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INSIDE BAND

The Imprisoned Heiress
—OR—
The Spectre of Egremont.

CHAPTER XII.

He experienced a keen disappointment at not having beheld the spectral appearance that had so fascinated him, and his manner was more than usually quiet and constrained as he re-entered the drawing-room.

Although unsuspecting by nature, it seemed to his lordship that Lord and Lady Egremont regarded him narrowly after his return, and the former carelessly inquired if he had had a pleasant walk. He answered quietly in the affirmative, not wishing to explain that he had been out upon the sea, lest the explanation might lead to remarks upon the specter, and what he now chose to guard carefully as a secret, be made a subject for criticism and gossip.

But the evening had at length drawn to a close, the guests had retired, the family separated, the lights extinguished, and silence and the dim moonlight fell upon the mansion.

And then the private door at the side of the dwelling nearest the sea noiselessly opened, and a woman stepped out upon the porch and looked anxiously up and down the cliff.

She was the lady Alexina.

Her velvet evening dress was caught up upon her arm, and her form was shrouded, and her face concealed by a long full scarlet cashmere cloak and hood, of the style known as "Red Riding Hood." The garment was thickly wadded, and lined with white silk, which was rendered conspicuous as she stood there, the cloak being evidently conspicuous as she stood there, the cloak being evidently thrown open purposely to reveal it.

If intended as a signal, it was the only one she used.

She stood quietly in the shadow of the porch a moment, as if listening for a sound from within; then, satisfied that her egress had not been heard or witnessed, she glided over the rocks, taking advantage of a friendly cloud obscuring the brightness of the moon.

She did not pause at her favorite retreat, the niche in the rocks, for the night was too cold and wintry to make it a desirable resting-place, but walked on, turning into the garden walk as the cloud passed from the moon.

The tall evergreens bordering the walk screened her effectually from the observation of any one who might chance to be looking from one of the windows of the mansion, and warded off the cold, piercing wind that came in from the sea.

But, as they nearly met in a pointed arch at some distance overhead, the walk was not particularly pleasant to the heiress, who shrank from its gloom, murmuring:

"What if I should meet the specter here?"

The thought caused her to quicken her steps, and she sped along the path half fancying she heard pursuing footsteps, and that the next moment a spectral hand would press heavily upon her shoulder.

Repressing the scream that arose to her lips at the thought, she hastened onward.

Her destination was a small, substantial pavilion, built in the airiest style possible for a building intended to be used equally in summer or winter, and to serve as a shelter from sudden storms as well as a retreat from summer heats. It stood upon a small point of land at some distance

from the house, and was entirely shut out of view from the latter by the thickly intervening trees. Upon one side of it lay the handsome garden; upon the other, and many feet below the sea.

Making her way to this pavilion, the heiress opened the door and entered its one simple apartment.

The room was very dark, except where faintly illumined by the light straying in through the now open door, but Alexina could distinguish nothing within, and her heart beat loudly as she whispered:

"Lyle, are you here?"

"Yes, I am here," responded the voice of Lyle Indor, and he arose from a seat in a distant corner, upon which he had been reclining, and approached the Lady Alexina.

His first act was to close the door, his second to bring out from behind the seat a dark lantern, and his third to turn on the light and deposit the lantern upon a small shelf that projected from the wall.

"Don't light it, Lyle," said the heiress, nervously. "What if some one should be wandering about the garden—one of the servants, perhaps—and see the light?"

"Don't be alarmed Xina," was the response. "The light cannot penetrate beyond the room. Look at the windows."

The Lady Alexina obeyed, and observed that the inside shutters of the windows, which were numerous, had been closely drawn.

Reassured, she seated herself in a large chair near the door, and said, shivering:

"The night is fearfully cold, Lyle. I am almost sorry I promised to meet you here. Should the meeting be discovered I dread to think what my guardian or Lord Ashcroft would say. I am sure that Lord Ashcroft is the most particular man in the world, and I would not for anything offend him."

"Of course not, Xina. And I would not have you offend him," rejoined Indor, seating himself at a respectful distance. "But, should he come upon us at this moment, I do not see that he could object to our interview. There were things I wished to say to you that could not be said before the family, and we should have been liable to interruption had we met in the picture-gallery or library. The only way to meet in secret was to meet here."

The Lady Alexina shivered again, and tapped her foot restlessly upon the floor.

"You are cold," cried Lyle, springing up and bringing her a warm Scotch shawl he had brought with him. "You see what it is to have a thoughtful friend like me, Xina."

He folded it about her, securing it by a clasp in front, and then resumed his seat.

"What is it you wish to say to me, Lyle?" she asked.

"I have so much to say that I scarcely know where to commence. The communication I am about to make to you will doubtless surprise you, and may condemn me for making it. Yet I can keep silence no longer."

"You need not hesitate to speak freely to me, Lyle," said the Lady Alexina, as he paused for encouragement to proceed.

Lyle Indor hesitated, his effeminate face now presenting a look of greater manliness, but soon said:

"Perhaps the part I am acting is treacherous to Lord Ashcroft, but I am constrained to think that the happiness of the greater number should be considered first."

"I don't understand you."

"I will come to the point. You know that you are beautiful, Alexina, and it is not necessary for me to rave of your dark eyes and scarlet cheeks, although the task would not be unpleasant, for I think of them continually. It is enough for me to talk of the effect of your beauty upon me. I have spent a year under the same roof with yourself, have shared your few pleasures, your hopes and desires, and, as might have been expected, I have learned to love you. Our tastes are congenial. We both love society and society, and I sometimes think we were formed for each other."

The heiress smiled with gratification.

"You do not check me, Alexina. You are not displeased with my presumption?"

The Lady Alexina murmured a gentle negative.

(To be continued.)

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Fuslier, Sask.—"For two or three days every so often I would have such pains in my back and sides that I could not do anything—could not even lie quietly in bed, and my head ached, too. I was this way about three years, but was worse after I was married. I was on a farm with not a house nearer than five miles and there was not a person to advise me, as my folks lived in Manitoba. My sister-in-law told me about Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and told me to try it. I took her advice and have been thankful for it ever since. After taking the medicine for three months I can say it has helped me a lot and I am doing fine. I am glad to recommend the Vegetable Compound to others and you may publish my testimonial."—Mrs. HELEN BALANOFF, Fuslier, Saskatchewan.

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WEARINESS.

I'm growing tired of stories about the hayseed town, the western burg that glories in keeping culture down, where all the men are sordid and all the women cheap; of such we've been accorded an ever

growing heap. And still the presses clatter and turn out volumes bad, huge stacks of reading matter about the hayseed grad, 'er little western cities I long have been enthused; it seems a thousand pities that they are so abused; of course, in goops and geezers their back streets may abound, but they turn out the Caesars who make the wheels go round. The men whose fame is spreading to every hemispheric, once earned their board and bedding in Punktown-by-the-Mere. The statement you're admiring, whose fame shall know no slump, once tolled with zeal untiring in Squalltown-by-the-Dump. The actress in her beauty, who plays before the queens, once did her humble duty in Quince-town, serving beans. The authors who are jolting the world with cyclic yarns, which find small towns revolting, once played among their barns. The alecks are applauding while authors sling their slurs, and hayseed towns are nodding among their cockleburrs; but still from old Hay Center the nation's great men come, the chieftain and the mentor who make the big world hum.

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The K. O. Club

LONDON, Nov. 21.—(C.P.)—A magistrate's visit to a girls' club in the East End was described in court by Magistrate Hall of Old Street Court. He received an invitation, with the address. He went to a dismal slum, and in a disused coal cellar that had been tastefully decorated met some 20 or 30 girls. The club was the "K.O." Club—King's Own, because every girl member had enjoyed the King's hospitality at some time or other in her career.

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