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CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Ten or fifteen pounds. I forgot what it was exactly," Lady Nora answers, confusedly, wondering distractedly what she shall do, and what she will have to pay Isabelle Glover to get the ring back again. "She gave me forty-five pounds for it—twenty on the evening she called to see me, and twenty-five by that check," she thinks, frightfully. "She'll make me pay fifty or sixty pounds for it at the very least! What shall I do?"

"Well, I suppose, mother, since you are so badly off," Dallas says, looking at her with gleaming eyes and a pale, hard, haughty face, "I must not dare to ask you to spend ten or fifteen pounds on getting it back again. Will you however, give me the pawnbroker's ticket for the ring?"

"I—I will. That is—I haven't a ticket. It was money sent me by a friend," Lady Nora stammers, bushing and growing angry as a last resource. "I tell you the ring is perfectly safe, and as soon as I can I will get it back for you. I wish to mercy I had never seen the thing! I had no idea, I am sure, that you would pounce on me in this manner for it!"

"It is exceedingly unpleasant when we are reminded of our wrong and foolish deeds, I know well," Dallas says, gravely and bitterly. "That ring has carried ill-luck with it from the very first. I won't trouble you any more."

lender with my company, mother, I dare say I am making a nuisance of myself. Please tell them to put me down at Albert Gate. By the by, I have not asked you—how is Yolande?"

"Oh, she is very well!" Lady Nora replies, briefly, biting her lip uneasily while she looks at him. "You know Mr. Dormer has been very ill, don't you?"

"No, I have heard nothing about them," her son answers, curtly.

"But you saw Yolande?" Lady Nora asks, in surprise, but feeling her way cautiously.

"Yes, I saw her," Dallas says, gloomily.

"And you have heard from her, of course?"

"No; I have not heard from her, of course," he replies, with a cold smile.

"Good-by, mother. Give my kind regards to my wife—with another cold faint smile—"that's as near as a penniless husband ought to come, isn't it?"

"But, Dallas, my dearest boy," she says, in her sweet maternal fashion, caressing his arm with her dainty hand in its long, shining, black glove, "surely Yolande has written to you? I am sure I heard her speak of doing so a few days after she saw you?"

"No, she has not written to me," he declares, drawing away his arm from the dainty maternal touch. "But I dare say her time is very fully occupied. Perhaps—with an icy tone in his voice—"when the season is over and she is quite at leisure she will write; she knows the address. You are all going abroad, I suppose?"

"He doesn't know a syllable about the failure; and what good would it do to tell him now?" Lady Nora thinks. "He has trouble enough of his own, poor boy!"

"I am going abroad, dearest," Lady Nora says, softly—"going to Switzerland, I think, with some friends."

"I can write from there and tell him all about it. That will be much the better way," she decides, instantly. "I believe Yolande is going into the country as soon as her uncle is able to leave town," she adds, aloud. "I shall tell Yolande I met you—may I, dear?" she asks, timidly.

"And, Dallas, my dear boy, you must take this trifle from me—you must indeed, to please me; and some day I hope to do much more for you. I mean to try to help you, my poor boy!"

"There are even tears in Lady Nora's eyes, she feels so tender and self-sacrificing just at this moment. But her son puts the offered note back on her lap very decidedly, and touches the little black-gloved, dainty hand with his lips.

"Thank you, madame," he says, with a little of his old graceful, pleasant manner—"I will not. Good-by again. Of course you may tell Yolande you met me, if she cares to hear of me."

He raises his hat, and his bright, tawny, close-cropped hair gleams in the sun, and with a smile of adieu he disappears in the crowd.

CHAPTER XXXV.

On Lady Nora's return home, she finds Mr. Carter waiting for her; and the worthy man—for he is a worthy man—is already on the friendliest terms with Miss Dormer, who is knit-

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ting away busily, and talking to him while she knits. Delighted, indeed, he is to discover poor Miss Keren's homely presence in the midst of the aristocratic atmosphere that surrounds his titled fiancée, whom honest John Carter, jeweler, gold and silversmith, and pawnbroker—a very wealthy and respectable man of plebeian antecedents—regards with most slavish, reverence and admiration.

He comes a-wroting with a costly bracelet set with cat's-eye and diamonds in one pocket, and a check for two hundred pounds and a marriage settlement ready for signing in the other.

Something like a lover! Lady Nora thinks so, and feels almost satisfied with her future husband. She accepts the check with an airy grace of indifference when honest John mutters something about "a little ready money, Lady Nora, my dear," and admires the bracelet—which gives her five hundred a year pin-money and provides for her handsomely if she survives him—with calm attention.

"I—hope you are satisfied, Lady Nora," he says, nervously. "I did what I thought was just and fair. The children of my first marriage, you know—I didn't want to make them jealous—"

"Oh, dear, no—not on any account!" Lady Nora interrupts, graciously; and then she smiles sweetly, and taps the enraptured John on one of his big red ears, comparing herself mentally to Titania as she does so. "I think you are very good and generous, my dear fellow. But you were always that—"

with a deep sigh and cast-down eyes. To herself she says with confidence, "I can dress as I please and spend money comfortably. He will never refuse to pay any moderate bills beyond my allowance."

Mr. Carter, thinking painful thoughts are hers, interposes hastily. "Indeed, I wasn't generous," he says, his honest face reddening with emotion. "For I fell head and ears in love with you the minute I laid eyes on you, Lady Nora, my darling! So there wasn't much generosity in my looking over that mistake, though it was a sad one," he adds, in a low tone, "and a thing I'm sure you wouldn't have done for worlds the minute after you had done it! And—don't ever speak of it again, dear; I can't bear to think of it!"

"Nor can I," Lady Nora rejoins meekly, looking up at him very innocently. "I must have been mad, you know—mad with trouble and worry, and the debts of my poor boy to pay, and—oh, I couldn't tell you all!"

"Yes, dear, I'm sure of it," says honest John.

But for that hateful Lord Pentreath and that more hateful Isabelle Glover, she might now comfortably bury the very memory of that past deed, Lady Nora reflects with angry impatience, one of the most foolish and dangerous things she has ever done among many foolish and dangerous ones.

Three years before, when staying at Cheltenham, Lady Nora found herself in debt to such a degree that she dared not even leave the hotel, as she had not the means of paying her bill, and stayed on week after week, buoyed up by the hope that, as the Viscount and Viscountess Glynn were coming to Cheltenham, things would be made smooth for her.

At the eleventh hour their plans were changed in consequence of Lady Marta's health, and they went to Carlsbad instead. In an evil hour, she used to think, but in a lucky hour, she thinks now, she made the acquaintance of a Mr. Carter, staying, like herself, at the hotel, and she was scornfully amused at the vulgar-looking little man's evident reverential admiration for her, until in her desperate plight she thought of turning his admiration to account.

(To be continued.)

Harpooning a Monster Rhinodon.

It happened in Florida waters a few weeks ago—the catching of a great fish, weighing fifteen tons, and a shark at that.

The lucky fisherman was Claude Nolan, and he was not out for sharks at all; he was hunting porpoises, with three other men in a stout boat. The sea was unusually calm, with no more than a smooth swell, and the boat, with its one sail just drawing full in the light breeze, was voyaging in the neighbourhood of Long Key, about a mile from land, when the men caught sight of a queer-looking triangular object standing up high out of the water.

At first they could not imagine what it was; but lowering sail, they paddled with oars slowly and cautiously toward the mysterious object. They got quite close to it before they perceived it was a gigantic fish, asleep apparently at the surface of the water, its huge back fin exposed to view.

Stealthily they brought the boat alongside the sleeping monster, and Nolan, standing in the bow with harpoon uplifted, suddenly drove it with all his might into the body of the fish, a foot or two forward of the fin.

The fish, waked thus rudely from its nap, instantly plunged to the bottom of the sea, and kept on going at a speed of at least sixty miles an hour. So fast did the harpoon-line run out that, to prevent it taking fire by friction, one of them was kept busy pouring water over the roller over which the rope whizzed. Another stood by with an axe, ready to cut the line if a hitch occurred.

Pulled Boat Under Water. The line was 2,400 feet, nearly half a mile long; and when all of it had run out the fish was still travelling. What saved the men's lives was that the water was not of a great depth. But the staunch boat was bows under scores of times, and they were kept frantically at work bailing to make her stay afloat.

After that had gone on for what seemed an age, the fish showed signs of tiring. It swam more slowly; and then for the first time its pursuers gained confidence of victory. Simply a matter of sticking at the job, and they were bound to win. But the struggle lasted for ten hours before the monster acknowledged defeat and came floating helplessly to the surface, utterly exhausted.

The rest was easy enough. A rope was passed with a sailor's hitch round the creature's tail, and it was towed to Long Key. When it came to rest in shallow water, it roused itself to a final and convulsive effort of resistance, and it was not subdued until fifty rifle bullets had been fired into it.

The prize was won. But even then Nolan and his men still found themselves in a state of amaze. They did not know what they had caught; for they had never seen or heard of such a fish. Scientific experts from the biological station of the Government Fisheries Bureau at Key West, enlightened them on the subject. They said it was a "rhinodon" or whale shark.

The experts were greatly interested, and no wonder; for the whale shark is rarely seen in American waters, and though not uncommon in the Indian Ocean, specimens are seldom taken.

But the adventure was not over. More was to come, and sufficiently thrilling.

Attacked by Tiger Sharks. The experts chartered a tug, to tow the dead whale shark to Key West, and all went well until, off Key Vacas, the skipper, L. L. Mombay, saw a big tiger shark coming. Tiger sharks are very numerous in Florida waters; they are man-eaters, attain a length of twenty feet, and are brown in color, with darker spots.

Presently two other tiger sharks appeared, and in a few minutes the sea was alive with them. For two hours the crew of the tug fought them with harpoons and sharp iron fastened to long poles, while hungry sharks leaped at the rhinodon, slid over its huge back, and even ran into the tug, as they strove to get at the dead monster. Those who were wounded were attacked by others of their own kind, and the scene of strife was well-nigh appalling.

At length the tiger sharks were driven off, or were so distracted by the fight among themselves as to abandon pursuit of the tug. But the attack, while it lasted, caused no little anxiety, because it was deemed of great importance to reserve the skin and skeleton of the rhinodon—which, in fact, was the object sought in transporting it to Key West.

On its arrival there it was lifted out of the water, machinery being available for the purpose, and was carefully measured. It was forty-five feet long, with a girth of forty-five feet, and a tail span of twelve feet; it weighed 20,000 pounds.

Under supervision of the experts, its hide was removed and salted, to preserve it and the flesh was removed from the bones, in order that the skeleton might be put together later and mounted for exhibition at the Museum of Natural History in New York.

Attains Great Length. Great though the size of this fish—it is really a mammal—much bigger specimens have been taken in eastern seas. They believe that the whale shark sometimes attains a length of sixty feet. It is not only the most gigantic of all sharks, but is the largest of existing animals, excepting the biggest whales.

The flesh of the rhinodon captured by Nolan was four feet wide. It could easily have swallowed a man. The creature is a good deal like a whale. It is dark gray in color, with white spots; it has a blunt head, and its small eyes are near the corner of

its mouth, which is at the front of the head, and not underneath like the mouths of other species of sharks, around its jaws run ribbon-like plates of minute teeth, ten in a row, and 150 rows in each jaw—about 7,000 teeth in all.

The rhinodon is nearly related to the "great basing shark" of Northern Atlantic waters—so called because of its habit of lying motionless, perhaps sleeping, at the surface of the sea. Like the whale shark, it is harmless to man. It attains a length of forty feet, of "cod liver oil."

Pursuit of it has long been an important industry of the Coasts of Norway and is the neighbourhood of Spitzbergen, its enormous liver sometimes yielding as much as 200 barrels of "cod liver oil."

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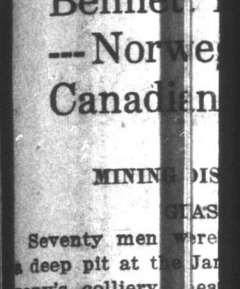
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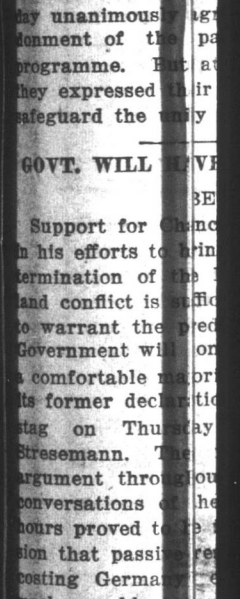
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