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ward in his own chamber, which was on the opposite side of the corridor.

I must have fallen into an uneasy slumber soon after the sounds ceased. I don't know how long I slept, but I awoke suddenly, to find myself sitting bolt upright in the bed. Singularly enough, the premonition of ill that had weighed upon my spirits all the evening was then heavier than ever with the first moment of resumed consciousness.

I sat very quiet. After a brief lapse of time Guy's door creaked slightly. Then I heard stealthy foot-steps stealing along the hall. I was sure it must be his tread. The truth did not occur to me for some seconds, and then it came with stunning force—*Guy intended to steal the topaz!*

Leaping from the bed, I hurried on my clothes as fast as possible. My first care was to peer into Guy's room. There was a moon that night, but clouds obscured it, and the chamber was quite dark. I pushed to the bedside, and ran my hand over it. It was empty! This fact confirmed my conjectures, for what could call Guy from his couch at that hour of the night unless it was to get the jewel into his possession?

He was desperate enough for such a deed. Perhaps he had even been revolving it while conversing with me before he went to bed. I shuddered when I thought how excited he had appeared.

I was not sure whether he knew the topaz was in the escritoire or not, but I hurried to the ante-room, pausing in the corridor outside the door, which stood slightly ajar. A faint, almost inaudible movement could be distinguished within. I stood as if spellbound for some seconds. Then, something brushed past me in the darkness. I heard a soft, rustling sound, and rapid though suppressed breathing. A human form was faintly outlined against the dark shadows that hovered in the corridor, and less than three feet away!

Whose was it? I had no time to think, and an awful dread was tugging at my heart. Acting on the impulse of the moment, I suddenly grasped the figure by the arm. It was a woman's silk sleeve with which my hand came in contact!

No outcry was made, though I had expected that. I dragged the resisting figure along the corridor to the great bay-window which lighted it from the end. Just then the moon dipped clear of the rift of clouds, shining out bright and serene. I turned to look at my captive.

"Eloise!" I gasped. She was ghastly pale. I could see that she shivered in the moonlight. She shrank away from me with an expression on her face I could not interpret.

"How came you here?" "Hush!" she cried, in a startled whisper. "Don't betray yourself. I never shall!"

What did she mean? It was no time to discover. I was afraid, every moment, that Guy would come out of the ante-room, and she would thus learn of the crime he had been tempted to commit.

"Go back to your chamber," I said. "You should not be wandering about the house at this hour. Go back, Eloise."

The incongruity of this address did not strike either of us at the time. She looked at me steadily for a moment, as if she would have read my very soul. Then she turned away, wringing her hands.

"I will go," she moaned. "May God forgive and keep you, Barton Devonshire!"

This singular form of address puzzled me more than anything that had gone before it. But she slipped away, just avoiding my detaining hand, and glided noiselessly and ghost-like along the corridor.

I felt giddy and sick at heart. But the thought of Guy nerved me again. The moon swept into a second bank of clouds just as I started to seek him. The passage seemed darker and gloomier than before. I could barely grope my way. Perhaps the half-realized pain at my heart had something to do with it.

This time I pushed open the ante-room door without a moment's hesi-

tation. There was a muttered curse, and somebody rose up suddenly from the floor, flashing the light of a dark lantern full upon me. Though nearly blinded by the glare, I strode forward.

"Guy," I whispered hoarsely, "why are you here?"

An angry cry fell from his lips as he advanced into the light. His face was ashen pale. In one hand he dangled a bunch of keys with which he had been attempting to force the lock of the escritoire upon the floor. He looked baffled and infuriated. He was stripped to the waist, and for some seconds stood glaring at me with a ferocious gleam in his eyes, as if tempted to close with me in a deadly struggle. I caught hold of his wrist.

"Guy, come back with me," I cried. "You shall come!"

He attempted to shake me off.

"Spy!" he hissed, "why did you follow me?"

"To save you from the consequences of a crime—a terrible crime that would blight all your future life."

He shuddered at that, and began to tremble. His features worked convulsively, as if he had experienced a severe mental strain. The perspiration stood in great drops on his brow. I saw my advantage, and followed it up.

"Come back with me," I pleaded. "It is not too late," for I knew he had not secured the topaz then. He had found trouble in fitting a key, perhaps. "Come back. I ask it for your sake, and for our dear mother's."

Something like a strangled sob burst from him. He followed me from the room, and I carefully closed the door behind us. We had heard no stir in Mr. Richard's room, and the rest of the house was just as quiet. We stole along the corridor. "It was for her sake," I heard Guy mutter. "God knows I could have borne poverty by myself. I wanted the topaz for her."

The plaintive cry touched my heart, but I would not show how deeply it affected me.

"Where did you find that lantern?" I asked, almost harshly.

"It hung on a peg in the corridor."

I restored it to the place from which he had taken it. When we reached his chamber-door, I signed for him to go in. He hesitated.

"Barton," he cried suddenly, "will you not say God bless you?"

I could not see his face, but his voice sounded harsh and broken. He held out his hand, and I wrung it warmly.

"May God bless you, Guy, and give you strength to overcome temptation!" I murmured, strangling a sob in my throat.

He closed the door between us, and I heard him throw himself on the bed, moaning once or twice like one in pain. Then all was still.

After that I brought the sofa pillows and a blanket, and threw myself on the floor directly in front of his chamber, so that he would be compelled to step over me in coming out. Having tossed restlessly for some time, at last I fell into a stupid sort of drowse, when (I know not to this day whether it was imagination or reality seemed as if a dark-robed figure glided to my side, and held a sponge exhaling some sort of sickening odor to my nostrils.

It was broad daylight, and the sun was shining in at the great oriel window at the end of the corridor, when I awoke from my lethargic slumber. Softly unclosing Guy's door, I saw that he was still buried in the deep sleep of exhaustion, and went away without arousing him.

He was astir, however, long before the breakfast bell rang, and preceded me to the morning-room. Mrs. Dacre and Eloise were waiting for us. The latter looked pale and hollow-eyed, but our hostess was rosily brilliant as ever, and so arch, piquant, irresistible in her pink silk morning-robe, that I scarcely wondered at my brother's infatuation. Many a man would have bartered his soul for a touch of those lusciously red lips.

Guy seemed grave and thoughtful, and none of us, save Mrs. Dacre, were in the best of spirits. She chatted and laughed as if trouble were a word unknown to her. Mr. Rich-

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