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BY LAURA JEAN LIBBEY

Author of "A Broken Betrothal," "Parted by Fate," "Parted at the Altar," "Heiress of Cameron Hall," "Miss Middleton's Lover," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

" Did you throw yourself in the river?' I asked, in breathless hor-

'No,' she answered; 'it was brought about by an accident. I fell into the water.' But there must have been some

one about who heard your cries for help, I exclaimed.

and shook her head. "The next day that which dreaded habmuch pened. She spoke of leaving us, and wrote on to her friends that she was

Only Heaven knows what I suffered that night. All through the long hours I paced up and down under the light of the stars, crying out if she left us the happiness of life

would be all over for me. I knew full well that she could not love me, sir, for I was but a rough, ignorant man, and she was a dainty, lovely creature just such a one as rich men choose for their brides. I could never give her silks and jewels and laces, nor coaches in which to ride. I could give her only an honest heart and a toil-hardened hand. Yes, yes, I realized full well hat this dainty young girl was not or me; but I idolized her as men dolize a golden star set in the blue

neavens so far beyond their grasp. "I will be strong enough and well enough to travel in a day or two, she said, with a smile, to mother How glad you will be to be rid of

our troublesome charge.'
"Mother looked at me. She knew oh, yes, she knew!-but she answered that she would be pleased if he could keep her there forever.

'I am expecting a relative to come for me," she said. "And that afternoon a gentleman called. I passed him in the hall as ie was leaving. One glance at his ace, and I started back as though

I had been shot. I had recognized in him a man whom I had been searching for for many a month. I was an eve-witness to a crime he committed one

winter's night. "I will tell you how it happened, sir, and you will not wonder that I sought to save a young and levely girl from such an atrocious fiend. "It was in Fittsburg, one stormy night last winter, sir, that it hap-

pened—the crime, I mean.

'It was nearly midnight. I was hurrying along through the blinding storm and intense cold on an unfrequented road, when suddenly I stumbled and fell in the frozen path. felt a sharp, horrible twinge of my left ankle, and when I tried to rise, cried aloud with the intense pain of it. I realized in a moment what had happened. I had sprained my

Whether it was the intense cold to lose consciousness, I cannot tell. When I regained it, I found myself still lying where I had fallen, near a

And at that instant the sound of harp, angry voices in fierce altercaion, fell upon my ears, and strug-ling to my elbows, I saw two men standing scarcely twenty paces from me. I could see their faces clearly in the white, bright moonlight-though they could not see me, lying as I was in the dark shadows of the pines.

What the trouble was, I could not tell; but, as I looked, attempting to raise my voice to cry out to them for help, I saw that which froze the sound on my lips. One of them had deliberately, and without warning, plunged a knife to the hilt in the ther's breast.

"Every lineament of the murderer's face stamped itself indefibly upon my brain; it is the man who, by this time, has wedded that innocent young girl. I would have faced him at the very altar and told my story. I was on my way to the church when

fate prevented me.
"But, hark you, sir! You have not heard the most atrocious part of the affair. Scarcely a moment had elapsed after the murderous blow was struck ere footsteps were heard crunching the snow on the frozen path, and in an instant a man's form could be distinctly seen approaching "The assassin wheeled about and

sprang into a clump of bushes so near where I lay that I could have put out my hand and touched him.

"It is he,' he muttered. 'Ha! a
plan-worthy of the fiend himselfcomes to me! I can-I-will put it

into execution." "He waited with breathless intenthe approach of the other, as did I-to note what else might take

"I could see in the clear moonlight how unsteady the gait of the man coming up the icy path was; he had been imbibling too much wine. "As I had expected, he stumbled

over the body lying directly in his path, and an exclamation of intense dismay broke from his lips as he caught sight of the knife. In an incaught sight of the knile. In an instant he had drawn it forth—recognizing, as he id so, with a cry of horror, the face of the dead.

"'My enemy!' he gasped, 'Great in the control of the dead.

Godf Who has done this?' He did not see the serpent in human form who had crawled out from among the

bushes. "He did not know of his presence until he laid a heavy hand on his arm, exclaiming, while his evil face was aglow with Satanic evil:
"'Ah! I am here in the nick time,' he cried, 'to discover what you have done. I know you—I know the murdered man He was your

* friend, though you quarreled bitterly in a down-town restaurant to-night, You vowed that you would kill him.

You kept your vow.'
"'Great God!' cried the other, 'you do not mean to say that I-I-have killed this man?' And he dropped the knife in horror, which he had

clutched in his nerveless grasp.
"'Precisely—I saw you!' repeated
the scoundrel, deliberately. And as I live, sir, he actually talked the man into the belief that he had done the deed of which, Heaven knows, he was as innocent as a little babe. But when wine was in wit was out: he was actually talked into the infamous belief that he had committed the

atrocious deed.

"I will not betray you. I would shield you,' said the rascal, smooth-'On one condition, and one condition only, will I consent to keep horrible secret and save you the gallows. I will call and see you early to-morrow morning, we will talk this matter over. You will wonder, sir, why I did not cry out and denounce the fiend incarnate when the foul lie was on his lips. I answer, in all candor, I dared not, for I was maimed and helpless; and if he had known that I witnessed the awful deed, there would have been two murders committed; he would have shown me no mercy Overcome with horror at the startling situation. I must have swooned When I returned to consciousness I was alone with the storm and the night. The two men had gone. Even the victim had been

were beginning to fall from the now clouded sky were fast obliterating the traces of blood which had dyed the white snow. " 'The villain has escaped me,' was my first thought, but as sure as there is a living God I will hunt him down, that an innocent man whom he is making his dupe may not suffer for - another's crime.' I hunted night and day, in crowded thoroughfares, in silent streets, I knew that I should know him when

we came face to face, as I felt cer-

removed, and the white flakes which

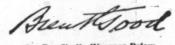
tain we should some time. And, sir, to make a long story short, the man whom I met coming from our house was the man whom had witnessed commit the horrible You will not wonder, then, next afternoon, when I heard he was to be wedded in a certain church at a certain hour to this fair young girl. I sought to save her; but I was too late, I would rather ave seen lovely Miss'Lawreze in-Arthur Rochester sprang forward, white as death, as the name from alcolm's lins

What name was that?" he cried. 'Speak it again-the gerl's name!'

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As he had listened, strange, wild fancies had thronged to his brain. His breath seemed to come from his lips in scorching, flaming fire. "What is the name of the girl

what is the name of the girl whom you saved from the water six weeks ago? Speak, quickly man; do not torture me!"

"Her name," replied Malcolm, "is Ione Lawrence. She is, however, Miss Lawrence no longer, for, ere

this, she has become .. Fate willed it so. A bitter cry fell from Arthur Roch-

could see the whole past outlined bemy God!—Ione! Ione!" he ;'I know what has parted us

CHAPTER XXXVII.

-too late!"

No pen can portray the poignant grief Arthur Rochester suffered as the awful truth burst upon him that the fair young girl, who had loved him so well, had been fairly forced, through fraud, into marrying his

He clenched his strong hands together, and a bitter cry fell from his white lips.

"It is too late to save her," he groaned; "but," springing to his feet in intense excitement, "I will follow him to the end of the world. and denounce him, and take her from Gaining from Malcolm explicit di-

rections as to where the church was situated where the ceremony was to have been performed, Arthur set out the place at once, in hopes of tracing from that point where they had gone; but first, however, taking immediate steps to have young Malcolm's sanity clearly established, and

his discharge accomplished. It was a day's journey to his destination. Arthur Rochester never remembered how he reached it, his thoughts were in such a whirl. He found the old rector, who lived in an adjoining cottage, at home. When he made known his errend, the old gentleman looked at him hesitating-

You are a friend of the parties,

sir?" he inquired.
"Of the lady's," replied Arthur.
"Then I will tell you what occursir," returned the reverend gentleman, thoughtfully. "The ceremony, which was to have made them was commenced, but never fin-

"What!" cried Arthur, springing breathlessly forward. "Good heavens, sir! do I hear aright-the cerenony was not concluded?" "That is what I said," replied the

minister: "If you will kindly give me your attention without interruption, I will relate briefly what occur-Arthur had sunk back in his chair, trembling in every limb. "I had been summoned rather has-

tily by the gentleman to perform the ceremony, as he wished to take the outgoing steamer for Europe, that left that day, he said. When I reached the church, the bridal party, which had preceded me,

was already there. "In the course of my thirty years' experience I have seen many brides elect, but never one like the one who stood before me. Her face looked like that of a dead woman's, pallid as marble, and her dark eyes fairly glowed like points of flame, and what caused me more surprise than all the rest was, she seemed to shrink from the very touch of the man whom she had come there to wed.

'Just before they reached the altar, faced him, drawing herself up to its

'Before this marriage takes place, have one request to make of you, she said. 'Consider it granted beforehand,

if it is in my power, he replied.
"She drew from the pocket of her dress a folded paper and placed it in 'Read that over carefully,' she

said. 'Then it is my request that you sign it and return it to me ere he ceremony shall proceed.'
"He glanced over the paper hurriedly, then-Heaven forgive me for the remark-but his face grew actually fiendish.

"I absolutely refuse to sign that!' he exclaimed, angrily. night have known I would object to such an arrangement. Leave you to go your way after the ceremony, and go mine, indeed!' And as he spoke he tore the paper into shreds and cast them on the floor. 'I am not a man to be trifled with in this fashion, he went on stormily. Either the marriage takes place here and now, or it does not. Understand, there is no coercion. But you know what will occur in case you do not return with me as my wife."
"'Let the sactifice go on, if it

must,' she answered.
"'Sir,' said I, stepping forward, 'you will pardon me. From what I see and hear I infer that this marriage would be distasteful to the lady, and under the circumstances I could not think of performing the To be Continued.

Hoax-Couldn't sleep last night. Fire engines dashed down our street and woke me up. Joax-A fire alarm wakened me,

Is that so? Yes, I dreamed that I had died. "This, said the Eminent Artist, "is my famous study of the Cows in the

"But, where is the clover?" we asked, not seeing any of it in the picture.
"Oh, the cows have eaten it, you

First Boy-It's 6 o'clock. Let's go Second Boy-Nit. If we go home now we'll get licked for stayin' out so late. If we stay till 8 o'clock we'll git hugged an' kissed fer not being drowned.

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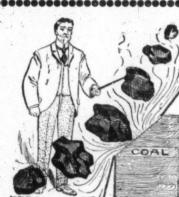
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