

YOLANDE.

By WILLIAM BLAKE. AUTHOR OF "SHEPHERD BOYS," "MIDNIGHT DANCE," "WINTER WISDOM," "SOCIETY," ETC.

(Continued.) CHAPTER XXX.

"DARE ALL."

He could not rest, somehow. He went into the laboratory and looked restlessly around; the objects there seemed to have no interest for him. Then he went back to the house—into the room where he had found her standing; and that had more of a charm for him; the atmosphere still seemed to bear the perfume of her presence, the music of her voice still seemed to hang in the air. She had left on the table—she had forgotten, indeed, to carry her hat, leaving two specimens of the *Achillea*.

And was he going to stand by idle? Was he going to limit himself to the part of mere messenger? Could he not do something? Was he not to be dominated by the coward fear of being called an intermeddler? He had not pondered over all this matter (with a far deeper interest than he himself imagined) without result. He had his own views, his own remedy; he knew what counsel he would give, if he dared intervene. And why should he not dare? He thought of the expression of her face as she had said, with averted eyes, "Good-bye!" and then, when she had suddenly impudently seized him that somehow and at once he must get to All-nam-ba, and that before she should meet her father.

He snatched up his hat and went quickly out and through the little front garden into the road; there he paused. Of course he could not follow her; she must needs see him coming up the wide street; and in that case what excuse could he give? But what if the shooting party had not yet come down the hill? Might he not intercept them somewhere? Sometimes, when they had been taking the far tops in search of a ptarmigan or two, they came home late—to be scolded by the young house-mistress for keeping dinner-bell back. Well, the result of these calculations was that the next minute he had set out to climb with a swiftness that was yet far too slow for the eagerness of his wishes, the steep and rough, and well-trodden hills that stretch away up to the neighborhood of Lynn forest.

First it was over peat bog and rock, then through a tangled undergrowth of young birches, then up through some precipitous gullies, until at last he had gained the top, and looked abroad over the forest—that wide, desolate, silent wilderness. Not a creature stirred, not even the chirp of a chaffinch broke the oppressive stillness, save the occasional death. But he had no time to take note of such matters; besides, the solitude of a deer forest was familiar to him. He held along by the hill top, sometimes having to stoop under sharp little gullies and clamber up again, until far below him, he came in sight of Lynn Towers, and the bridge, and the stream, and the loch; and onward still he kept his way, until the stream came in view, with All-nam-ba and a pale blue smoke rising from the chimneys into the still evening air. Probably Yolande had got home by that time; perhaps she might be out and walking round the place, or sitting on the dogs in the kennel, and so forth. So he kept rather back from the edge of the hill-top, so that he should not be discovered, and in due time arrived at a point overlooking the junction of three gullies, down one of which the shooting party, if they had not already reached the lodge, were almost certain to come.

He looked and waited, however, in vain; and he was coming to the conclusion that they must have already passed and gone on to the lodge, when he fancied he saw something more behind some birch bushes on the hill-side beyond the gully. Presently he made out that it was—a pony grazing, and gradually coming more into view, until he reflected that the pony could not be there for any purpose; that probably the attendant gillie and the paniers were hidden from sight behind those birches and that the shooting party, the shooting party had not returned, and were bound to come back that way. A very few minutes of further waiting proved his conjectures to be right; a scattered group of people, with dogs in hand, appeared on the crest of the hill opposite. Then he had no further doubt. Down this slope he went at heading speed, crossing the rushing burn by springing from boulder to boulder, scrambled up through the thick brush-wood and heather of the opposite bank, and very soon encountered the returning party, who were now watching the paniers being put on the pony's back.

Now that he had intercepted Mr. Winterbourne, there was no need for hurry. He could take time to recover his breath, and also to bask himself as he should approach this difficult matter; and then, when he had done so, he would be able to give his wish those who were to be made acquainted with it. He had come on any important errand. And so the conversation, as the pony was being loaded was all about the day's sport. They had had a very well, it appeared; the birds had not been wild, and there was no sign of packing; they had got a couple of teal and a golden plover, which was something of a variety; also they had had the satisfaction of seeing a large eagle—about the Dunoon declared to be a Golden Eagle—attain unusually close quarters.

Then they set out for home; Duncan and the gillies making away for a sort of ford by which Water, while the three others took a nearer way to the lodge by getting down through a gully to the Corrie-an-ich, where there was a swing-bridge across the burn. When they had got to the bridge, Melville stopped him.

"I am not going on with you to the lodge," said he. "Mr. Winterbourne, I have seen your daughter this afternoon. She is not well, and I am anxious, and I thought I'd come along and have a word with you. I hope you will forgive me for thrusting myself in where I may not be wanted; but—but it is not always the right thing to press by on the other side." Melville, in this case, was the other side. "I can assure you are most thankful to you for what you have done already."

Yolande's father said, promptly; and then he added, with a weary look in his face, "and what you have done for me, I don't know. I can not bring myself to think that Leslie demands. It is too terrible. I look at the girl—well, it does not bear speaking of." "Look here," Winterbourne said. "John Shortlands said, 'I am going to leave you two together. I will wait for you on the other side. But I would advise you to listen well to anything that Mr. Melville has to say; I have my own guess.'"

With that he proceeded to make his way across the narrow and swaying bridge, leaving these two alone. "What I want to know, first of all," Mr. Winterbourne said, "is whether you are certain that the Master will insist? Why should he? How could it matter to him? I thought we had done everything, and he let him know. Why should Yolande know? Why make her miserable to end? Look what has been done to keep this knowledge from her all through these years; and you can see the result in the gaily of her forehead. Would she like to be like that if she had known—if she had always

been thinking of one who ought to be near her, and perhaps blaming herself for holding aloof from her? She would have been quite different; she would have been in the saddle by this time; whereas she has never known what care was. Mr. Melville, you are my friend; you know him better than any of us. Don't you think there is some chance of reasoning with him, and inducing him to forego this demand? It seems so hard."

The suffering that this man was undergoing was terrible. His questions were almost a cry of entreaty, and Jack Melville could scarcely bring himself to answer in what he well knew to be the truth. "I can not deceive you," he said, after a second. "There is no doubt that Leslie will make up on the point. When I undertook to carry his message, he more than once repeated his clear decision."

"But why? What end will it serve? How could it matter to them—living away from London? How could they be harmed?" "Mr. Winterbourne," said the other, with something of a clear emphasis, "when I reported Leslie's decision to Mr. Shortlands, he was asked to refuse to defend it—or to attack it for that matter—and I would rather not do so now. What I might think right in the same case, what you might think right, does not much matter. I told Mr. Shortlands that perhaps we did not know everything that might lead to such a decision; Leslie has not been on good terms with his father and aunt, and he thinks he is being badly used. There may be other things; I do not know."

"And how do we know that it will suffice?" the other said. "How do we know that it will satisfy him and his people? Are we to inflict all this pain and sorrow on the girl, and then wait to see whether that is enough?" "It is not what I would do," said Jack Melville, who had not come here for nothing. "What would you do, then? Can you suggest anything?" he father said, eagerly. "Ah, you little know how we should value any one who could remove this thing from us!"

"What! I will tell you. I would go to that girl, and I would see how much of the woman is in her; I think you will find enough. I would say to her, 'There is your father; that is the man who has sunk into through those accursed dunes. Every means has been tried to save her without avail—to every means save one. It is for you to go to her—yourself alone. Who knows what restoration of Mr. Shortlands may not arise within her when it is her own daughter who stands before her and appeals to her—when it is her own daughter who will be by her side during the long struggle? That is your duty as a daughter; will you do it?' If I know the girl, you will not have to say more."

The wretched man opposite seemed to recoil from him in dismay. "Good God!" he muttered, and there was a sound of clanking, vague terror in his face. Melville stood silent and calm, awaiting an answer. "It is the suggestion of a devil," said this man, who was quite aghast, and seemed scarcely to comprehend the whole thing just yet, "or else of an angel; why—"

"It is the suggestion neither of a devil nor an angel," said Melville, calmly, "but of a man who has read a few medical books." The other with the half-horror-stricken look in the eyes, seemed to be thinking hard of all that might happen; and his two hands clasped together over his forehead, as if he were resting on the ground, or something of the kind. "Oh, it is impossible—impossible!" he cried at length. "It is inhuman. You have not thought of it sufficiently. My girl is going through that!—have you any other plan, you are proposing to subject her to?"

"I have considered," Jack Melville said (perhaps with a passing qualm; for there was a pathetic cry in this man's voice), "and I have thought of it sufficiently. I hope you will not have dared to make the suggestion without the most anxious consideration."

"And you would subject Yolande to that?" "No," said the other. "I would not. I would not subject her to anything; I would put the case before her, and I know what her own answer would be. I don't think any one would have to use prayers and entreaties. I don't think it would be necessary to try such persuasion. I say this—put the case before her, and I will stake my head that her decision will be—yes, and before you have finished your story!"

"And she will not be afraid." "She seemed to have a very profound conviction of his knowledge of this girl's nature; and there was a kind of pride in the way he spoke of her." "But why alone?" pleaded the father—he seemed to be imagining all kinds of things with those haggard eyes. "I would not have the mental shock lessened by the presence of any one. I would have no possible suspicion of a trap, a bait, a temptation. I would have it between these two daughters; and then, when the experiment should be tried at all—is to prevent suspicion in the poor woman's mind. I would have no third person. It should be a matter between the two women themselves; and Yolande must insist on seeing her mother alone."

"Insist! Yes, and insist with two such wretches as those Romfords? Why, the man might insult her; he might lay hands on her, and force her out of the house." Melville's pale, dark face grew darker at this, and his eyes had a sudden sharp fire in them. "She must have a policeman waiting outside," he said, curtly. "And her maid must go inside with her, but not necessarily into the room." "And then?" "Then," said Mr. Winterbourne, before his hand was raised to stop her, "I would have her go to her mother away with her, that is all."

you have thought of everything," the father murmured. "Well, let us see what Shortlands says. It is a terrible risk. I am not hopeful myself. The thing is, it is to be fair to all such a distress and suffering on the girl on such a remote chance?" "You must judge that," said Melville. "You asked me what I would do. I have told you."

Mr. Winterbourne was about to step on to the bridge, across which only one could go at a time, when he suddenly turned back, and said, with some earnest emphasis, to the younger man: "Do not imagine that because I hesitate, I think any the less of your thoughtfulness. Not many would have risked as much. Whatever happens, I know what your intentions were toward us. He took Melville's hand for a moment and pressed it. "And I thank you for her sake and for my own. May God bless you!"

When they got to the other side they found John Shortlands seated on a boulder of granite, smoking a cigar. He was not much startled by this proposal. He had not much to say, but a thing of the kind to him, in an interjectional sort of fashion, some time before, and he had given it a brief but rather unfavorable consideration. Now, when they talked the matter over, it appeared that he stood about midway between these two, having neither the eager enthusiasm of Jack Melville nor yet the utter hopelessness of his friend Winterbourne.

"If you think it is worth trying, try it," he said, coolly. "It can't do harm. If Yolande is to know, she may as well know to some end. Other things have been tried, and failed; this might not. The shock might bring her to her senses. Anyhow, don't you see, if you once tell Yolande all about it, I rather fancy she will be dissatisfied unless she has made a trial." "That is what I am certain of," Melville said, quickly. "If you would consent to leave it to herself. Only the girl must have some guidance."

"Surely, surely," said John Shortlands, considering your plan very carefully laid out—if I might say so. The only other way is to leave Yolande in her present happy ignorance; and tell the Master of Lynn, and his father, and his aunt, and whatever of her relations he has, to go to the devil."

"Shortlands," said Mr. Winterbourne angrily, "this is a serious thing; it is not to be settled in your free-and-easy way. I suppose you wouldn't mind bringing on Yolande the mortification of being jilted? How could you explain to her? She would be left without a word. And I fear she is beginning to be anxious already. Poor child, whichever way it goes, she will have enough to suffer from it."

"I should not mind so much which way it goes," said John Shortlands, bluntly, "if only somebody would take the Master of Lynn by the scruff of the neck, and kicking him, send a bottle of Kendall's Spavin Cure to the house of All-nam-ba-bridge to Foyager. 'Come, come,' said Melville (though he was by much the youngest of these three), "the less said is the better. What you want is to make the best of things, not to stir up the party. For my part, I regard Miss Winterbourne's engagement to Mr. Leslie as a secondary matter—at this present moment; consider her first duty is to her mother; and I am pretty sure you will find that will be her opinion when you put the facts of the case before her. Yes; I am pretty certain of that."

"And who would undertake to tell her?" her father said. "Who could face the suffering, the shame, and the see in her eyes? Who would dare suggest to her that she, so tenderly cared for all her life, should go away and encounter these horrors?" "There is no one," said Melville, slowly. "I will do it. If you think it right—if it will give you pain to speak to her—let me speak to her." "You?" said her father. "Why should you undertake what you should not have to bear that?"

"Oh," said he, "my share in the common trouble would be slight. Besides, I have not the right to refuse when one has the chance of lending a hand, don't you understand, it is a kind of gratification. I know it will not be pleasant, except for one thing—I am looking forward to her answer; and I know what it will be."

"But, really," her father said, with some hesitation, "it is fair we should put this on you? It is a great sacrifice to ask from one who has so recently been in his efforts, and in action as it does not seem to be penetrating and powerful to reach every depressed part, or to remove any other or other congenialities, such as spavin, splints, curbs, ringbones, callosities, swellings, and all the various ailments of the joints or limbs, or for rheumatism in man or for any purpose for which it is used, and is the best. It is now known to be the best of its kind for use, acting mildly and yet certain in its effects."

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Respectfully yours, P. V. CRIST. EXECUTOR OF LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF Alex. Frost Deceased. JAMES ROBINSON, Solicitor to Executor.

General Business. NEW BRUNSWICK, Oct. 28th, 1883. Mr. F. H. McCallum, Dear Sir:—The bottle of Kendall's Spavin Cure, bought of you last summer, has effected a complete cure of a spavin on the fore leg of a yearling yearling mare upon a mare nineteen years of age, belonging to me, which was entirely gone after using half a bottle of the cure, and she is like a young horse again.

From the Oneonta Press, N. Y. ONEWONTA, N. Y., Jan. 6th, 1883. Early last summer Messrs. B. J. Kendall & Co., of Enosburg, N. Y., sent me a bottle of their "Kendall's Spavin Cure" for a trial. I used it on a spavin on the fore leg of a yearling yearling mare upon a mare nineteen years of age, belonging to me, which was entirely gone after using half a bottle of the cure, and she is like a young horse again.

General Business. COL. L. T. FOSTER. YOCUMSTOWN, OHIO, May 10th, 1880. Dr. B. J. Kendall & Co., Gents.—I had a very bad case of spavin on one of my horses, which I had a large bone spavin on one joint of his leg. I had him under the care of two veterinary surgeons who failed to cure him. I was one day in the city of Enosburg, N. Y., and saw a bottle of Kendall's Spavin Cure in the window of a drug store. I bought a bottle and used it on my horse, and he was cured. I have since used it on several other horses, and it has cured them all. I have since used it on several other horses, and it has cured them all.

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