

## THE Phantom

(By the Author of "A Bachelor Husband.")

CHAPTER IV. ther said. She picked up a lid from ed how much he really cared for her

the mauve and white label.

She looked at the glowing face op- do you'd find the time pass ever so posite to her.

"Do you use it for your own skin?" she asked shyly. Miss Mason chuckled; she pushed the tray to one side along the floor.

never used cream to my skin at all," but it was only a very little, and I she said. "But people think I do, and spent most of it at first while I was so there you are! Have some more looking for work. So I'm going back

She refilled Esther's cup and lit an- I think they will." other cigarette. "So that's what I am," she said. "And now go on, and tell me about yourself. You said you were at ticoat shop," she said bluntly. "You're

"Yes, I was there for two years. I you're so prettyfather liked it! I love pretty things, and I was in the workroom. They paid claimed. She laughed in sheer amuseme quite well, too, though it was ment. To her it seemed absurd for this hard work, and then-well. then I girl to call her pretty; she considerleft-" her voice changed subtly. "Why?"

The query was only interested, and not at all impertinent.

"But you're not married?"

" Esther was looking away into the fire. "No, I'm not married," June's mind at that moment. she said in a stifled voice. "He my I shall see him again."

"You poor little thing!" said June

Esther smiled. I know. I keep on telling myself didn't seem half so bad; but-"

another the next day, and one every day while he's away. There! That's better," she added cheerily as Esther

I'm going to cheer you up. I shan't alway," she added, with a sudden softening, "you've got some one who loves

in the world." "Yes." said Esther. Her eyes shone and she thought of the letter which was even then lying against her "I think you're just wonderful," Es- heart. Somehow she had never realis-

one of the little pots and looked at | till to-day. "And what are you going to do till "June Mason's natural beautifier. he comes home?" Miss Mason asked ed many times, and had lost its first interestedly. "If you had something to

much quickly." "It's a question of having to do omething rather than how to pass the time," Esther said. "I haven't any money except what I can make. My I don't mind telling you that I've aunt left me a little when she died,

> to Eldred's-if they will have me, and Miss Mason said "Humph!"

"I think you're too good for a pet wasted there! Nobody sees you, and "Oh, what nonsense!" Esther ex-

ed June Mason such a personalityso attractive! She really did make a picturesque

figure as she sat there with her mauve Esther flushed.

"Well—well—I thought I was going blouse and dark hair and wonderful to be married. He-well, he asked me rose-leaf skin reminded one of some to leave to marry him, and so I did. brilliant portrait painted by a masterhand

Esther would have been surprised could she have known the thought in

"She's just sweet! I don't know fiance—has had to go away on busi- when I've seen a face I admire more. ness-abroad, and I don't know when Micky would adore her! She's just the sort of woman he always raves Her voice sounded sad and dispirit- about. I must ask him to tea to meet her one day."

"There are heaps of other berth Mason. She leaned over and laid her | going besides Eldred's you know," she hand on Esther's. "Never mind! The said earnestly. "However, you must time will soon pass, and then he'll do as you like, of course." She threw come back and you'll live happily ever away another unfinished cigarette. "Do you think we are going to be friends?" she asked.

"I am sure we are," Esther said. it's foolish to worry. I felt quite happy She really did think so; she had nevthis morning. I had a letter from him, er met any one in the least like June and somehow when I read it things Mason before. She began to feel glad that she had come to this house. It I expect." Miss Mason insisted. "And Brixton Road, certainly, but it was table; Esther recognised her as the well worth it, even if only because proprietress, Mrs. Elders. she had met this quaint little woman.

a, and then it was only the chimng of a clock on the shelf that rous-

"Nearly seven!" She started up am sorry for having stayed so

June declared. "You may go shares with this room if you like. I'm out so much, it isn't used half the time. Think it over, will you?"

"It's awfully kind of you; I should ove to, but I couldn't afford it. I'm really paying more money now than I ought to. I want to save, too Miss Mason laughed,

"For the wedding! Lucky girl! hope you'll ask me to come and see you married—and I hope he's very nice," she added. "He is," said Esther eagerly. "An he's very handsome," she added shy-

But Miss Mason was not impres

"I don't care a fig if a man is hand ome or not," she said bluntly. "If he's just manly and straightforward and kind, that's all I expect him to be Now look here we have dinner at half-past seven in this establishmen low you to be miserable. And any- lit's only supper really, but we all put on our best blouses-if we've got any -and call it dinner. I'll call for you you, and that's worth everything else on the way down and we'll go in to gether. I'll tell Mrs. Elders you are going to share my table, if you like; it's deadly dull sitting alone."

"I should like to sit with you very much." Esther said eagerly. "But I really haven't got a 'best' blouse." She glanced down at the plain white silk shirt she wore; it had been wash-

freshness. "Come down as you are, then, Miss Mason urged, "and I will too! hate changing. This yellow rag good enough for the old tabbies we

Esther went half-way down the stairs and came back. "Charlie-I've forgotten Charlie."

"Charlie can stay where he is till bedtime," June declared. "You can come up and fetch him then. Hurry, or you'll be late." Esther went down to her

feeling more lighthearted than she had done for a long time. As she unpacked, her boxes and tidied her hair she could hear June Mason moving about upstairs, singing cheerily.

"I'm going to like her-I'm going to like her awfully," she told herself. She hurried to be ready in time, but the rather unmelodious dinner-bel had clanged through the house twice she asked June presently. hefore June came to the door.

"You've unpacked, then?" she said. She looked round the small room approvingly. "I can see you're one of the tidy ones," she said. "I'm not; I be the same. Are you ready?"

went downstairs together. "Every one knows you're coming," June said as they neared the diningings. I'll tell you who they all are and all about them."

The dining-room was a long, narrow sort of room that looked as if it once had been two rooms recently chair spoke to a young man who was thrown into one; the floor was cover- sitting alone at one of the smaller ed with slippery green linoleum, and tables behind her. there was a long table running almost the length of the room, with a

few smaller ones on either side. A grey-haired woman with pebble was, much more expensive than the glasses stood at the head of the long

She said good-evening to Esther and It was nearly seven o'clock before stared frigidly at June, as if she did she thought of going back to her own not like to see the two girls together.

BABY COLEMAN

'Altogether brighter

My baby seemed to be quite health at birth, but being unable to feed hi I tried different foods at various time evident he was wasting, an became evident he was wasing, and I was advised to try Virol. He soo began to pull round, and in short time made considerable weight This satisfactory progress has continued, thanks to Virol, which has view of the gratifying results obtained I do not hesitate to recommend Viro whenever the quantum states of the control of the

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She did not approve of the little fac cream lady, though she was careful never to say so, as June was one of her best paying propositions.

Esther was glad when they reached their own table; glad, too, that she was more or less out of the way of

The dinner was plain, but infinitely superior to the fare she had had to put up with in the Brixton Road. "Do you have all your meals here?"

and not always supper. I go out with friends sometimes. Every one hasn't given me up just because my family have. But the food is quite good here. wish I were. However, we can't all They're rather too fond of rice and stewed apples; but it might be worse. She took Esther's arm and they Turn round presently and look at the man behind you with the grey hair. Isn't he handsome? We call him the colonel, though I don't believe he's a room, "Every one always knows every- colonel at all. He's a dear, but he althing that goes on here. Don't take ways complains about everything. I any notice if they stare a lot; they know he gives notice regularly on must stare at something, poor darl- Saturday morning and takes it back again on Saturday night. Mrs. Elders would think he wasn't well if he miss-

ed giving her notice." She laughed, and turning in he

"Is your cough better?" she asked. "I'm going to give you some special stuff to-night for it. No, it isn't at all nasty." She turned back to Esther. "May I introduce Mr. Harley—he's the most interesting person in the whole house. He writes stories and things. Mr. Harley, this is Miss Shepstone—a great friend of mind." Harley bowed. He was a pale, deicate-looking young man with fine

dark eyes. "You never told me that you knew Miss Shepstone," he said to June. diss Shepstone," he said to June.
"I didn't know her till this after-

noon," she answered promptly; "but I make friends quickly, as you know." "You'll like Harley," she told Es-her presently in an undertone. "He's ther presently in an undertone. "He's very clever, but so delicate, poor boy! He ought to live in the country instead of in London. He's the sort of person I should love to help if I were

"It must be wonderful to be rich," Esther said. There was a little flush in her cheeks; she was really enjoying herself. "It's the dream of my life to have enough money to be able to do anything I like," she added earnestly. 'Just for a month! If I could be really ich just for one month I wouldn't nind going back to being poor again."

Miss Mason said "Rubbish!" briskly. "Money can't buy happiness, my dear, and don't you forget it. My people think it can, and lots of other people think the same. It only shows what fools they are. It was the money my people couldn't get over when Ileclined to marry Micky Mellowes "She made a little wry face. "I reember my mother coming into my member my mother coming into my room one night in her dressing-gown—poor soul!—when she heard I'd told Micky there was nothing doing, and saying tragically: 'June, you must be mad—stark, staring mad! Why, the man's as rich as Cræsus!'

"Rich!" Esther as conscious of an odd little sinking at her heart. "Is Mr. Mellowes rich, then?" she asked



RETURNING SPRING. on't be long before we'll hear And hear the blackbirds on the fen With all their feathered consequence With all their feathered consequence, Chattering and sputtering over things. And getting mad and locking wings And bills and feet, the way men act At times about some simple fact, Disputing one another there As though the Lord on high will care Which one of them was fed the best Or which one had the finest nest.

It won't be long before we'll see
The green returning to the tree,
An' over all our lives anew
Will stretch a kindly ky of blue;
The tulips will come springing up
To catch the sunbeams in a cup
And everyone of them will say,
"We' were not dead, but just away.
We've had our sleep, and now we rise,
Fresh messengers from heavenly skies,
To carry beauty down below
To everyone of you to know.

It won't be long before the streams Will wake from all their winter

And start to laugh and race again Down hillsides and the level plain, Making their journey to the sea Most human-like it seems to me; For we are headed seaward, too-Each morning here we wake anew To toss and race and move along Towards that great unnumbered

throng. Which went before, and at the end Our lives with greater lives to bend

It won't be long before the Spring . Should strengthen faith that's falter ing.

Fashions and Fads. Satin and crepe de chine are much

sed for spring millinery. Flat tassels of silky fibre fringe appear on frocks of jersey cloth. Shiny buttons and military braid trim the suit for the 16-year-old.



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naking other foods yield up their nu

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In



March t weather runs a m u c k and springs contor. tions, great and small—the poor, est month I ever struck, and I'v been up agains them all. It is a month of sudder whims; one day the grass start from the

You'

Came

and then a blizzard comes and trims the whiskers from a stone gargoyle. What h should wear no man can know, for he may shiver or perspire; there sure to be three feet of snow if h puts on his spring attire. If he puts on his heavy furs, convinced they are the safest bet, a summer zephyr round him whirs, and he's reduced to grease and sweat. March seems keep us all in view, as we go doddering along, and then, no matter what we do, she shows us what we did was wrong. I've seen all kinds of months go by, I've seen their characters unfold; and some were wet and some were dry, and some were hot, and others cold. And they were what we would expect, the were consistent in their ways, and so their conduct was correct, and drew from me a song of praise. But March is summer, winter, fall, and springtime, badly mixed and blent; her lightning changes bore us all, and fill our hearts with discontent

## Short Shrift for Negro.

Tampa, Fla., March 15 .- William Bowles, a negro, was lynched by mob near Eagle Lake, in Polk County, late yesterday, after two deputy sheriffs had arrested him on a charge of making improper remarks to a young white woman. As the officers were taking the negro to the county jail at Barlow they were held up by a mob of armed men, overpowered and the negro taken from them. He

was hanged to a tree near the roal.

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