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The Crimson Blind

By FRED. M. WHITE

CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

The grim and dusty desolation of an empty house seemed to be supplemented here by a deeper desolation. Not that there was any dust on the ground floor, which seemed a singular thing seeing that elsewhere the boards were powdered with it, and fastoons of brown cobwebs hung everywhere. Bell smiled approvingly as David Steel pointed the fact out to him.

"Do you note another singular point?" the former asked. "I—stop! The two side-shutters in the bay windows are closed, and there is the same vivid crimson blind in the centre window. And the self-color of the walls is exactly the same. The faint discoloration by the fireplace is a perfect facsimile."

"In fact, this is the room you were in the other night," Bell said, quietly. "Impossible!" Bell said, thoughtfully. "The blind may be an accident, so might the fading of the distemper. But the furniture, the engravings, the fittings generally—"

"The all capable of an explanation, which I shall arrive at with patience," Bell said, thoughtfully. "Can we arrive at the number over the door with patience?"

"Exactly what I was coming to," Bell said, thoughtfully. "I have been looking for a number like 180 per annum. Let us go and take the keys back to the agents."

"Steel was nothing loth to find himself in the fresh air again. Some progress had been made like the opening of a chess match between masters, and yet the more Steel thought of it the more muddled and bewildered did he become. No complicated tangle in the way of a plot and ever been anything like the skein this was."

"I'm like a child in your hands," he said. "I'm a blind man on the end of a string; a man dazed with wine in a labyrinth. And if ever I help a woman again—"

He paused as he caught sight of Ruth Gates' lovely face through the window of No. 219. Her features were tinged with melancholy; there was a look of misery and despair in her eyes, and compassion in her glorious eyes. She slipped back as Steel bowed, and the rest of his speech was lost in a sigh.

CHAPTER X.
The House of the Silent Sorrow.

hall switch and no result came. Down the basement by the rear door stood the meter. Both switches were turned off, but on Bell pressing them down Steel was enabled to light the passage.

"There's the card," Bell exclaimed. "Made up to 25th June, 1895, since when the house has been void. Just a minute whilst I read the meter. Yes, that's right. According to this the card on your hand, provided that the index has not been used since the index was taken, should read at 1521. What do you make of the card?"

"1522," David cried. "Which means eleven units since the meter was last taken. If you like to put it from your point of view, eleven units used the night that I came here. You are quite right, Bell. You have practically convinced me that I have been inside the real 219 for the first time to-day. And yet the more one probes the mystery the more astounding does it become. . . . What do you propose to do next?"

"I find out the name of the last tenant or owner," he suggested. "I don't cover what the two houses were used for when they were occupied by one person. Also ascertain why on earth the owners are willing to let a house like this sit in this situation for a sum like \$80 per annum. Let us go and take the keys back to the agents."

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CHAPTER X.
The House of the Silent Sorrow.

Blood Poison

Brings Boils, Salt Rheum, Eczema and Scrofula,

WEAVER'S SYRUP

Cures them permanently.

Davis & Lawrence Co., Ltd., Montreal.

more fierce and truculent than they really were, being Cuban bloodhounds, but they gave a weird color to the place and lent it new terror to the simple folk around.

The bell was swinging dolefully over the stable-curtain; it rang out its passing note till the clock struck eight and then mercifully ceased. At the same moment precisely as she had done so, then the last seven years the lady of the house descended the broad, black oak staircase to the hall. A butler of the old-fashioned type bowed to her and announced that the dinner was ready. He might have been a butler of an archbishop from his mien and deportment, yet his evening dress was seedy and shiny to the last degree, his patent leather boots had long lost their lustre, his linen was terribly frayed and yellow. Two footmen in livery stood in the hall. They might have been superns playing on the boards of a travelling theatre, their once smartly cut and trimmed coats hung raggedly upon them.

As to the lady, who was tall and handsome, with dark eyes and features contrasting strangely with hair as white as the frost on a winter's landscape, there was far-away, strained look in the dark eyes, as if they were ever night and day looking for something, something that would be found. In herself the lady was clean and wholesome enough, but her evening dress of black silk and lace was dripping fragments, the lace was in rags upon her bosom, though there were diamonds of great value in her white hair.

And here, strangely allied, were wealth and direst poverty; the whole place was filled with rare and costly things, pictures, statuary, china; the floors were covered with thick carpets, and yet everything was absolutely smothered in dust. A thick, white, blankety cloud of it lay everywhere. It obscured the china, it dimmed the glasses of the pictures, it piled in little drifts on the heads and arms of the dining statures there. Many years must have passed since a housemaid's brush or duster had touched anything in Longeand Grange. It was like a palace of the Sleeping Beauty, wherein people walked as in a waking dream.

The lady of the house made her way slowly to the dining-room. Here dinner was laid out daintily and artistically enough—a gourmet would have felt drawn up the table with a feeling of satisfaction. Flowers were there, and silver and cut glass, china with a history of its own, and the whole set out on a tablecloth that was literally dripping to pieces. There was a beautiful room in itself, lofty, oak paneled from floor to roof, with a few pictures of price on the wall. There was plenty of gleaming silver glowing like an argent moon against a purple sky, and yet he had not been found out himself. He stood before the world as a social missoner; he made speeches at religious gatherings and affected the women to long by the table, one a girl with a handsome, intellectual face full of passion and ill repressed; the other a big fair man known to the village as "Mr. Charles." As a matter of fact, his name was Reginald Henson, and he was distantly related to Mrs. Henson, the strange chateleine of the House of the Silent Sorrow. He was smiling blandly now at Enid Henson, the wonderfully beautiful girl with the defiant, shining eyes.

"We may be seated now that madam is arrived," Henson said, gravely. He spoke with a certain mocking humility and a queer wry smile on his broad, loose mouth that filled Enid with a speechless rage. The girl was hot-blooded—a good hater and a good friend. And the master passion of her life was hatred of Reginald Henson.

"Madam has had a refreshing rest," Henson suggested. "Pardon our anxious curiosity."

Again Enid raged, but Margaret Henson might have been stone for all the notice she took. The far-away look was still in her eyes as she felt her way to the table like one in a dream. Then she dropped suddenly into a chair and began grace in a high, clear voice.

he said, "But I shall get justice some day."

Enid replied that she fervently hoped so, and thus the strange meal proceeded with smiles and gentle words from Henson, and a wild outburst of bitterness from the girl. So far as she was concerned the servants might have been mere automatons. The dust rose in clouds as she later moved silently. It was hot in there, and gradually the brown powder grained like a film over Henson's oily skin. At the head of the table Margaret Henson sat like a woman in a dream. Ever, ever her dark eyes seemed to be looking eagerly around. Thirsty men seeking precious water in a desert might have looked like her. Ever and anon her lips moved, but no sound came from them.

Occasionally she spoke to one or the other of her guests, but she never looked her words with her eyes. Such a sad, pathetic, pitiable figure, such a grey sorrow in her rags and snowy hair.

The meal came to an end at length, and Mrs. Henson rose dolefully. There was a grotesque suggestion of the marionette in the movement. She bowed as if to some imaginary personage and moved with dignity towards the door. Henson rose and stepped aside and opened it for her. She passed into the dim hall as if absolutely unconscious of his presence. Enid flashed a look of defiance at him as she disappeared into the gloom and floating dust.

Henson's face changed instantly, as if a mask had fallen from his snugg features. He became alert and vigorously. He was no longer patron of the artist, but a man who looked at the man who devotes himself to the good of humanity. The blue eyes were cold and cruel, there was a hungry look about the loose mouth.

CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

"Take a bottle of claret and the cigars into the small library, Williams," he said. "And open the window, the dust stifles me."

The dignified butler bowed respectfully. He remembered the typical butler of fiction in no respect, but his thoughts were by no means pleasant as he hastened to obey. Enid was loitering in the hall as Williams passed with the tray.

"Small study and the window open, miss," he whispered. "The song and game on—oh, yes, there is some blessed game on again to-night. And him so anxious to know how Miss Christiana is. Says she ought to call him in pro-mothered in dust. A thick, white, blankety cloud of it lay everywhere. It obscured the china, it dimmed the glasses of the pictures, it piled in little drifts on the heads and arms of the dining statures there. Many years must have passed since a housemaid's brush or duster had touched anything in Longeand Grange. It was like a palace of the Sleeping Beauty, wherein people walked as in a waking dream.

said. He tapped the top book significantly. "To-morrow is the last day of the month."

Enid picked up the top book with strange eagerness. There were pages of figures and cabalistic entries that she could not read. So far as she was concerned the servants might have been mere automatons. The dust rose in clouds as she later moved silently. It was hot in there, and gradually the brown powder grained like a film over Henson's oily skin. At the head of the table Margaret Henson sat like a woman in a dream. Ever, ever her dark eyes seemed to be looking eagerly around. Thirsty men seeking precious water in a desert might have looked like her. Ever and anon her lips moved, but no sound came from them.

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Dear Doctor—
I owe you so much—
for you saved my Mama's life—
she was awful sick—the Doctor
came and Papa cried—so did I—
The Doctor could not help her—
but Aunt Emma—she told
Mama to take Dr. Pierce's Favorite
Prescription—and so she got
well in nough time.
I thank you very much
Dr. R. V. Pierce. Enid Decker.

Many mothers of families in the United States have reason to be grateful to the person who recommended Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. This is a medicine specially prescribed for diseases of womanhood. It does not cure eczema, catarrh in all its forms, or heart disease, for it is put up for the single purpose of curing diseases peculiar to women. It has a reputation of over a century as a cure of all these ailments, and has sold more largely on this continent than any other medicine for women. Another point in its favor—it does not contain a single drop of alcohol or harmful habit-forming drugs. It is purely vegetable and perfectly harmless in any condition of the system. An alcoholic compound for women is something no woman should take and yet "Favorite Prescription" is the only tonic and nerve put up for sale through druggists, especially for women's weaknesses, that does not contain alcohol and that too in large quantities. Womanly weakness will always bring nervous irritability and a nervous condition, for which alcohol is the worst thing in the world. What a woman thus afflicted needs is a vegetable tonic and invigorating nerve-bringer. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, which will build up her delicate system and bring about a healthy tone. It cures the drains and weaknesses of women, also displacements, as prolapsus, inversion, retroversion, irregular and painful periods and kindred ailments. If you want to know what all you can get for your money, write to Dr. R. V. Pierce, the founder of the Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute, at Buffalo, N. Y.

Dr. Pierce by no means confines himself to prescribing his well-known proprietary medicines. He tells you in the most common-sense way what ails you, what you ought to do, what

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Notice is hereby given that on Wednesday, the 24th day of January, 1906, at the City Court, Chambers Street, at the hour of 12 o'clock noon, I shall sell by Public Auction the following animal, viz., one aged red cow, white spot in face, white on tail, hind legs; bell and udder; unless the said animal is redeemed and the pound charges paid at, or before, the time of sale.

WM. H. CRAIG,
Pound Keeper.

When Accidents Occur

be prompt to apply **Road's Extract**—the old family doctor's remedy. It is a powerful and reliable cure for all accidents, burns, scalds, cuts, bruises, sprains, etc. It is a true and reliable remedy for every ailment. It is a true and reliable remedy for every ailment. It is a true and reliable remedy for every ailment.

Accept only in sealed box.

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