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## GRAPES AND THORNS.

M. A. T., AUTHOR OF "THE HOUSE OF YORK," "A WINGED WORD," ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

F. Chevreuse had no time to linger in the house of mourning; for it was his duty to inform Mr. Schoninger at once of his deliverance. But that it was necessary to guard the unhappy mother from any chance of hearing the news too abruptly, even the claims of a supreme misfortune like hers could not have been allowed to take precedence of a wrong so deep as that from which he had suffered. After he was informed, silence would, of course, e impossible; for when Mr. Schoninger knew, the whole world must

Until the evening before, the priest had not permitted himself even to guess what might be the contents of the package entrusted to his charge Humanly speaking, he knew nothing. Whatever he might have learned by virtue of his sacred office was hidden in the bosom of God; not even in his most secret thoughts did he suffer his mind to dwell upon it. The only action he had taken in the matter was such as might have seemed necessary to one who had no more than a faint suspicion of what was about to take place; he had requested F. O'Donovan to be with him that day, and he had made sure that Mrs Gerald should have the only preparation possible for whatever might threaten her, in a well-made Communion.

For her sake he had opened the package the evening before, in order to be able to put Honora Pembroke on her guard. He did not read the confession to her, nor did he read it him-self, but glanced over the letter which Annette had enclosed to him.

"A great misfortune is about fall upon our dear friend," he said. "and I trust to your piety and dis-cretion to do what you can for her. Her son will not return home. He has fled from the country, and she may never see him again. To morrow she will know all, and the world will know Mr. Schoninger, who has been unjustly accused and condemned, will be released. You must be strong and See that nothing disturbs her to-night, or interferes with her making a good Communion. Do not think of yourself, but of her. There is not much to do; perhaps there will be nothing to do, but simply to stand guard and see that nothing comes near to trouble her mind, and to have her at home in the morning at ten melting it quite, and bursting out in o'clock, and without visitors.

"It will kill her!" said Honora F. Chevreuse sighed. "I think it

will; but there is no help for it. Justice must be done. It had indeed killed her, and more

quickly, therefore more mercifully, than they had anticipated. And now F. Chevreuse, having been the mes-senger of disgrace and desolation, had to be the messenger of joy.

He wiped away resolutely the tears

that started at sight of that pitiful victim of maternal love. "To day, at least," he said, "I must have no I must do my duty faithfeeling. I must do my duty faithfully, and only my duty. I cannot allow myself to sympathize with the slayer and the slain in the same

It was very hard for such a man not to sympathize with a true joy or sorrow whenever it came within his kenhim to whose lips, even in moments him to whose lips, even in moments of of care or sadness, the frank laugh of a child would bring a smile, and to whose eyes, even in moments of joy, the sorrow of a stranger would call the sudden moisture. But the very excess, and, still more, the contrast, of these contending emotions enabled him to be known, to have been greatly wronged."

1 repeat, I have come to oring you two persons have ceen anoved to know good news. Do not you understand?"

1 to be good news. Do not you understand?"

1 to be good news. To mothers had a right is established. You are known, to have been assistants. Now, whatever you may do, my duty is the same. I have to place that confession in the hands of the prisoner extended the prisoner ex him to hold himself in a sort of equilibhim to hold himself in a sort of equilib-rium. Like one who walks a rough either betrayed me or bungled, and path carrying a cup filled to the brim. and looks not to right nor left, lest he should lose its contents, so F. Chevreuse carried his full heart, and would not yield to any emotion till bis work

When he entered the corridor leading to Mr. Schoninger's cell, he was somewhat surprised at meeting Mr. Schoninger's lawyer coming out. The surprise was mutual, but they merely saluted each other, and passed on.

"He doesn't give up yet," remarked the turnkey confidentially. "His lawyer comes every little while, and the warden has given orders that they shall talk without a guard. He, the awyer, is the only person who can talk alone with a convict, except the chaplain, and, of course, you, sir!"
F. Chevreuse had self-possession

enough to bow his acknowledgments. But I wish to enter the cell this morning," he said ; "I don't want to

# TCHING HUMORS



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The man looked embarrassed. There was a limit even to the privileges of F. Chevreuse,

"You can lock me in with him, and o away," the priest said, impatient of delay. "I will be responsible for you this time. I looked for the warden, but he is not about the house. Let me go in, and, as soon as the warden returns, say I wish to see him."
The guard yielded, though unwill-

ingly. There was something imperative in the priest's manner which he did not venture to resist. Moreover, F. Chevreuse was so well known as man who scrupulously upheld legiti-mate authority, and obeyed to the letter the regulations of any establishment he might enter, that it was evident there must be some urgent

reason when he would set a rule aside.

The bolts were drawn back, the door grated on its hinges, and the priest stepped into the cell. He scarcely took any notice of the prisoner, who sat looking at him something as a newly-caged lion may look when first his keeper ventures into the cage, but watched the guard while he locked the door again, and listened to the sound of his retreating steps as they echoed along the corridor.

The prisoner's voice, deep and harsh, demanded his attention before he turned to him. "May I ask, sir, the meaning of this intrusion?"

F. Chevreuse almost started at the sound. His mind had been so occupied by sorrowful and pathetic images, and had, moreover, so associated Mr. Schoninger with thoughts of joy and freedom, that the concentrated bitterness of those tones smote him dis-cordantly. He had for the time forgotten that the prisoner could not even suspect that his visitor was one who brought good tidings. His surprise was therefore, at this repelling question, that for a moment he looked at the speaker attentively without replying, and the look itself held him yet a moment longer silent.

Mr. Schoninger had changed ter ribly. It was as though you should some marble statue of a superb heathen deity, and carve down contours, sharpen the lines without changing them, carefully, with mallet and chisel, gnaw away the flesh from muscle and bone, and cut in the lines of anger, impatience and hatred and of an intense and corroding bitterness. Then, if the statue could be made hollow, and filled with a fire which should glow through the thin casing till it seemed at times on the point of a destroying flame, you would have some semblance of what this man had become after seven months of imprison

F. Chevreuse was terrified. "Mr. Schoninger!" he exclaimed, "I have come to bring you liberty. Do not look so at me! Try to forgive the wrong that has been done you. All shall be righted. The criminal has confessed, and you are to go free as soon as the necessary steps shall be

Not a gleam of pleasure softened the prisoner's face. Only his brows darkened over the piercing eyes he fixed on his visitor. "So Mr. Benton has betrayed me!" he said in a low voice that expressed more of rage and threatening than any outcry could have done.

"I do not know anything of your lawyer, nor have any communication with him," the priest replied. "I do not know what you mean by betrayal. I repeat, I have come to bring you

eatly wronged.
"It is a trick!" the prisoner exyou think to offer me as a gift-for which I am to be grateful, and merci ful too-what I have won for myself. gesture of the hand, seemed to fling the priest's offer from him. "Do you fancy, sir, that I have been idle here? Does a man sleep in hell? Did you fancy that I was going to wait for justice to come to me? No! I was shut into a cage; but I am not the sort of been busy while the world forgot me. "I did not forget you," hastily in-terposed the priest. "And others also

have tried."
"Tried!" echoed the prisoner scornfully. "Sir, when a clay-bank falls on a poor workman, every body runs to the rescue. Not a minute is lost. People rush in haste to dig him out before he is dead. That you call before he is dead. humanity. You do not even dignify mind. it by the name of charity. A man overwhelmed with a mountain of wrong and disgrace, shut in a cage that is changing me into a madman, and politic, they are careful not to soil tion to the officer; but the prisoner their fingers or inconvenience their seized the bars of the door in his defriends in giving me liberty. I am a lirious impatience, and tried to wring Jew, and, therefore, out of the pale of your charity. But, Jew though I are priest, I take the side of the Christ you pretend to adore against your accursed hour. Open the door, I say! Why do and hypocritical Christians. If your doctrines were true, still I am a better "With all my heart, Mr. Schoninand hypocritical Christians. If your doctrines were true, still I am a better Christian than any of those who have get!" the warden said. "But you caught himself back, setting his foot believed me guilty."

With all my heart, Mr. Schonining low ground, and, with a firm will, caught himself back, setting his foot on the temptation that had been making through his veins. All the believed me guilty."

the priest's errand, or not to have understood what it meant.

"What you say may be all true," F. Chevreuse replied calmly. "But that pense with them. Ther can be thought of another time. You delay, I assure you, sir."

talk through the bars; and I wish to have something more pleasant to dwell enter alone."

In spite of the deep and wearing ex-Schoninger perceived that his visitor somewhat alarmed at his violence. He controlled himself, therefore, and, as much from physical weakness as from a desire to appear self-possessed, resumed his seat, motioning his visitor

to another.

"From the time when Annette Ferrier came here and begged me to fly, I have known whose place I was occupying," he said in measured tones, his gaze fixed steadily upon the priest's face. "I sent for my lawyer the next morning, and put him on the track. I had not enough proof to prevent the fellow going away; but his every step has been followed I know where he stepped in London and in Paris; and despatch from Rome has come saying he is there. To-morrow morning at answer will be sent to that telegram, ordering his arrest."

F. Chevreuse was confounded. For moment he knew not what to say.
"I think you will perceive that I do not need your assistance, sir," Mr. Schoninger continued haughtily 'The power is in my hands, and shall use it as seems to me best.'

"And so," said the priest, recover ing his speech, "you are willing, from pride and a desire for revenge, to stay here weeks, perhaps months, longer, and await the result of another trial, rather than accept the tardy justice which that unhappy man offers you, not knowing that you suspected him, and rather than permit me to be the medium of his reparation! I can make great allowances for the effect which your terrible wrongs and suffer ings must necessarily have produced on your mind; but I did not expect to see you show a needless acrimony. did not think that you would wish to strike down a man, even one who had injured you, in order to take violently what he offers you with an open hand, not knowing, remember, that you have the power to compel him.

Mr. Schoninger still looked steadfastly at his companion, but with a changed expression. He looked no longer suspicious, but uncomprehendoccupied and excited that he had only half listened to the priest's communica tion, and the only impression he had received was that Lawrence Gerald's friends, knowing his danger, were trying to temporize, and that, while securing his escape, they would obtain the release of his substitute by some quibble of the law. He was not suffic ently recollected to perceive, what he would at any other time have acknowledged, that F. Chevreuse was not the man to lend himself to such a plot in any case, still less in this.
"Four weeks ago," the priest re-

"Lawrence Gerald and his wife give me a packet which was to be opened and acted on to-day. They were going away for a little journey, they said. I did not know where they were going, and I do not know, nor wish to know, where they are. I will not interfere with the course of the law, nor shield any offender from justice, especially at the cost of the inno cent. But since, in this case, I have been the sufferer by that crime, I claim the right to forgive, and to wish, at least, that the criminal, whoever he may be, should be left to the stings of his own conscience. I would have said the same for you had I ever believed you guilty. That packet confession. That packet contains two persons have been allowed to know do, my duty is the same. I have to back to his companions. To place that confession in the hands of hidden tumult of passions, the authorities, and testify that I received it from Lawrence Gerald and his wife, and that I signed without reading it. Then my work will be done. I do not know much of the tech-I will not take liberty from your hands!" He started up, and, with a may be necessary; but I presume your may be necessary; but I presume your further detention will be short and merely nominal.

He paused, but Mr. Schoninger made no reply: he only sat and listened, and looked attentively at the speaker.

"If I could rejoice at anything, I should rejoice at your release from this animal who can be tamed and made to wretched place, and from the still more play tricks for my keeper. I have wretched charge that was laid on you, F. Chevreuse continued; "but I have witnessed too much sorrow to be able to sav more than God speed you."

Mr. Schoninger did not appear to have heard the last words. He stood up and drew in a strong breath, and shivered all through. The thought that it was to be for him no slow fight for liberty, but that liberty was at the threshold, had at length entered his

"Let me out of here !" he exclaimed, would be a brute to do otherwise than help in such a case. But here am I, Open the door. You cannot hold me any longer. Open the door, sir! cried to the warden, who stood outside, looking at him in astonishment.

claimed. "I cannot bear it another Why do

He seemed to have quite forgotten confinement patiently for seven ing him a companion for demons. I feverish mass of humanity, with its periest's errand, or not to have months; try to bear it a little longer Wronged he had been in a way that till the formalities of the law shall have he could not help; but he could at least been complied with. We cannot dis-pense with them. There shall be no

Mr. Schoninger was too proud to need a second exhortation to contro need a second exhortation to control himself; was, perhaps, annoyed that he should have incurred one. He immediately drew back, and seated himself. "Allow me to say, sir," he remarked coldly, "that I have not borne imprisonment natiently. I have imprisonment patiently. I have merely endured it because I was obliged to submit to force. And now will you please to open the door? I will not go out till I may; but set the door wide. Do not keep me any longer

under lock and key."

The warden called to his guard, who were not far away. Indeed, several of them, curious to know what was going on, had gathered in the corridor, only just out of sight of those in

"Unlock the door of Mr. Schonin ger's cell," he said in a loud voice.

'He is no longer a prisoner."
The bolts shot back, and the door clanged open against the stone casing.
"Let me be the first one to congratulate you, sir," the officer added.

Mr. Schoninger did not see the hand

offered him, though he replied to the words. He was looking past the officer, past the wondering faces of the guard who peeped in at the door, and his glance flashed along the corridor, through which a ray of sunlight shone from the guard-room, and fresh breezes blew. A slight quiver passed through his frame, and he seemed to be resisting an impulse to rush out of the

It was only for one instant. The next, he became aware of the eyes that curiously observed him, and, by the exercise of that habit of self-control which had become to him a second nature, shut off from his face every ripple of emotion.
"I thank you, sir!" he said in

answer to the warden's compliments. And perhaps you will be so good as to send those men away from the cor ridor, and to let Mr. Benton know that I want to see him here immediately. The guard disappeared at once, one of them as messenger to Mr. Schoninger's lawyer; but the warden still

You will want to change clothes," he said. "And after that, I shall be happy to place a room in my house at your disposal, where you may receive your friends and transact business till the time comes for you to go

Mr. Schoninger glanced down with loothing on his prison uniform, re-membering it for the first time since that day of horror and despair when he had waked from a half-swoon to find himself invested with it and laid on the narrow bed in his cell.

Perhaps the officer, too, remembered that day when he had said that he would rather resign his office than receive such a prisoner into his care when he had exhausted arguments and persuasions to induce him to submit to prison rules, and how, when at last he had felt obliged to hint at the employment of force, he had seen the strong man fall powerless before him.

"These clothes would hardly fit Mr. Lawrence Gerald," Mr. Schoninger remarked, smiling scornfully. "But perhaps there will be no question of his wearing them.

The warden uttered an exclamation.
Is it Lawrence Gerald? It cannot !" He had not been told the name.
"And why not, sir?" demanded the Jew haughtily.

The officer was silent, disconcerted by the question, which he did not at mpt to answer.
"Poor Mrs. Gerald!" he said, look

ing at F. Chevreuse.

Mrs. Gerald's fondness for her son was almost a proverb in Crichton. "Mrs. Gerald's troubles are over,

said the priest briefly. Mr. Schoninger went to the window. and stood there looking out, his fierce, half-formed resolutions, his swelling pride, his burning anger and impatience, this news came with as sudden a check as if he had seen the cold form of the dead woman brought

into the cell and laid at his feet.

He had been thinking of the world of men, of the bigoted crowd which had condemned him unheard, of the judge who had pronounced sentence, and the jury who had found him guilty-of all the cold outside world which had to be conquered by strength, or to be sub mitted to; and now rose up before him another world of pitying women whose tenderness reversed the decisions pronounced by the intellects of men, o swept over them with an imperious charity; who were ever at the side of the sufferer, even when they knew him had withdrawn, and the same full to be the sinner, and whose silent hearts felt the rebound of every blow that was struck. He saw the priest's mother, a sacrifice to the interests of her son; the criminal's wife, as he had light scarcely less brilliant the beautiseen her that night in his cell, with the only half-veiled splendor of her silks and jewels mocking the pallid misery of her face; and now this last victim, more pitful than all! A sight their budding branches, climbed the ing wind seemed to sweep around him, far-reaching and full of mingled voices, the infinite wail of innocent and suffering hearts. How gross and demoniac in comparison were the bitter, warring voices of hate and pride and revenge! To his startled mental vision it was almost as though there appeared before him hideous and brutal forms cowering away from faces full of a pure and piercing sorrow. He perceived that he had been tak-

He turned proudly toward his two companions, who still waited for him to speak. "If the arrest of Lawrence Gerald is not necessary for my release, then I hope he may escape," he said.
"It is bad enough to be shut up in this way when one has a clear con-science; but with such a conscience as he must have, imprisonment could lead only to madness or suicide."
"Or to penitence," added F. Chey

reuse with emphasis.

Mr. Schoninger did not reply; this alternative was beyond his comprehe sion. But he glanced at the priest and, in doing so, his eyes were attracted to the doorway, which was quite filled by the ample figure of Mrs.

Ferrier.
"I couldn't help coming, Father,"
"I humbly. "And, beshe said quite humbly. "And, sides, Honora Pembroke said thought it right that I should. sha'n't stay long or say much. I only want to say that when Mr. Schoninger goes out of this place, my house and all in it are at his disposal."

The scene she had witnessed had quieted her completely, and there was even a certain dignity in her submissive air. But when she turned to Mr. Schoninger, her tears burst forth again, in spite of her efforts to restrain them. "You'll have to learn to forgive and forget," she said in a stifled voice, which she vainly strove to render calm. "I'm the only one left to make amends to you.'

Mr. Schoninger came forward instantly, and extended his hands to her. "I have nothing to forgive in you, he said warmly: "and I would not wish to forget your kindness. I thank you for your offer, but I cannot give any answer to it now. If I decline, it will not be because I am ungrateful. And now let me say good by to you till a more favorable time.

She had had the discretion not to wait for this intimation, and had of erself made the motion to go.

"Try to forgive and forget," she whispered hoarsely; and, pulling her veil over her tear-swollen face, hurried This was Mr. Schoninger's first visi

tor, but not his last. Before an hour had passed, the news had overspread the whole city, producing a strange revulsion of feeling. There were, perhaps, those who were, at heart, sorry to know that the Jew was innocent. They had from the first expressed their belief in his guilt, and they had been loud in their opinion that he should be sentenced to the full extent of the law. This class were not only disappointed in their prejudices, but humbled in their own persons. They could not but feel that they had rendered themselves at once odious and ridiculous. But the majority o the people were disposed to render full justice. All the Protestant clergymen justice. called on him, though but few of them had ever spoken to him. It was right. they said, that every man of dignity and position in the city should pay some respect to the stranger who suffered in their midst such a cruel injustice, and the fact that he was a lew should make them all the more anxious in doing so; for the public must see that they did not persecute any one for his religious belief Judges, lawyers, bankers, professors men of wealth, who were nothing bu men of wealth-all came to express their regrets and to offer their hospitality.

He saw none of them, though he sent courteons messages to some. was too much engaged in business that day to receive visitors. Only one received a decided rebuff. "As for the judge who sentenced me to be hanged," Mr. Schoninger said, "no compliment which he can pay will ever render his presence tol

All the young ladies took their walk in the direction of the prison that day, and all the young gentlemen followed the young ladies; and, in passing, they lingered and looked, or cast sidelong glances, at the windows of the warden's parlor, where it was understood Mr. Schoninger was. People who did not like to be suspected of romance or of curiosity had some excuse for going in that direction, and those who had business in the prison were esteemed fortunate. Probably one-half the town took occasion that day to look at the windows of the warden's house. But it cannot be said that they were wiser for having done so, for not a glimpse did one of them get of Mr. Schoninger. But when the soft spring evening

deepened, and all the curious crowd moon which Lawrence Gerald and his wife had seen the night before, flooding with its radiance the melancholy plendors of Rome, was veiling with a ful young city of Crichton, two men hill to South Avenue. They walked leisurely, and almost in silence only exchanging now and then a quiet word: but one who watched closely the taller of the two might have perceived that his quiet signified anything but indifference to the scen around him, and that he was full of a strong though controlled excitement He stepped as though curbed and every moment glanced up at the sky or at the branches over his head, and petty hates and still more hateful loves, its jealousies, its trivial fears prevent their lowering him in mind.
They should not induce him to yield to passion or to meanness.

And despicable hopes, was put aside, and he was entering into a new and freshly-blooming creation, where man-

kind, too, might ity of nature.

They passed with its broad fr ooking very sta light, and, aft reached the sum only a single tre about them the seemed to be the tranquil beauty. towns and forest of mountains th richness agains wound like a si Where sparkling point foam, told whe day and night some feet. TO B

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