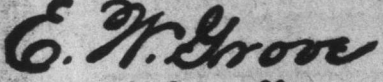


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**For Her Sake;
 OR
 The Murder in Ferness Wood.**

CHAPTER LXIV.

There came a quiver of pain over her beautiful face.

"I am happier now, Royal," she answered, "although it seems cruel to say so."

"Thank Heaven!" he said. "Tell me another thing. You are young; all your bitter experience of life has not aged you. How is it you do not love and marry some brave, good man, who will make up to you for all you have suffered?"

"I shall never love, and I shall never marry," she said, earnestly.

"Diana," whispered Sir Royal, "tell me—where is Sir Leslie Scarisdale?"

The name seemed to pierce her heart. Her face grew deadly pale, then a burning flush covered it.

"Where is he? I am sure he loved you," Sir Royal continued. "Why does he not seek you, now that you are free?"

"I should never marry him, Royal," she answered.

"But why not, my dear? You are free; I am sure that he loves you; and if ever I saw love in a woman's eyes, I saw it in yours for him."

"Yes," she replied calmly; "I loved him well."

"Then why not marry him and be happy? We cannot know what the next world may be like; but, if we who have lived in this take with us thoughts of those we have loved, and are enabled to remember our loved ones, I shall long to know that you are happy."

"I shall never marry him, Royal," she said; "I shall never even see him again."

"But why? Tell me why," requested Sir Royal.

"There is a gulf between us," she said, "deeper, darker, and wider than the grave."

"What has made it? You tell me everything, Diana—tell me that."

"I cannot," she replied. "I have never even shaped the words in my own mind. I could not put my thought into words. Oh, Royal, do not speak of it. Let us talk of you."

"My dearest Diana, I have not much longer to live. One doctor gives me days, another hours—I think it will be hours—and you are my greatest—indeed my only care on earth. Tell me what is this yawning gulf between you and Sir Leslie?"

"I cannot. I shall try to be happy, but it will never be with him—never!"

"Yet you love him. What has parted you? Diana," he added, as a sudden light flashed in his eyes, "tell me the truth. I heard that he had gone from Ferness, and that you had not spoken of him since. Tell me, Diana—did you ever think, ever suspect that he had anything to do with your husband's death?"

Sir Royal's words startled her beyond expression. But she made no answer to his question. She had sufficient self-control to hide the emotion that his words called into life.

"Answer me, Diana," he urged.

"I cannot answer you, Royal."

"I call to you," he said, "from the very threshold of eternity; will you not hear me?"

"No," she replied kindly, but firmly.

"I could not, would not hear you if you called to me from another world."

He was silent for a few moments; then he said slowly:

"I am answered, Diana. I now know

all I wanted to know. If you had never suspected him, you would be indignant with me; you would hate me even for harboring the thought. I am answered."

Diana made no reply, for she knew that Sir Royal had fathomed her suspicion. She saw a gray shadow pass over his face, a strange glimmer steal into his eyes; he clung more closely to her hands.

"Diana," he said, "I have something to tell you. If I could have avoided it, I would never have communicated it to a living soul." He paused for a moment. "Kiss me, dear, before I speak, and ask Heaven's blessing on me."

Wondering at his strange manner, she bent down and kissed him.

"Heaven bless you, dear Royal!" she said.

"Perhaps you will never speak kindly of me or to me again," he said. "I dare hardly hope that you will, Diana—put your ear close to my lips, dear, so that no one may hear what I say—Diana, I killed your husband! Hush! You must not scream or cry. No one must know. Be silent, Diana!"

For a heart-rending cry had risen to her lips, a deadly pallor spread over her face. It seemed to her, when she heard those words, that life for her had lost even its last illusion. Her dearest friend a murderer!

"I killed him," went on Sir Royal, "and I want to tell you all about it. It has been lying here"—and he pointed to his breast—"a dead weight, ever since. But I do not think I did wrong."

"Oh, Royal, Royal!" she cried, in irrepressible anguish.

"It was not wrong," he said. "He made your life miserable. You told me that you were unhappy—you looked ill and weary of life. I wanted you to be happy and free, to be like the Diana who sang of 'sunshine and roses'; so I killed him!"

"Oh, Royal!" she sobbed again.

"Hush! Be silent, Diana. No one must know. Not that I fear, for I am going to meet the Great Judge, and the judgment of men will not reach me."

"You could not have done it, Royal!" she sobbed. "It is impossible! You are dreaming!"

"No; it is quite true. And, Diana, together with the fact that I killed him, remember this always—that I did it for love of you. Oh, hush, my dear, hush!"

For Diana had broken down, horror-stricken, and was sobbing as though her heart would break. Of all that had fallen to her lot, this blow seemed the hardest to bear.

"I will tell you all about it," said Sir Royal, faintly, "if you will listen, Diana, without weeping. You ought to know the whole truth: Is the door closed? I have kept my secret so long, I need not let it be known now."

(To be continued.)

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**The Romance
 OF A
 Marriage.**

CHAPTER I.

A lovely night in June; not full moonlight, for Diana is at the three-quarters, and instead of flooding hill and dale, land and stream, just down from between her fingers, as it were, a soft, misty moon-twig; that turns the earth to fairyland, and makes every tree and bush and twinkling star seem weird and phantasmal.

Just the night for a poet to walk abroad in, and let his soul take wings and soar into the unfathomable; just the night for love and lyrics, for softly uttered vows and hidden embraces.

The air is full of unseen Cupids, flying up and down seeking for victims at whom they may let fly the fatal arrow.

In this moonlight mist, vague yet not dark, poetical yet rather dangerous in the way of sore throats and influenza, lay the village of Hampden Powis, wrapped as in a fleecy, transparent pall, and looking, as most things—from a bride in her veil to a bun under green gauze in a pastry-cook's window—do when they are half-concealed—very beautiful.

But even by daylight it was a bad-looking place. It had, as the proprietor of the academy for young gentlemen said in his advertisement, "every advantage, being sheltered from the north winds by the Wolmshire Hills, and open to the balmy breeze of the South."

It was like many a hundred other villages in England, pretty, picturesque, and most excruciatingly dead-and-alive.

In the centre of this village, just screened by some tall trees, stood Powis Court was an old mansion; but if you will open any history of the county of Wolmshire you will find a more eloquent and graphic account of Powis Court than I could pen.

At present there were no Powises at Powis Court, for the simple reason that the Powises had long since managed to get rid of it. They had also got rid of all the money and lands they possessed, and if there had been anything else they had owned, they would have got rid of that also. The Powises had a great talent for getting rid of things.

On this June Powis Court was owned by Mr. Houndell Palmer. The Court dated from Henry VIII, Mr. Palmer's grandfather—but there were people who asserted confidently that he had never had one—at any rate, he must have had a father, for it was Mr. Houndell Palmer's father who started the sugar factory, out of which the present owner of the Court had made a fortune large enough to enable him to buy the Court and figure as a county "swell."

Besides the Court, there was no house of any great importance in Hampden Powis; that was the vicarage, of course, and equally, of course, the doctor's house. The next in importance to these was Wyrtille Cottage.

Myrtle Cottage was a pretty little place, a mere box of one story, with the lower windows opening on to a terrace roofed by a verandah, over which trailed a wild rose that bloomed in the summer and a jasmine that flowered in the winter.

Myrtle Cottage stood on the very edge of the Court grounds, almost inside the fence, indeed, and had once belonged to the great house.

This night in June there were lights in the many windows of the Court; there were lights also in the small windows of Myrtle Cottage, and at the doctor's and the vicarage there were similar evidences of stir and movement: for to-night there was a party at the Court in honour of the coming of age of Mr. Houndell Palmer's only son and heir, Stacey de Palmer.

Why Stacey and why "de" it would be rather hard to explain, excepting on the inference that Mr. Palmer had, at the birth of his son, chanced to open an old-fashioned novel, and dropping on the name, been so smitten with it as to bestow it on his offspring.

It was a very high-sounding name for the son of a sugar baker; but then Mr. Houndell Palmer was rather fond of the high-sounding, and proud of the aristocracy. As he said himself, he was one of "Nature's noblemen," and doubtless felt himself justified in bestowing the Norman "de" on a nobleman's son.

It was a quarter to nine; carriages were driving up to the great, red-brick entrance to the Court, the guests were arriving, much to the delight of a crowd of yokels gathered at the gates, when the door of Myrtle Cottage was opened, and the figure of a young girl came out and stared at the night. It was a very graceful figure, tall, and slim, and girlish, and as it stood, with the light of the window at its back accentuating its every outline, it would have made a very pretty picture in black and white: more than pretty—piquant.

She stood with one hand raised to her forehead, the other resting on her lap, her head thrown back, her left foot a little advanced; youth, health, and the natural grace of a young savage in the very attitude.

Her face, of course, was in the dark; but you will see it directly. She stood thus for a minute, then she lowered her eyes from the moon, and peered as into the misty light, called out "Bob!"

not in the soft, hesitating tone of a boarding-school young lady who has been told that it is vulgar to speak above her breath, but with a clear, resonant voice, that cleaved the mist and echoed faintly amongst the Court elms.

(To be continued.)

Fashion Plates.

A SMART "TUNIC" DRESS.



3033—Here is a pretty model for serge and satin, duvetyne and crepe, or crepe de chine and chiffon. Bordered or embroidered materials could be used for this model. Gray blue Georgette crepe could be combined with black satin, and have a simple ornamentation of embroidery in self color. Purple and black, or black satin or silk with a touch of copper color would be effective.

The Pattern is cut in 3 sizes: 16, 18, and 20 years. Size 18 requires 5 1/2 yards of 44-inch material. Width of skirt at lower edge is 1 1/4 yards.

A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 10c. in silver or stamps or 1c. and 2c. stamps.

A SMART FROCK FOR MOTHER'S GIRL.



3055—Here is a style good for repp, linen, gingham, chambray, poplin, gazarine, corduroy or velvet. The shield may be omitted; the sleeve may be finished in wrist or elbow length. The dress is made to slip on over the head but additional opening may be arranged under the plait.

The Pattern is cut in 4 Sizes: 4, 6, 8 and 10 years. Size 8 requires 3 1/2 yards of 30 inch material.

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