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CHAPTER IX.
THE DOCTOR'S STRANGE AGITATION.

"Yes, Devonshire air seems to agree with your brother as well as it agrees with you. I am glad to see you looking so well, Miss Kendrick," the doctor replies, looking down into my flushed face with eyes that seem to penetrate the depths of my soul.

The meal, which I have hastily improvised for the benefit of our guest, passes off without any appearance of Addie and her escort; and Len and the doctor, ignoring my existence in a way that is not flattering to feminine vanity, enter upon a long political discussion.

Clearing the table at last, I light the lamps; and, leaving them to their chat, stroll away into the moonlit garden. It is a quiet, May night, warm and balmy as June itself, heavy with blossom and deep with scent. Resting my arms on the gate, I stand looking up the road, where the ancient elms are casting black shadows in the moonlight, when a step, a breath—a vague, indefinable something—tells me that I am not alone; and, rousing from my abstraction, I look up into the grave, unsmiling face of Doctor Fuller.

"What a beautiful night!" he says, in that brusque way I know so well, reaching up, without looking at me, for one of the white spikes on the chestnut tree above my head. "Moonlight in the country is a different thing, is it not, from the pale glimmer we sometimes see struggling with the red and white glare of gas and electricity in the city? I have come out to look at your flowers, Miss Kendrick."

"You mean weeds," I laugh, with a glance at the tangled wilderness. But whether flowers or weeds, it looks beautiful as a dream in the white radiance, turning leaf and twig into things of beauty, as side by side we stroll toward the plantation of dark firs bounding the farther end of our neglected domain.

"It seems a pity that a place like this should run to ruin so utterly," he presently remarks.

"It is a pity," I agree; "but how are we to prevent it, Doctor Fuller? An Addie enthusiastically declares, Despert has wonderful capabilities. With time and money, one might do almost anything with it; but, then, as you

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know, we are too poor to bestow much of either on a place that will not let, and cannot be sold. You have heard the story of the strange way in which it came into our family possession?" I ask, as we near a straggling cluster of yew and laurel.

But the question dies on my lips, for a spectral woman starts up from the path before us, with a suddenness that seems to take away my breath. A woman with a mass of gray hair flowing wild and disheveled over her shoulders. With the air of some hunted animal, she pauses for a moment in the moonlight filtering down through the trees, her mournful eyes fixed upon us. Then, with a low, pitiful moan, she puts her hand to her head, and disappears as suddenly as she came.

I have seen that wild face with those haunting eyes before; but it does not terrify me so greatly now, for the reason that I am not alone. I have the comforting sense of Doctor Fuller's protecting presence to sustain me, I think, looking questioning-ly up into the face of my companion; and if I have not been frightened before, I make up for it now.

Never in all my life have I felt so startled, so shocked, and surprised. White to the lips, and rigid as death, he stands there in the moonlight like a figure carved in stone, his eyes still strained toward the bushes behind which that spectral figure has disappeared, as if he could never move or speak again.

Utterly at a loss what to say or think, I stand for one breathless moment looking up into that white, horror-stricken face with an amazement words are powerless to express.

That it was something connected with the appearance of that mysterious figure which moved him so deeply, I do not doubt; and, with a great tide of pity, of terror in my heart, as I look into that pained, white face, I lay my hand on his arm and speak to him.

"What is it?" I ask. "Oh, Doctor Fuller, pray don't look like that! You frighten me!"

The sound of my voice seems to recall him to himself in a measure, for, with a sigh that is like a groan, a dead, passionless look settling down over the sternly handsome features, he puts out his hand as if to brush some hateful vision from his sight, and then lets it drop, heavy and pulseless, on my shoulder.

To me it is a supreme moment—why, I could hardly have told—as, stirred to the inmost depths of my soul, I stand here with Doctor Fuller's strong right arm resting like a weight of lead on my trembling shoulder, waiting with this strange, new fear in my heart for him to move, speak, or show some sign of recovery from that mysterious rigidity that seems to possess him like a spell.

Yet I am dimly conscious, frightened though I am, of the smell of tobacco, the sound of an approaching step. And the next moment Len is standing before us, staring from one to another, and asking a dozen questions, which neither the doctor nor I seem able to answer.

"Don't be alarmed, Kendrick," Doc-

tor Fuller says at last, with the air of a man who is making a desperate effort to pull himself together. "It is nothing; I shall be all right in a moment, believe me—a little attack to which I am rather subject at times."

There is no mention, I notice, of the mysterious apparition which I feel assured has been the real cause of what he calls "a little attack." And, taking my cue accordingly, I am equally reticent on the subject; when that weird cry that startled us a moment ago rings out again on the stillness of the evening, and once more that shadowy figure fits like a specter before us.

"Well, upon my word, that's comfortable!" exclaims Len, in his cool, matter-of-fact way, starting with wide-open eyes in the direction the specter had taken. "Now, what do you call that? Is it the veritable ghost of Despere, or merely some rascally piece of very commonplace flesh and blood playing off a senseless little trick upon us? Come along, Fuller," he adds, "let us follow, and find out what its ghostly make is of. You go down that path and I'll take this; and it will go hard indeed if we don't catch it between us. Come!"

Something in the face of our guest seems to arrest his attention, for he stops, and looks at Len in silence.

"What is it, Fuller?" he asks, at last, with a sudden change in his look and tone, as he lays his hand on his arm with a touch that is like a caress.

"What's amiss? Are you ill? Tell me what I can do for you?"

"Nothing, thanks," is the reply. "Come, Kendrick, let us return to the house; the dew is falling more than is good for your sister. I am all right now, and more than sorry if I have alarmed you by my illness."

"Then it wasn't the sight of the ghost that upset you, doctor?" Len inquires, with a laugh, as we enter the hall, which is still in darkness save for a gleam of lamplight streaming through the partly open door of the parlor in which the voices of Adelaide and Ernest Warden, who have evidently just returned, are distinctly audible. "Come up to my 'den,' old fellow, and take a glass of wine or a little brandy and a smoke. That will set you all right in no time—do you more good than all the drugs in the entire pharmacopoeia!"

Taking the stairs two steps at a time, Len starts off to his own domain without waiting for an answer; but for the moment the doctor makes no attempt to follow him.

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"Lesley," he says, calling me by my name for the first time—a tragic intensity in the low, suppressed tones in which he speaks—and coming close up to me, he lays his hand on my shoulder with a viselike grip that makes me wince with pain, "will you do me a favor, child?"

"If I can," I reply, trembling to the lips with agitation; "only tell me, Doctor Fuller, what can I do?"

"Say as little as possible of the weakness you have seen me display this evening—least of all, of its cause!" he returns, a look of misery in the gloomy eyes as they rest for a moment on my face.

"I will say nothing," I reply. "Believe me, Doctor Fuller, you may trust me."

"I know it," he replies; and, turning my face to the light, he looks down at it with a long, earnest gaze, under the power of which my heart awakes and trembles. "My experience of life has taught me to trust few men, still fewer women; but, for all that child, I trust you," he adds.

Lifting my hand to his lips, he presses it for a moment hard and close in his own; then, dropping it suddenly, turns away, to follow Len, leaving me with a wild sense of joy tingling through every vein in my body as I stand looking after him with yearning eyes which the friendly darkness happily hides.

CHAPTER X.

ONLY A GOOD FOR NOTHING.

"I say, Lesley, what in the name of mystery was up with the doctor last night?" Len inquires, on the following morning, sauntering nonchalantly into the kitchen, in which I am rather absently engaged in my preparations for breakfast. "You looked uncommonly like the hero and heroine out of some thrilling melodrama, when I came upon you last night, you two. What inspired him, may I ask, to such a dramatic little performance as that all at once? You had not been playing off any of your little tricks upon him, I hope—breaking his heart, or any trifle of that sort, eh?"

"Not that I am aware of," I reply, with feigned indifference. "I should hardly think the doctor's heart so brittle an article. Cannot he be ill like other people, without exciting everybody's comment?"

"H'm! I can't comprehend it. Had it been any one but the doctor, I should have suspected him of having been scared at the ghost, for he has been asking me no end of questions about that mysterious apparition, as if I could understand it any better than he can; but it would take rather more than a thing of that sort to throw a man like Fuller off his balance, I think. By the way, Lesley, how do you explain the mystery of that gray, shadowy figure in the garden last night?"

"I don't explain it at all," I reply, without looking up. "As Lord Dunsany says, there are some things in the world that no fellow can find out; and possibly that is one of them, though I strongly incline to the suspicion that it must have been some one playing a trick upon us."

"Then they had better not let me catch them at their tricks, whoever they are!" replies Len, stalking away, and leaving me to my own thoughts, which are full of perplexity and bewilderment.

"Three days later, Doctor Fuller's visit comes to a close."

His professional duties will not permit him to be long absent from home, although his practice is not a large one. I fear, a very lucrative one, judging from that trim little house in London, over which, in spite of its methodical neatness, there hangs such an unmistakable air of genteel poverty. Since the evening of that little episode in the garden the somber face has worn a look of pain and suffering, but never once, either by word or look, has he made the slightest allusion to the subject of his indisposition, or the reappearance of that weird figure, which I strongly suspect to have been the cause of it.

"Well, good-by, old fellow, and many thanks for the pleasure your visit has given me," Len remarks, with a parting handshake, on the morning of our guest's departure. "My best regards to the great city and all in it. Upon my word, I wish I were going with you! I am positively pining for a smell of London smoke and the sight of bricks and mortar."

(To be Continued.)

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CABLE NEWS

WAR REVIEW.

Over a curving front of more than twenty miles, the British and French troops are continuing to sweep by the Germans across the plains of Picardy from the region north of Somme, east of Morlancourt to eastern bank of the Avre, northwest of Mont Didier. On the first day of offensive material progress was made and on Friday over the entire battle front many additional villages were captured. The bag of prisoners was largely increased, numerous guns and great quantities of war stores were taken, and heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy by tanks, moured motor cars, the cavalry and infantry. The losses sustained by the Anglo-French forces are cleared to be relatively small. To Allied forces there have fallen 17,000 German prisoners and between 200,000 and 300,000 men, many of them of high calibre, and innumerable machine guns, trench mortars and kind small weapons. To the north of Picardy, the German forces have been driven from two important sectors. On the famous Lys salient, northwest of La Bassée, and in the region southwest of Ypres on an equally famous battleground north of Kemmel, on the Lys sector, territory over a front of more than seven miles was evacuated by the enemy, while the north of Kemmel the British advanced their line over a front of 1,000 yards. These manoeuvres on the part of the Germans seemingly indicate that they still considered their ground insecure, the face of the heavy forces General Haig is known to have in both regions, and that Crown Prince Rupprecht's army has been materially decreased in strength to rush reinforcements to the battle zones where the German armies in the south were being softly harassed. Already being penetrated the Picardy salient, a depth of nearly thirty miles, the centre towards the vicinity of important railway junction of Chantilly, and at other points along the line, pushed forward between five and seven miles, the northern and southern flanks of the Abble front where the Germans had been resisting desperately, gave way before the pressure respectively of the British and French. On the north the British captured Morlancourt and pressed eastward, while on the south, northwest of Mont Didier, Piereport, Oter and Villers were taken by French who drove in their wedge of distance of more than 8 1/2 miles. Tanks, armored cars and cavalry still working throughout the entire region, while airplanes are so far behind the lines, bombard transports and troops movements, also paying particular attention to the bridges over the Somme by which



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