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PARTED BY GOLD

And he turned to where Mary stood, but did not lift his eyes. Mary came forward in obedience to a sign of her father's, and stood pale and silent.

Jack read the paper and signed it, then he handed Mr. Shallop the pen. Shallop signed it, and with a low bow presented the pen to Mary. She took it and looked around resolutely.

"This—the paper," she said, "takes Mr. Hamilton's money from him and gives it to us, who have as yet not made good our right to it. Father, I will not sign it."

Mr. Montague stared and gasped for breath.

"Mary!" he breathed.

"Oh, father!" she retorted, bursting into tears. "How can you be so cruel and forgetful? Where's all your gratitude gone? Cannot you see he is sacrificing himself to us when he ought rather to be defending himself against our grasping covetousness? I will not sign it."

Then, turning to Jack, who stood, hat in hand, and almost as pale as herself, she continued:

"Oh, sir, do not put us to shame like this! You see him now at his worst; he was never unjust or cruel before. This wicked money has turned his head. I—I wish you had kept it, for it has brought us nothing but unhappiness already."

Jack could not speak, he did not dare to trust himself.

"The agreement is valid," he said, "one witness is sufficient. Mr. Shallop will arrange it. Mr. Pacewell, may the money bring you the happiness it conferred on me; with all my heart I hope you will live long and enjoy it well."

He turned, opened the door, and had almost got out of the room, when a thin voice cried:

He started and turned.

Her chair and was stretching out her arms to him with two tearful eyes.

He made half a step back, but shook his head, smiled his old smile at her, and left the room.

There was still hard and unpleasant work for him.

He walked sharply through the snow and stood waiting admittance at the Pacewell Villa.

The elegant drawing-room was empty, and he stood wondering how he should get through the ordeal which he knew awaited him.

Presently a light footstep sounded behind him, and Lady Maud entered, her brightest smile, her choicest flush called up to receive him.

"Dear Jack, why have you kept from me? It has seemed an age," she murmured, as he took her hand and shook it.

"Indeed!" he said, speaking as away because I did not want to bring quietly as he could. "I have kept bad news, but it must come, and perhaps I am the best one to carry it."

"Bad news," she repeated, turning pale. "Any one dead?" she asked.

"No, thank Heaven!" he replied.

"The old Henry Pacewell, whom you all thought dead, has turned up, and the man you have promised to marry

is—a beggar!"

She sank from his arms directly.

"A—beggar!" she echoed.

"Well, not exactly, because I don't mean to be," he said, trying to speak lightly. "But a penniless man, with the world before him, Maud."

Her ladyship drew farther away and sank upon the sofa.

"When did you know this?" she asked.

"Yesterday," he said.

"And did not come to tell me!" she said, elevating her eyebrows, and speaking bitterly, for she saw now that between two stools, she had come to the ground.

"No—no," he said. "Maud, I put off the ordeal for a few hours. Forgive me! I know how it would grieve you."

She burst into tears.

"A beggar!" she repeated. "I am to marry a beggar! Oh, aunt! oh aunt! Then she went into well-bred hysterics, and Jack rang the bell.

Lady Pacewell appeared, and amid Lady Maud's nicely toned shrieks, Jack told his story.

Lady Pacewell was really shocked.

"Wait here, Jack, dear, or dear! oh, dear! till I come down."

And then she took Lady Maud upstairs. Presently she came down, and Jack went over the story again.

Lady Pacewell cried, Jack comforted her. Her ladyship still wept, and at last she sobbed out:

"Of course, it is all over between you and Maud."

"Yes," said Jack; "if she wishes it, of course."

"Of course," said Lady Pacewell. "But it is an awful blow for her, poor girl."

Jack could not help smiling bitterly.

"And I must send the brougham horse back, I suppose, Jack, dear?"

"No," said Jack, taking up his hat and trying not to look wounded.

"Keep the horse and Maud, aunt. I will arrange about the former, and as for the latter, give her my love."

Then he kissed his aunt, who, poor woman, could not help her worldliness overshooting her love for her favorite nephew, and with a sinking at the heart, he left the villa.

On his way to his chambers he passed his club. A small group of men stood on the steps. He nodded cheerfully, and received in return the coolest of bows from the men who yesterday would have run down to meet him and shake hands.

He reached his chambers; his men-servants were waiting outside the door, and begged to know if they were to be paid.

He entered the room, and thereupon the table lay a heap of bills marked immediate, and accompanied by letters threatening him with instant proceedings by the very tradesmen who a few hours since were ready to lick the dust from his feet.

The news had spread. Indeed, Mr. Montague had taken care that it should, and had not only favored Mr. Montague with his views of Jack's conduct as regards the cheque and the other kindness, but had spent the morning in running around to the tradespeople and informing them of the change in Mr. Hamilton's fortune.

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COMFORT LYE

Extra Strong



CHAPTER XIII.

In a small room that might have been dignified by the name of chamber, as it stood within the precincts of Lincoln's Inn, and was barely furnished with half legal and wholly uncomfortable table, chair and worn-out sofa, sat Jack.

The fire in the small grate was low, and it was bitterly cold. Jack sat over the tiny glow, and shivering, but it would have been the height of impudence to have put any more coal on, for it was only just six, and the small knob of coal in the box beside the fire had to last till midnight.

It was snowing outside, Jack knew, for once during the twilight he had gone to the window and looked down upon the umbrellas flitting by below.

He sat near the fire and poured himself out some tea from a small teapot. The tea was weak, the teapot a battered and used-up one. The bread and butter were unglorified, and the whole meal, to say the least, uncomfortable.

When Jack had finished his tea, he lit a lamp, put on a shade, and, drawing a large document toward him, set to work to copy it.

All this meant that Jack was poor, and working hard for a very miserable living.

He wrote on for half an hour, and then a tremendous clatter and burst of music caused him to look wearily up.

It was the bells bursting out into noise, like a lot of schoolboys let out for the holidays.

"Ding, ding! dong, dong!"

"Christmas Eve!" muttered Jack, trimming his pen. "A ram sort of Christmas Eve for you, old fellow! Last year you were dining at the club with Pop, and Beau, and the rest; this year I think you dined on a sausage roll without company. Christmas Eve, heigho!"

Then, having no time to spare for soliloquies, he fell to work on the copying again, and scratched, squawked, and scratched through another folio.

But the bells grew positively intrusive, and louder and louder, till the

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FOR PURITY

MAKE

COOKING

EASY

AND

DINNER

DELIGHTFUL

W. CLARK

solitary slave to the pen laid it down and turned his chair to the fire.

"I think I'll just have a pipe. What a blessing tobacco is so cheap! What should I have been without my pipe? So this is Christmas Eve. Well, a merry time for some of them; a merry time at the villa, I dare say, and at the Pacewell's, too. Little Pattie, like a fairy, laughing over her new riches, and old Montague Pacewell as proud as a turkey cock. And she—well, bless her sweet face, wherever she is; she doesn't look happy, though! her old life clings to her, perhaps. I saw her the other morning in the lane. She was in their grand new carriage with one of my horses. She was pale enough and sad enough to be Mary Montague at the Signet again. And I stopped and looked at her—and the best of the joke was, she looked at me, but since I've shaved my beard off, and looked seedy, she didn't know the Jack Hamilton, who is foolish enough to think of her now. Six o'clock! half past by this time. I must finish this work, for I want my dinner to-morrow, Christmas Day, and working for my dinner! Well, if it wasn't so serious, it would be a most excellent joke. Heigho!"

With the pipe in his mouth, he turned around and picked up his pen. But there came a knock at the door at the instant and he looked up from the parchment to say:

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"Come in!"

The door opened, and a short individual, having missed the step, precipitated himself pretty nearly into the grate.

"Come none of that," said Jack, in his old good-natured way, "you are not coo's, worse luck, and won't burn," and then added, having set him upright: "Who are you, and what do you want?"

"Who are you, and what do you want?" he asked, stoutly.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mr. Tubbs, out of breath by his tumble and his evident nervousness at being so sternly confronted. "But you see it was the step as threw me up. Used as I am to tumble, as is natural on the boards, still, it was a mercy my 'ead wasn't jammed between them 'ere bars."

"What do you want?" repeated Jack.

Mr. Tubbs took off his hat and wiped his forehead. He seemed much agitated.

"I beg your pardon for intrudin', sir," he said, "specially as you was busy, but I've brought a message."

"Where is it?" Jack said, as shortly as before.

The sight of the man was distasteful to him in the extreme.

"Where?" asked Mr. Tubbs, vacantly.

"Oh, ah, yes, of course, you mean what is it? It wasn't a written message, oh, no, she never writes, she don't. Her way, when she wants anything, is to say: 'Tubbs, I want so and so,' and Tubbs, meanin' me, 'as to get it if it's in Amarikey."

"Now," said Jack, sternly, "have the goodness to tell me your business."

"My business is this, sir, meanin' no offence," said Mr. Tubbs, "will you come along with me? You are wanted at once. It's most particular—Heaven knows whether she'll be alive when I get back."

"Who?" said Jack, starting.

"Why, haven't I told you?" said Mr. Tubbs, the tears starting to his eyes.

"Who? Miss Pattie, bless her heart."

"Miss Pattie Montague?" said Jack.

"And she wanted to see me?"

"Ay," said Tubbs. "She sent for me, and when they let me see her, 'Tubbs,' says she, 'go and fetch him. But I says, I don't know where to find him! Go to the lawyer, Mr. Shallop, whispeer Miss Mary, a-cryin' all the time. And I goes to Mr. Shallop, he sends me on here, and after dodging about among these 'ere queer houses, which are all alike a purpose to puzzle a body, 'ere I am. For Heaven's sake, be quick."

Jack had been putting on his coat while the man had been speaking, and now took up the lamp and walked to the door.

"Go first," said Jack, "and I'll light you down."

Mr. Tubbs stumbled down the stairs in a way that would have made the clown envious, and Jack allowed him.

There was a cab at the door, and the two jumped in.

"Where yer come from," said Mr. Tubbs. And the man drove off as fast as the snowy street would allow him.

"Is she very ill?" asked Jack.

"Oh, dreadful," said Mr. Tubbs, tearfully. "Poor little angel, it will hurt your heart to see her so white and patient-like."

Jack fell into silence a while, and the cab drew up to one of the grandest mansions in Grosvenor Square.

Mr. Tubbs jumped out, and a footman opened the door.

Jack, who seemed expected, was asked to step upstairs, and followed the footman to the door of a room at which the man knocked gently.

There was a hush about the house that was eloquent of suffering and danger.

The footman went down as the door opened, and Jack, on entering, found himself face to face with Mr. Henry Pacewell.

The old man had the same weary look upon him as the pirate in the greenroom had worn, notwithstanding the magnificent apartment in which they stood and the diamonds in his shirt front. He held out his hand, and Jack shaking it self that it trembled.

"She sent for you; has been crying for you. It is good of you to come."

"I would have come through fire for her," said Jack, simply.

The old man put his hand to his eyes and led the way upstairs.

Jack followed him into a semi-darkened room. A woman's figure moved from the side and peeped into the shadow of the curtains as he entered, and, although he could not see the face, he knew by the beating of his heart that it was Mary's.

As he approached the bed, a tiny, thin voice arose from it.

"Has he come, Mary?"

Jack stepped softly forward and bent over the bed.

"Do you want me, Pattie?" he said, lowering his musical voice to the gentlest of tones.

"Jack," she said, with a touch of her old naivete. "Yes, I knew you would come, though they told me you were too proud. You're not proud, are you? You wouldn't be proud to poor little Pattie?"

"No," he said. "Not proud to you, Pattie. See here, I am kneeling."

And he knelt at her side.

She put out her hand and touched him. Then laughed with a child's glee.

"What a big hand you've got," she said. "I could put both of mine into it and lose them. But you've cut your beard off, and you don't look so handsome as when you carried me to the window to look at the snow. Jack, you'll never carry me again, never again!"

"I hope, so many times," he said, a choking coming in his throat and a film over his eyes at the wistful tones of the child-woman.

"Will you carry me now?" she said, suddenly. "I should like so much to have you lift me up!"

Some one came with a shawl and wrapped it around her.

He took her in his arms and walked to the fire with her. No one interfered. Her wish seemed to be law.

"Oh, that's nice!" she said. "It reminds me of that day when you and Mary sat before the fire laughing in each other's faces and looking so happy." She sighed: "Poor Mary! Poor Jack!"

"Why poor Jack?" he asked to humor her.

"Oh, I know," she said. "You are poor now and we are rich; but my dear isn't cruel and unkind now, and he wants you to forgive him, Jack. He's very sorry for what he said that day, and he wouldn't have said it if that wicked, wicked Mr. Anderson hadn't put it into his head. And you'll forgive him, Jack, won't you, for my sake? And, Jack, I want to whisper something in your ear. Tell them to keep away. I don't want them to hear."

They drew back into a far corner of the room, and, putting one wasted arm around his neck, she whispered:

(To be continued.)

"But, my dear, what did I do at dinner that made you so angry?"

"You've disgraced me forever by your common manners. When the charlotte russe was set before you, you blew off the foam!"—Judge.

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