"LIFE MUST OBEY THE PRINCIPLES OF MATHEMATICS"

A Fearsome Riddle

BY

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TO BETTIE
AND
JAMES S. BARCUS

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That great mystery of TIME, were there no other; the illimitable, silent, never-resting thing called time, rolling, rushing on, swift, silent, like an all-embracing ocean-tide, on which we and all the universe swim like exhalations, like apparitions which ARE, *and then* ARE NOT: *this is forever very literally a miracle; a thing to strike us dumb,—for we have no word to speak about it.*

CARLYLE.

11-12-04

A Fearsome Riddle

CHAPTER ONE

The thing arose in this way.

"I know very well that no time nor place thinks itself romantic," said the judge one winter night as the three of us—himself, Doctor Robinson, and I—were coming into the former's study from the dining-room, where we had been discussing the "crimes of fiction," as Doctor Robinson expressed it. He had maintained that the product of no profession so unfitted people for life as that of the romantic *littérateur*.

"We live in a world," he said, dropping

into an easy chair before the crackling grate fire, "which moves according to law; there is no wild and weird romance here; everything has an explanation and will some day be explained—even human nature is not hap-hazard. Then what romance can there be in this humdrum of daily existence?"

"I agree," said the judge, drawing at a cigar, "that the world moves according to law, and that everything, as you say, has an explanation. I believe that thoroughly. But I say also that life is not humdrum, that in some of its phases it is marvelous and mysterious."

"You novelists," laughed the doctor—for the judge had twice appeared in book form—"have no regard for truth. You

create continents, nations, kings, and characters the like of which never did—never could exist."

"Very well," said the judge meditatively, "it isn't necessary, according to my notion of fiction, to do that; people as they are, are interesting enough.

"If I were younger," he continued, "there is one piece of work I should like to do. It is a case of life which came under my observation, and I know the facts. It is real life—no fiction in it, doctor; yet it is as strange in some ways as if Haggard, Doyle, Weyman, or some other of those English clinical fellows had written it. It's a long story; but some night when we have time, I'll tell it." The judge walked to the other side of the

room, and taking some things out of a drawer, placed them on the table. "These are some of the traps that belong to the case."

There were an ordinary blue-covered blankbook; a roll of manuscript apparently; a bottle half full of chloroform (I could smell the stuff!); some morphine; a small, silver-mounted, glass-barreled instrument with a long sharp point; a letter; and some scraps of paper.

"A hypodermic needle," said the doctor examining the instrument.

"Yes," answered the judge. "Look at the book."

Its worn appearance could only have been the result of frequent reading and study, for there was little written there-

in. I opened it, glanced at the top of the page and read:

"ARITHMETIC AND TIME.—Arithmetic is dealing in time as geometry is in space. Thus, counting is only giving different intervals of time to the units, as, 1—1—1—1—1—1—1. But instead of saying, 1—1—1—1—1—1—1, in order to know the number of time intervals, different names are given the units as they succeed, as 1—2—3—4—5—6—7. Arithmetic is, therefore, a dealing in time. Thus an experiment in time is one in arithmetic—the lowest form of the mathematical principle. With the bodily organism we can make such temporal—therefore arithmetical—experimentations."

"What does this mean?" I asked.

The judge smiled.

Other pages were headed "The Mathematical Principle in Life." "March 16th, 1881, Experiment 21, black rat-terrier." "The Organism and the Time Progress." "The Rhythm of Unconscious Expectation with food." I gave the book to Doctor Robinson, who, looking intently at it for a few minutes, resumed his seat by the fire and began to study its pages, while the judge kept a musing silence.

"Why," said the doctor after some minutes, "this book evidently belonged to a man of science."

"Exactly," answered the judge.

"But it's a mystery to me. I can't understand what the sentences mean; yet no

insane man could have written them—they're too coherent for that."

"No, I do not think myself that he was insane; yet that is what some people said, after the whole thing became known."

"Judge," I protested, "you must give us this story now."

"It is too long to tell to-night."

"Too long!" exclaimed the doctor. "Come now, judge, it's only seven o'clock."

We settled ourselves in our armchairs; I filled my pipe, while the judge and the doctor relighted their cigars, nibbling the ends with renewed energy. The wind brushed about the house and piped down the large grate flue, while the fire popped and crackled and the shadows flickered

on the dimly lighted walls. The judge was a delightful talker, and I was glad to hear him on almost any subject.. Here is the story he told us:

CHAPTER TWO

Mr. Chauncey Rose, a pioneer in the state of Indiana, in his last will and testament, left six hundred thousand dollars as an endowment for a school of technology to be established in the city of Terre Haute. In eighteen hundred and eighty-three, six years after his death, the school was ready for operation and received its first students for instruction. Among other elections, the board of trustees called to the chair of mathematics Professor William Whitmore, a gentleman who had been teaching for some time at the University of Virginia.

Professor Whitmore, I should judge, was a man about forty years of age. He was in nowise attractive, but the plainest and most simple of men in appearance. His clothes were always dark in color, and cut after the same unornamental pattern. He was of less than medium height, slender, and a bit stoop-shouldered; so that with an additional springy motion in his knees as he walked, he appeared not a little shorter than he really was. He was smooth shaven, had a colorless face—a little sallow if anything—a pointed nose, thin lips, and large but dull and expressionless eyes.

He was strictly a man of science—quiet, methodical, curt and always to the point in his statements. As a professor,

he was somewhat of a failure. Not that he was wanting in information, for he was certainly a scholarly and a profound thinker; this was, however,—strange as it may seem,—just the trouble; he was too scholarly and too profound, always hard at work, and taking too little interest in his students, and what interest he did take in them did not extend beyond the subjects which he taught.

He never went in society, neither that of the Institution nor of the city; and so far as I knew, his only walks were to and from his classroom and the hotel, between which points he oscillated with the most precise regularity. It was, therefore, not strange that few persons knew him by sight. His name was better known, for

he had written some articles for the daily press upon subjects involving mathematics—astronomical phenomena, storms, or something of the kind—I have forgotten now just exactly what.

There was not much of the worldly man in him, that is, of affairs and business; he was more of a machine, as most all men of the exact sciences and the languages sooner or later become. But with all this, those who knew Professor Whitmore respected him very highly, for he was honest and sincere to the core. Yet above and nearly to the exclusion of all else, he was a thinker and a scholar—a man of science.

Professor Whitmore did not come to Terre Haute alone. He brought with him

a colored attendant who was known by the name of Blanchard. If Blanchard had been a white man, there would have been nothing particularly extraordinary about him; but being a negro, his almost brilliant mind, his well-bred address, his habit of constant reading, and his neat and scrupulously clean appearance, made him an object of some attraction. Though slightly bald, and perhaps even a little gray, slender and stooped like his master, yet taller, one could not say whether he was older or younger. He lacked entirely the large, coarse features and happy-go-lucky disposition of his race.

If one could have scrutinized these two men regardless of their difference

in color, there would have appeared a wonderful similarity in disposition and bodily cast which could only happen by chance once in many times, and which is more often the result of circumstances other than those which ebb and flow by the mere caprice of fortune. Blanchard, too, like the professor, was a man unto himself. Whatever other reasons there were, it is easy to understand that utter uncongeniality from an educational point of view, with perhaps some additional aristocratic notions, kept him from associating with the people of his own race.

Yet with all these likenesses, the two men were very different. Blanchard was much more animated, had a sharp, quick eye, and a mobile face, apparently capable

of expressions of intense passion. Of these the professor had nothing.

The suite of rooms which these two men occupied on the second floor of the Terre Haute House formed an angle in the northeast corner. The apex of this angle, which was the professor's study, had two doors; one leading into the room on the west, which was occupied by Blanchard, and the other leading into a neatly furnished and somewhat spacious drawing-room on the south. The professor slept in the study.

Some months after their arrival, I met Professor Whitmore through President Thompson of the Institute. I should say that I called on him three or four times that first winter, and about as often

the next year. He was not a man of whose company one could stand much. He was so particular to express exactly what was in his mind that I often felt I was perhaps demanding too much when I engaged him in conversation. Yet what he said had the rare charm of unadulterated truth—it was exactly what he meant.

As I look back on it I believe that every call I made on the professor was when I had become disgusted, during the day or week, with the endless insincerity and convention of the people with whom I had come in contact, or with myself. I used him as a sort of tonic. It was really refreshing to listen to this man; and though one could not relish much of it, it was never because it lacked

interest and depth of thought, but partly for these very reasons. He spoke pearls, and they were precious. When I asked him once, during the first year, to call on me, he said that he had not the time, but that he would be glad to see me occasionally. I did not feel piqued, I knew that what he said was the truth, he never told anything else. I was often sorry that our acquaintance must have meant little to him; for having no knowledge of higher mathematics, he knew that I could not be in sympathy with nor follow much that he might have wished to talk about. Nevertheless we had something in common: we believed in each other, and that is not the least of the things that make men congenial.

One might think, from what I have said, that Professor Whitmore was a selfish man. But he was not that at all; he was simply a scholar, and was methodical. He lived in a different world from that of the people of the street, of the trades and professions. While some sold clothing and shoes for a living, he made figures and theorized about them, partly for the same purpose perhaps, but more surely for a very much higher and less selfish motive—the love of the thing.

Truthfulness, the characteristic of all real men of science,—for one cannot long deceive one's self or the world about the laws of the universe,—he had in such a degree that it permeated his whole being; he refused to fawn upon those with whom

he came in contact, even at the risk of displeasing their falsely coddled minds. Some few met and understood him, they were the wiser and the richer therefor.

However honest, sincere, and studious he may have been, selfish he was not; where he could help, he was bounteous in his generosity. I recall a case which came within my clientage involving some mechanical engineering. I did all that inexpert knowledge could do and then went to him for help. Though he was not a mechanical engineer, he knew a great deal more than was necessary to explain all I wished to learn. It took nearly a whole day, but he gave the time more cheerfully, it seemed to me, than on occasions when I had made merely a social call. When I

left he seemed very much gratified by the thought that he had been of some service to me. Shortly after, when I sent him twenty dollars, as the fee of a skilled mechanic in the case (which I had won), he promptly returned the money, saying, "It was for our friendship."

Thus it was that my occasional personal relations with Professor Whitmore went on, though scarcely a week passed but that I thought of him. Despite our infrequent meetings, to me it was a friendship to be marked with a white stone.

CHAPTER THREE

One night well along in the month of December, eighteen hundred and eighty-five, I determined to call on the professor; I had not seen him for some time. It was my intention to stay until about a quarter past ten o'clock when I had in mind to start for the Vandalia railway station to meet my friend Doctor Skelton, who was to arrive from Indianapolis on the ten-thirty train. Since I had always been received by the professor in his own rooms, I did not send up my card but went directly upstairs and knocked at the drawing-room door. After I had waited a moment, Blanchard opened the door to

his room and looked out into the hall. I walked to where he was standing and asked whether the professor was in.

"N—ye—y—yes, sir,—but—but—he can see no one," stammered the negro.

I stood for a moment and was about to ask whether the professor was sick, but the door closed with the negro within.

I came home and read until after ten o'clock, when I took a cab for the railway station. I confess, as I thought of the conduct of the professor's negro, it appeared a bit strange.

When the train arrived I had some difficulty in finding Doctor Skelton; he was a nervous little man and moved about very rapidly. Wherever I looked, he was not to be found, but was running about some-

where else, hunting me; thus we succeeded admirably in avoiding each other until all the conveyances were gone, and we were compelled to walk home in the cold. I did not object, for I had been confined by close court work for several weeks and enjoyed the bracing atmosphere; but poor Skelton! I felt sorry for him, though he insisted he did not care at all, since the night was so bright—even beautiful.

As we passed by the side of Centenary Church approaching Seventh Street, two men came along the front at right angles to us, though somewhat ahead. We were in the shadow of the church, as were the two also, but the white background of snow was sufficient to show,

when they came to the tower side of the edifice, that one stopped abruptly and we heard him mumble something with the resolute conclusion, "I will go no farther!" When we came to the front of the church, they had moved on down the street but were only a short distance away. As we turned in the opposite direction, I looked around, for the voice of the man, aside from what he said, had something in it that attracted me.

"Why, that's Professor Whitmore and Blanchard!" I said.

"Who?" asked Skelton.

"Whitmore—Professor Whitmore." I was trying to think what Blanchard could have meant, for I realized now that it was he who had spoken.

"Well, I didn't know that man was Professor Whitmore. I have heard the name, but never knew that that was the man. They evidently don't get along very well. The one that spoke is a negro, eh?"

"Yes," I answered, "what do you think he could have meant?"

"Oh! I don't know—I don't know the connection; but I suppose he meant what he said. They have trouble occasionally—those two; and this may be another little set-to."

"I thought you said you didn't know Professor Whitmore."

"And I thought I didn't; but I know that man and that negro.

"It was this way," continued the doctor. "You remember last fall while Mrs.

Skelton was away, I had my quarters at the Terre Haute House. I told the clerk that I wanted a quiet place, and on his recommendation I took a room on the second floor in the east side of the hotel.

"It was quiet enough until one night in October; I had been out to see a patient and didn't get back till late—very late; I sat looking over the evening paper, when I thought I heard somebody talking very loud, or more likely shouting or screaming. I dropped the paper and listened. The noise came from the room next to mine. It was a choking, suppressed, passionate cry that seemed to be freeing itself, and became louder all the time; somebody was pleading and begging as if for life.

"Well, my dear judge, believe me, I did

not want to see murder committed under my very nose, for the case seemed imminent. I slipped my revolver into my pocket, (fancy me doing that!), rushed into the hall and thumped at the door next to mine. The noise stopped suddenly, the door opened, and I went in uninvited. As I started toward the negro, whom I could see through an open door, lying partly on the couch and partly on the floor, this man whom you call Professor Whitmore stood before me. He had a terrible look in his face; he undoubtedly had been beating the darkey. Well, you know, that don't go up here in this day and generation—"

"Doctor, doctor!" I interrupted, "you are certainly mistaken."

"That he had beaten the negro?"

"Yes."

"I don't think I am; of course I didn't see him do it but it looked mightily that way."

"Have you told this to anybody else?"

"No. Why?"

"It would do Professor Whitmore great injustice; it can hardly be true, —something is wrong."

We soon arrived at Skelton's house, and I wandered home.

This story set me thinking. Why had the negro refused me admittance early in the evening? Why had he contradicted himself in saying that the professor was not, and then that he was in? If the professor was sick, he cer-

tainly would not have walked out into the cold air, and especially several blocks from the hotel. Then what could the negro have meant by, "I will go no farther"?

These things began to look sinister.

I remembered now, too, that one evening when I called, the negro came in and said to the professor in rather an authoritative voice that it was too cold in the room, and thereupon the professor obediently arose and closed the window. Might it not be that it was not the negro who had pleaded for mercy? and that the histrionic position on the couch and floor had been for effect upon the person knocking at the door? If the negro had done the loud and passionate talking, might it

not have been reprimands or suppressed threats instead of entreaties for mercy?

I believed thoroughly in Professor Whitmore; but about the negro I knew little, except that he was shrewd for his kind and had a character seemingly capable of much that might never appear to the casual observation of the world. I could not rid myself of thinking of the evening's information concerning my friend and his attendant.

CHAPTER FOUR

When I arrived at my office in the morning, I found a letter on the floor that had been slipped under the door. It was in the handwriting of the professor. "An explanation," I thought, "for my last night's misadventure." But no, it was a different document—quite different!—it was his will! It bequeathed everything to Blanchard, and in a personal note he asked me faithfully to execute it upon his death.

I was settled on one thing now—I must see Professor Whitmore at once. I went directly to the Rose Institute. On

inquiry, I found, to my surprise, he had not been there that college year; that he had resigned his position. I went to the hotel, and was met at the door by Blanchard. "Damn Blanchard!" I thought, I wanted to see the professor. I asked whether he was in.

"Yes," answered the negro, his sharp eyes rolling nervously.

"I wish to see him," I said, starting toward the door.

Blanchard stepped before me. "That is impossible, sir."

I was dumfounded! The negro grew more nervous—nervously bold, and would not move from his position.

"Did you bring a letter to my office this morning?" I asked.

"I brought it last night," he answered, "late."

"Who wrote that letter?"

"I do not know, sir."

"Who gave it to you?"

"My master."

"I *must* see him—do you hear?" I was determined—there was but one road to follow.

The negro quivered in a sort of savage agitation, and became a frightful sight as he stood immovable before me.

"Wait," he said at last, never once taking his feline eyes from me, as he backed into the room and closed the door noiselessly. I heard the key turn on the inside.

In a short time he returned, opened the

door as quietly as he had closed it and said:

"Sir, if you *must* see my master, come to-night at fifteen minutes before eleven; do not knock. I will meet you here exactly at that time; no other arrangement is possible. I hope you will make no unnecessary noise in going away," and with this he closed the door in my face.

I saw now in the visage of the negro what I had surmised he was capable of; yet mingled with the arrogant, surly authority there was fear; his eyes rolled nervously back and forth, his voice was unsteady, he looked a mongrel of human and devil.

I had the apartments watched that day. All the curtains were drawn, except those

in the windows of the room occupied by the negro. Professor Whitmore was not seen; but Blanchard went regularly to his meals in the back of the *café;* and about ten minutes before ten, night, he left the hotel carrying a basket, went west on Wabash Avenue, stopped at Sage's restaurant, and in a short time returned to the hotel. At a little after ten, a bright light shone from the professor's study, and at fifteen minutes before eleven I found Blanchard waiting for me.

He handed me this note:

"Judge Nutt:

I cannot see you. You doubtless received my will to-day. After December twenty-fifth, I shall be at leisure.

W. Whitmore."

It was in the professor's handwriting, but unsteady.

"This will not do!" I said, and before the negro had time to think, I thrust him aside (he was standing in such a way that it was no hard task), burst into the room and went on into the study, closing and locking the door behind me.

Professor Whitmore sat in his dressing gown at the table, eating.

He stared at me in amazement—or were the thin, vacant face and wide open eyes natural now?

"Where is Blanchard?"

"He was at the door," I said.

"He gave you the note?"

"Yes."

"I am sorry; I am not at leisure; I am

sorry the note was not sufficient. Did he let you in?" he continued uneasily, looking toward the door which I had just locked.

"No, I *came* in. I want to see you about the will."

"You received it, then?"

"Yes, but it is all so strange—"

"There is nothing strange," he interrupted, quivering from head to foot; "I am sorry, but you must leave me—you must leave me at once. Since you have broken in, and have seen that there is some irregularity here, you must promise on our friendship to say nothing to any one. When I have time I shall see you again."

"Have you not time now?" I asked.

"No, no; after December twenty-fifth, no sooner. If you stay longer, it will cost me a great deal."

He unlocked the door leading into the drawing-room, and as he opened the hall door of that room for my exit, said:

"You must not feel offended—it is a necessity."

"But can I not help you?" I asked, bewildered.

"You are mistaken. I need no help except your silence." But the quaver was still in his voice, and he was very pale.

I went home, sat down, and began to think as seriously and as dispassionately as I could, over this matter. I thought of what I had heard the negro say, of the affair related by Doctor Skelton, of my

adventure during the day and the night before, of the will—the will! That was a stumbling block. Why, too, had the professor let me out at the drawing-room door? Was it that I should not again meet the negro? Why did he command my silence? He was paler than his natural color. What had "after December twenty-fifth" to do with his leisure time—was it not rather release from some thraldom?

Even after I thought of all these things, I felt that I had been bold and perhaps ungentlemanly in my conduct. But, then, was he not my friend, and now my client also? Had I not some reason to be alarmed? Though my judgment told me that I had acted rightly, I could not help a feeling of dissatisfaction and unrest.

The conflict in my mind became almost unendurable, and over all hovered the gruesome, insidious face and devilish eyes of the negro Blanchard.

CHAPTER FIVE

Several days passed—perhaps a week—it was approaching Christmas; I went about the practice of my profession as usual, but the thing was more or less on my mind all the time.

One morning Mrs. Thompson, the widow of the late President of the Rose Institute, came into my office. Her husband had been dead something over a month. After we had finished our business—for I was settling the affairs of her husband's estate—it occurred to me that it had been through him that I had met Professor Whitmore; that he and the pro-

fessor, so far as I knew, had been somewhat intimate—if that word could be at all applied to the latter; and that perhaps Mrs. Thompson might be able to give me some information concerning the man whose affairs were now uppermost in my mind. But what was I to say? How was I to approach the subject, inasmuch as I had been asked to keep silent?

"By the way, Mrs. Thompson," I said —somewhat awkwardly, for it was hardly germane to her call or warranted by our slight acquaintance—"your husband was a friend of Professor Whitmore's was he not?"

Having a subject suggested, I trusted in the nature of the good woman to talk. I was not disappointed.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Thompson, "my husband thought a great deal of Professor Whitmore, and often spoke of him. Though I had never seen him, I wished him to be a pallbearer at my husband's funeral, for there were few men of whom he thought more. He often said that Professor Whitmore would some day be a great man in his science. It seemed strange to me that he did not call during my husband's sickness, although he sent a note occasionally."

"It seems to me," I said, "if I remember correctly, that Professor Whitmore was not a pallbearer at the funeral—was he?"

"No, he was not at the funeral at all."

This seemed singular to me, when the

two had been so well acquainted, in a town of the size of Terre Haute.

"Would you mind, Mrs. Thompson," I asked, wholly on the strength of my professional prerogative, "sending me those notes from Professor Whitmore to your husband?"

"I suppose they are done up with the other papers; but if you do not find them in the package, I shall look them up, and send them."

"This was a bold piece of business," I thought to myself, as the good lady in black went out.

I believe that I am not very imaginative, but in everything I did and especially when night came I could see the pallid, quivering, appealing face of my

friend; and the ghastly, black grimace and the white veering eyeballs of the negro. Though in my innermost heart I felt that I was meddling with other persons' affairs, I did not cease to meddle.

I thought if I could see the chambermaid who attends to the professor's rooms, I could keep at least partly informed on what was going on within the place that had been forbidden me, and where I felt sure some insidious machination was operating. I went to the hotel, but found that the chambermaids had been forbidden to enter the professor's apartments since some time in October. Blanchard had forbidden them.

"Does Professor Whitmore take his

meals here?" I asked the clerk, with whom I had some acquaintance, hoping to find out at what hours the professor dined that I might "happen" to be at his table at the same time.

"No," answered the clerk,—"wait, let me see, maybe he does; I don't remember," and he began to finger a ledger. "He has rooms here."

"Yes, I know," I said.

"No, no, he has not taken his meals here since September thirtieth. Wait, let me see; this thing is somewhat mixed up." After examining the book a few moments, he continued: "He has not taken breakfast here since September thirtieth—that's it. And after October thirtieth there is no lunch charged to

him, and no charge at all after November twenty-ninth."

This struck me as a peculiar proceeding.

"Will you give me those dates again?" I asked.

"No breakfast after September thirtieth, no lunch after October thirtieth, and no dinner after November twenty-ninth," answered the clerk, evidently struck by the singularity of the matter, for he looked at the book two or three times to verify his statement.

I made note of these dates, and left the hotel.

There often comes a time during complications when the mind is irresolute, incapable; and one stands wondering and

fearing. So I stood then. But we were not living in a time of revolution or anarchy. Everything was as usual in this western city; general order was maintained; and if Professor Whitmore needed help, he had but to speak.

The satisfaction arising from this state of mind into which I had argued myself was not very great, despite the fact that I had overlooked the possibility of there being something which bound my friend to silence and obedience, beyond the help of police officials. It was only a few days until "after December twenty-fifth," when I could see Professor Whitmore, and when doubtless he would relieve me of this frightful phantasmagoria of my somewhat melodramatic imagination. I

decided to wait, when, I hoped, everything would be set aright. What else could I do?

CHAPTER SIX

Christmas was a sharp, cold day; the streets were a frozen crust of snow and ice. From my window I could see bundled-up people hurrying by; men with their hands thrust deep into their overcoat pockets and their faces couched within upturned collars; women—not very many—turning their backs leeward to the cutting wind which frilled and curled their skirts, writhing the most charming Venus de Milo of the pavement into grotesque decrepitude. I was satisfied to stay indoors that day.

Doctor and Mrs. Skelton were to dine

and spend the afternoon with us. The doctor, as I have said, was a small, thin, nervous man with a weak, rasping voice and a well bitten-off mustache. But withal, he was as free from self consciousness as any man I ever knew. That was the charm of his society. It was about nine o'clock when the maid announced that Doctor Skelton was in the study. " 'Tis a bit early," I thought.

"Where is Mrs. Skelton? Go and call Mrs. Nutt," I said.

"Mrs. Skelton is not here; the doctor is alone."

I went down to the study.

"My dear judge! what do you think?" said he, nervously, and in a terribly bad manner to tell such news, but he was a

nervous man and could not help it. "Whitmore—Whitmore has been found dead!"

A rhythm of piercing chills ran through me.

"Must have died sometime in the night. I knew he was a friend of yours—and they think we'd better go to the hotel at once. They have sent for me; we shall go up together; I'll wait till you are ready."

As we walked to the hotel a great calm came over me, a sort of lethargy of all thought, except that my friend was dead—that was in my mind—nothing more.

The hall leading to his apartments was crowded with men. In a very short time

the news had gone from one person to another until, it seemed, everybody in the hotel knew it. We were admitted by the night clerk at the drawing-room door. Two or three persons besides the clerk were in the rooms. The drawing-room looked as usual. In the study, low on the folding bed, lay the body—silent—shriveled—stiff. Professor Whitmore was not there to greet me; but an icy, livid something with a blood bubble on its frosty lips lay under the covers.

Doctor Skelton examined carefully. "Nothing, nothing," he muttered several times, "I can see nothing."

There was silence.

At last he broke out enthusiastically:

"What is this—here on the neck? Come here, look here on the neck!"

He had rolled the body over on the side, pulled down the nightshirt, and exposed the neck, below and to the front of the left ear, over which he was now holding a strong lens.

"Purpuric spots—purpuric spots," muttered the doctor.

Looking through the lens, I could see perhaps twenty unnatural-looking spots from the size of a pin head down. Some were slight red discolorations of congested blood, others were festered, and still others were nearly invisible, colorless scars. They were scarcely discernible without the lens.

Somebody asked what these spots

meant; but I left the room before I heard the doctor's reply, if he made any; I was sick of the sight of the examination.

I could not rest; I went to my office, got the will, and looked it all over again. I tried to organize what I knew—what I had seen and heard—but my mind, as well as the facts, was in a swirl; nothing would organize; everything was chaos! but my friend—that he was dead—that was clear.

About five o'clock in the afternoon a reporter called, and I told him of the will. He already knew what Doctor Skelton had told me that night coming from the railway station, and what we had seen between Professor Whitmore and Blanchard near Centenary Church.

At six o'clock I went back to the hotel and learned that the negro was missing. On entering the rooms again, I saw—what I had not seen in the morning—that there were several bundles of the professor's and the negro's belongings packed as if ready for shipment.

A little later it was learned from a clerk in an uptown railway ticket office that Blanchard had inquired about rates—where to, he did not remember—the day before.

When these things became generally known—and it took but a very short time—suspicion turned against the negro; and to increase the indignation, which was gradually growing into frenzy, a north-end druggist said that a negro,

very much like the description of Blanchard, had purchased ten grains of morphine and a hypodermic needle at his store something over two months before, and had asked in a peculiar way whether that amount of morphine "would kill a man." The conduct of the negro had aroused the suspicion of the druggist, and he had for that reason a distinct recollection of the purchase. When Doctor Skelton heard this, he smiled in professional satisfaction. "The spots on the neck—the spots on the neck—injections of morphine. The man has told the truth."

Blanchard's room was now searched, and not only were the morphine and hypodermic needle found, but also a half

empty bottle of chloroform—all secreted in the covers of his bed, which had not been slept in that night. What more evidence was wanted?

About ten o'clock that night a telegram was received from Staunton, Virginia, commanding to "seize the nigger," signed — "Waldon Whitmore." But Blanchard, "the nigger," had not yet been found.

There was one newspaper issued that day; it appeared about six o'clock, and was unrestrained in its condemnation of Blanchard as the murderer of Professor Whitmore. It recited the event which Doctor Skelton had witnessed in October, interpreting it as an assault which the professor had made upon the negro,

and as giving the latter an additional motive for taking his master's life; but the greatest stress was laid upon the will. This account was read all over the city that Christmas night, and what had been learned since six o'clock spread with scarcely less rapidity.

So it happened, by ten o'clock that wintry night—in the city of Terre Haute, but a few years ago—that men, singly and in straggling groups, began to skulk about the back of the hotel. It was clear enough what was in the air. A serving girl had just said that she had seen Blanchard on the second floor late in the afternoon. But neither mob nor officers could find the negro. He was gone.

In an interview with Doctor Skelton

which appeared in the morning *Express,* it was stated as the doctor's opinion that death could not have been the result of the morphine injections, since the little wounds on the neck were either healed or covered with a pus of some days' standing, and no other similar wound or wounds were found on the body. Death had been the result of the chloroform, was the doctor's opinion, for the body in nowise showed indications of violence, and a post-mortem examination disclosed no internal disorganization. The paper also stated that another druggist had been found who identified the description of Blanchard and the half empty chloroform bottle. Thus it was the unanimous belief that the negro Blanchard had killed the

professor by the use of chloroform. I believed it myself.

When the *Gazette* appeared the next evening the negro had not been found.

The only additional fact reported in that issue was that a canary bird had been found dead in a cage in the study, where it will be remembered the body also had been found; the writer ventured to suggest that the two deaths occurring simultaneously, might have been caused by escaping gas; but it was more probable that the dead bird was an ingenious scheme of Blanchard's to divert suspicion.

Blanchard's intelligence was against him. The morphine, hypodermic needle, and chloroform having been bought some time before the murder, showed that the

negro had taken great precaution, and had worked out his plans upon what seemed to him, and with good reason, sure and safe methods. He had looked so far ahead as to prepare some packages of his and the professor's most valuable belongings, that in case of any suspicion of him, he might be ready to flee in good form and with at least some reward for his trouble. The discovery that he had inquired about railroad rates gave strength to this view.

Nobody liked the negro, for he had proudly kept himself aloof from his own race, and had made not the least solicitation for the acquaintance of anybody else. The fact is that he knew more than most persons with whom he came in contact, and many frequently and stingingly felt

his superiority. He was not the public toy that most colored people are in the North—to be played with, and joked with, and laughed at, at pleasure, Some of the clerks in stores where he did business for the professor had tried this; but he always rose proudly and disdainfully above them by some such remark as "beg pardon," or "I hardly understand."

Thus it was written down in everybody's mind that the negro Blanchard had forced a will from Professor Whitmore, and then killed him. I was of that conviction myself; but there was something more to this case, as will be seen.

CHAPTER SEVEN

On the morning of December twenty-seventh, there lay before me the last papers and correspondence of the late President Thompson. Among them was this letter:

"President Thompson.

Dear Sir: For the last few days the time rhythm has become established in me. The bird is doing well—it is following. The utter darkness of the room overcomes the difficulty we had spoken of.

Blanchard tells me he read in the evening paper that you are sick. I hope it is nothing serious.

Nov. 1, '84. W. Whitmore."

"What kind of letter is this?" I asked myself.

The disorganized data which I—and perhaps only I—knew in the affair of the death of Professor Whitmore had now, for the first time, two facts which could be co-ordinated and not directly construed, as nearly all the other facts had been, against the negro. What was the bird following? Having been found dead at the same time as its owner, it was not an altogether unwarrantable inference that it was following him. Then what did he mean by "the time rhythm has become established *in me?*"

If the "in me" had been omitted, I should undoubtedly have passed over the matter, thinking it but a concern of his science which he had been discussing with his friend. "The utter darkness of the

room"—it is true that the curtains of the study and drawing-room had, of late, nearly always been drawn.

I did not say to myself that the negro had not killed his master, but, on the other hand, I could not say that all had been explained. What was the meaning of the facts which the hotel clerk had given me concerning the professor's meals—"no breakfast after September thirtieth, no lunch after October thirtieth, and no dinner after November twenty-ninth"? Was Blanchard starving his master? No, it could not have been that, for the meal which I had seen the professor eating was a large one; and the cook at Sage's restaurant said that the food which he

had been preparing daily for Blanchard since about December first, would easily have made two ordinary meals, even when the smallest quantity had been ordered.

In my thoughts I got no farther that day. I was continually condemning myself for not having carried out my first impulse more persistently, for not having called the attention of the police before it was too late. I might have saved my friend's life; part of the responsibility of his death haunted me; I had even kept silent about the will until I had been asked, and I had said nothing whatever of the other things I knew. Yet after all, what good might it have done to speak out? Had I not been sworn to silence? Had not the professor asked it himself?

And might there not have existed between these two men a web of life, intricate and cunning, beyond the stereotyped comprehension of civil authority? Had not the professor willingly stayed in the venomous grasp of the negro? Did they not look alike? Who knew anything of their past lives? I say I got no farther in my thoughts that day, nor the next day, until in the night.

I was sitting at my study table, looking again at the dates the hotel clerk had given me,

"No breakfast after September thirtieth.

"No lunch after October thirtieth.

"No dinner after November twenty-ninth."

Once more I asked myself what this could mean. People do not stop boarding at a place in this peculiar fashion. Now it flashed upon me that (October having thirty-one days) these dates were just thirty days apart: thirty days after breakfast stopped, lunch stopped; and thirty days after that, the professor took no more dinners. It was about that time, according to the statement of Sage's cook, that Blanchard began to take food from the restaurant in a basket.

Doctor Skelton suddenly dropped in on my meditation.

"Something has turned up," he said.

"What! have they found the negro?"

"No, no. A brother, Mr. Waldon Whitmore. He will take the body home."

"Home—where to?" I asked.

"To Virginia; they are from Virginia."

"I must see him first," I said.

"Yes, of course," answered the doctor. "Perhaps we had better see him at once. It was he who sent the telegram to 'seize the nigger,' you remember."

I remembered that very well.

"Doctor," I said, "are you very sure that it was the chloroform that killed Professor Whitmore?"

"I believe that was it—I believe that was it. It could not have been the morphine injections, for even the latest spots on the neck must have been there several days. The injections, too, had been going on undoubtedly for some time, for many of the spots, as you remember, were hardly

visible; and further, the quantity of morphine used (judging from the amount purchased and what was found left in the negro's bed), injected through the length of time that the purpuric spots indicated, would easily have established a tolerance for the opiate. No, it could not have been the morphine," concluded the doctor.

"Then you say that the injections were made at different times and perhaps through a considerable period?" I asked.

"Yes, I should say that."

"The professor must have made these injections himself then."

"Hardly," said the doctor meditatively, "it is such an awkward place—there in the neck—to inject one's self."

"But he must have known of them," I said.

"Yes, yes," answered the doctor; "but the negro did *his* business with the chloroform."

"Might not the negro be innocent?" I said abruptly.

"Impossible! impossible! there is the will, the bags for shipment, the inquiry about rates, the quarrel in October, the negro's escape when the suspicion grew against him—no, no, I tell you, my dear judge, it was Blanchard; he knew when to do such a job too; he could not have selected a better time than Christmas eve, when everybody is at his own fireside."

I got the note that Professor Whitmore had written me the night I forced

my way into his study, and handed it to Doctor Skelton. His eyes blinked and his face jerked nervously as he read it, first to himself, then aloud.

"Judge Nutt.

I cannot see you. You doubtless received my will to-day. After December twenty-fifth, I shall be at leisure.

W. Whitmore."

The doctor still jerked and twisted as he stared at me; he always acted in this way when there was a puzzle and no explanation to ease his mind.

I then told him everything I knew. It made the little man so nervous that I was almost sorry I had said anything; but Skelton had a brilliant mind, and I needed his assistance—alone I could go no far-

ther. He at once recognized the exact thirty days between the meal hours.

On our way to the hotel, where we were going to meet the brother, we stopped at the drug store across the street to buy a cigar. We were still talking about the things I had related, when Doctor Skelton, I think, mentioned the name of Whitmore in the hearing of the clerk.

"He used to smoke that very cigar," said the clerk, as I was taking an "Havana filler" out of the case.

"I did not know that Professor Whitmore smoked," I interjected.

"Oh! yes," continued the clerk, "he used to smoke one cigar every day. He was the quietest man I ever saw; he used to come in here every morning after

breakfast and get his cigar and never say a word to anybody. He got to coming later and later in the day, until toward the last he would come in the night, at nearly closing up time."

"Skelton," I said, as we walked into the hotel, "What do you think of this? there are the meals being stopped at different times, the morphine injected at different times, and the daily smoke at different times."

"Yes, yes," said Skelton, "not only that, but the meal taken latest in the day was the one longest continued, and the one cigar a day was smoked later also—things seemed to have happened later toward the end of his life."

The doctor had gone me one better.

The brother, Waldon Whitmore, was a one-armed Southern gentleman, evidently much older than the professor. His gray hair and beard were in singular contrast with his florid complexion and small but bright and alert eyes. He had none of the professor in his face, and certainly much less (if that is possible) in his manners and character. He had military dignity in his bearing. He was a good swearer, used tobacco in every form, and drank "straight" whisky and gin cocktails in frequent instalments.

He did not seem to be moved so much by the death of his brother as by the supposed guilt of the negro, whom—it could be seen in every word—he hated. He said that many years ago he had fore-

seen the sad end of his brother, and that he had repeatedly warned him against the "nigger," but all to no purpose.

He satisfied the authorities that he was Waldon Whitmore, and soon left for the South with all that was mortal of my friend, the professor.

Not long afterward, according to my duty, I entered the will that had been entrusted to me for probate. About a week later a suit was filed by Waldon Whitmore, through attorneys, to set it aside as an instrument which had been forced from the alleged testator. The plaintiff showed that he was the only surviving near relative of the deceased; and upon the evidence already given against the negro Blanchard, the will was easily

set aside, and an estate of some twenty thousand dollars went to Waldon Whitmore.

The brother took all the belongings of the professor from his apartments that might be of value or easily disposed of, but papers, scrapbooks, manuscripts and the like he left behind. It was from the verge of this debris of stuff, burning in the street, that the blue-covered blankbook was picked up by the man engaged in the not very absorbing business of watching the bonfire, whence it finally found its way into my hands. It is unfortunate that the other papers were burned. They might have been of value to modern science.

Through these events Doctor Skelton

and I became even better acquainted, and though he always maintained that Professor Whitmore had come to his death by chloroform, he admitted that there were facts in the case which had, indeed, not been explained, and which seemed strange and mysterious. We often walked together and talked the matter over, but could not get beyond our first futile attempts to understand what had taken place within Professor Whitmore's apartments prior to his death.

The negro Blanchard had been searched for everywhere—in a manner, all over the country, but he was neither found nor heard of.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Eighteen hundred and eighty-five and eighty-six passed; it was the fall of eighteen hundred and eighty-seven when

> Autumn bold,
> With universal tinge of sober gold

was ushered in. Pardon the poetry! It's about the only line I know, but can't say now whether it's Keats or Shelley—it doesn't matter much, I suppose; we'll let it suffice for a flowery description of beautiful, muddy, cheerless autumn. The death of Professor Whitmore had been about forgotten. The public has a short memory. A few other crimes had been

committed, and had supplied the sort of romantic, realistic literature always more or less in demand.

One afternoon a well dressed young man presented himself at my office as Charles Crossley—the same Doctor Crossley who is practising medicine in Terre Haute now. He related to me a singular story which I will not attempt to tell in his own language.

He had graduated that summer from the New York College of Physicians and Surgeons. His home was in the state of New York; but he wanted to establish himself in the west. A friend, who was also a student in the college, and whose home was in Virginia, had repeatedly asked Crossley to come and spend a va-

cation with him. After his graduation he decided to accept the invitation; and the two started for the South. They went down the ocean, up the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River, thence southwest by rail. It was a long trip—perhaps twice the distance of the direct route, and nearly all by water—but they had nothing to do, and thought that as good a way to idle time as any.

The father of Crossley's friend had been a Confederate soldier, who had not only lost part of his body in the war—having only one arm—but had also been deprived of nearly all of a very large estate. He had recently, however, upon the death of a brother who had been foully killed in the North, come into some

additional possessions, with which, the spring before Crossley's visit, he had purchased a portion of the old plantation upon which he had lived before the war.

Crossley stayed for some time, for he had nothing in particular to do but to decide where to settle—a hard task, alas! nearly as hard for a young man as to decide what profession he shall keep out of, or in which one he will be of the least uselessness—a thing, however, more often settled by circumstances than by one's self, as it turned out in this case.

One day when Crossley was out roving over the farm (for it could hardly be called a plantation now), he happened near some of the negro huts, and looking into one, saw a sight which struck him as

being somewhat novel. An old darkey sat by a table, writing. Crossley had no idea that "niggers"—as they called them down there—did that sort of thing, certainly not in the extensive manner in which this one seemed to be engaged, for he had rather a large stack of written pages at his side. As soon as the negro saw Crossley, he grabbed up the sheets and furtively put them behind him.

The next day when he was with his friend he mentioned something of what he had seen.

"Oh! that crazy old nigger! We don't pay any attention to him; he's lost his mind," said his friend.

After several calls at the hut, Crossley was able to strike up an acquaintance

with the old darkey, whom, to his great surprise, he found not to be ignorant, much less crazy, but educated and in his speech almost refined. If he had any mental ailment, it was melancholia of a deep, sensitive and awful sort, which was all the more intensified by his being a negro, of whom one would not naturally expect so refined a dejection.

But he was thought to be crazy and for all Crossley knew, it may have been his wish to be so considered. In appearance slender, and though very stooped, he was still of medium height; his body showed no marks of hard labor; his hands were small and regular, and his face sharp and clear cut in outline. He had nothing of the Southern negro in feature or dis-

position, but that he had once been taller, heavier, and more cheerful could easily be seen.

After the first few calls Crossley made, the old negro became accustomed to him and would not attempt to hide the written pages, as at first. He asked Crossley, however, to say nothing about his visits to the hut (which seemed to please him quite as much as they had at first amused his guest), and certainly never to mention anything about the writing. Crossley promised, and they became as good friends as the circumstances of the old negro's dejection would allow.

One night about two hours after Crossley had retired, he heard somebody at his window, calling in a loud whisper, "Massa

Crossley! Massa Crossley!" It was one of the old wenches. "Come, Massa Crossley, de crazy old niggah is a dyin'; he wants ter see you fust please, sah, come quick, Massa Crossley!"

When Crossley arrived at the hut, the old negro was lying on a low trap of a couch with very little life in him. The wench had disappeared. On examination, Crossley found his condition serious; there was a very feeble pulse, labored respiration, and a cold perspiration covered the entire body. He was about to start to the house for drugs and water, when the negro began to speak:

"No, stay here, I must tell you something before you go," and with this he drew a roll of papers—evidently those he

had written on—from under the couch. Grasping it tremblingly, he stretched toward Crossley a skinny black arm from which the torn sleeve had fallen, exposing an ugly strip of white scar from the elbow down. "Send this," he said, "to Judge Nutt, Terre Haute, Indiana. Tell him where I am dying."

"But, but," said Crossley, much moved, "you are not dying! I can help you, I'll be back in a minute," and he ran out toward the house. When he returned, the negro was not there; he had disappeared. Crossley searched about the hut, but there being no moon that night, he was compelled, after stumbling about in the dark for some time, to give up the search. He returned to the hut, took the

roll of manuscript from the floor, and went back to the house.

"Well, the crazy old nigger died last night," said Crossley's friend the next morning.

Crossley was about to ask where he had been found, but realizing that this might betray the fact of his having been in the empty hut the night before, he asked where the body of the dead darkey lay.

"Where they found it this morning, in the cemetery, down by the river," replied his friend.

Crossley asked where the cemetery was; and after his friend had left, went in that direction. Just before he arrived at a spot where two flat tombstones lay

on a slope in the ground, he came upon a couple of darkies digging and tussling with roots under a large, knotted tree. By their side was a coarse wooden box in which lay the dead body of the old negro, a peaceful expression on his thin old face, and his hair now as white as snow.

"He was a slabe heah 'fo' de wa'," said one of the darkies.

"He was? Where was he found this morning?" asked Crossley.

"He was found ober on de grabe, ober yonder, on de grabe, sah," said the other darkey, pointing toward a little slope near the river.

It was a beautiful, quiet, green spot looking toward the south, not thirty yards

from which the river glided gently away. There were two marble slabs lying in the ground; and a little to the left, a grave marked only by a low mound of grass-grown earth.

One of the slabs read,

"ABRAHAM STARR.
Born 1774.
Died 1842."

The other,

"MARGARET STARR WHITMORE.
Born 1821.
Died 1859."

From the flattened and crushed appearance of the grass over the tombless grave, Crossley could see where the dead negro had been found, and where he must have lain a good part of the night.

He went back to the gravediggers just as they were lowering the body. There were no services; nobody was there except Crossley and the two darkies, nobody said anything, and the only noise was the regular thump of the falling dirt on the wooden box. In a few moments the grave was filled; the negroes wiped their brows and went away. Crossley remained a little, then returned to the house.

A week later he took leave of his friend, and came directly north.

The young man had not gone far in this story concerning the poor old darkey and his sad death before I recognized Blanchard. I at once undid the roll, and found that I was not mistaken. Dr.

Skelton was sent for; and in less than an hour the three of us—Crossley, Skelton and myself—began the reading of the manuscript.

CHAPTER NINE

I was born a slave near the lower part of the Shenandoah River, in Virginia, the property of Abraham Starr, a very rich old gentleman, master of several plantations and many negroes. He was in his declining years when I came into this world; I do not believe I ever saw him. I can only remember of having heard of him; he was always spoken of as a very white-haired, and a very kind old man.

This wonderful document—wonderful because Blanchard was a negro and for what it records—is made public now for the first time; only a few omissions—apologies, repetitions, and the like—and a few changes necessitated by printing have been made.—M. E.

He had an only daughter, Margaret, his sole heir, who was at the time of my first faint memory about twenty years old.

A year after the death of Abraham Starr, Margaret married a gentleman from New Orleans by the name of Whitmore—William Whitmore. They lived on the plantation for a year or two, during which time a son was born to them. They named him Waldon.

Now, in accordance with the wishes of the husband, the family left the plantation and moved to New Orleans; but Mrs. Whitmore's health was very poor in the far South, and after two years' absence they returned to the plantation. Perhaps she wished to return because she had

promised her father to keep up the plantation and continue the beautiful life he had led there with his wife and one child. Perhaps, too, she had promised him that her children should be born there, in the same house where she had been born and had grown into womanhood, and from which she had never gone more than ten or fifteen miles, and then always in the company of her father.

I do not know that she promised these things, but from what I have several times heard, she might have done so. No matter what she had promised the good, white-haired father in the time of her simple girlhood, when to her the plantation was the world, she had now a strong desire to get back to the quiet life which

she had lived before her marriage. I had stayed on the plantation during their absence.

According to the slave-book of the Starr plantation, in which births, deaths, purchases, and sales of slaves were recorded, I would be six years old on September nineteenth. This was the year eighteen hundred and forty-five. My birthday did not have any celebration; perhaps besides myself no one knew of it; and I should never have known had it not been that I sometimes looked over this book, trying to make out the letters and figures. It was in this way, with the assistance of one of the masters who caught me at the book one day, that I found out my name was Blanchard, my

number 183, and that my birthday was on the above date.

Yet after all September nineteenth was an eventful day in the quiet household of the plantation; on that day a second son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Whitmore. This was two months after they had returned from New Orleans. This second son was named William.

I was one day standing near the house holding Mr. Whitmore's horse until he should come to mount and ride away. After he had been gone a little while and I was still standing where I had held the horse, old Aunt Jennie came to the dining-room door and said in a loud voice: "Come here, nigger. What's your name?"

"Blanchard," I replied.

"Yes, you come in the house."

I was taken into Mrs. Whitmore's private chamber. It was the first time I had ever been inside the house.

"Blanchard, you say is your name?" asked Mrs. Whitmore. She was a slender, pale lady, still worn from the birth of her child.

"Yes, ma'am," I answered.

"Who named you?"

"I do not know, ma'am."

"How do you know that is your name?"

"It says so in the slave-book."

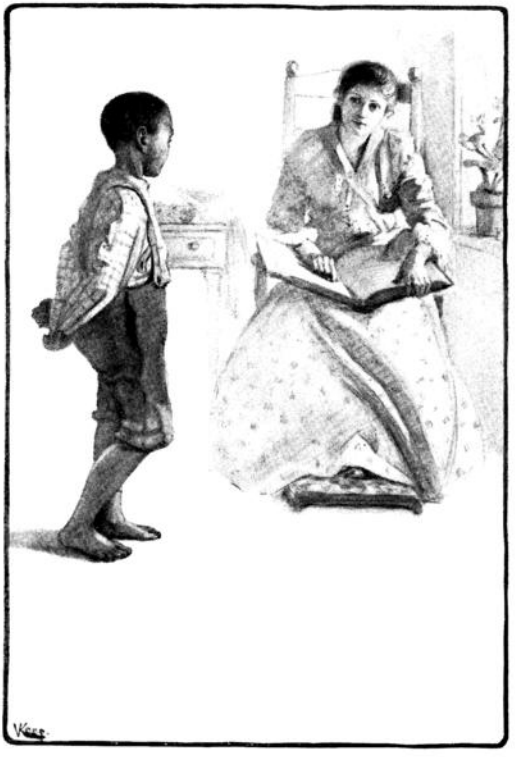
"Bring me the book."

I brought the book, and showed her the page, name, number, location of the cabin in which I was born, and date of birth. I saw that it aroused some kind of feel-

ing in her; it was not of anger,—I never saw her angry, and after that I saw her very often; it was as if she remembered something, as of her father. She gently tore the page from the book, and placed the volume in my arms. The writing had been by her father, but there was something more than that, which perhaps only the dead could have answered.

"Take back the book, Blanchard," said Mrs. Whitmore, "and come here again after dinner."

I returned the book, but could not for the life of me tell what had happened, or what was wanted with me. I now know that if this circumstance had happened on some plantations, a little nigger in my condition would have been frightened out



of his wits; but instead of cruel punishment and fear, on that plantation respect and obedience reigned; the master was honored nearly as a god, and the good Mrs. Whitmore inspired those about her with a reverence which I felt but could not then understand.

I went into the house after dinner, and into the room where Mrs. Whitmore said I should come. The baby of some months was lying on Aunt Jennie's lap.

"Blanchard," said Mrs. Whitmore, hesitatingly at first, "you are—you are to belong to this child when he becomes a man. You must now help to take care of him; when the summer comes you must take him out into the woods, you must play with him, you must be kind and

gentle to him that he will be so to you." Thus she continued for a little while, telling me how I should take care of young William. I tried to remember, to obey what she said.

The winter passed and summer came—several winters and summers passed. My master and I were much alone; I grew to love him (if you will allow that a slave is capable of that); he was not a beautiful child, but was good, and above all never cruel to anything. We fished and swam in the Shenandoah, climbed the solitary mountains, imagining ourselves hunters and adventurers; we were often gone from morning till night.

He did not become robust as his mother had hoped, nor cheerful nor gay, but

began early to read books, and to think about things. He told me the stories he read, and often tried to explain to me what he was thinking about; he also taught me to read and write and figure. He had no liking for his brother, nor for any one except his mother and father, whom he reverenced, and for me.

It seemed that I was a part of him; when he suffered, I did; when he rejoiced, I did; my life was swallowed up in his; I did not understand it, and when I began to think a little for myself, I could not explain it, but when he was yet very young he told me that was the way it was between us, and I believed, and believe it still.

One morning, when my master was in

his tenth year, we went on one of our accustomed trips to the mountains; I remember the day very well. About a mile from the house the mountains began to rise high into the air. My master had all the peaks named, but I do not remember what.

On this morning he was trying to explain to me why the mountains did not sink into the ground; he gave lots of figures, proportions and the like that I couldn't understand. We climbed up, through the trees and over rocks, to a favorite ledge, and sat down and surveyed the valley below as it stretched out for miles before us toward the west. We stayed out till night, far too long. I ran nearly all the way down the mountain

with my master on my back, but we came home too late.

While we were still gone, and it grew darker, Waldon whispered into the father's ear that I had too much influence over William, and that I ought to be disposed of. When we approached the house my master went in, and I went to where I lived,—a cabin half way between the home of my master and the cabins of the other slaves.

It was very dark; not a star was out, but I knew the path well. When I had gone but a short distance some one stopped me and said: "You damned nigger—where have you been with William to-day?" It was Waldon. He was large and strong for his age, and hated me like

death. As I was telling where we had been, a crash came upon my head, and I fell.

I do not know to-day who struck me; it seemed too hard a blow for Waldon to strike, and yet it was so unexpected that it may not have been so hard as I thought, and he may have done it—I do not know, I say, I do not know. What took place in the house concerning me I also do not know, except that I narrowly missed being sold. It was my master who had prevented it, but only at the risk of leaving home to follow me. After that time the relation between the two brothers was more distant than before. I never told my master about the knock on my head, but he knew of it.

CHAPTER TEN

In eighteen hundred and fifty-seven, when William was twelve years of age, we went across the mountains to Fredericksburg, where he entered a school in preparation for the Naval Academy at Annapolis. I remember very well the day we left; the good mother, who seemed to me to have become more angelic every year, cried a great deal, but the father said that it had to be; that William had to get an education.

At Fredericksburg we lived the quietest kind of life; my master studied very hard—so hard that I often had to talk

very earnestly before he would leave his books. I was afraid for his health. The mother came across the mountains to see William frequently. I could notice in her face that, under the burden of the times, she was rapidly becoming old; her face did not lose any of the sweet expression it had borne ever since I could remember, but it became softened into a sorrowful resignation, which seemed only to change when in the presence of her son William; he was very dear to his mother, and she to him.

Everybody knows the uncertainty of the times; it was the year fifty-nine—in the fall; a great cloud began to gather over the nation, and the maelstrom of war to seethe and swirl about us; there was soon

to be a great sacrifice in a night of months —of years.

Mrs. Whitmore made her last visit to Fredericksburg. The life which she had lived with her father was destined never to return, it had not returned in her marriage; she had been comparatively happy, but there were some natural differences between her and her husband which prevented them from understanding each other—so my master afterwards told me.

The mother saw now that even the home of her childhood was likely to be destroyed, that her husband and at least one of her sons were to be dragged into a bitter war. Her strength did not cease to ebb away, but ebbed away entirely; she

died in the latter part of November, eighteen hundred fifty-nine, and was buried beside her father, on a beautiful slope of the Shenandoah looking toward the South.

The death of his mother seemed to have an effect upon my master, that stayed with him until I saw him last. She was the only person with whom he indulged the least emotion; the sentiments and feelings of others had no effect upon him. I do not know that he believed them unreal, but he simply passed them unnoticed. But whatever else the death of my master's mother was to me, it seemed above all a blessing. What room was there for a soul like hers in the Shenandoah Valley during the time that was to

come? None. She died before the war Was that not a blessing?

That winter we stayed on the plantation. Waldon had gone to Annapolis, and the father went frequently to Richmond, which was fast becoming the center of the Southern Confederacy. He was a firm believer in the principles of the South, and was among the first to arouse the people of Virginia; and when the conflict began he was one of the first to offer his services and his fortune. After the death of his wife he became desultory in his habits, but in his love for the South he never wavered.

Waldon had been sent to Annapolis to be prepared for the coming struggle which the father seemed to have fore-

seen long before most people. My master was also to be sent to Annapolis the next fall. Waldon grew to be like his father, wild and ravishing, and began early, under his father's influence, to nurture an intense hatred for the North. But my master lived along in the same quiet, methodical way, interested in nothing but his books, which came more and more to run along the line of mathematics.

The fall of eighteen hundred and sixty came, and together William and I went to Annapolis. But he had no relish for warships and the sea, except to figure about the waves and how the cannons were made. We were much alone as before; Waldon came around

very seldom, for he despised the indifference of his brother concerning the conflict between the North and South; he was every day growing hotter and more anxious to fight, but he had to hold his peace, for the Naval Academy was Northern in sentiment.

On April fourteenth, eighteen hundred and sixty-one, Fort Sumter surrendered, and in May it was announced that the Naval Academy was to be removed to Newport, Rhode Island, away from where the greater part of the war must inevitably be waged; the three upper classes were to be detached and ordered to sea to fight against the South. The Academy was in a turmoil the morning this announcement was made. We had

just heard of it; I was in our rooms cleaning, and my master sat, as usual, at his table with papers before him on which were curves and lines and hordes of figures, when the door flew open and in walked Waldon in full uniform, his sword at his side. His face showed a mingling of feverish rejoicing and rage.

"Where's your master, nigger?"

"At the table, sir," I said.

He went up to his brother.

"Be ready to leave with me to-night. The time has come; we'll show these nigger-lovers their business!"

"Leave?" repeated my master, slowly, as if to ask what for.

"Haven't you heard that the Academy

is going North? Why don't you open your eyes and ears?" roared Waldon.

"I have heard it," answered William.

"And you mean to go North with it?"

"Yes, what does the war concern—"

But before my master finished, Waldon—his face crimson with smothered rage—had drawn his sword.

"You pale, traitorous pup, I'd rather see you dead!" and he thrust at his brother's head. My master dodged the point, which I caught in my arm trying to ward it off. In an instant I raised a chair, intending to knock out Waldon's brains, but he ran to the door, turned and shouted: "Traitor!" and was gone.

In May we followed the Academy to Newport.

My master used occasionally to receive letters from his father, but after Waldon left, the father did not write any more. He was doubtless enraged at the indifference of his younger son, which was perhaps one of the disappointments of his life; he had intended that his sons should be like himself in their belief and in their love for the South; he had intended that they should be great soldiers. In one of them, at least, he now saw that this would never be. He himself had cast his lot with Stonewall Jackson; had fought at Bull Run; marched through the Shenandoah Valley toward Washington as a Lieutenant-Colonel; assisted in the seiz-

ure of Harper's Ferry, and was killed at Chancellorsville, May second, eighteen hundred and sixty-three, on the same day that Stonewall Jackson himself fell. His body was never found.

In the spring of eighteen hundred and sixty-five we received word that Waldon had been wounded and lay very low at the old plantation. In the latter part of April we returned to the old homestead which I had given up hope of ever seeing again. Waldon had lost his left arm, and was just recovering from a fever which had seized him in the Chickahominy Swamp.

Everything on the plantation that was capable of destruction had been destroyed by the armies continually fighting or

marching through the Valley. The houses and barns had been burned, the fences were down, the slaves were gone; nothing remained as it had been but the two solitary tombstones of the grandfather and the mother on the bank of the Shenandoah. The armies had been fighting the living; the dead were not disturbed.

Waldon would have very little to do with us, though it was he who had sent for us, but he had not been responsible for our information concerning the condition in which the arbitraments of war had left him. He had sent for my master in order to settle the estate, which was quickly done, there being little left to settle.

The almost enormous fortune of Abraham Starr had fallen with the fate of the Confederacy, and had the father lived through the war, there doubtless would have been nothing left, such was his devotion to the cause for which he had died. The two brothers received about thirty thousand dollars each.

The last words I heard Waldon say to my master, as he (for it was destined that I was to return) left forever the banks of the Shenandoah, the Valley and the mountains of our childhood, were: "I hope we shall never need to meet again." And as far as I know they never did meet again in this world. The war which prostrated the nation had taken away William's mother and father, nearly all his

fortune, and had made more than a stranger of his only brother—should I say an enemy?

In the fall of eighteen hundred and sixty-five, a few days before our birthday, we left the South, not to return in many years. We went to New Haven, where my master entered Yale as an irregular student; I do not think his name was registered at first; he was only interested in mathematics, and attended only such classes and did such work as he wished. The first night that we were situated in our new quarters my master called me into his room. He was sitting at his table with the accustomed marked papers and open books, more like a man in middle life than a boy of twenty.

"Blanchard," he began, "I had forgotten to tell you. Do you know that you are free now?"

I said nothing; I did not understand, and he went on:

"You need not stay with me any longer; you may do as you like now; go where you please. I will give you money to start with."

I was tottering with fear; it was one of the darkest moments of my life. "Master William, you don't want me any more then?" I said, wishing I had died in the war.

He only answered: "You are free."

I told him that I did not want to leave him; that if I was too expensive I would find work, but leave him I could not; if

I had to do so, I did not wish to live.

"Then, Blanchard," he said, "you stay with me of your own free will?"

"Yes, Master William, yes," I answered, "of my own free will, if you will let me."

"Very well, Blanchard, then we shall stay together as before, but after this call me only William. I am no longer your master."

That was all that night. After that I always called him "William"—except twice—it was his wish.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The next year he decided to become a regular student, and in eighteen hundred and seventy he took his degree at Yale. From there we went to Germany, where William entered the University of Berlin. He had become an accomplished German scholar, but it was all for the sake of the mathematics. In eighteen hundred and seventy-three he took a doctor's degree at that University, and for the next five years we roamed about Europe, visiting, principally, seats of learning—Cambridge, London, Edinburgh, Paris, Kiel, Jena, Königsberg and Vienna—where William

would bury himself for weeks and months in the great libraries.

During all these years he was the same person. If there was any change in him it was that he was even more himself; that is, he became still more studious, silent and unknown to me. His disposition toward me seemed unchanged, but there were often periods during which he said so little that the state of his mind was as unknown to me as that of a person whom I seldom or never saw. There were days that not a word passed between us.

He used to mark with a blue pencil those papers which I was to destroy when cleaning his study; everything was so methodically arranged that it was not

necessary for us to speak to each other for weeks. Sometimes when we were out walking he would talk a little, but it was always as if his mind were on his work. His sentences were never long nor involved, but short and to the point, and spoken as if his mind had already left the thought and gone on or back to some constant theme—what, I did not know.

I caught him, too, occasionally talking to himself, as once, when we were walking leisurely along, he said in a kind of undertone: "It must be; it must be so." When I asked him if he had addressed me, he looked up, apparently unconscious that he had spoken. He was not an imaginative dreamer—he

was not a dreamer at all—his abstraction was due to something else.

One evening about four o'clock, when we lived in Jena, a university town not far from Leipsic, and where I was somewhat of a curiosity to the natives, our daily walk led us down a narrow street occupied by small tradesmen. We stopped at a little shop with a dirty little show-window full of rat traps, dog collars, chains and the like.

William bought a bird cage.

A few days after I had carried the cage to our rooms an old lady called and asked for *Herr Wittman.* When William came some negotiations took place, after which the lady put a bird into our cage.

"How much food ought it to have a

day?" asked my master—of course, in German.

"Oh! little or nothing," said the old lady; "just as it pleases you."

"That was not what I asked. How much *ought* it to have a day to keep in good health—exactly."

"Oh exactly!" repeated the old lady; "well that would be about a thimbleful of seed."

When we were alone again my master commanded me to feed the bird the quantity suggested at eleven o'clock every night.

"At eleven," I repeated, wishing to be sure that I had not misunderstood, for it seemed a strange time to feed a bird; and I was wondering, too, whether my

master was getting into the habits of an old bachelor.

"At eleven, exactly," he answered, with emphasis on the last word.

Our lives went on as before, excepting the changes the bird made, which happened not to be very slight. I asked once how soon we were going to leave Jena.

"In about two months. We should be gone now but for the bird," answered William.

About a week after the bird came I was directed to feed it exactly a half-hour earlier every day, with an emphasis again on the "exactly." I carried out my master's command; the first night thereafter I fed the bird at 10:30, the next night at 10, the next at 9:30, the next at 9, and

so on—at 8:30, 8, 7:30, 7, 6:30, 6—always a half-hour earlier every day, so that I was soon feeding the bird in the afternoon, then in the morning, then in the early morning, then midnight, and in forty-eight days at eleven o'clock again, the time at which I had started.

On the night of the forty-eighth day, as it struck eleven, I walked into the room where we kept the bird, to feed it, and found William standing before the cage, looking intently at the little animal as it flitted about waiting for its food. He stood motionless for at least ten minutes and watched the bird eat; then, with something of a look of disappointment in his face, he turned and walked away.

"William," I asked, "what shall I do

about feeding the bird after this? Shall I continue as usual? I believe it has become used to being fed a half-hour earlier every day, for of late it is generally awake and waiting for me, though it has already had its head under its wing for the night."

"You need not feed it again," was my master's answer.

That night I heard him walk the floor into the deep hours of the morning.

The next day the old lady came and took the bird away. At about ten o'clock that night William called me into his room and asked me to repeat what I had said the night before, concerning the bird becoming used to being fed a half-hour earlier every day. As I repeated what I had said, his face became almost radiant.

He took down from the shelves a blue-covered book and began to write on the first page.

In less than a week we boarded the good ship Thuringia at Hamburg for our homeward voyage to America. This was the year eighteen hundred and seventy-eight—in the summer. On landing at New York we went directly to the University of Virginia, where in September William became assistant professor of mathematics.

Until then he had given me almost daily instructions in some subject or other, excepting during those taciturn periods when he would only direct my reading. Although a man of very few words, he had taught me much during

these years, directed me to many books, and told me many things; for besides being his servant, I was in a manner his companion also. It was recreation to him, he said; which may account for the fact that he never taught me higher mathematics nor science. We were at this time reading the Odes of Horace. But now all this stopped, his time being entirely taken up by his classes and in study.

From the time of the bird experience in Jena, he now and then had me feed pigeons, chloroform dogs, and do various other things to domestic animals —all had to be done in a methodical way, with great exactness in regard to time. The outcome of some of the experiments elicited expressions of approbation from

William, while over others he mumbled despairingly. Some of the animals died during our experimenting, others became lame and some were turned loose unaffected. We never used any drugs except chloroform, and our only instrument was the clock—exact time measurements.

After every experiment the accustomed blue book was taken from the shelf and written in. I several times wished to ask what all this was for —what it all meant—but I knew my place and said nothing; I knew, too, from William's manner, that any answer I might have received would have been unsatisfactory, for it did not seem entirely clear to him, but that he had been upon

the scent of something during these years was evident.

I had my eyes opened one day—this was during our last year at the University of Virginia. I had for some weeks been chloroforming a stout little rat-terrier fifteen minutes earlier every day. I had chloroformed him first at six o'clock in the evening, next day at five-forty-five, next at five-thirty, and so on. The narcotic was very lightly administered, and calculated only to keep him in a doze until his natural time of sleeping came on.

I had been careful, according to the instructions of William, not to allow the dog to awaken between his artificial and natural sleep; I had, also according to instructions, placed an alarm clock in the kennel

set at four in the morning; so that whether the terrier had finished his snooze or not, he was compelled to awaken. It was my business then to keep him awake until the time of chloroforming came again, which was fifteen minutes earlier than the day before.

After I had been at this strange and apparently insane work for about two weeks I noticed that the dog became more and more susceptible to the chloroform, going to sleep more quickly on lighter applications. On the twenty-fourth day I was, according to the rule, to administer the narcotic at exactly twelve o'clock, noon. When I had left the animal at eleven forty-five to prepare the chloroform, he was wide awake, when I returned

he was fast asleep: he had gone to sleep at the regular time—fifteen minutes earlier than the day before—without the narcotic. Had this merely happened by accident, or—or what? William was just then returning from the university. I told him of the circumstance, and asked whether I should, nevertheless, administer the chloroform. Again there was some expression of brightness in his countenance as he said, "yes," and turned away.

The next day the same thing happened, and that night, March sixteenth, eighteen hundred and eighty-one, I again saw the blue book on the table before my master. I remember the date for several reasons, the most important of which is that just a week later the house in which

we lived caught fire, and the terrier was burned to death.

In the blue-covered blankbook, under date of March sixteenth, eighteen hundred eighty-one, appears the following:

> Experiment 21, black rat-terrier. The time rhythm. Twenty-fifth day of experimentation. Yesterday the arithmetical progression of the time rhythm of fifteen minutes per day became self-active. The same to-day. For Principle, see pages 20, 24, 28. Other experiments, pages 46, 52, 75, 89, 90, 92.
>
> Page 20: THE MATHEMATICAL PRINCIPLE IN LIFE.—It is folly to suppose that the principles of mathematics bind all the

universe excepting life. If a part of the world obeys its principles, so must all.

Page 24: ARITHMETIC AND TIME.—Arithmetic is dealing in time as Geometry is in space. Thus counting is only giving different intervals of time to the units, as, 1—1—1—1—1—1—1. But instead of saying, 1—1—1—1—1—1—1, in order to know the number of time intervals, different names are given the units as they succeed, as, 1—2—3—4—5—6—7. Arithmetic is, therefore, a dealing in time. Thus an experiment in time is one in arithmetic—the lowest form of the mathematical principle. With the

bodily organism we can make such temporal—therefore arithmetical—experimentations.*

Page 28: THE ORGANISM AND THE TIME PROGRESSION.—In experiments 21, 46, 52, 75, 89, 90, 92, organisms have come into the habit of doing things at a

* Since compiling this sketch related by my friend Judge Nutt, I have been informed by Professor Josiah Royce of Harvard University that an almost identical passage (excepting the last two sentences, in which Professor Whitmore carried life into a new and hitherto unexplored realm—mathematics) may be found in Dr. Paul Deussen's *Die Elemente der Metaphysik,* recently translated by M. C. Duff (Sec. Eng. Ed., p. 38). The first edition of this work appeared in Germany in 1877, one year before Professor Whitmore left Jena for America. But whether or not the first edition contained this passage I have not been able to ascertain, and if it did, whether it came under the notice of Professor Whitmore will perhaps never be known. The last I heard of Dr. Paul Deussen was that he was at the University of Kiel, but whether

different time every day; these different times have progressed regularly an exact number of minutes every day; thus showing that the organism observes arithmetical progression—the lowest form of the mathematical principle.

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he was there between 1870 and 1878, during which years Professor Whitmore and Blanchard roamed about the universities of Europe, Kiel among them, I do not know. It is not altogether improbable that these two men met during those years. But from which one the idea emanated that the science of arithmetic is founded upon the a-priority of time—if it emanated from either —is also unknown to me. Yet from what Blanchard has left us concerning this wonderful man it is reasonable to believe that he had been for some time before 1877 revolving the proposition that from the a-priority of time, life itself could be shown to be bound hard and fast by the principles of the lowest mathematical science, arithmetic.—M. E.

CHAPTER TWELVE

In January, eighteen hundred and eighty-three, my master received a call to the chair of mathematics in Rose Polytechnic Institute, Terre Haute, Indiana. We arrived the next month and took rooms at the Terre Haute House, in the northwest corner of the second floor. But it being much too noisy there for my master—the street being below our west windows—we removed to a suite of rooms in the northeast corner of the same floor.

There were only three or four persons who ever came to see my master, and they called but seldom. President Thompson

of the Institute was the most frequent visitor; he came five or six times the year before his death. My master never called on any one. He had, it seemed to me, only one unnecessary habit. Every morning, directly after breakfast, he went to the drug store across the street and bought a cigar, returned to the rooms and smoked for about fifteen minutes. No matter what happened, he had this one cigar every day, and that immediately after his first meal.

One evening in January, eighteen hundred and eighty-four, about ten months before President Thompson died, he called on my master. I heard them talking until late into the night. About the time I thought the fire must be low I went into

the room where they were sitting to put some coal on the grate, when I overheard the following:

". . . time is of the individual body and mind itself then?" asked President Thompson. [I did not hear the first part of his sentence.]

"What else could it be?" replied my master in his shallow monotone. "We do not see time. We do not hear time. We do not smell time. We do not taste time. We do not feel time. Yet who will deny that time exists? If we do not get it through the senses, then it is not in the outer world; then it must be a something inherent in us—an innate or inborn idea."*

*The a-priority of time. This notion of time was first developed by Kant, in his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft.*—M. E.

"Ah!" said President Thompson, "now the point is clearer. Time being a thing not of the outer world, but existing only in the mind, and arithmetic being concerned only with time, the mind of the individual must of necessity obey arithmetical principles."

"That is exactly what I claim," said my master.

"But," continued President Thompson, "life is so complex that it will be difficult to discern the mind's obedience to arithmetical progressions."

"That is the trouble," said my master. "But it can be overcome."

"How on earth?" asked President Thompson, looking in wonderment at William.

"In this way. If the body and mind are subjected to some comparatively simple and regular activities, their obedience to arithmetical progressions will appear, that is, if I am right that life must obey the principles of mathematics and is mathematically lawful the same as the physical universe."

I should have liked to hear more, but it was not my business, and I went out. I turned that statement over and over again in my mind that night; I could not forget it: "that life must obey the principles of mathematics." What can this mean? I thought. But President Thompson is dead; he is not here to tell what he heard that night, and must have heard on other occasions when they were

together; and my master is dead also; I alone am left to tell what little I know.

During the spring of eighteen hundred and eighty-four my master kept two pigeons in the study. I don't know what he did with them, but I found both dead in their respective cages just seven days apart.

Some time during the vacation—I think in July—I carried my master's resignation to President Thompson's home.

"Are we going to leave, William?" I asked, a few days after.

"No. I must have all my time," was all that he said.

About September tenth two events took place which I shall relate. The first was that I was ordered to buy a canary bird, and place it in a cage in the study; the

second was that my master retired that night at twelve o'clock sharp. He had ordered me to awaken him by pounding on the door at eight o'clock the next morning; which I did. From that day on he retired every night exactly at twelve o'clock, and had me awaken him at eight.

This was quite a change in his habits of life, for as long as I can remember —and that is all his life—he had never retired at any regular time, not even when he was a child, long before we left the plantation for the academy at Fredericksburg; and his time of arising had been also always more or less irregular. I remember that I thought he must be experimenting on the canary bird; and I remember also that I felt sorry he

had not allowed me to make the experiments, as I had done before. I felt that I had perhaps made some mistake; that he didn't trust me any longer.

Our birthday was September nineteenth. Since September tenth my master had retired every night at twelve o'clock, and was up the next morning at eight. On this day—September nineteenth—he commanded me to awaken him the next morning, September twentieth—mark the date—at exactly ten minutes past eight.

I did as I had been ordered, and didn't think anything about the extra ten minutes, except that perhaps he felt he could afford a little more sleep that morning. But when on that day he ordered me to

awaken him the next morning—September twenty-first—at exactly twenty minutes past eight, I began to think a bit. But I dropped the matter when it occurred to me that he was undoubtedly experimenting on the canary, as we had often done before. That night he ordered me to awaken him the next day—which was the third morning, September twenty-second—at exactly thirty minutes past eight.

After I had set the alarm clock that night and retired, the thought struck me that my master's arising ten minutes later every day could not be on account of the bird; for our experiments with all the animals—all at least excepting the last two, which I had found dead in the cages,

and of which I knew nothing—had gone the other way, that is, the time had become earlier and earlier, instead of later and later; the bird at Jena had been fed earlier, and so it had been with all our experiments.

After I had tossed in bed for some time, thinking of an explanation for what as yet I could not understand, it occurred to me that William perhaps had turned the train of experimentation, and would do the feeding—or whatever he was doing to the bird—ten minutes later every day, instead of earlier, as we had done heretofore. But this I found, after a little more thought, to be no explanation at all. If he wished to attend to the bird at a given time later

every day it was not at all necessary for him to arise later: if he wished to feed the bird at eight, eight-ten, eight-twenty, eight-thirty, it was not necessary for him to sleep until those times.

One thing was clear now. He was experimenting on himself.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Things had been going on in this way for nearly two weeks—in bed every night sharp at twelve o'clock, and up the next morning ten minutes later than the morning before. Thus on the eleventh day my master arose at ten minutes before ten. As the dining-hall of the hotel was closed for breakfast exactly at ten, after that morning, September thirtieth, he did not appear for that meal, but had me bring him his lunch; after which he went directly for his cigar.

The time which was not occupied in

sleeping was spent in reading, writing and in light bodily exercise.

A difficulty soon arose. As the days were being gradually converted into nights, my master found some difficulty in going to sleep. Up to the time he slept ten hours, everything had gone smoothly; he had found no difficulty whatever at twelve o'clock in dropping off into a heavy slumber. But now, after the twelfth day, this obstacle arose. As yet he had said not a word to me about the entire matter, except to give the directions concerning the awakening times. I knew though that this difficulty had arisen; I could hear him rolling in his bed at night.

One morning—it was the morning that

he arose at twenty minutes after ten—I was sitting in my room, thinking about what had been taking place with my master during the last fourteen days, and how strange everything was. He had, indeed, always been strange; there had been a side of his life which I had never understood—which I had never hoped to understand.

In our younger days he had told me once that this was natural from the difference in our education and experience; that we were occupied with different thoughts and that things had different meanings to us, that even words did not mean the same to us. I remember how unsatisfactory his explanation had been—how little, indeed, it had ex-

plained to me. I was revolving these things in my mind when my master called me into the study. He had just finished his cigar, and the few empty breakfast dishes were still standing on the table.

"Blanchard," he said in the same monotone, but there was something of anxiety in his colorless face—"Blanchard, I must have more of your assistance. Go to a drug store where you are not known, for it is nobody's business, and buy ten grains of morphine and a hypodermic needle." With this he drew some money from his pocket, gave it to me, and waited for me to leave.

I knew what morphine was, but had not the least idea what a hypodermic needle could be. And then, why go where

I was not known? Yet what he said about its being "nobody's business" only reminded me how he disliked public curiosity, which would naturally be aroused about him if I purchased the articles where I was known to be his attendant. I went to a drug store in the northern part of the city, and was back in a short time.

"That is all," he said, and I left the room.

That was a bitter errand for me. I had asked the drug store clerk whether that amount of morphine was deadly, and he had laughed and said that it would kill two or three men.

I continued, as usual, to awaken my master ten minutes later every day. The

time at which he arose went past eleven—past twelve—near to one o'clock in the afternoon. "Is this never going to end?" I asked myself. "What will be the outcome?" It now flashed upon me what the outcome *must* be. I knew nothing about science and know nothing yet (he had never taught me); but if he slept ten minutes later every day and forced himself to sleep, as he must now be doing, there would come a time when he would not awake at all—when he would sleep always, for he was still retiring sharp at twelve and continued to do so.

He called me into the study again; it was late at night, about the middle of October. When I entered he was standing near the table.

"Come here, Blanchard," he said.

I approached the table, on which stood nothing but a small wine glass, containing a very small quantity of liquid; it was the morphine that I had purchased at the drug store; it had been dissolved.

Drawing from the wine glass a small syringe with a very fine point, he said: "Take this at four o'clock to-morrow morning, thrust the point just under the skin any place on my body which is exposed, and inject the contents."

"My God! Master William—," but before I could finish there was an expression in his face which I had never seen before; it was of utter disappointment, of disgust, as if he almost hated me. Though I was not his slave, he was

as much as ever my master. Save him nobody on earth was anything to me, or I anything to anybody else; and though he never said much and had no expression in his voice, he had always had a kind and sympathetic heart. I begged him not to go farther in this affair, not to have me do what he had commanded. He did not say a word, but with every sentence I uttered his face grew more pallid and marked with furrows of contempt. I can see him yet as he stood there! I had rather he had beaten me. I left the study nearly crazed with hatred of myself and anxiety for my master. He hated me now; why should I not hate myself? It was as if he had asked me to kill him, and because of my desire to save

his life he had turned against me. What right had I, his servant, to interfere with his plans? had he not taught me? could he not see through my simple mind? did I not owe him, above all, obedience? Just at that moment some one knocked at one of the doors; a small man hurried into the drawing-room, then into the study, and shouted something to my master.

I saw now that I had been loud in my remonstrances, and that this man must have thought we had been quarreling and fighting. Before I could collect myself, and find out what was going on between the man and my master, the former had gone, and William had closed the study door.

That night was like an age to me. I

knew well enough, from my master's past life, how he disliked a public demonstration of any kind, and how vulgar his own affairs seemed to him when other people meddled with them; then, too, I had aroused him against me; I had offended him who had saved me from the travails of slavery, had taught me, had given me as good a life through all these years as he had known himself, and had shown me all the sympathy that he was capable of; then came the thought of my awful duty for the night! These things swam and swarmed through my head, as one by one the hours of the night wearily wore on. At last four o'clock came; the night began to gray in the east; a slight wind was astir in the street, rustling the withered

leaves, and like a thief I stole into my master's room. He was lying on his right side fast asleep. His body was as straight as a corpse, and his face in the dark seemed still to wear that awful expression. There was nowhere I could inject the morphine but in the neck. That was the only place exposed except the face. I hesitated. His eyes seemed to open, and his features to distort and wrinkle with a grimace that overawed and that commanded me. I pricked the skin and forced the morphine into my master's neck. The flesh flinched and the temples quivered as I withdrew the needle. It was done! I went trembling to my room and waited for the dawn.

That day my master arose at ten minutes before one.

The chambermaids had been complaining of late because they were not allowed to enter our rooms in the morning, but were delayed with their work on our account until the afternoon. When on this same day I was able to approach my master I told him of these complaints.

"From now on," he answered, "allow no one to enter the rooms; you can attend to them." After a moment he continued, looking straight into my eyes, "Blanchard, did you inject the morphine at the hour I told you?"

I was surprised at this. "Yes," I said.

"Where?"

I indicated the spot.

He ran his fingers over his neck, and stopping at the little wound the needle had made, said, to my horror: "The same at the same hour to-morrow," and motioned me to go.

I obeyed this ghastly command not only the next morning, but for many mornings after that, until his neck was spotted with little wounds from the hypodermic needle. It was his wish. He was my master.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

This strange business ran on as before, excepting that while it was explaining itself, it yet became stranger still. Of late when I pounded on the door for my master to arise, he would answer immediately—almost on the second. One day the time slipped me, I looked at the clock and found that I was two minutes late. As I hurried toward the door to give the usual rap I heard the curtain fly up within —as was usual immediately after his arising, for the darkness of the room and his sleep were always kept in exact coexistence. "Never mind, you are two minutes

late," came from his room in the same monotone.

"Yes," I answered, "two minutes." I was astounded at this. He had no watch nor clock in his room; there were no bells nor whistles, for it was between hours; there was nothing that I knew of from which he could have received his information concerning the exact hour and minute of the day.

The time finally came when my master slept till ten minutes before three in the afternoon. He was unable, therefore, after October thirtieth—just thirty days after he ate his last breakfast in the dining-hall of the hotel—to take his lunch there; for three o'clock was the latest hour that lunch was served, and on the

next day he would arise at exactly that time. After that day, therefore, I brought this meal to his room.

From the first night of the morphine injection I slept very little—not that I had not plenty of time for sleep, for I had scarcely anything to do, but I began at times to distrust my own mind; this strange business was continually in my thoughts; what was to be the end? I was alone more than ever before, and sat for hours, thinking.

The next thing in this chain of events was that my master instructed me one day not to rap at his door at the awakening time, as I had been doing, but to come into his room noiselessly, and if he did not awaken of his own accord at the exact

time, I should then arouse him, ***but not till then.*** After this, therefore, I did not shut the door after the morphine injection, for it was a spring lock, but left it open that I might enter at the arising time. What capability of surprise was left in me was aroused, when within a few seconds of the exact time, his body would begin to move and his eyes to open. As I would go out, he would arise and flip up the curtain as usual.

About this time he sent me with a letter to President Thompson, who was then lying sick at his residence. I do not know what that letter contained.

[The following is the letter which was found among the papers and correspondence of the late President Thompson

shortly after Professor Whitmore's death, and is undoubtedly the one here referred to by Blanchard:

"President Thompson.

Dear Sir: For the last few days the time rhythm has become established in me. The bird is doing well—it is following. The utter darkness of the room overcomes the difficulty we had spoken of.

Blanchard tells me he read in the evening paper that you are sick. I hope it is nothing serious.

Nov. 1, 1884. W. Whitmore."

The darkness of the room referred to here is perhaps the method Professor Whitmore employed in putting the bird to sleep.]

Not long after that time President Thompson died. My master did not, of

course, attend the funeral, for at that time I believe he was arising at about six in the evening.

On November twenty-ninth, thirty days after his last lunch in the dining-hall of the hotel, he arose at ten minutes before eight, night, and took his last dinner there. After that date I brought this meal to him from Sage's restaurant.

It was a cold, keen night about the middle of December; a thick, tightly trampled snow was on the ground, the stars shone clear, and the moonlight gave the night the brightness of dawn. It was approaching the hour of eleven. I was sitting in my room, which was only lighted by the flicker of the grate fire, while my master ate his night meal. A

gentleman, whom I thought and afterwards learned to be Judge Nutt, had called that evening about eight o'clock to see my master. I had not admitted him; I had been somewhat bewildered, for no one had called since my master began his strange life, and I had not known therefore what excuses to make—what to say. That my master was not to be awakened, I knew better than anything else. I was thinking over the matter, trying to recall what I had said to Judge Nutt and wondering what he would think, when my door opened and William entered buttoned up to the neck in his overcoat.

"Are you going out, William?"

"Yes," he replied.

"Shall I go along?"

"Yes," and he stood waiting.

I wrapped up warm and followed my master. The night was still, but the bitter cold nipped our faces as we moved along the deserted streets. Now and then merry sleigh bells hurried by and died away in the distance. We had walked for several squares in utter silence, when presently my master said: "Blanchard, at what time do I arise to-morrow?"

"At twenty minutes past ten, night," I answered.

"Twenty minutes past ten, night," he repeated slowly. "The end is drawing near."

"Oh, William! what end?" I cried.

This manifestation of feeling dis-

pleased him; he did not answer, but walked on as if he had not heard me. The court house clock tolled the hour of eleven.

"To-morrow will be the last night of the morphine," he mumbled.

"Thank God!" I said to myself.

"To-morrow," he continued, "you will buy some chloroform; and come to me as usual, at four o'clock in the morning; if I stir, saturate a bit of cotton and hold it under my nostrils for a short time, until I am perfectly quiet again. Come again every hour after that, and if I stir, do the same. Do you understand, Blanchard?"

Chloroform! I would as soon he had told me to thrust a dagger into his breast.

"Do you understand, Blanchard? You do not answer."

We were in the shadow of Centenary Church. Why did I not answer? Why did I not speak what was in my mind? "William," I burst out finally, "you must explain or I will go no farther!"

"You are foolish, Blanchard; it will soon be over, and then I shall have fulfilled the purpose of my life," came forth in the dispassionate monotone. "Yet, you are right," he continued, after a pause, "the time *has* come. I shall explain."

We walked for some distance before he began again. I hardly knew how cold I was, but my master seemed secretly to revel in the sharpness of the chill midnight air. "I shall explain," reverber-

ated in my ears as we walked silently along. "At last," I thought, "the time has indeed come."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

"Listen. *It is the arithmetical time rhythm in human life,*" he began. "If I am right, at twelve o'clock night December twenty-fourth I shall not awake, but continue to sleep, the time having arrived at which I should both awake and go to sleep again at the same identical instant. If I am right I shall not awake at all, but continue to sleep until the body dies of starvation or other natural causes. But it will not come to that.

"On that night, December twenty-fourth, at a little before twelve, you will

come noiselessly into my room, light the gas, observe the conduct of the bird, then sit beside my bed. If I awake at twelve, I am wrong; then life is exempt from the principles of mathematics, which bind the rest of the universe, then I am in a sea of inconsistencies without end. But I am *not* wrong, I shall *not* awake. I shall sleep on and on forever, if not aroused. An hour later, at one o'clock, awake me.

"Do you understand, Blanchard?"

I believe I said that I did.

"After that we shall go home."

"Home! where?" I thought, but did not speak.

"To the Shenandoah, Blanchard, to the Shenandoah," he mysteriously answered

my thoughts. "There I shall write of these things."

We were soon on our way back to the hotel; and although it was a sharp, cold night without, I felt cheerful and glad within. "Back to the Shenandoah," I thought, "where the mountains and vallies and river are, and all this strange business over;" and in my heart I was happy.

That night I carried a letter for my master to Judge Nutt's office. I do not know what that letter contained, nor why my master wished me to take it at such an hour, unless it was to avoid the judge.

[This, it will be remembered, was the will.]

The next morning I bought the chloro-

form, and followed my master's instructions exactly. I had no more than got my room in order on that same morning when Judge Nutt called and insisted on seeing my master; he was determined, and it was with difficulty that I kept him from breaking the spell of William's sleep, which would have destroyed his entire plan. When the judge returned that night at the hour I had told him my master would be awake, he was not satisfied with the note William had written for him, but forced his way into the study; and they were together for a few minutes. What took place between them I do not know; but when I saw my master a short time after Judge Nutt left, he was very nervous and feared that

such another visit would entirely upset his system and destroy his slumbers.

Once before December twenty-fourth my master reviewed in a few sentences my duties for that last night, and now I awaited "the end." I counted the hours to that happy one o'clock when I was to arouse him and when all would be over, and after which we should soon be on our way toward the place of our childhood. During the last few days I began to pack our belongings.

Now I come to the end. December twenty-fourth came at last. In the morning as usual I returned the dishes of my master's last night's meal to the restaurant. It was a wet, slushy day; the sun shone warm, melting the heavy snow of a

week before; eaves were dripping and roofs steaming. The streets were crowded with people brushing happily by one another in preparation for Christmas; children, old men, women—everybody seemed to be out and cheerful. I too was happy. In the afternoon I bought some fruit for my master to eat that night after the spell of sleep was broken; and on my way to the rooms, I stopped at an uptown railway ticket office and inquired about rates to the South.

At nightfall it began to get colder and to freeze; and about seven o'clock, as I was leaving the crowded streets with their brilliantly lighted show windows, a cold wind began to stir. I sat in my room now, waiting, as many others were that night.

I listened at my master's door once every hour; everything was as quiet as death within; but outside it was a blustering night. It was now eleven o'clock. I walked to the window and looked out. The streets were deserted, yet everything was in movement. The flickering lights on the icy sidewalks, gutters and icicled eaves, the silent running shadows on the frozen streets and buildings, and the whining and moaning of the wind, made the night hideous. Soon the last thirty minutes were being slept away; it was approaching the hour of twelve; and now the ten minutes of sleep which my master had accumulated day after day were to induce his body into perpetual sleep. "Will he awaken?" I began to ask my-

self, "or must I arouse him at one o'clock?"

At a little before twelve o'clock I crept noiselessly into his room and lighted the gas very low. Of a sudden the wind stopped moaning and the night settled still. I waited—it was a minute yet. I sat looking intently at my master's thin, white face; it wore a troubled expression. Slowly, but cutting clearly through the cold night, came the tolls of twelve o'clock from the court house tower.

The cover over my master's body began to move, his shoulders drew up, and his face quivered again about the temples and upper lip. He dropped over on his back. "It has failed," something shrieked within me, "he will awaken!" Drawing in

a long breath, his chest and body rose and expanded as if to burst, and his chin bolted against his breast; at the last stroke of the hour he dropped and sank again into the hollow of his bed, and his glassy eyes snapped open, looking toward the ceiling.

"It has failed, William!" I cried.

He made no answer.

"Master William!"

He was silent, and as white as the sheets.

I grabbed his arm, he did not move; there was no pulse, it had not failed! he would sleep forever! he was dead.

The wind moaned again and the lights flickered.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

My fate is quickly told. The next day I sent a telegram to Waldon; people came and asked questions; and I grew sick with a high fever so that I had to go to bed. I went to a room on the second floor which I knew to be unoccupied. One of the colored men of the hotel stayed with me. About five o'clock in the afternoon he came into the room and told me that my master's will had been found and that everything had been left to me.

At seven o'clock he came again and told me that he heard I was to be arrested; he also said that while in my master's

apartments, he had found a bottle of chloroform, a package of white stuff (the morphine), and a syringe, all of which he hid in the covers of my bed. "If they find those things you're gone," he concluded.

It grew dark in the room; my fever continued to rage.

"What time is it?" I asked.

"Ten o'clock," said the man, sitting by the window and looking intently toward the ground.

We had no light in the room.

"Let us have a light," I said.

"No, no!" answered the man, sharply.

I thought my head would burst, I was in a delirium; "I have waited long enough, I must have a doctor," I thought.

"Send for a doctor," I said.

"That is impossible," said the man.

"Why?"

He made no answer, and seemed to crouch down closer to the window sill and look out more eagerly.

"For God's sake get some cold water then, and bathe my head!"

"Some men are collecting at the back entrance."

"What?" I asked.

"Some men are collecting at the back entrance," and with this he grabbed his hat, said he would be back in a moment, locked the door on the outside, and was gone.

I arose and looked out the window. There must have been something like a

crowd of a hundred and fifty men below, swarming and jostling noiselessly; some seemed to be looking straight at the window before which I stood; I unconsciously shrank back. I heard somebody running down the hall toward my room, a key was slipped into the door, and in bounded the man who had been staying with me.

"They have come to hang you!" he cried in a wild whisper.

"What?" I asked.

"They have come to hang you!"

"Me?"

"Yes, *you!* you must get out of here! they have come to hang you! dress, dress. quick!"

I had my clothes on in a minute,

though my head was burning and I tottered under the delirium of the fever. I could now hear the mob stumbling up the back stairs at the west end of the hall; two pistol shots were fired; my companion thrust a mask into my hand, which I immediately put over my face; we ran down to the east end of the hall, climbed down the fire escape and jumped to the ground. It was dark where we landed, and where the men had collected and were still collecting. We could not make our escape, every direction was watched.

"Come, come!" said my companion, pulling me along.

We ran to where the mob had gathered, and followed the end of the mur-

derous procession up the rear stairs. It was my companion's plan; I was bewildered. I helped that mob of savage men hunt for me, I helped to batter out the windows and tear up the room.

"Let's have a light!" shouted a voice —shouted voices— "a light! a light!"

"My end has come," I thought. My companion gripped my hand, as a dozen other cowardly murderous voices shouted "No! No!" and mumbled something about recognition. The police appeared, and threatened to fire into the crowd, if we did not disperse. Among the first to move away were my companion and I, the rest followed; and in a few moments all was over, and we were making our way toward the river.

It was like a dream, a nightmare. I could feel the cold air on my head and it revived me. When we came to the river, we did not dare to cross by any of the bridges, for part of the mob, my companion said, must have been river people, living in huts and house-boats about the piers. We hid in a lumber pile until the moon went behind a cloud, then ran across the frozen river, the ice bending and cracking under our feet. The moon flashed upon us as we were climbing the bank on the other side, but all was silent. My companion hurried me over fences and through thick brush, and finally lodged me in his sister's hut.

I stayed there till I got well; then I went South, down the Wabash. From

city to city I worked my way in disguise, back to the place where my master and I were born. Here it is where I finish this last task of my life. Waldon owns the place now. They do not know me, they say I am crazy. But soon I'll be on the hill where my master lies, and where the good mother and grandfather were laid before the war.

It is done. I have told all that I know of the strange life and stranger death of him the world called William Whitmore. Who shall say that it was not all a fearsome riddle.

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