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**The Imprisoned Heiress**  
 —OR—  
**The Spectre of Egremont.**

CHAPTER XV.

"By Lionel I suppose you mean Lord Ashcroft," said the countess, regarding the young girl keenly. "Did you tell the truth, Aimee, when you said you had not spoken to his lordship?"

"Did I ever tell a falsehood?" asked Aimee, indignantly.

"Never, child, and I am sure you have not now. You could not meet my eyes so fearlessly if you had spoken falsely. You think Lord Ashcroft would protect you?"

"I am sure he would," answered the maiden, with enthusiasm, too innocent to suspect that the question was intended only to probe the hidden emotion of her heart. "He looks so good and so grand that I—"

She stopped in confusion.

"I see how it is," said the countess, more to herself than to Aimee. "What fatality! How terribly unfortunate! Oh, child, child! you know not what you have done."

"Why, what have I done?"

"Never mind. You cannot know, and I must not tell you. Promise me that you will not stand at the window again, Aimee, with the shutters drawn up, and that you will never venture from these rooms again. If you did but know it, they are a safe shelter for you. There are persons who would gladly see you die, and until you go to a convent you must be kept hidden here. Will you give me the promise I require?"

Aimee shook her head sadly.

"My child," cried the countess, "do you not love your mother?"

"I should love you better if you did not keep me confined here. You do not love me as much as you love the Lady Alexina."

"How can you think that?"

"You give her freedom and make her happy."

"How could I do otherwise with her, Aimee? She is the owner of Egremont; besides, we have no reason for keeping her concealed. But the earl and I cannot own you."

"Why not? What is the mystery about me?" exclaimed Aimee, her face kindling and her tones full of trepidation. "Is there anything—anything disgraceful?"

"No, child. Yet I cannot tell you the mystery. It is enough to say that if you repeat your excursions outside of your rooms you will bring a horrible fate upon yourself. Remember, I have warned you."

"I will remember," responded the maiden, somewhat coldly.

The countess frowned at this reply and an expression of terrible severity gathered in her eyes.

"I suppose," she said, "that you have forgotten the care I have always bestowed upon you, the tenderness I have lavished upon you, the sacrifices I have made for you. I love gaiety and society, yet since your birth I

the yacht, that she had taken a great fancy to his lordship. She asked me his name, and after I told her she called him Lionel slyly to herself."

"What irreparable mischief, Toplift! You must make amends for your carelessness. Aimee refused to promise anything, and you must keep a closer watch upon her."

"Yes, my lady, but she steals out when I am asleep. I might drug her."

"You might, but it is better not. The earl will never consent to having her drugged, even if I would. You must not be harsh with her, for she is but a tender, fragile thing. You had better hide your keys where she cannot find them."

"I will do so," said the governess greatly relieved at discovering that her young charge had not betrayed her habit of taking opium. "I will be as gentle with her as you always are, my lady. The Lady Aimee never had any reason to complain of my harshness or inattention."

"She never has complained of you, Toplift. You feel as I do, that we ought to make her life as pleasant as possible, for it is a hard one at best. But we must not be too indulgent, lest she take advantage of our weakness."

"Have you thought what is to be done with her, my lady, when the Lady Alexina is married and Lord Ashcroft becomes master of Egremont?"

"She is then to be sent to a convent. I have just told her so. She does not like the plan, but you must use all your influence toward making her regard it favorably."

"Am I to go with her, my lady?"

"No; you will always remain with me, I hope, Toplift. You have been so faithful to my interests that I shall never part with you. But I must return to the earl. See that Aimee retires immediately, and be sure to hide the keys."

The governess promised particular attention to those commands, and Lady Egremont took her departure.

Toplift then hastened to her young charge.

"Come, my pet," she said, coaxingly, "it's time for you to be in bed."

"I will come pretty soon, Dorcas, but leave me alone now. That's a dear old nurse."

"But my lady won't like it—"

"I shall," interrupted the little lady, decidedly. "Go now. I'll come when I feel sleepy."

The governess hesitated, but a desire to please Aimee, and the remembrance of the attractions of her novel induced her to yield assent, and she went back to the drawing-room.

"I intend to have my own way here" thought Aimee, evidently continuing the musings interrupted by her jailer. "Since mama will not tell me the secret, I'll try and find it out for myself. I mean to see Lord Ashcroft again, and she blushed prettily. "Even if he is going to marry Alexina, he may not despise my friendship. I will tell him, at least, that I am not a ghost, although I may have frightened him."

With this charitable intention she decided on waiting until the evening of the next day, rightly foreseeing that Toplift would be unusually vigilant that night.

She then arose, went to her table, and took from its drawer a small miniature of herself painted upon ivory. She had painted it some months before, to beguile the lagging hours, and it had been pronounced by her three friends perfect and true to life.

It looked like a miniature copy of the Lady Jasmine's portrait.

There was, perhaps, more strength and sweetness in it, but otherwise it was the same.

From the same drawer Aimee produced a picture of Lady Egremont, set in a frame bordered with seed pearls.

To move this frame and put it on her own portrait, was a labor of some minutes, but it was accomplished, and the young girl regarded the change with pleasure.

"He will like that, I am sure," she said, gleefully. "I will give it to him to-morrow evening, and then not see him again. I only want to let him see that I am not a ghost. But how shall I let him know who I am? Ah! I know."

She went to a little writing-desk upon her work-table, and seated herself to the task of inscribing her name under her portrait.

(To be continued.)



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**Children's Bogey**  
 By BERNARD RAILTON.

A few days ago I called upon some friends of mine—a young married couple—whom I had not seen for some months. They have a jolly little son about two years old.

This young man and I were great pals once. Every time I went to see him he used to chuckle with glee. But, to my amazement, the moment he set eyes on me this time he burst into tears and kicked and struggled to get away from me.

"What on earth is the matter with the lad?" I asked his mother.

"Oh," she replied, "I expect he thinks you are the doctor."

Apparently the child had been ill some little time before and it was necessary for the doctor to examine his throat, which the boy had disliked very much. From that day, whenever he had been naughty, his mother had said, "Now, if you're not a good boy I'll fetch the doctor to you."

Gradually this menace of the doctor had become a positive fear with the child. The very mention of his name terrified him. Any strange man wearing an overcoat who visited the house reminded him of the doctor.

I remember the agonies I suffered as a child from fear.

I was always particularly afraid of the dark. A nurse had once told me that if I was not a good boy a black man with a big sack would come and take me away. As I was never allowed to have a light in my bedroom, whenever I woke in the night I was absolutely terrified. Every shadow looked like a man with a big sack on his back. Shaking with terror I used to cover my head with the bed-clothes and pray hard to God not to let the black man get me.

Policemen were another bugbear of mine. For years after my childhood, whenever I passed a policeman I trembled. And to this day, if I am in a strange town and wish to know my way I never think of asking a policeman. This is a fear complex which I have never been able to eradicate.

Personally, I think it should be made a criminal offence for grown-up people to frighten young people. Far more harm is done to the mentality of a child in this way than by actual physical punishment.

Brown slices of onion in a little fat; add diced cooked potatoes and just before serving add a cupful of milk in which two eggs have been beaten.

**Bobbed Hair Not Allowed**

**GUARDIANS' ORDER TO NURSES.—SHINGLING ALSO FORBIDDEN.**

Romford, Essex. Board of Guardians has adopted a report of the Hospital Committee recommending that the nursing staff be instructed that, in future, bobbed or shingled hair will not be allowed and that anyone already bobbed must allow her hair to grow.

Miss Haslam, a guardian, who has bobbed her hair, said she objected to the recommendation. "Think," she said, "of the long hair coming down and tickling a patient."

Mr. J. W. Rigby, chairman of the Hospital Committee, said there had been a discussion on the matter in the nursing papers, and most of the matrons were against bobbed hair.

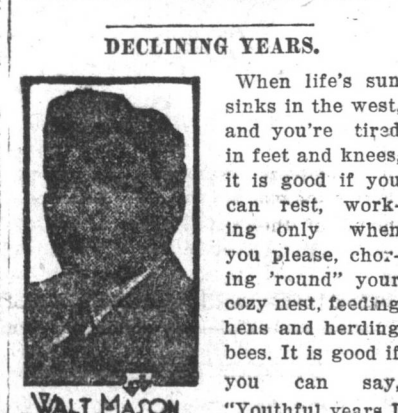
High Heels and Powder.

Mr. E. R. Goodfellow jocularly said that perhaps it was a question of morals, and, if so, the committee ought to go into the matter of whether the nurses should use face powder or wear high-heeled shoes when off duty.

He added that this was an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the staff. Perhaps when the Hospital Committee built a new nursing home, they would put a statue of Bumble in the entrance-hall. This was a pettingfogging piece of Bumble-don.

The chairman, Mr. E. G. Bratchell, said he did not see why the nurses should not be allowed to do as they liked. Mr. E. Lambert said the only reason given by the chairman of the Hospital Committee was that it was done at the desire of the matron, and he certainly did not think they should curtail the liberty of the nurses.

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**DECLINING YEARS.**

When life's sun sinks in the west, and you're tired in feet and knees, it is good if you can rest, working only when you please, changing "round" your cosy nest, feeding hens and herding bees. It is good if you can say, "Youthful years I gave to plant, pruning and threshing hay, wrestling with the fertile soil; and the dimes I put away; put them down in castor oil. Now that I am gone to seed, lame in all my bones and thews, I can loaf and smoke and read, only toiling when I choose; oh, a cheerful life I lead, here I yawn and rest and snooze." And there is no sadder sight than an old man, bent and frail, laboring with all his might for a paltry slice of kale, fearing he may die some night in a poorhouse or a jail. Past my gate the old men go, to their heavy, weary tasks, digging pathways in the snow, heaving coal and lifting casks, while the man who saved his dough on his silken cushions basks. Past my gate I see them wend, and their ancient hinges creak; to their bitter tasks they bend, drawing fifteen bucks a week; and their heartless sighs ascend to the heavens cold and bleak. Oh, my nephews, one and all, put the kopecks down in brass! Save a package, however small; with the wise boys stand in line; when night's shades begin to fall, have a bundle just like mine!

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**Lost City Quest**  
**EXPLORERS TO TRY TO CAPTURE MONSTER WHALE SHARK.**

For his great adventure in British Honduras with Dr. Thomas Gann and Lady Brown, wife of Sir Richmond Brown, Mr. F. A. Mitchell-Hodges recently at Liverpool saw his yacht, *Cara*, of 20 tons, placed on board the Harrison liner *Traveller*, 4,000 tons. The three explorers will, as already described in *The Daily Mail*, further investigate the unknown and deadly region in Central America where last

spring they discovered the ruins of the lost city of Lubantun, the seat of the Maya people.

Among the luggage are 3,000 fish hooks, some of them weighing fourteen pounds each, and 92 harpoons, several of which are 4 1/2 feet long. With these it is hoped to capture what Mr. Hodges states is now definitely known to exist, the Rhinodon typicus (or whale shark).

The length of an adult typicus he states is at least 70 feet, and if harpooned it could kill the *Cara* for three days and two nights.—*Daily Mail*, Nov. 8.

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