

# Tried for His Life;

## WITHIN THE SHADOW OF THE SCAFFOLD.

By MAJOR JAMES FRAK IN FITTS.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### WHAT SHE SAW IN THE NIGHT.

To others in that house the failure of the Captain Courtenay to arrive on the evening of the third seemed a trivial circumstance. His trunk had come; the hour appointed for the wedding was still twenty-four hours off; he had probably been subjected to some small delay, and would come in ample time. And whether he came or not, the matter was regarded with much indifference by all but the housekeeper and the ser-

vant. The housekeeper and the servant no doubt wished the wedding to proceed, as they had been put to a great deal of trouble about it; but the feeling of the people who like to participate in a show, and all wished her to be there. She had been told, and she had seen, that the bridegroom was well known, and that there had been much whispering and talk about the affair as to how the wedding was likely to end.

Blanche Pembroke her lover's failure to arrive promptly at nightfall, as he had promised, was a serious thing. She declined to come down to supper. She heard the house shut up, the usual locking and barring of doors, and felt the silence that followed, when all but she were wrapped in sleep.

But she could not sleep. Fears of harm or mishap to him she loved better than all the world besides possessed her. The circumstances of her engagement had, as it were, left her alone with him. Her father's tardy and reluctant consent, her sister's open disapproval, had, in a way, alienated both Ralph and herself from them. She felt that by the step she was taking she might be severing herself from home and relatives, and she was willing—O, how willing!—to go anywhere, to do anything, with him, with him! But if accident had happened to him?—if his horse had thrown and fallen on him?—if he were to be brought to her dead or dying?—then what would life be worth to her?

She had lain down on the outside of her bed, dressed as she was, and tried to sleep. The effort was useless; her fears, her love, her boundless longings banished rest from her eyelids.

She rose, threw on a shawl, and seated herself by the window. She raised it, she softly unclasped the blinds.

The sky was cloudy; a star glimmered faintly here and there. Her chamber looked out upon the river. There was a wide stretch of lawn between the house and the water, much of which was visible to her as she sat there.

The air was chill, but she heeded it not. She sat with her hands clasped on the window-sill, intently gazing out. The highway ran in rear of the house; when Ralph should come, she knew he would, as usual, come round to the front, and enter by the great door.

The things of which she was now to speak, the sights which Blanche Pembroke in those night hours saw—or thought she saw—are of the kind that are variously treated by men. By some, doubted, by others scoffed at, what can we say of them except to repeat the words of the witness herself, as she uttered them again and again, to all who wished to talk of these things, until her dying day?

"No," she was wont to say, "I did not dream. I was looking out upon the lawn, wide awake, eagerly expecting Ralph. I saw them; they passed before my sight, I know not what they were, but I plainly saw them."

This is what she saw: A broad pebbled walk led down to the river-bank from the front porch. From the end of the house, between some trees that grew there, a figure came slowly across the lawn and reached the front walk. It was the figure of a man. The dress was disordered, the head bare, the hair tumbled. She recognized the figure; it was that of Ralph Courtenay.

She gazed from the window; she was wont to say that this act, perfectly remembered by her, was proof positive that she was awake. She was about to speak his name—when, as the figure slowly walked down to the water, the face was turned up to her, over the shoulder. His face; but O, how troubled, how sad it looked!

Yet she might have called to him, but at that instant another figure came in view, coming from the same direction, and following directly after the first. This was also a man's figure. The clothes were threadbare and dusty, but this one she knew. She shuddered to recognize him, for it was Robert Barnwell, whom of all men she feared and hated.

And he, walking toward the river, also turned his livid, passion-distorted face up to her. She shuddered, but could not look away. A nameless fascination held her, she continued to look.

She saw the first figure reach the edge of the bank. It turned about. The hand of the other was shaken toward it. Then the first disappeared toward the edge, and slowly followed. The second went the same way. The watcher fell on her knees there by the window. She did not reason, then as to whether this might be a vision, a reality, or a dream. She knew that Ralph was in danger. She knew that Ralph through the peril had been made known to her by the evidence of her own eyes. Perhaps it had been; she knew not as to that. These appearances portended she could not tell, but her heart gave her the warning—he is in danger! And on her knees she prayed for him, and asked God to keep him safe to her.

She knew not how long she prayed, how long she was awake. With the dawn she awoke. On the

"You look like a ghost," she said, "I have had such dreams. I have been so frightened about you. Is it you—really?" She held him off from her, with both hands on his shoulders. His dress, the fatigue uniform of a line officer, was neat and tidy; his face, though pale and worn, was smiling. He looked as she might expect he would look.

"You don't deserve to be let in," she pouted, "after scaring me so. Where have you been?" "My poor Mirabel fell lame some miles above here, and I had to see him well stabled and cared for. I have walked fifteen miles to reach you since then."

"You have—for me? You dear fellow! What's that ugly scratch on your cheek?" "Where I fell when the horse stumbled, I suppose."

She leaned on his shoulder. "O Ralph! I am so glad you have come!" "None others were near to hear the sound of a kiss."

### CHAPTER IX.

#### A BOLT FROM A CLEAR SKY.

The new day, the day whose eve would bring the wedding, was ushered in as gracefully by Nature as though she had regarded that event. The atmosphere was of that heavy mildness peculiar to the month. The breeze was as gay with ocean and river craft, as though it were joining in the festivities. All the preparations were made—nothing but joy and pleasure was anticipated.

The arrangements contemplated a dinner of guests were expected to appear. The wedding was to take place at six; at eight the bride and groom were to take the baronet's carriage for London.

At the breakfast-table all went well. Captain Courtenay briefly explained the reason of his delay, and his explanation was accounted sufficient. Sir Roger conversed with him, and seemed rather pleased with his son-in-law to be.

Even haughty Miss Isabel unbent a little, and after some interchange of talk, bestowed approving glances on the bright and handsome Captain.

From breakfast to dinner Blanche was in her chamber, with occasional fittings out to speak to Ralph. Miss Isabel was taking some faint interest in the proceedings; it rather seemed to her, now that the presence of the Captain had sharply brought the matter to her attention, that even the daughter of a baronet might make a much worse match than to marry this young Captain of artillery.

And since she must be his sister-in-law, why, it might be well to make the best of it. The Captain refused luncheon; he said he was not hungry. But it was plainly to be seen that he was uneasy and restless.

"What's the matter with you, man?" asked Sir Roger, coming out on the piazza, plethoric from his indulgence at the lunch-table. "You look down-in-the-mouth. Damme, but that's not the way the man ought to look who's going to marry my daughter! What's the matter, my lad? Doesn't promotion come fast enough? Wait a bit, till you're Blanche Pembroke's husband, and if you don't hear from the War Office with a Major's rank, then I'm no prophet."

"You are very kind, sir," replied the Captain. "I appreciate your kind intentions, and shall be very happy to avail myself of your influence in my behalf. If I appear depressed and out of spirits at present, I assure you that the feeling proceeds only from the annoyances and discomforts of the past night. A man can't have a favorite horse crippled on the road, and then be compelled to walk fifteen miles, without feeling a little weary and out of sorts. I am trying not to show it, sir; it will soon pass off."

The explanation was satisfactory to Sir Roger. We need not linger over unimportant details; we will at once go forward to the hour of two, when a glad dinner-party, preliminary to the wedding, was gathered around the baronet's table. There were twenty guests, all arranged in full costume. Sir Roger was at the head of the table, smiling and rosy; Miss Isabel opposite, brilliant with her dark beauty, and with all the advantage that satin, diamonds and pearls could give her; Captain Courtenay was there, looking so handsome in his full scarlet uniform and gold cord that some of the ladies envied Blanche, who sat by his side, proud, happy, and certainly very beautiful.

Then there were members of the neighboring country families. There was a bishop, a retired general, and their wives, a judge and his wife, and some young people of Blanche's acquaintance.

A formal dinner of this kind is long protracted. Some of the guests probably ate of every course; the bride and groom to be, sufficient each to the other, ate little but whispered much. Five o'clock came while the dessert was on the table. As the timepiece on the mantel chimed the hour Miss Isabel made a hurried sign to her father, which he at once understood.

He rose with a glass of sherry in his hand and rapped on the table with his knife-handle for attention. The conversation that had been buzzing about the board was at once suspended, and all the guests looked toward the baronet.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I am admonished that other guests are arriving, and that a certain ceremony that was set for six o'clock is near at hand. Before we leave this table I wish to give you all a sentiment, in which I know you will join me. First, you will all agree that there is nothing more honorable for a true-born Englishman than to be engaged in the military or naval service of his King. This realm is propped by the gallant arms of our soldiers and sailors; all honor to them! I have to propose at present the health of the bridegroom of this evening, who has already shown his worth as a soldier, and who is soon to start on distant, perhaps dangerous service. Gentlemen and ladies, I give you the health of—"

There was a sudden stir and bustle at the door. It was so loud that it drew the attention of the guests from Sir Roger. The latter put down his glass, and angrily asked, "what the devil is all that racket?"

"I beg your pardon, Sir Roger," said one of several men who crowded the doorway. "I have just heard that the

"Yes, the Master of the county. My business is with Captain Courtenay." The Captain rose from his chair, pale but firm. Blanche followed him.

In the hall leading to the dining-room the Captain found not only the Sheriff but two other officers, and Dick Ryder. The guests rose from the table; they thronged the doorway, and peered over each other's shoulders. Blanche Pembroke being near the front.

"Captain Courtenay," said the Sheriff, "my duty is disagreeable, but must be done. You were at the Red Lion inn last night?" "Yes."

"In advance of the issue of a warrant, I take the responsibility of arresting you."

"For what?" "For the murder of Robert Barnwell."

### CHAPTER X.

#### A WOMAN'S STEADFAST HEART.

The scene ensuing at Pembroke Villa upon this terrible announcement may be passed over. The amazement of guests, the rage of the baronet, the cold, unsympathetic bearing of Miss Isabel, the struggle of the accused to maintain his composure and to comfort and reassure the bride from whom he was so suddenly and so harshly snatched—these are things that may not be described. No pen could do them justice; we leave them to be imagined.

Ralph Courtenay was conveyed to the county jail at Chelmsford, whence, in a few days, he was taken before a magistrate to be examined. Here he was represented by counsel; but so strong a case was made out against him that he was committed to jail to await his trial at the Essex Assizes, to be held at Chelmsford the first of November.

"Prosperity makes friends; adversity tries them." Most strikingly did Captain Courtenay, standing now under an indictment for murder, have cause to verify in his own experience this proverb.

The newspapers of that day—the "gazettes," as they were called—were full and scanty of news. But Captain Courtenay's case was briefly heralded by them, far and wide. The imperfect outline of the affair given in them was usually summed up with an unfavorable opinion as to the accused. It was asserted that the officers of his regiment were not outspoken in the avowal of his innocence.

And this was certainly true. Popular among his set while fortune and prosperity favored him, our hero was made to feel with the utmost keenness the sting of ingratitude and weak friendship, now that he most needed friends. A few of the subalterns, who loved him for his sterling worth, and steadily refused to believe in the dreadful charge against him, stood staunchly by him, visited him in jail, and gave him aid and comfort.

But the great majority of his brother officers refused to see him, and stood coldly aloof at this time, when mere sympathy was golden.

"A demotion awkward affair," lisped the Honorable Algernon Desmond, a Lieutenant of the same regiment. "Courtenay is a good fellow; but they may hang him, you know; and how awkward it would be to know a fellow that was hung! And then, you know, if he is hung, it will make another vacancy for one of us subs. O, yes; a bad case!"

The gazettes also stated that the excellent matrimonial prospects of the accused were summarily ended by this accusation, that his prospective father-in-law, Sir Roger P—, had commanded that the engagement be broken off, which would doubtless be done.

It was not done. And this record, which tells of man's endurance and suffering, must speak also of woman's fidelity, and show how Blanche Pembroke clung to the man she loved, though home and friends—aye, and at last, as it seemed, the whole world—rose up against him.

The first of November was fast approaching; it was now the middle of October. Blanche, pale and thin, but bearing up heroically against her crushing sorrow, was one afternoon summoned by her father to the library. She found him there, and Isabel, cold and scornful.

"My child," began the baronet, with a kindness in his voice which he no doubt felt, "it has become necessary for us to talk plainly to you about this distressing affair of Captain Courtenay. I had hoped that you would have seen, long ere this, the propriety of sundering all relations with him. But I have learned," and a glance at Isabel showed the source of his information, "that you are regularly exchanging letters with that man—a man under accusation of murder, in Chelmsford jail, and shortly to be tried for his life. Is this true?"

Her eyes were downcast; she was collecting strength for her trial, now before her. But she bowed assent.

"Is it indeed so?" exclaimed the baronet, sternly. "I command you to cease this disgraceful correspondence at once. I order you to stop all communication with that man, instantly. Will you obey me?"

She raised her eyes, and looked from sneering sister to passionate father. "He is my betrothed," she said. "He has done nothing wrong. He could not commit a crime! I will cleave to him."

"I believe him guilty, on what I have heard," said Sir Roger, succeeding for the moment in smothering his temper. "Whether he is or not, has nothing to do with the treatment that you must give him. I do not choose that the affianced of my daughter shall be locked up in the public jail, charged with crime. Just that is a disgrace which I cannot tolerate. I command you to give him up."

"To Chelmsford—to him." And there she went. The stage took her and her trunk to the county seat that afternoon. At the turn of the road she cast a last look back upon the villa, the place of her birth, the beautiful home of her childhood and maidenhood. Tears filled her eyes at the thought, "I shall never look upon it again."

Ah, sweet heroine! patient, courageous one—you little knew the vast possibilities of the future!

### CHAPTER XI.

#### AT THE MOUTH OF THE PIT.

With a distant relative of her mother at Chelmsford, a benevolent Quakeress who had lived almost alone for years, doing deeds of charity with the competence she had, Blanche found a welcome and hospitable refuge. As was her wont, Mrs. Grayson warmly enlisted herself in the cause of the accused; not only because he was the betrothed of her fair young relative, but because he was under accusation for crime. Her generous heart ever went out in pity for the afflicted and the sorely burdened, and her aid, advice, and comfort were precious to the lovers in this fearful crisis.

She went up to London herself and retained one of the foremost sergeants of the bar to defend Captain Courtenay. The advocate came to Chelmsford, visited Ipswich, Colchester, the Red Lion Inn, and even Pembroke Villa, and with professional precision, re-enforced by a real interest in his unfortunate client, and admiration for the distress and fidelity of Blanche, he worked zealously in the preparation of the defense.

As the first of November drew near public curiosity and interest in this extraordinary case reached almost a fever-heat.

Great crimes, capital trials, and executions for murder were plenty enough at that day, when the law was administered in a savage spirit of vengeance and persecution, and when the mere fact of a public accusation went very far to establish guilt; but the victims were usually of the lower class, often the depraved, the debased and the ignorant, who were commonly considered the enemies of society.

But here was an officer in his Majesty's service, whose associations had been with the best people in Essex, to be tried for a murder charged to have been committed under such circumstances, and with such plotting and deliberation, as to evidence a cruelty that criminal annals had not yet shown.

The excitement increased. A mild interest was aroused by the story of Blanche Pembroke's unswerving faith in the accused, and her abandonment of a luxurious and aristocratic home to be near him; but the prevalent feeling among the people was a desire to look at the man who had done the things that it was charged Captain Courtenay had done.

On some days, even before the trial began, Chelmsford was crowded with men and women who came in and hung about the jail, eager to get a peep at the prisoner. Not only were they the common people, but ladies and gentlemen swayed the number, and pushed and shooed with the others.

Captain Courtenay's regiment had embarked for India. It was said, and many believed, the report that the Colonel wished to have him cashiered at once, before he had been condemned, and when all the presumptions of the law were in favor of his innocence.

This was but one specimen of the heartless indifference to the fate of a brave and accomplished officer that was exhibited at that time; but the Honorable Algernon Desmond and other sprigs of the aristocracy were pressing for promotion, and the hateful spirit of kicking a man when he is down, old as the world, was again exemplified.

After the few officers of the departing regiment who still believed in their comrade, and hoped for his deliverance, had bidden him an affecting farewell, there were very few left to befriend him. Who, indeed, but Blanche, the good Mrs. Grayson, and his hired advocate?

Without saying anything of his intentions, the latter had determined to have an interview with Sir Roger Pembroke, and try to enlist him in the desperate cause of his client.

The advocate was a man of large acquaintance, as well as influence, and was well known to the baronet. He was cordially received at the villa, and being a bachelor and in the line of promotion to the nobility and a judgeship, Miss Isabel treated him as graciously as did her father. But the mention of his errand instantly cast a chill over both.

"The person you mention is nothing whatever to me," replied the Baronet. "Excuse me, Sir Roger; he has been something to you, and I believe you to be too generous and chivalrous a man to wholly desert Captain Courtenay when he is surely in need of your friendship. Your admirable daughter, Miss Blanche—"

"Do not mention her, sir! She has chosen for herself, and must abide by her choice. She also is nothing to me!"

"You shock and distress me," said Mr. Lascelle. "Miss Isabel will not you speak for this man—for your own sister?"

"Sir Roger has uttered my sentiments," was her reply.

The advocate rose to go, politely concealing his anger and irritation.

"I regret to refuse you anything," said the baronet, apologetically. "But if I were inclined to manifest any sympathy in a public way—and I certainly am not—I suppose it would do no good. The fellow—that is, Captain Courtenay—is sure to be convicted, if one-half that I hear of the shocking case is true."

"It was kind of you, sir," said Blanche; "but I could have told you in advance that your errand would result in no good. You got not so much as a word of kindness for him—or for me."

The lawyer shook his head. "The Captain's courage bore up wonderfully; but there were times when his heart failed him in view of his awful position."

"The whole world is against me!" he passionately cried. Blanche went to him and laid her hand on his shoulder.

"Not all of it, Ralph," she softly said. He looked up to her steadfast face. "O, my darling," he cried, "to what wretchedness am I dooming you? You have sacrificed everything for me—home, father, sister, friends. And because you cling to me in these dark hours the miserable rabble out in the common jail there, and upon the street, too, as I hear, make your name a byword, and utter coarse jests—the vile wretches when you come in here to visit me."

She looked calmly at his face, quivering with emotion. "I never will desert you, Ralph," she answered. "They may say what they will."

"The good Quakeress came and spoke a few words to them in a low voice. The girl's cheek colored. The Captain looked astonished.

"That would be too much to ask," he said. "It is not too much to ask," she answered. "I am ready."

He could not restrain himself. He caught her in his arms. In after years, when Mr. Lascelle had become a judge, and his experience in human suffering and in human depravity and nobility had broadened, he was wont to cite the scene that then occurred in Chelmsford jail as the grandest exhibition of woman's fidelity that he had ever known.

Because the governor of the jail and the chaplain were sent for, and this man, under the shadow of the gallows, and this girl, willing to face the world and its sneers that she might still be with him and comfort him, were married.

"O woman! Well has one of the most gifted of the sex since sung of thee: 'She, white discipline shrank, could danger brave, / Sat at the cross, and sat at the grave.'"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

### MARKET PRICES.

New York Quotations for Produce of Various Kinds.

BUTTER.—State dairy, fancy, per lb.	26
State dairy, fair, per lb.	23
Eastern Creamery, fancy, per lb.	26
Western, fair to good, per lb.	22
Wheat, choice, per lb.	24
Elgin Creamery, new, fancy, per lb.	27
Western Creamery, new, fancy, per lb.	27
Western Creamery, new, choice, per lb.	26
Factory, fresh, choice, per lb.	20
BEANS AND PEAS.—Beans, mar., choice.	2.25
Beans, pea, choice.	1.80
Beans, medium, choice.	2.00
Beans, red kidney, choice.	2.65
Beans, Lima, California, per 100 lb.	1.70
Green Peas, foreign, per bushel.	1.50
CHEESE.—State Factory, large fancy.	11 1/2
State Factory, small fancy, lb.	12
State Factory, part skims, per lb.	6
State Factory, full skims, per lb.	2 1/2
DRIED FRUITS, ETC.—Apples, svap, fcy	11
Apples, sun dried, per lb.	15
Artichokes, California, per lb.	11
Raspberries, evaporated, per lb.	17
Peaches, svap, p.e.d., per lb.	13
Coconuts, per lb.	9
Chestnuts, Northern, 60 lb.	2.85
Chestnuts, Southern, 60 lb.	2.25
Pistons, Southern, 60 lb.	8
Hickory Nut, new, 50 lb.	1.00
Peanuts, shelled, Spanish, lb.	8
Eggs.—Western, fancy, per doz.	25
Eastern, lined, per doz.	18
Western, each use, choice, per doz.	20
FRUITS.—Apples, Greening, per bbl.	3.75
Apples, Baldwin, per bbl.	3.75
Apples, ordinary, per bbl.	1.25
Cranberries, Cap, per bbl.	6.50
Cranberries, N. A. crate.	1.50
Grapes, Concord, 5 lb.	11
Oranges, Florida, bright, per box.	2.00
Oranges, Florida, average, per box.	1.65
HAY AND STRAW.—Hay, No. 1, per 100 lb.	90
Hay, Clover, mixed.	70
Hay, Salt.	50
Hay, shipping.	70
Long Bay Straw.	50
Short Bay Straw.	50
Chop Straw.	50
Wheat Straw.	50
POULTRY, ETC.—Western Geese, per pair	1.30
Fowls, Western, State and Pa., per lb.	8 1/2
Booster, old, per lb.	5
Dressed Philadelphia chickens, per lb.	13
Dressed Western fowls.	8
Dressed Turkey, prime.	11
Turkeys, fancy, per lb.	13
Ducks, Del. & Mo., per lb.	13
Wild Ducks, canvas, pair.	2.00
Wild Ducks, redhead, pair.	1.50
Partridges, State, per pair.	1.93
English Snipe, per dozen.	1.60
Quail, Southern, per doz.	1.75
VEGETABLES.—Celery, fancy, per doz.	65
Cabbage, Dutch, per 100.	3.90
Potatoes, Southern N. J., per bbl.	1.75
Onions, State and Pa., per bbl.	1.65
Onions, Conn., per bbl.	1.75
Sweet Potatoes, N. J., per doz. bbl.	3.00
Turnips, Russian, N. J., per case.	85
String Beans, Southern, per crate.	2.00
Tomatoes, Florida, per bushel.	1.30
Lettuce, New Orleans, per bbl.	3.50
SUGARS.—Maple Sugar, prime, per lb.	1 1/2
Honey, white clover, per lb.	14
Honey, buckwheat, per lb.	11
Maple Syrup, per gallon can.	70
Beeswax, Western, pure, per lb.	25

Big Fire at Minneapolis. MINNEAPOLIS, Minn., Jan. 15.—Another bad fire ravaged the Syndicate block on Nicollet avenue, for the third time in its history yesterday afternoon, entailing a loss of \$113,000. The origin of the fire is unknown as at its discovery it had enveloped the entire rear portion of the building.

Adverse Report on Harrison. WASHINGTON, Jan. 12.—The senate committee on commerce has ordered an adverse report on the nomination of J. Scott Harrison, brother of ex-President Harrison, nominated Dec. 12 last to be surveyor of customs at Kansas City.

Hornblower's Nomination. WASHINGTON, Jan. 11.—The senate in executive session will to-day consider the nomination of Mr. Hornblower as Mr. President's ambassador to the court of St. James. It is believed that the nomination will be confirmed.