THE GRAY FALCON

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CHAPTER XVIII.

He came to Jules one day with a trembling lip.

"Jules the last water cask is empty. I supposed it would be full. It must have leaked out long ago."

"How much is there left?" asked Jules.

Her voice shook.

"Not twice can the ewer be filled. Oh, Jules!"

"Yes, dear one. I can fill it up tonight. Do you know the exact locality of the spring?"

"I remember visiting it once or twice. I must pause a moment before I can tell you its direction from this spot. But it frightens me to think of your attempting such a dangerous feat."

"It is vitally necessary, if we remain here, which seems the best thing left us, until our provisions fail us, or we are convinced there is no hope of Emile's appearance."

"If it must be I consent; but upon one condition—I shall accompany you, Jules."

"My precious Chlotilde, not for the world."

"I insist upon it. Whatever happens to you I must share it with you; besides, I can recognize the spring at once, and you might search a long time for it."

"My beloved one, let me brave this little danger alone. What would Emile say to me if he knew I allowed you to venture out so far?"

"It does not matter; you shall allow it; you yield to it because there is no help for it. I should follow at all events."

"But it is not immediately necessary. We will be as prudent as possible, and Emile may yet arrive," replied Jules, resolved to sally forth secretly.

Lady Felicie put the vessel of water carefully aside, saying wistfully:

"It must not be before us to tempt us. How perverse is me! I was never so thirsty in my life!"

Jules deliberately poured out a glass and held it toward her.

"You shall not deny yourself while there is so much left to us."

She sipped it slowly.

"If we were to have no more, how much more precious than our pearls and diamonds would be the tiniest drop," said she, and handed it back only half empty.

"Now I must return to my post, and learn how near the sentinels approach us. Can it be possible for them to hear our voices when above us?"

"I think not, or Emile would have warned us."

"Oh, invaluable, allwise Emile! what detains him?" groaned Jules, as he clambered up the stairway.

No sign came of any human presence throughout the day, and much emboldened by the circumstance, Jules took a pitcher and small pail and started forth as soon as evening came.

Lady Felicie followed silently behind him, notwithstanding his entreaty to the contrary.

They passed along softly, with the utmost caution, pausing every few steps to listen for any sound of alarm.

All was profound stillness, save that now and then a dry leaf dropped from a bough, or a bird with heavy wing thurred through the branches.

The spring was just a little way from the trodden pathway. It lay in its mossy bed like an inky mirror, with just one ripple of silver where a star beam from above slid through the canopy of leaves and gave it a tender kiss.

The trembling pair gave a sigh of relief. Jules hastily knelt down and dipped the pitcher into it. He turned and held it up to Chlotilde's lips. Draught of nectar from the very cup of Titania was outrivaled by the refreshing coolness of the water.

Neither ventured to speak, but their hearts beat with joyful relief. Jules filled the pail to the brim and Chlotilde took the pitcher. She tripped lightly before him to open the door.

He spoke suddenly and sharply.

"Hurry, Chlotilde! go at once!"

She obeyed with a quick rush of terror, for she also caught the sound of hurrying steps, and gaining the tree, stood waiting his approach.

There came to her from the gloom of the shadowed pathway a fierce oath, a scuffle, and shout for help.

Setting down the pitcher hastily, the girl bent out of the tree with white lips and horror-stricken eyes.

A quick rush of frantic steps—but whose? the companion of her hidden home of refuge, or the cruel spy? She could not stir, but stood paralyzed.

It was Jules. He dashed up to her, thrust her into the little room with impetuous haste, and closed the door.

The movement upset the pitcher, the precious water was lost, not a drop remained; for in his struggle with the man who had pounced upon him, Jules had dropped the bucket.

Then shivering and repressing the very sound of breathing, the pair listened to the eager talk going on outside, as a group of the sentinels gathered together in bewildered astonishment.

"This is certainly witch[illegible] exhibited one.

"He was here a mom[illegible] now he has gone. [illegible] like a lo[illegible] it is a [illegible] that the villain disappears," again Pierre must hear of this. What a wise man he is; in spite of all our doubts he declared they were in this forest, and so I venture to declare we shall find it."

"Boot [illegible] cried out another; "let's drag him out to-night, and earn the reward."

They went tramping all about the spot, and one struck his heavy pike against the tree trunk, making the girl spring back wildly.

Jules took her hand in both his, and held it firmly; the darkness concealed his quivering lip and flashing eye.

But presently the men were tired hunting over the recent ground, and they dispersed to their separate stations.

Jules bid his silent companion down in the lower room. She turned and threw herself into his arms with a sob of anguish.

"Jules, Jules, we shall perish together! there is a little comfort in that thought."

His breast was heaving. Too well he knew how little hope there was, even of such a melancholy end. He had learned enough from Emile to feel convinced that she would be torn away from him at once.

"Yes, they will certainly mark the spot well. They will dig for traces of a secret passage; you heard them sounding the tree. Oh, that we had remained quiet. We have not even a glass of water to stand for the mishap."

They said nothing more concerning their apprehensions, but shade as attempt at cheerfulness, and sat hand clasped in hand in utter silence.

Slowly and sadly wore away the night, and the next day. Neither could touch food, but their feverish thirst seemed to increase, as the precious water disappeared. By another nightfall there remained but a single wineglass full.

"Drink it, Chlotilde!" exclaimed Jules, bitterly, as he saw her eyes dwell upon it wistfully; "by another day it will be of no consequence. That Pierre has been examining the place himself; he has ordered them to commence felling the trees by the morning light."

Lady Felicie clasped her hands, and her white lips moved prayerfully—then she said tremulously:

"M. Pierre! oh, Jules! shoot me with your pistol before you allow me to fall into his hands."

"Chlotilde, let us try to escape from the forest to-night, rather than be dragged forth by their triumphant hands."

"But whither shall we go?" asked she, sorrowfully.

He groaned in anguish.

"Whither, indeed! oh, Emile, Monsieur Emile, what has become of you?"

The words had hardly passed his lips ere a step was heard on the rude stairs leading to the secret door above.

They sprang up with cheeks growing still more ashy white, and turned wild glances to the aperture. Had their persevering enemy at last discovered the secret passage to them?

Hastily came the intruder downward—the lofty head stooped to clear the beam and then—oh, joy! oh, transport! they beheld the pale, excited, but triumphant face of Emile!

With a glad cry, Felicie fell down at his feet. His tears mingled with hers, as he raised her in his arms.

"My child, my beloved one! you are safe; I feared to find you completely prostrated, if yet alive."

Jules seized his hand in a transport of delight.

He gave them a few moments to relieve their excitement, then produced from the bundle he had brought, two disguises, both for peasants of the humblest class.

"Do not delay a second beyond what is absolutely necessary, but put them on at once, and take every valuable that you can conceal. The diamonds I will secrete on my own person."

Neither asked him a single question; but trusting him implicitly, gave thought only to thorough obedience.

In a few moments they were ready.

Emile quietly took a powder from his pocket and rubbed it over the pale faces and hands; he gave to Jules a different shade of hair by a powerful liquid, and concealed the silky tresses of Felicie by a most unbecoming mantle twisted in turban fashion.

"Come now," said he, taking them each by the hand.

Still though their hearts beat anxiously, neither asked a single question. This implicit trust moved Emile, deeply; but he closed the door of the faithful tree which had protected them so long, and led them on in silence.

Jules looked around him with a wistful glance. Where were the sentinels? At least no sign of them was visible.

Unmolested they gained the outskirts. Emile pausing a moment, gazed all around him.

"It is well," murmured he; "Jean has not failed me. Now let us move swiftly, nor lose the propitious moment."

"The sentinels are removed!" exclaimed Jules, in utter astonishment.

"They are lying senseless on the ground," replied Emile, "a faithful fellow has carried [illegible] wine well drugged, and [illegible] himself, to re[illegible] mentally [illegible] M. Pierre is well [illegible] to [illegible] we, a true, shall be [illegible] up to Paris. I have the papers [illegible] the passage of the Gray Fa[illegible] and his cousins Jules and Chlotilde; I hope we will meet with no molestation. I started with the main and left them just below the forest, they are to make their way to the next town on foot. The spies on the road will not know but I have still the identical pair—the driver of the cart waiting for us is faithful to me. Give yourselves no uneasiness, de[illegible] den. All will be well."

"We do not fear, so long as [illegible] who plans," answered Chlotilde.

"May your generous trust [illegible] warded," responded he, fervently.

They were stopped many an [illegible] a time before they reached the [illegible] haven; but the Gray Falcon's sai[illegible] strongly disguised, only messenger [illegible] M. Pierre, the event most dreaded [illegible] all.

The horrors had deepened in Paris. The unfortunate Louis had been led to the block, and the trial of the queen was already under consideration. The utmost lawlessness and blood-thirstiness prevailed everywhere.

The Gray Falcon was welcomed back with enthusiasm. He lodged his pretended relatives with an acquaintance, and went at once to his old club. Notwithstanding the abhorrence he felt for the sentiments which now reigned triumphant there, he felt that it was vitally necessary for him to seem to participate in them, and accordingly he delivered to them one of his old harangues—somewhat disappointing them, to be sure, with the moderation of his views.

Having thus established himself safe from suspicion, he proceeded to look up a little plot of ground and small cottage, at a safe distance from the city, and thither he conveyed his friends.

A little garden gave extensive employment to Jules, and his fair companion made up bouquets, and sent them to the city regularly by a peasant boy, who was the unconscious bearer of dispatches between Emile and his disguised wards. For a bouquet, especially marked, was sent twice a week to Emile, and its fragrant blossoms concealed a guarded statement of present security.

And thus amidst the frightful carnage going on almost within sound of their voices, the pair dwelt in peaceful security. They had almost ceased to fear molestation, and Lady Felicie, growing quite accustomed to the light tasks which devolved upon her, had almost got over the old identity, and believed herself the humble Chlotilde of the cottage, when suddenly and harshly came to her the reminder of her former existence.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

FALL OF A FOREST MONARCH.

Sawing Down a Giant Pine Tree in the Minnesota Woods.

I had my eye on a grand old pine standing a little way from any of his fellows, a monarch in the forest. It must have been a hundred and forty feet, perhaps more, from the topmost point in its glossy green coronal down to the dead guidewood in the snow at its base. It was about three feet in diameter at the ground, so tall, so strong, so straight, a noble tree indeed, in very truth a king of the forest. It was the result of the life which dwelt in the tiny black, winged seed which was but to view more than a century and a half before. While I was admiring the splendid proportions of the tree three men came toward me. One was a bright-eyed fellow, short of stature and swarthy of skin, looking like one of the Chippewa Indians whose home this forest had been nobody knows how many centuries. He looked the tree over sharply, stepping to this side and to that, eyed it critically from various points of view, and then with a small, sharp ax cut a keen gash in the trunk about a foot above the top of the dead guidewood in the snow. He was an undercutter, a man whose business it is to cut into the tree on the side on which it should fall, so that it may not be broken in the fall, or lodge in the crotch of another tree. The cut on the side of the tree is the guide for the sawyers. The other men, bearing a big saw, began cutting down the pine, sawing steadily and powerfully through the fragrant yellowish-white trunk. Now and then the undercutter would step up to them to see how they were progressing. When their saw had passed the heart of the pine he placed a small bright steel wedge in the path of the saw and drove it in. "Look out there, now!" came the c[illegible] of the undercutter as he looked in a[illegible] direction. I made a quick scramble through the deep snow, nearly tumbling over a hidden log, and grubbing my camera as I went. I had no intention of staying in the immediate vicinity, for I had seen trees like this fall before, and I knew it was a risky thing to stand hard by. The best directed tree will sometimes veer a little in its fall, and woe to the one who stands below it. Many an experienced woodman has been killed in just such a place; many a one has been caught and pinioned, perhaps to escape with only broken legs or ribs. In a second more the noble pine came crashing down through the branches of the other trees, falling upon the frozen earth with a noise which drowned all the other noises of the forest—a roar which echoed and re-echoed through the long, dim aisles of the forest like the booming of some mighty cannonade.—W. H. Harwood in St. Nicholas.

Boston Forced as Hale.

One parrot will live in luxury all his life. He belonged to Mary J. Bradford, of South Boston. When she died she left $4,000, the income of which she wished to be devoted to the support of her pet. And it was further added, with Bostonian exclusiveness, that he should not be placed in any place of a promiscuous.

An Operation Needed.

Maria—"Humph! You needn't go around like that with your nose in the air just because you've been ter jail city." Joshua—"Tain't that. I ain't stuck up a bit, Maria; but since my sightseeing down ter New York down if I kin git it down agin."—The Yellow Book.

FOR WOMEN AND HOME

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR MAIDS AND MATRONS.

Gown of Gray Cashmere—A Become Skirt for a Tall Figure—Women of the Orient—Some Notes About Gowns.

Love and Friendship.

Hill birds, when winter shakes the sky,
Fly o'er the seas away;
Where laughing rains in sunshine lie,
And summer breezes play.

And thus the friendship that flatter near
While fortune's sun is warm,
Are startled if a cloud appears,
And fly rather than storm.

Fly from winter's howling plains
To other warmer climes;
The cold snow-bird still remains,
And chirps amid the chimes.

Love, like that bird, when friendship's gone
Flies to other climes;
With fortune's sun decays,
But leaves with me cheerful song,
And nestles on my heart.

Tea Gowns.

There is a wonderful fascination in a tea gown, and quite exquisite was one in a coarse-ribbed cream silk flounced and applaqued with lace, and tiny bouquetes of pink to simulate an upper skirt. It was draped on to the shoulders in the form of a peplum over a front of cream velvet fluorinomed with lace and soft waterfalls of lace fell from back to waist to be tucked into a fetching belt of cerise velvet.

Charmingly pretty was another in moire cloth studded with guipure lace and drawn into the waist with mandarin orange velvet, fastened by a quaint old turquoise clasp, while the sleeves were of finely tucked white lisse and guipure.

A very smart tea or theater jacket is of green brocade, turned back in front to show a vest of cream satin finely tucked and crossed by frills and narrow insertions of palest yellow lace. The tucked waistband is also of cream satin, prettily trimmed with lace, while the coat is finished on the shoulders with cascade draperies of fine lace to correspond.

Very pretty also is a tea gown of black accordion-plaited silk, the sunray plaitings being arranged to start from a yoke of cerise velvet, which is ornamented with a narrow applique design in cream guipure. Long ends of black satin ribbon, float away from this yoke in front and add not a little to the graceful appearance of the gown as a whole.

Gray Cashmere.

The picture shows a gown of gray cashmere, having the ever present blouse front of the same material, which acts as a fine foil for the plastron with epaulets, and bolero fronts of black velvet overlaid with white silk guipure applique and jet, which are edged with a narrow pleating of black liberty satin. The yoke of the same applique effects, the plain all around, and the skirt falls on in gathers at the back, while the bottom is edged with a band of gray fur finished with black.

It is the details of finish and trimming that constitute the chief element of smartness in the new gowns, and so much the change of cut and material, for in truth there is very little change in the shape of gowns or wraps, and, after all, materials are but a rehash of what we have had for years, only dressed up in new colorings, and perhaps given new names that few of us remember five minutes after they have been told us.

The question "What is the fashionable black shirt to wear with the fancy waist?" is perhaps more often asked than any other by the woman who makes one skirt answer for many occasions. In repir it may be asserted that rich black satin is given the preference where only one skirt is found in the wardrobe of the questioner. But if you already have that, then plain black taffeta, often much trimmed from waist to hem, is the newest and most fashionable.

Is This Not?

Women are often accused of becoming careless about their dress and style of hair-dressing after marriage, and the reason for this speculated upon. Here is the other side of the question. "I found out the other day why married men, or almost all married men, are so severely regarding their dress," said a married man recently. "No matter how much of a dandy the man may have been before marriage, as a rule he begins to show unmistakable signs, shortly afterward, that he cares nothing about his personal appearance. It has been popularly supposed that the reason for this is because a man, once he is married, thinks that his mission in life as a good dresser is ended, and that he can wear soiled linen and old clothes to his heart's content, or because the wife does not think to have clean collars and cuffs laid on hand for him. This idea is all wrong, for all women like to have their husbands look well, and at least clean, for they well know it is a reflection upon themselves if the husband looks otherwise, and they are too selfish to want any such notion to gain credence. The real reason, however, is jealousy. A friend of mine, when I asked him why he always wore the same necktie, told me that if he changed his tie or clothes or shirt, and often if he shaved himself, his wife thought it was because he wanted to impress some other woman's fancy, and, in order to avoid jealousy, he preferred to go about looking slightly unkempt rather than have [illegible] wife [illegible] him."

A Becoming Style.

This model shows one of the newest and most becoming skirts of the season, and is designed for a tall figure. The cloth is cut of the new blouts, having a bodice of the same cut, so pleated work over white satin, which is well "blouted" in the front, the waist size. The pleats are white satin edged with narrow frills of the cloth which have no ruffle, but are simply cut with clean, clear edges. The same frills are applied with graceful effect on the skirt, while the tie is true chiffon.

White wool and broad-cloth suitings are novelties for the winter, but in all instances are trimmed with dark colors, usually black or very dark brown. Many of them are trimmed with tucks of contrasting width, each one being edged with a tiny band of black velvet, while others have a row of black lace insertion between the tucks.

Women in the Orient.

Mrs. Stephen Pennington, an American, who has traveled extensively in Turkey, Egypt and the east and has had unusual advantages for observing the women of the harems there, has brought out a little book which she calls "A Key to the Orient," wherein a very different aspect from that generally received is taken of the relations of the sexes there. The western world generally holds that women in all Mohammedan countries are the mere slaves of the men, creatures of pleasure, and are finally denied a soul. Far from this being the case, Mrs. Pennington urges, they are held in the highest honor, and even the work of household drudgery, which makes life so hardly to be borne elsewhere, is there in the hands of men.

Another of the notions she overthrows has to do with the prevalence of polygamy. It is exceedingly rare, she observes, to find a man of more than one wife, except in the cases of officials, whose rank compels them, as a social duty, to maintain a large household. Even then it is rather more than likely that the pasha or bey will wed successive wives, divorcing each in turn, with a sufficient settlement to keep her from want, as he marries a successor—a practice which, as Mrs. Pennington points out, does not differ by much from the change going in England and America. It is true that there are no love matches, in the American sense of the word, but every girl is given plenty of opportunity to see the candidate for her hand at a distance, as from a lattice window, and if she express the slightest repugnance the matter is not pressed further. All the matrimonial arrangements devolve on the mothers of the young couple, who may safely be presumed to have their interests at heart, and there is very little unhappiness after marriage as a result. When wedded it is considered unsuitable for young wives to take upon themselves the care of housekeeping, so they go to live with their husband's family. As soon as motherhood blooms the young matron she is believed even by the most fanatical moslems to be endowed with a soul and she "thenceforth held in the highest respect." "Her days run calmly on," says the writer, "only broken by the rejoicings over the successive babes, and by the excitement of other weddings in her family, and at last she is called to take the place of honor vacated by her mother or mother-in-law and to rule the harem."

INDIANA REPUBLICANS.

Largest Attendance Conference Adjourning Ever Seen Before.

Indianapolis, Ind., Dec. 29.—Five hundred representatives of the Republican party of Indiana, outside of the city of Indianapolis, held a conference yesterday. The meeting was for talk and little else, and was the largest off-year meeting the party ever held. The meeting was held a little later in the year in order that the United States senator from the state and the Republican representatives might be here, and they all came.

The influential men in the party were encouraged by the statements of the senators and representatives that there is hope for currency reform, not radical legislation, but such as will tend to set the party right before the people. The unanimity of the party in the state on the proposition that the currency must be reformed was a surprise to a good many men attending the conference. The Democrats, it was reported, will declare for free silver in their next state platform and the Republicans will, of course, take the opposite ground. In the event of the failure of congress to take action looking to the reform of the currency, members of the party said the party in this state would go into the state campaign unharnessed and on the defensive [illegible] the currency.

In the lobbies of the hotel lobbies, there was a great deal of talk against the civil service law, but it came largely from men who made application for office immediately after the nomination of McKinley and have been disappointed. The prominent men of the party agreed that no one need fear that the Republicans of Indiana will ever declare against the law.

The chief speakers were United States Senator Charles W. Fairbanks and Governor James A. Mount. Senator Fairbanks paid a high tribute to the president.

"In my humble opinion," he said, "a more patriotic citizen of the republic never graced the chair of the chief executive."

Referring to the subject of currency reform, Senator Fairbanks said:

"The Republican party, with McKinley as our leader, intends to keep faith and to preserve the gold standard unimpaired to the American people. I saw the president but a day before coming here. I asked him if he had any message for the Republicans of Indiana. He commissioned me to say to you that he gratefully remembers the encouragement and assistance which the Republicans of this splendid state have given him heretofore, and he further said: 'I am going to keep the faith.' I am going to vindicate the sound money plank in the St. Louis platform."

BANKERS ARRESTED.

Their Oklahoma Victims Were Ready to Lynch Them.

El Reno, Okla., Dec. 29.—Gustav Theisen, president of the Stock Exchange bank; Michael Eichoff, cashier; Charles A. Newman, assistant cashier, and Louis Eichoff, a member of the board of directors, have been arrested on the charge of receiving deposits when the bank was known to be insolvent. A big meeting of the stockholders was held, at which great excitement was manifested and several of the speakers declared that they were ready to lead a lynching party. The bank had $96,000 in deposits when it went under, but will probably not pay more than 25 cents on the dollar.

TIN PAIL FOR A BANK.

Foolish Michigan Farmer Loses His Little Fortune.

Niles, Mich., Dec. 29.—Lawrence Walters, an aged farmer residing three miles north of Wayland, Cass county, had no faith in banks, and instead, placed his savings, consisting of about $7,500 in green backs, $4,000 in government bonds, notes, mortgages and other valuable papers, in a tin pail. This pail he buried beneath the floor of his barn some months ago, and he has been in the habit of visiting the hiding place every day to see if his fortune was safe. This morning when he made his customary visit he discovered that robbers had been there, for his fortune had disappeared. The old man is almost crazed over his misfortune.

Played Its Own Dirge Appropriately.

Chicago, Dec. 29.—Fire late this afternoon destroyed the large pipe organ in the office of the Great Northern hotel, entailing a loss of $20,000 upon the management. Although the fire was confined entirely to the organ the smoke was so profuse that many guests became alarmed. By a curious coincidence the last air played on the organ was "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight."

Republicans for Prohibition.

Fargo, N. D., Dec. 29.—An important meeting of Republicans will occur here today, the object being to organize a campaign club within the party, and somewhat on the lines of the national platform, but with this distinctive feature, that the strict enforcement of the prohibitory law be made one of the cardinal features of the club, and one of the principles that every man who asks for the endorsement of the party at the coming election will have to advocate.