

Lorrie

Or Hollow Gold.

The earl stood looking at her with troubled perplexity.

"Poor girl!" he murmured. "And it was she whom Guy loved? There is some mystery. My dear, I wish I had not seen her. She—she has made me wretched."

Lady Farnham forced a smile.

"It is the awkward thing," she said, "but there is only one way out of it. Will you ask this young man, Seymour Melford?"

The words were scarcely out of her mouth when the footman opened the door and announced—Mr. Seymour Melford.

For the first time in her life, Lady Farnham was guilty of a scream; it was a very low one, but Seymour Melford heard it. Coming forward with his soft, catlike step and insidious smile, he bent over her hand.

"Forgive me for intruding, Lady Farnham," he said, "but I knew that my sister was here and I've come to see her on an important business."

Lady Farnham with the ready tact of a woman of the world, has recovered all her usual self-possession.

"We are delighted at any business, important or otherwise, which brings you here, Mr. Melford. There are Diana and Miss Latimer. They are at once, then, and tell me that you will make one of our party. I was going to write and beg you to join us."

With a bow to her and the earl, who acknowledged her with a haughty nod, Seymour glided across the room to Diana.

She looked up with languid, indifferent surprise.

"Seymour! What on earth brings you here?"

"Hush!" he said, bending over her. "Something has happened—I will come to your room and tell you. Where is Lorrie?"

Diana looked round and shrugged her shoulders.

"I see her," he said, and went toward the anti-room where Lorrie was standing talking to Guy. Her back was toward Seymour, and as he came up he spoke her name.

It was spoken softly enough, in all conscience, but its effect was disastrous. Lorrie's nerves, not over-strong of late, had been kept at the highest tension all this evening, and at the sound of her name she started, and uttering a low cry of alarm, she went white and staggered.

Guy caught her in his arms, but, with an evil smile, Seymour said:

"That is my duty, I think, Lord Kendale," and put his arm round her.

For a moment the two men glared at each other over the unconscious girl, then, with an oath crushed up on his lips, Guy surrendered her.

"You are right," he said, "as if the words were forced from him. I will send Lady Farnham."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Seymour Melford swept the curtains aside with his left arm, while his right supported Lorrie, and called to Lady Collop:

"Will you come please? Miss Latimer has fainted."

There was an instant commotion and consternation, in the midst of which Lady Farnham came up, composed and self-possessed. She understood it all at a glance.

"Your unexpected arrival has startled her," she said to Seymour Melford. "That and the long journey have been too much for her; the poor child is not strong! Give her to me, please!" and she took Lorrie from his arms as he had taken her from Guy's.

In a few minutes Lorrie came to, and she looked round wildly, with a little shudder of fear.

"Hush, my dear! Don't speak!" whispered Lady Farnham; then, shushing the rest, who stood round in silent anxiety, she led her up to her own room.

"It's very silly of me," she said, with a feeble attempt at a laugh. "I've only fainted once before in my life, I think! It must have been the heat of the room! I am very sorry, Lady Farnham."

Lady Farnham said nothing, but with her own hands helped her maid to undress Lorrie.

"Now go to bed, and to sleep, my dear," she said at last, "don't say another word as Lorrie opened her eyes again. I don't want to see you more than you think! And with this enigmatical speech she stooped and kissed the pale, beautiful face and went out.

When Lady Farnham re-entered the drawing-room, it was to see the guests broken up into cold and awkward groups. The earl stood by the fire, his white hands leaning on his stick, his noble-looking head bent thoughtfully. Lord Collop had gone up stairs to "look after Lorrie," and Diana sat frowning sulkily behind her fan. Guy, with his hands thrust as far as they would go in his pockets, leaned against the wall, staring moodily at the floor. But it was Seymour Melford's face that attracted her attention. It was never very ruddy at the best of times, but it was perfectly colorless now, and with a look half savage, half ferocious, like that of a wild animal longing to snarl and bite, and yet afraid to do so.

"I must be going," said the earl. "Is she better?" he added in a low voice, full of a sense of trouble and remorse.

"Yes, poor young thing!" said Lady Farnham. "Don't go to-night, Latcham! stay here; your room is ready for you. It is next to Guy's! Guy, come and persuade your father to stay till the morning. It is a nasty, draughty night, and he will catch cold going out of this warm room."

Guy crossed over and said nothing, but, as if he had spoken, the earl nodded.

"I will stay," he said. "Guy, come to my room before you go to bed."

Guy inclined his head dutifully, and the earl went to the two ladies and made his courtly adieux.

Guy went back to the wall and resumed his old attitude, his face pale, his hands crossed, his eyes fixed on the floor.

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his lips set. Seymour Melford's sudden return had roused in him that devil which most men have. It maddened him to think that the man had the right to take Lorrie out of his—Guy's—arms, that soon he would have the right to hold her in his own arms as his wife!

Lady Farnham came up to him and touched him gently.

"Guy, you are going to be a good boy, aren't you?" she said in a low voice, and one that was strangely anxious for her.

"What do you mean?" he demanded, almost curtly.

"Well, you haven't been a very good boy to me, have you, now?" she said with gentle reproach. "Why didn't you tell me that Lorrie was—well, the girl you are fond of?"

"Why should I?" he said, under his breath. "If I had done so, you wouldn't have asked her here, would you?"

"Certainly not, you know I should not!"

"Well, I wanted you to ask her. You see how she is? She is pining for fresh air, and a sight of the country she loves so well!"

"Still you should have told me," she said, gently. "But it is all right now that her sweetheart has arrived, isn't it?"

"It looks like it, doesn't it?" he retorted bitterly, "when she faints at the sight of him!"

"Hush!" she said, warningly, for he has spoken almost aloud. "Won't you go to bed now, like a good boy?"

"What, and leave all the hard work of entertaining Mr. Melford to you?" he said, with bitter significance. "I have scarcely spoken to him yet."

Lady Farnham's grasp tightened on his arm.

"Guy, you are not going to make a scene?"

"No," he said calmly, and with a heavy sigh. "I am bound hand and foot, and powerless; there is no use in making a scene."

Meanwhile Seymour Melford went and sat down beside Diana. She glanced up at him over her fan curiously.

"What is the matter with you?" she said in a low voice. "What has happened—can you not tell me now and here?"

"No," he said, looking beyond her at the tall figure leaning against the wall. "How long has this been going on?"

"How long has what been going on?" she repeated, with affected indifference.

"You know what I mean! How long has that fellow been dancing attendance on Lorrie? How long has he been sitting in her pocket and flirting with her?"

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which side is it? Not on yours, I am sure. Any obstacle Fate would put in the way of your marriage with Diana now would be too great a misfortune, would it not?"—and the smile grew into a sneer.

Guy thrust his hands deeper in his pockets, so that they might be less unfree and more under his control, and his face went white. He understood the taunt conveyed in the seemingly innocent words. He knew that the breaking off of the match with Diana would mean ruin to Latcham.

"A very great misfortune," he said, and then in a lower voice, and with an ominous light flashing in his eyes, "Mr. Melford, do you mean to be offensive?"

Seymour Melford gave an affected little start.

"Offensive?" he echoed, with a laugh. "What can you mean? Surely you do not take my little phrase—truly seriously? Oh, I am quite convinced of your devotion to my sister, or be sure I shouldn't jest about it!"

"No, I suppose not," said Guy, grimly. "But I don't mean to be offensive when I tell you that I am not in the humor for jesting this evening," and he turned on his heel.

Seymour Melford went back to the sofa, panting with suppressed fury.

"Well," said Diana, in a low, mocking voice, "is it all arranged? Are you going to fight with swords or pistols?"

"Heavens! If it were only possible!" he groaned out.

"But as it is, you had better agree to hate each other in the ordinary polite and harmless manner," she retorted. "I am going to say now, you can come and say what you want to me up there."

"Good," he replied. "I will go and get a cigar, and cool myself, and he passed his hat hand over his forehead, upon which great drops of perspiration had gathered.

She rose languidly and crossed the room.

"Good-night," Guy, she said, rising, and he went to his room. "If I don't fall-tilt-till you look! Lorrie isn't really ill, you know; she will be all tight to-morrow. Don't upset yourself more than you can help."

His face flushed, then went pale again, and he stooped and touched her cold forehead with his lips, from which he crushed back the retort that sprang to them, for was he not bound hand and foot and helpless?

As he went up, he passed the stairs to the earl's room, he passed Lorrie's door, and for a moment he paused and stretched out his hands yearningly toward the senseless door, and her name trembled on his lips.

Heaven! How hard and cruel had fate been to them both!—not only to him, but to her, for he had read in the swift look with which she had greeted Seymour Melford not only surprise, but fear and dislike.

Even now it was not too late. The fatal words which would make him Diana's husband, and her Seymour Melford's wife, had not been spoken, but how could he break his promise? How could he let Latcham in ruin? And bring his father's gray hairs an sorrow to the grave?

With a deep sigh, he opened the door of the earl's room and entered. The earl was seated before the fire, in his dressing gown, with the valet in the room. Lady Farnham had sent—had brought over with him. He looked up as Guy came in, but said nothing, and Guy went and leaned against the mantelpiece, and both were silent for a moment or two.

Then the earl raised his head and in a low, mournful voice, which quivered with emotion, said:

"Guy, I am a wretched man."

Guy started and looked down at him.

"Why do you say that, sir?"

"Because I am too wretched to keep my misery to myself. Guy! I have been to-night how it is with you?"

A faint flush came and faded upon Guy's face.

"I have seen how it is with you—I am frightened."

"Yes, frightened," repeated the old man, with solemn melancholy. "I had thought that things were working well with us—that you had not gotten the past, and were contented and happy with the prospect of the future. But—to-night the veil has been torn aside, and I see it all! Guy, you love that little girl still! Can you deny it?"

Guy's face went white, and he bit his lip.

"Why do you torture me, sir?" he asked, bitterly.

The earl put up his head appealingly.

"I did not mean to be cruel, Guy! Heaven forbid! Ah, there is a great deal to answer my question! I read the truth in your face when I turned to her; your voice, even when you spoke to me to-night! Oh, Guy, what is to be done?"

Guy remained silent.

"And she, too—she loves you!" said the old man, his voice low and broken.

"Oh, say no more, sir, for heaven's sake!" exclaimed Guy hoarsely. "Of what use is all this! What is done cannot be undone! Of what use can this be?"

The earl raised his head and looked at him, a glance of infinite pity and sorrow.

"Guy," he said, with a quiet air of resolution, "it is not yet too late. You are divided, and in I who did it! I did it for the best, I call it! I did it for you, not for my own good alone, but for you, for Latcham's! But—but I had not seen her then. He turned for a moment, and his head sunk again. "I had not seen her then. The girl wrought to bewitch me so thoroughly! I cannot get her sweet, pale face out of my mind! I do not know what I am doing, but it is of her I think! Guy, her heart is breaking!"

Guy moved so that his face was in the shadow.

"Breaking? I know the look too well to be deceived. And I have done it! My boy!—and his voice grew tender and full of remorse—"It must not be! I take back all I have done! I will undo all I have done!"

It came with a low, mocking laugh.

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You shall go to her—"

Guy broke in with a harsh laugh. "That would do no good!" he said. "Ah! you do not know her! She has given her promise to that—man, and she will keep it, though her heart is breaking, as you say!"

"I will go to her," said the earl, with simple dignity. "She will listen to an old man who has wronged her, and comes with humility and remorse to make reparation—"

"Too late!" said Guy, grimly. "You forget, sir, that I, too, am fettered. I have given my word, and a Latcham does not break his promise lightly. You think—only of Lorrie, but Diana—"

The old man bowed his head.

"What have I done, Guy?" he murmured, almost inaudibly.

"You have acted according to your lights," Guy said, slowly, solemnly. "It is too late now, sir, to hark back. Neither her heart nor mine will break; we cannot suffer more than we have, I think," he added, simply. "And, at least, Latcham will be a free man."

As he spoke he passed his hand across his face swiftly, but not so swiftly as to conceal the misery which shone darkly in his eyes.

The old man saw it, and rose with patrician dignity, and Diana's, and he spoke, his words seemed to ring like the tones of a great muffled bell.

"No! it is not too late. Latcham shall not be saved by your destruction! No! you can come of such a marriage as yours and Diana's, and it shall not be. My hand made the match and mine shall break it! I will go to her and tell her the truth! I will humble myself before her, and I will win her back!"

Every moment since he spoke the truth his resolution has been growing stronger. I will not go to my grave bearing the weight of your ruined life. What is Latcham, what is all your happiness? I thought differently awhile ago, but my eyes are opened now. You shall marry the girl you love, Guy."

Guy stood silent for a moment, then he forced the old man in to his chair and he stood hoarsely.

"My word, my honor is pledged. I shall marry Diana Melford!"

As he spoke the window adjoining the earl's room opened, and the sound of voices came distinctly to their ears.

Both men looked toward the half-opened window and listened unconsciously.

"Are you going to faint now?" it was Seymour Melford's voice, hard and metallic, with a bitter sneering tone, and Diana's retorted bitterly:

"No! Why did you tell me with such utter sadness? Leave the window open! Yes, open it! When did you know this and how?"

"Yesterday," replied Seymour. "I went into his office to fetch a letter. His private account book was open on his desk, and there he has been, he has been drinking heavily for the last month—and—"

"You examined it," she said.

"I examined it," he asserted, doggedly. "The items fouled my suspicion before the fact, and I rounded by his papers, and was not long in arriving at the truth. The great Mr. Melford—the successful financier and millionaire—is a fraud. He has been on the brink of ruin for years—both ruin and irretrievably at this moment."

"I am quite sure," he returned, coldly, as if enjoying the effect he had produced.

"It has been going on for years!"

"Far years. Not one of the recent contracts has been profitable, though the public has believed that he was making thousands and was eager to have seen to-night how it is with you?"

A faint flush came and faded upon Guy's face.

"I have seen how it is with you—I am frightened."

"Yes, frightened," repeated the old man, with solemn melancholy. "I had thought that things were working well with us—that you had not gotten the past, and were contented and happy with the prospect of the future. But—to-night the veil has been torn aside, and I see it all! Guy, you love that little girl still! Can you deny it?"

Guy's face went white, and he bit his lip.

"Why do you torture me, sir?" he asked, bitterly.

The earl put up his head appealingly.

"I did not mean to be cruel, Guy! Heaven forbid! Ah, there is a great deal to answer my question! I read the truth in your face when I turned to her; your voice, even when you spoke to me to-night! Oh, Guy, what is to be done?"

Guy remained silent.

"And she, too—she loves you!" said the old man, his voice low and broken.

"Oh, say no more, sir, for heaven's sake!" exclaimed Guy hoarsely. "Of what use is all this! What is done cannot be undone! Of what use can this be?"

The earl raised his head and looked at him, a glance of infinite pity and sorrow.

"Guy," he said, with a quiet air of resolution, "it is not yet too late. You are divided, and in I who did it! I did it for the best, I call it! I did it for you, not for my own good alone, but for you, for Latcham's! But—but I had not seen her then. He turned for a moment, and his head sunk again. "I had not seen her then. The girl wrought to bewitch me so thoroughly! I cannot get her sweet, pale face out of my mind! I do not know what I am doing, but it is of her I think! Guy, her heart is breaking!"

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"Breaking? I know the look too well to be deceived. And I have done it! My boy!—and his voice grew tender and full of remorse—"It must not be! I take back all I have done! I will undo all I have done!"

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TWENTY SIX-FOOTERS

A Startling Example of How Oats Create Height

Archdeacon Sinclair, in advising boys to eat oatmeal, said that "Among my brothers and my father's brothers and sisters there were 20 six-footers. At brought up oatmeal."

Oats contain more body-building food, more brain-building food, more nerve-building food than any other grain that grows. No other item in all human diet compares in importance with oats. Nothing else creates so much energy.

But thousands of people buy this food carelessly. They accept oatmeal made from oats as they run—the plump and the small, the rich and the worthless.

Quaker Oats is made from the great: of the oats, selected by 62 sifting. Only ten pounds in a bushel are good enough for use in this food. The result is a richness and flavor that all enjoy, and the maximum value as food.

Yet Quaker Oats, despite its quality, costs but one-half cent per dish. Does it pay to take anything inferior?

Made in Canada.

"Will I marry him still? Yes, I think so."

"Then you love him?" he said, in a tone of cold surprise.

She laughed again, this time with scornful contempt.

"Love him? Love a man who is in love with another woman! To you take me for a fool? I have never been very sweet upon him, my dear Seymour, but lately, I think—that I have hated him! Let me think!" There was silence for a moment; the earl sank back in his chair and his face in his hands.

But Guy stood like an image carved in stone. "Yes, Seymour, I will marry him! There will be, there will be something left out of the wreck of Latcham, and that will be better than nothing. Besides, I shall be Lady Kendale; I shall be the Countess of Latcham before long; the old man is breaking fast; he is laughing at me; my husband, my dear Seymour, must be hastened; he must not know what has happened till it is too late! Seymour!"

She paused and drew a low breath. She asked me to-night how I could be so mean as to let those two carry on under my very eyes? You thought I did not mind it! If you knew how I have chafed and mad—seemed under it! But I shall have my revenge now! He will marry me for my money, will he? Marry me, and save his name and his house? Seymour, I shall have my revenge, don't you think, when I can say to him, you have married the daughter of a scoundrel, and he has saved your precious house after all!"

Seymour Melford laughed a low, sinister laugh.

"Good!" he said. "Good! Diana I am proud of you! Yes, that will be best. There will be something out of the wreck, and you will be a countess! Nothing can rob you of your open! Yes, open it! When did you know this and how?"

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Guy moved so that his face was in the shadow.

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It came with a low, mocking laugh.

"There was silence for a moment; Guy's grasp at the earl's arm, he caught it like a clasp of steel as they waited for the answer.

It came with a low, mocking laugh.

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TELEGRAPHIC NEWS

KAISER VISITS BRITAIN

To Attend Unveiling of Great Victoria Memorial

Many Members of Royal Families Will Be Present at Splendid Ceremony To-morrow—Emperor Comes to Pay Honor to the Memory of His Grandmother and Gets an Enthusiastic Welcome at Sheerness.

London, May 15.—The German imperial yacht Hohenzollern, with the Emperor and Empress, and Princess Victoria Louise aboard, arrived at Sheerness last evening. The German cruisers escorting the yacht exchanged salutes with the British warships. The latter were gallantly decorated and the crews gave a cheering welcome to the visiting sovereigns. Their majesties remained aboard the yacht during the night.

Emperor Wilhelm and the Empress are making the first state visit by foreign monarchs to England since the death of Edward VII. They have come for the unveiling by King George of the statue in front of Buckingham Palace, which is a great national memorial to Queen Victoria. This, however, will only be an incident of their visit, which extends over a week, during which the English court, now out of mourning, will entertain their distinguished guests at state banquets, a state ball and a gala performance at Drury Lane Theatre.

To-day the Emperor and Empress landed at Port Victoria, and proceeded to London, where they were greeted by King George and Queen Mary and other members of the royal family and escorted in open carriages to Buckingham Palace, where they will be the guests of the King and Queen. This evening there will be a family dinner at the palace.

The unveiling of the statue will take place to-morrow morning