

FOR A MILLION OF MONEY

BY ARTHUR W. MARCHMONT
Author of "By Right of Sword," "When I Was Caesar," etc., etc.
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"I think you had better make up your mind to stay until the mistress returns, Miss," answered the woman in the same dogged tone. "All the servants have the same orders, and even if you got out of this room, they wouldn't let you leave the house. The mistress is so strict about her orders being obeyed."

"But she has made a mistake, I tell you."

"Of course, we know nothing about that, Miss. We can only do what we are told."

Olivia bit her lip in anger, as she saw that she would not be allowed to go. "Do you know where your mistress is?"

"She has gone down to her country house at Lichfield, Miss."

"Then telegraph to her at once. Wait! I'll write a telegram," and turning to her table, Olivia wrote a message. "What is the full address?"

"I don't know the exact address, Miss, but the butler will add it. I'll send it off at once. I've no doubt this will soon put matters right. I'm glad to be able to help you. I am very sorry for all this."

Left to herself once more, Olivia racked her wits to understand the reason for the extraordinary course Mrs. Taunton had taken, and gradually a grave mistrust of the American began to take shape in her thoughts. It seemed incredible that, if she were really her friend, she should have allowed herself to be persuaded to do what Merridew had said, knowing as well as she did how he had behaved.

She fought against this distrust vigorously. It threatened so much to her that she was all unwilling to entertain it. The telegram would help her to decide, and she waited with almost fierce impatience for it.

It did not arrive until the evening, and then only added to the puzzle. "Deeply regret mistake. Will re-

turn at once, and set matters right. But don't worry. Have good reason to know that G. M. is not at all what you think. Dearest love, —Taunton."

Panton had brought up the message and stood watching Olivia impassively as she read it. "Are you to go, Miss?" she asked.

"Mrs. Taunton is coming home at once. It is late now, and I may as well wait until she arrives," said Olivia, and did not see the look in Panton's eyes as she turned and went out of the room.

The telegram added to Olivia's perplexity. A few words with Mrs. Taunton would, no doubt, clear matters up entirely; but the sentence about Merridew baffled her. And when the night passed without bringing the American and mid-day on Sunday arrived without any news of her, the mistrust took deeper root and grew quickly.

She read the telegram a dozen times and at length a new disturbing thought occurred to her.

What was it she knew about Lichfield? And in a flash she remembered and turned chill with new fear.

It was from Lichfield that Olga Schmidt was supposed to have come, and from Lichfield that her bogus character had been sent.

And it was Madame Boncourt who, the woman who was the organizer and leader, and found out the richly paid work for other members of the gang to do.

Could there be any possibility even the remotest connection between her and Mrs. Taunton? The thought so frightened Olivia that she took her book and began to read with feverish intensity, seeking to concentrate all her thoughts on what she read in the desperate effort to put aside this new and terrible fear.

The rest of that day was dominated by this fresh terror. The night was one long, dismal horror; and the next morning found her feverish, unrested and sick with suspense.

But she took herself to task sharply. "If I get ill, it will be worse than all," she told herself; and all the morning she fought bravely to regain her courage.

Mrs. Taunton arrived about mid-day, and Olivia had by then so far retained her self-control as to be able to repress all signs of her new fear.

The American was full of regrets at the turn matters had taken, and that she had not been able to get back before. But, at any rate, she had brought good news, and she went on to declare that Merridew was doing all he could to keep his word.

"I will not wait any longer," said Mrs. Taunton. "I am going now," said Olivia.

"But, my dear little piece of impenitence, I promised him, I can't break my word; and he is really a good fellow. You are altogether wrong about him."

"Do you mean you will not let me leave the house?" asked Olivia.

"What I mean is that you ought to give him time; you really must."

"Must?" echoed Olivia, pointedly. "Why must?"

"How strange and cold you are, dear. I don't understand you."

"I think I am beginning to understand you."

For a moment Mrs. Taunton paused and then, with an air of great candor, said: "My dear Olivia, I really did not intend to tell you, but, of course, now I must. The plain truth is that Mr. Merridew told me such things that I saw you could not leave here with safety, and I therefore kept you here until I could get back to see to matters for myself. Don't look at me as if I were going to eat you."

"He told me that he has been mixed up with a lot of dreadful people, and that you went amongst them in disguise in order to find out their secrets. I have got to know this, and when they find you, of course, I could not write this, and I was going to let you walk blindfolded into such danger. There is one man in particular—a Karl Hartmann, I think the name is—whom you allowed to make love to you, and he is just mad to do you a mischief."

"I am quiet prepared to take the risk of going, Mrs. Taunton."

"That's because you don't appreciate it, dear. Mr. Merridew has spoken quite frankly to me about it all, and he declares that your life will

be taken unless something is done to prevent it."

"I know how solicitous he is for my safety," said Olivia, with a curl of the lip.

"You don't mean that, but I know it to be true, Olivia. I know how deeply he admires you. He told me he has more than once asked you to be his wife."

"Your purpose in saying all this?"

"I have no purpose on earth other than your safety and good; I have not really, although you look so skeptical. And I am quite inclined to believe him when he says that, considering the mad things you have done and the wild passions you have roused in these men against you, there is only one really safe course for you to take."

"The remain here as a prisoner, you mean?"

"How ridiculously you talk, Olivia. A prisoner! In my house! You are my guest, of course. What else could you be? But I am convinced that it would be sheer insanity for you to think of leaving at present."

"Is there any difference, except in terms?" cried Olivia, with more indignation than she had before shown.

"But you have some proposition to suggest. What is it?"

"You are making it very difficult for me, Olivia, upon my word. It is not my proposition at all; it is Mr. Merridew's. He is, it appears, the leader of these men, and says the only way in which you can be protected from their fury is to know you have been desperately foolish, and every one of us has to pay the price of making mistakes—is to place yourself entirely in his care. And, upon my word, I think that will now be your wisest course. As his wife you would, of course, be safe. I can see no other way."

Olivia paused. She was burning with indignation, and understood everything now. She had indeed been "desperately foolish," as her companion said, and would have to pay the price of her folly. But it would not be the price which was thus suggested with such adroit cunning. For the moment her rage passed beyond control, and she asked, her eyes flashing and her cheeks aflame:

"Do you advise this as Mrs. Taunton, Jack's friend and mine, or as Madame Boncourt, one of the leaders of these very men?"

CHAPTER XXX.

A PRISONER.

Olivia had made a bitter mistake, indeed in showing that she suspected the secret of Mrs. Taunton's identity. The fact of all this, however, she had revealed her suspicion, and she had made herself as dangerous to Mrs. Merridew as she was already to Merridew himself.

The question had taken Mrs. Taunton so entirely by surprise, that, excellent actress though she was, she could not entirely conceal her anger and concern. But it was no more than a flash of feeling; and then she smiled and answered with an assumption of indifference:

"Of course, I don't for an instant know what you mean by that, Olivia. Do you really wish to charge me with being an associate of this Mr. Merridew's rascally companions? Think, my dear."

"I do not know what I am saying. You won't let me leave the house, and you urge this hateful suggestion about marrying this scoundrel. I don't know what to think."

"Well, you have certainly placed yourself in real peril from the man's associates, and I can't take the responsibility of letting you leave here," said Mrs. Taunton, coldly. "It is for you to say whether you will accept his offer of safety. Do as you will. And now I must go; I have a great deal to do."

Olivia was convinced that she had hit on the truth; and, dangerous as was her position in consequence, and foolish as she had been to let her knowledge escape her, she was in her heart thankful in the hours of suspense.

It was clear that Merridew was resolved to take advantage of her helplessness to force her to marry him. That was the price which he and his hypocrite of a woman had together agreed she should pay for freedom.

She would never pay it. They should take her life first. Not for the fraction of a second did she waver in that decision. Let come what might, she would never yield on that.

Other things were plain to her now. She saw the reason why Merridew had appeared to yield to that interview in the Clerkenwell house; and that he had lied to her then, as he had lied before, about the truth.

He had known all along of her relations with this woman who called herself Mrs. Taunton, and had been cunning enough to foresee that, when prevented her from returning to the detective's house, and to Mr. Casement's, there would remain only Mrs. Taunton's house as a possible refuge for her.

She had been no match for him in cunning; and he had escaped from the danger with which she had threatened him, and at the same time had succeeded in thrusting her into an even greater peril than she had been then.

And now his monstrous offer to make her his wife meant what it always meant—that he was conscious of the fraud by which she had been robbed of her fortune and her name, and intended to marry her, so that, in the event of the trial ever being discovered, he would still be in possession of everything through her.

Then her thoughts turned to the consideration of any possible means of escape. If she could only get word to Mr. Casement, or Jack, or even Mr. Robson, she could still cheatmate them all.

(To be Continued.)

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FANNY CROSBY IS 88 YEARS OLD

Birthday of the Blind Poet and Hymn Writer Is Being Celebrated.

Bridgeport, Conn., March 27.—Today is the eighty-eighth birthday of Miss Fanny Crosby, the blind poetess and hymn-writer, whose compositions run into the thousands, and whose cheerful, uncomplaining spirit will serve as an example to others for many years.

For the last eight years Miss Crosby has made her home in this city, in a pretty little vine-covered cottage in Wells street. There she is passing the declining years of her life, surrounded by her friends and neighbors, and they have taken advantage of the opportunity to show their affection by arranging a celebration, which will last several days and include the presentation of a gold watch.

Gave an Interview. A newspaper correspondent who called on Miss Crosby yesterday found the wonderful little woman in her favorite rocking chair in her parlor.

"I am very happy here. Of course tomorrow is my birthday, and I am to have a reception. It will be an enjoyable occasion, but on other days it seems as if every one I meet were trying to do his share toward making me feel that this is really a good world."

"I live here in quietude, surrounded by a loyal circle of friends, and I find more in their love, esteem, and affection than anything that money could ever buy for me."

Blind From Childhood. "I have been blind ever since I was six months old, but I have never lived like a blind person. When I was a girl I rode horses by holding onto their manes, I climbed trees and did lots of other things that the girls who are styled Tom Boys do; and now I have such beautiful day dreams, in which I see faces and eyes that are dear to me and picture in mind the more before my eyes."

"Do you think the fancy pictures I draw of them are very far from fact, in which I see faces and eyes that are dear to me and picture in mind the more before my eyes?"

"Mr. Sankey, with whom I was associated for so many years, is now blind, I understand, although his sight was not at all affected when we were together."

"I have written many hymns and poems, more than six thousand in all. I write when the fancy strikes me, and I presume I shall write many more before I leave this earth. Of all my compositions my favorite hymn is 'Safe in the Arms of Jesus.'"

The celebration in honor of Miss Crosby's birthday began last night with a reception for her at the First Methodist church, where she attends service almost every Sunday.

Today Miss Crosby will be entertained at luncheon by the Fanny Crosby Circle of King's Daughters at the home of Mrs. Orville Rector, and the Mary Sullivan Chapter, D.A.R., of which she was recently elected a member, at the home of Mrs. W. E. Halligan. Receiving with Miss Crosby will be five other friends of her girlhood whose ages total 519 years.

JAP AND MONGOL

Hayashi Says Best of Feeling Prevails Between Peking and Tokio.

Tokio, March 26.—Foreign Minister Hayashi made a statement today in the Diet in reference to the Tatsu incident. He related the history of the case, as has already been published, and said that the entire record had not yet been received at the foreign office. He wished to say emphatically that the Chinese central Government had shown a friendly attitude to Japan and a desire for the continuance of friendly relations by conceding an ample reparation.

Regarding the seizure of the Japanese fishing vessel Kaito Maru, near St. Paul Islands, by the United States Government, Mr. Hayashi said that negotiations were pending, and that it was premature to make an official statement.

In the matter of the Kanton boundary, the minister of foreign affairs said that this was an old dispute between Korea and China, and that it would probably involve lengthy negotiations. In fact, the boundary had not yet been fixed.

Regarding the forcible seizure of the Tien Peashan mine, near Kanton, by Chinese troops, Minister Hayashi said that this matter was included in the Kanton negotiations, and that when

the boundary was fixed the mine question would be considered.

Regarding anti-Japanese feeling by the Chinese to discover the slightest evidence of unfriendliness China is a vast country with millions of people, of whom a portion was probably anti-Japanese, but it was impossible to influence the entire population. It is beyond the scope of the Japanese foreign office to reach all sections of China, and it will take time to prove to universal satisfaction Japan's good intentions toward her neighbors.

The Diet prorogued tonight to meet in December, after the general elections, which commences in May.

MURDER CONFESSION MAY BE A FAKE

Montreal Police Inclined to Doubt the Story of Wm. Sangster.

Montreal, March 26.—Montreal police doubt the murder confession of William Sangster made yesterday at New York. There is no record of any man named Sangster, and while murder was committed, the authorities are inclined to the belief that the prisoner is a notoriety-seeker.

The crime to which Sangster has confessed was committed on Saturday, Oct. 26 last, on the Back River road.

Young Delorme, who was 23 years old, was driving home from market with his parents, the latter being in a wagon about three hundred yards ahead of him. The elder Delorme saw two men sitting by the road as they drove past, but were not disturbed. When the younger Delorme drove by, the two men jumped out from the road, and while one seized the handle the other pulled a revolver and told Delorme to hand over his money. When the latter refused the man fired two shots at him, one of which took effect. The highwaymen then decamped.

Delorme, after lingering in the hospital for a couple of weeks, died from his wounds. The only description he was able to give of his assailants was that one was tall and wore a brown overcoat, while the other was a man of medium height, and that both spoke French.

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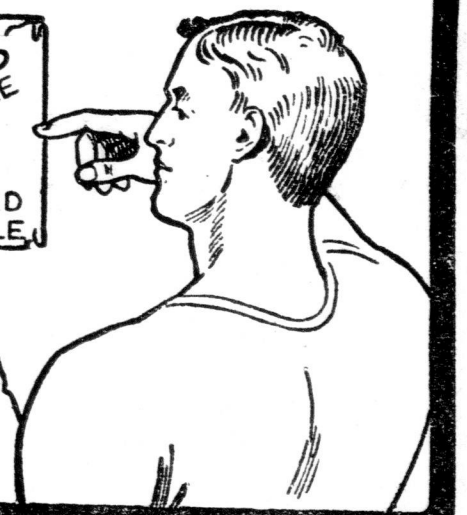
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LAMBETH. Lambeth, March 25.—There is to be a new store built in the village by Mr. Eale & Son. Mr. Joseph Boren is preparing to build a store and there probably a couple of cottages. There have been several persons from different parts lately looking at properties in the village and still there is room.

Mr. James Rutledge lately in the Northwest, has returned and is settled on his farm northeast of the village.

Mr. John Lave, London, called on a few of his friends here last week.

Mr. Kelley received a car of groceries and sugar lately and is expecting another in a few days.

Builders are all busy preparing to go on with their contracts.

Every soldier in the Russian army is to be provided with a pocket compass with a luminous needle, and 200,000 compasses, costing \$400,000, have already been ordered.

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