losing forever, "if there is suffering in a once proud man flinging from him the last rag of respect with which he sought to cover the hideous nakedness of an unsuspected crime, it is lost in the joy of doing justice to the son who would take advantage of circumstances to assume his father's guilt."

But Oliver, with a fire which nothing could damp, spoke up again: "Gentlemen, will you see my father so degrade himself? He has dwelt so continually upon the knowledge which separated us a dozen years ago that he no longer can discriminate between the guilty and the innocent. Would he have sat in court, would he have uttered sentences; would he have kept his seat upon the bench for all these years, if he had borne with in his breast this secret of personal guilt? No, it is not in human nature to play such a part. I was guilty—and I fled. Let the act speak for itself. The respect due my father must not be taken from him."

Confusion and counter-confusion! What were they to think! Alanson Black, agitated at this dread dilemma, ran over in his mind all that had led him to accept Oliver's guilt as proved, and then, in immediate opposition to it, the details of that old trial and the judge's consequent life; and, voicing the helpless confusion of the others, observed with forced firmness:

"The gesture accompanying this oath was a grand one, convincing in its fervor, its majesty and power. But facts are stubborn things, and while most of those present were still thrilling under the effect of this oath, the dry voice of District Attorney Andrews was heard for the first time, in these words:

"Why, then, did you, on the night of Bela's death, stop on your way across the bridge to look back upon Dark Hollow and cry in the bitterest tones which escape human lips, 'Oliver! Oliver!' You were heard to speak this name, Judge Ostrander, he hastily put it, as the miserable father raised his hand in ineffectual protest. 'A man was lurking in the darkness behind you, who both saw and heard you. He may not be the most prepossessing of witnesses, but we cannot discredit his story.'"

"Mr. Andrews, you have no children. To the man who has, I make my last appeal. Mr. Renfrew, you know the human heart both as a father and a pastor. Do you find anything unnatural in a guilty soul bemoaning its loss rather than its sin, in the spot which recalled both to his overburdened spirit?"

"No." The word came sharply, and it sounded decisive; but the ones which followed from Mr. Andrews were no less so.

"That is not enough. We want evidence, actual evidence, that you are not playing the part your son ascribes to you."

The judge's eyes glared, then suddenly and incomprehensibly softened till the quick fear that his mind as well as his memory had gone astray, vanished in a feeling none of them could have characterized, but which gave to them all an expression of awe.

"I have such evidence," announced the judge. "Come."

Turning, he stepped into the hall. Oliver, with bended head and a discouraged mien, quickly followed. Alanson Black and the others, casting startled and inquiring looks at each other, brought up the rear. Deborah Scoville was nowhere to be seen.

At the door of his own room, the judge paused, and with his hand on the curtain, remarked with unexpected composure: "You have all wondered, and others with you, why for the last ten years I have kept the gates of my house shut against every comer. I am going to show you."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Dark Hollow. Later, when the boards he had loosened in anticipation of this hour were all removed, they came upon a packet of closely written words hidden in the framework of the bed.

It read as follows: Whosoever lays hands on this MS. will already be acquainted with my crime. If he would also know its cause and the full story of my hypocrisy, let him read these lines written, as it were, with my heart's blood.

I loved Algernon Etheridge; I shall never have a dearer friend. His odd ways, his lank, possibly ungainly, figure crowned by a head of scholarly refinement, his amiability when pleased, his tracibility when crossed, formed a character attractive to me from its very contradictions; and after my wife's death and before my son Oliver reached a companionable age, it was in my intercourse with this man I found my most solid satisfaction.

self-hatred and secret immolation can never undo the deed of an infuriated moment. Eternity may console, but it can never make me innocent of the blood of my heart's brother.

We had had our usual wordy disagreement over some petty subject in which he was no nearer wrong nor I any nearer right than we had been many times before; but for some reason I found it harder to pardon him. For the first time in our long acquaintance, I let Algernon Etheridge leave me without any attempt at conciliation.

If only I had halted there! If, at sight of my empty study, I had not conceived the mad notion of waylaying him at the bridge for the hand-shake I missed, I might have been a happy man now, and Oliver—But why dwell upon these might-have-beens! What happened was this:

Disturbed in mind, and finding myself alone in the house, Oliver having evidently gone out while we two were disputing, I decided to follow out the impulse I have mentioned. Leaving by the rear, I went down the lane to the path which served as a short cut to the bridge.

That I did this unseen by anybody is not so strange when you consider the hour, and how the only person then living in the lane was, in all probability, in her kitchen. It would have been better for me, little as I might have recognized it at the time, had she been where she could have witnessed both my going and coming and faced me with the fact.

John Scoville, in his statement, says that after giving up his search for his little girl he wandered up the ravine before taking the path back which led him through Dark Hollow. This was false, as well as the story he told of leaving his stick by the chestnut tree in the gully at foot of Ostrander lane. For I was on the spot, and I know the route by which he reached Dark Hollow and also through whose agency the stick came to be there.

Read and learn with what tricks the devil beguiles us men.

I was descending this path, heavily shadowed, as you know, by a skirting of closely growing trees and bushes, when just where it dips into the Hollow, I heard the sound of a hasty foot come crashing up through the under-

brush from the ravine and cross the path ahead of me. A turn in the path prevented me from seeing the man himself, but as you will perceive and as I perceived later when circumstances recalled it to my mind, I had no need to see him to know who it was or with what intent he took this method of escape from the ravine into the fields leading to the highway. Scoville's stick spoke for him, the stick which I presently tripped over and mechanically picked up, without a thought of the desperate use to which I was destined to put it.

Etheridge was coming. I could hear his whistle on Factory road. There was no mistaking it. It was unusually shrill one and had always been a cause of irritation to me, but at this moment it was more; it roused every antagonistic impulse within me. He whistled like a galliard, after a parting which had dissatisfied me to such an extent that I had come all this distance to ask his pardon and see his old smile again! Afterward, long afterward, I was able to give another interpretation to his show of apparent self-satisfaction, but then I saw nothing but the contrast it offered to my own tender regrets, and my blood began to boil and my temper rise to such a point that recrimination took the place of apology when in another moment we came together in the open space between the end of the bridge and Dark Hollow.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Beautiful Ypres. The old Belgian city of Ypres, which has suffered much destruction at the hands of the Germans, was at one time one of the most flourishing cities in West Flanders, with a population of almost 200,000. Like other ancient cities of Belgium, it has many architectural and artistic reminders of its past greatness in its Cloth hall, Guild hall, and churches, the burghers' houses, many of which have now been laid in ruins by German guns. The Cloth hall, which was commenced in the year 1200, and took a century to build, has a beautiful facade 120 yards in length; while there are also the Meat hall, the Cathedral of St. Martin, and a number of the old houses with the wooden facades Flemish architects were so fond of.

Firearm Breaks Ankle, Leg, Foot, Arm, and Head in Five of His Rest Periods. His left ankle broken when caught with several other firemen under a falling wall at the big fire in Collingswood, Capt. George Wade recalled at the Homopathic hospital, Camden, that all five serious mishaps he has sustained while in the Camden fire department were met in responding to calls on his day off, says the Philadelphia Record. Such was the case the last time He just dropped in at fire headquarters to see how things were going when the call for aid came from Collingswood. Of course, he could not resist the temptation to lead his company.

On another of his days off in 1907 he was thrown from the engine and suffered a compound fracture of the left leg. At another time, in a like accident, also on his day off, his right foot was crushed. At still another time, Captain Wade suffered a fracture of his left arm by a fall at a

"SAMPLES PACKED SEPARATELY"



When forty mothers, each with a baby, descended on the University settlement temporary nursery at the emergency workshop for women in New York, the problem was where to put the babies. It was solved by the gift of a number of wicker clothes baskets, which were fitted with small mattresses and pillows.

VICTORIOUS CARRANZA TROOPS



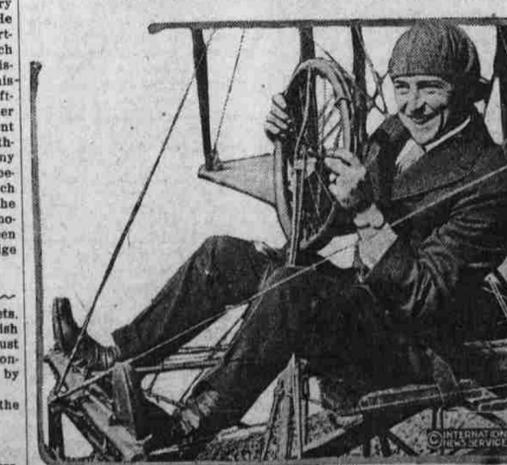
Company of Carranzistas who heroically defended one of the trenches near the Rio Grande at Matamoros against the attacks of Villa's troops and captured four of the enemy's flags.

REPUDIATE PLEDGE NOT TO FIGHT



British prisoners of war, captured by the Kronprinz Wilhelm, being transferred from a tug boat to the dock at Newport News to take the British ship Cassandra to England, where they planned to enlist and go to the front despite a promise given to Captain Thierfelder not to do so. They asserted the pledge was given under compulsion and so not binding.

NEW DAREDEVIL OF THE AIR



Art Smith, the young Indiana aviator, who has been doing most sensational stunts in the air at San Francisco since the death of Lincoln Beachey. He recently made 22 loops in one flight.

GREED OF THE CUTWORMS

Most Dreaded Robbers of the Garden That Work Only in the Night.

In Farm and Fireside a contributor writes about cutworms. The ravages of cutworms are fully described and definite suggestions as to how to get rid of them are reported. Some of the remarkable facts about cutworms are included in the following extract taken from the article:

"Cutworms are true burglars. 'As long as the day lasts they remain in hiding under sticks, stones or trash—or even below the surface of the ground; and as soon as night falls they come forth to steal the lives of tender plants. 'It is a wise precaution on the part of these insect burglars to hide during the day, for they are smooth and plump and just the sort of food tithing birds are always looking for. If these night prowling rascals would only stop and satisfy their hunger by eating the plants as they cut them down, they would be less rascally. But no! They go on appeasing their voracious appetites with merely what they bite out in cutting down the plants; thus a dozen plants lie flat and withered in the morning sun, sacrificed for one late dinner. 'In this respect the cutworms resemble dogs which kill more sheep in a flock than they can eat.' You can feed anybody flattery if you keep a sober face.

KARL BITTER'S LAST WORK



This heroic statue of Henry Hudson, which will be erected on Spuyten Duyvil hill when cast in bronze, is the last completed model by Karl Bitter, the sculptor who recently was killed in an automobile accident.

WILLIAM BARNES, JR.



William Barnes, Jr., Republican political leader of New York state, as he appeared at Syracuse when his libel suit against Colonel Roosevelt was called for trial.

Thoughtless Explanation.

"You say this will be your farewell appearance?" asked the interviewer. "Yes," answered the eminent actress. "I shall retire from the stage, never to return to it."

"What is your reason for such a decision?" "My manager thinks it better for business to make every other tour a farewell engagement."

A Catastrophe.

"There was a terrible train wreck in our neighborhood last night." "What was it?" "Some boob at the party stepped on my wife's fish-tail party gown."

ACCOUNTING FOR OLD MAIDS

Various Reasons Why Girls of Homeburg Are Living Lives of Single Blessedness.

They say there are one hundred thousand old maids in Massachusetts. I'll bet that's just about the number of Massachusetts young men who have gone West or somewhere, and haven't remembered the things they said at parting as well as the girls did. We've got plenty of girls in Homeburg who are getting intimately acquainted with the thrills—fine girls, still pretty, bright and keeping up with the world. Young men come into town and do their best to get on a "trow-beside-me" footing, but somehow the girls don't seem to marry. At the root of almost every case there's an old Homeburg boy. Maybe he's making good somewhere, and they're just waiting until he does. Maybe he isn't making good and is too proud to ask her to wait. Maybe she's waiting alone—because some other girl was handier in the new places. And maybe it wasn't a case of wait at all, only the

HIS UNLUCKY "DAYS OFF"

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