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The Woman in the Alcove

By ANNA KATHARINE GREEN

Author of "The Millionaire Baby," "The Filligree Ball," "The Leavenworth Case," Etc., Etc.

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This was a heart-stroke, but I kept up bravely, changing color perhaps, but not to such a marked degree as to arouse any deeper suspicion in his mind than that I had been wounded in my amour propre.

"She shall be well guarded," said I. "You may trust me to keep from her avoidable knowledge of this crime."

He bowed and I was about to leave his presence, when he turned and remarked with the air of one who felt that some explanation was necessary: "I was at the ball where this crime took place. Naturally it has made a deep impression on me and would on her if she heard of it."

"Assuredly," I murmured, wondering if he would say more and how I should have the courage to stand there and listen if he did.

"It is the first time I have ever come in contact with crime," he went on with what, in one of his reserved nature, seemed a hardly natural insistence. "I could well have been spared the experience. A tragedy with which one has been even thus remotely connected produces a lasting effect upon the mind."

"Oh, yes, oh yes!" I murmured, edging involuntarily toward the door. Did I not know? Had not been there, too? Little I, whom he stood gazing upon from such a height, little realizing the fatality which united us and, what was even a more overwhelming thought to me at the moment, the fact that of all persons in the world the shrinking little being, into whose eyes he was then looking, was perhaps his nearest enemy and the one person, great or small, from whom he had the most to fear.

But I was no enemy to his gentle daughter and the relief I felt at finding myself thus cut off by my own promise from even the remotest communication with her on this forbidden subject was genuine and sincere.

But the father! What was I to think of the father? Alas! I could have but one thought, admirable as he appeared in all lights save the one in which crime too evident connection with this crime had placed him. I spent the hours of the afternoon in alternately watching the sleeping face of my patient, too sweetly calm in its repose, or so it seemed, for the mind beneath to harbor such doubts as were shown in her vain efforts to explain by any other hypothesis than that of guilt, the extraordinary evidence which linked this man of great affairs and the loftiest repute to a crime involving both theft and murder.

Nor did the struggle end that night. It was renewed with still greater positiveness the next day, as I witnessed the glances which from time to time passed between this father and daughter—glances full of doubt and question on both sides, but not exactly such doubt or such question as my suspicion called for. Or so I thought, and spent another day or two hesitating very much upon my duty, when, coming unexpectedly upon Mr. Grey one evening, I felt all my doubts revive in view of the extraordinary expression of dread— I might with still greater truth say fear—which deformed his features and made them, to my unaccustomed eyes, almost unrecognizable.

He was sitting at his desk in reverie over some papers which he seemed not to have touched for hours, and when, at some movement I made, he started up and met my eye, could swear that his cheek was pale, the firm carriage of his body shaken, and the whole man a victim to some strong and secret apprehension he vainly sought to hide. When I ventured to tell him what I wanted, he made an effort and pulled himself together, but I had seen him with his mask off, and his usual calm visage and self-possessed mien could not again deceive me.

My duties kept me mainly at Miss Grey's bedside, but I had been provided with a little room across the hall, and to this room I retired very soon after this, for rest and a necessary understanding with myself.

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as a father, the place he held in his daughter's heart—these were real to me these I could understand; and it was of these and not of his place as a man, that this his favorite seat spoke to me. How often had I beheld him sit by the hour with his eye on the door behind which his one darling lay ill! Even now, it was easy for me to recall his face as I had sometimes caught a glimpse of it through the crack of the suddenly opened door, and I felt my breast heave and my hand falter as I drew forth the stiletto and moved to place it where his eye would fall upon it on his leaving his daughter's bedside.

But my hand returned quickly to my breast and fell back again empty. A pile of letters lay before me on the open lid of the desk. The top one was addressed to me with the word "Important" written in the corner. I did not know the writing, but I felt that I should open and read this letter before committing myself or those who stood back of me to this desperate undertaking.

Glancing behind me and seeing that the door into Miss Grey's room was ajar, I caught up this letter and rushed with it to my own room. As I surmised, it was from the inspector, and as I read it I realized that I had received it not one moment too soon. In language purposely non-committal, but of a meaning not to be mistaken, it advised me that some unforeseen facts had come to light which altered all former suspicions and made the little surprise I had planned no longer necessary.

There was no allusion to Mr. Durand but the final sentence ran: "Drop all care and give your undivided attention to your patient."

[To be Continued.]

Advertiser Correspondence

BENEFITS OF LOCAL OPTION.
To the Editor of The Advertiser:

In your issue of Saturday last I see a lengthy communication from Thomas N. Duntley. After dealing in his own peculiar way with many subjects he reveals his real object—to oppose local option. He tells us what a bad thing local option is, and praises our present license system and the open bar.

With your permission, I will give my experience of local option and the closed bar. A few years ago I was in Pasadena, Cal., where there were no bars, but everyone could procure liquor freely who wished it. They could have beer and wine at regular meals, they could get it in a few minutes' walk or drive just outside the city limits, or they could order it from home and have it delivered next day. Yet, though only that one way of getting liquor, the open bar, was closed, I never saw a drunken man, nor heard of any of the evils of drink. In order to make sure I called on the city marshal and asked him if he never had any drunken men or any of the evils of drink. He said: "No, we have a lockup, but there has only been one man in it in two years."

He said when a crowd of men get together they are apt to go to extremes in anything. In a barroom it is worse because men soon begin to lose their power of self-control and do what they would never think of doing alone or at home. Now, here was a place where men could get all the drink they wanted quite freely, except in the barroom, and the results were all that anyone could desire.

Again, last summer I was several days in Owen Sound, where local option had been in operation for three months. I was curious to learn how the law was operating in a lake port, where there are two breweries not affected by the law, so I called on about 60 business and professional men and private citizens. I found about two-thirds of the people whom I interviewed delighted with the result. But of more importance was the evidence of those opposed to local option. Out of eighteen who were opposed to it, mostly because they were interested in the liquor business directly or indirectly, there were ten who admitted that it had lessened drunkenness and rowdiness. Several prominent citizens assured me that they did not think there was one drunken man for a hundred before, and a man in a position to know said: "There are hundreds of families in Owen Sound who are better fed and better clothed on account of local option." Merchants told of a distinct improvement in their business traceable directly to local option, and several large employers of labor said that they were not troubled so much by their men being away drunk. They now arrest every man found in a state of intoxication. If they had followed that rule before local option came in they would have needed four times the jail accommodation they have.

Such is the tenor of the evidence that I got in Owen Sound, where there are two breweries selling in bottles or by the keg, and where they can order it from the surrounding towns as much as they please. I was most impressed by the large number of men who had been supposed to be hopeless drunkards for years who gave up drinking, as soon as the bars were closed and have remained sober men ever since. That is the great fact that should not be lost sight of that at least three-fourths of the drunkards in Owen Sound are now supposed to be hopeless drunkards for years who gave up drinking, as soon as the bars were closed and have remained sober men ever since. That is the great fact that should not be lost sight of that at least three-fourths of the drunkards in Owen Sound are now supposed to be hopeless drunkards for years who gave up drinking, as soon as the bars were closed and have remained sober men ever since.

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Winipeg, Nov. 19.—Salvatore Maric, an Italian, who stabbed John Ronanelli, a fellow-countryman, to death here last spring, was sentenced this morning by Judge Howell to be hanged on Jan. 15 next.

HEAVEN DID IT, MR. CROKER SAYS

Defeat of Hearst a Judgment On Him Personally—Cochran a Blackguard.

London, Nov. 20.—The Publishers' Press sends out from Dublin an interview with Richard Croker, which it says he read over and corrected. Parts of it follow:

In reply to a question as to what had caused Hearst's defeat, Mr. Croker replied: "God Almighty."

Then he added: "His defeat is a judgment of heaven owing to his scurrilous character and his unseemly conduct of the campaign, vilifying everyone who did not hold his opinion. In all my experience I do not remember a campaign which sank to such billingsgate."

"I see Hearst referred to me as a corrupt politician. If he thinks so, why did he write me in 1903 at Wantage and beg me to resume the leadership of Tammany Hall? Mr. Hearst implored me to re-enter politics, saying that Lewis Nixon was incompetent and that everybody wanted me to return. Hearst also confessed that he was ambitious to enter politics and said I could help him."

"I am proud to be associated with these gentlemen, for they have done more for New York since Hearst has accomplished in a conscious state of mind."

"When I was in New York Hearst and I were close friends and I always liked him. Surely Hearst did not at that time think me corrupt. I do not know why he thinks so now. Hearst greatly changed in the last few years. Now, apparently, he is controlled by the idea that he is greater than the Democratic party. He is ambitious to make the party his servant. He is a slave to passion and egotism. His creed is that everybody who is for him is again his friend."

"Because I think he is still a danger to Democracy I consider it my duty to speak. If Hearst had been elected governor and had continued raising class distinctions, cursing those who have made our country and vilifying everyone who writes him an account, I am convinced he would have caused a class war, bringing sadder days than any America has ever known."

"His power to do this has not disappeared. Democracy should be on guard against him. God help Democracy if Hearstism becomes its guiding principle."

Mr. Croker was asked what he had to say about the charge that he was a corrupt politician and he replied: "I want to tell Cochran that I believe him to be the biggest blackguard of modern times. In all my experience I have never found an honest streak in him. When Cochran was a poor youth I not only introduced him into politics, but, as he had no money, I induced Tammany to pay the expenses of his congressional campaign. When he got into Congress Cochran wanted to be appointed on the ways and means committee. I still had faith in him and suggested his appointment to Speaker Crisp."

"Mr. Crisp demurred, saying he feared Democracy would be sorry later, but finally Cochran was appointed."

"I consider Cochran one of the most dangerous and most treacherous men in American politics. All that is necessary to learn his character is to look him straight in the face and watch the little, closely set, beady eyes roll in his head as he attempts to deceive."

"Cochran is one of the ablest speakers in America, but he never believes a word he says. This is the man who got into the 400 and is now preaching clean politics. God save Democracy from such reformers!"

WILL CALL ON THE POPE.
Rome, Nov. 19.—It has been officially decided that the Pope will receive King George of Greece on Sunday next. The pontiff this morning received Cardinal Coullié, Archbishop of Lyons, and conferred lengthily with them regarding the situation in France, giving the impression that he is gathering information for an allocation on the conflict between the Vatican and France to be delivered at the consistory in December.

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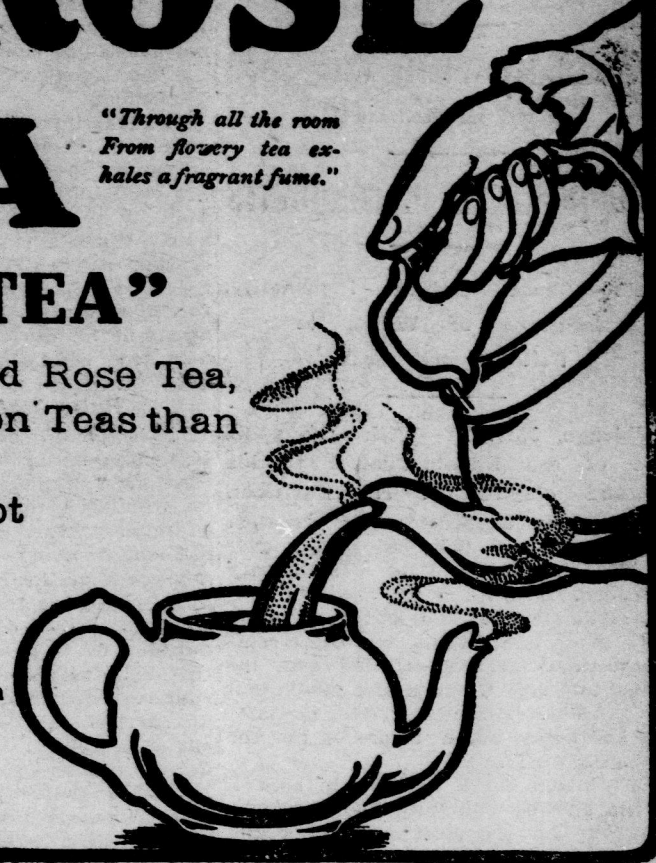
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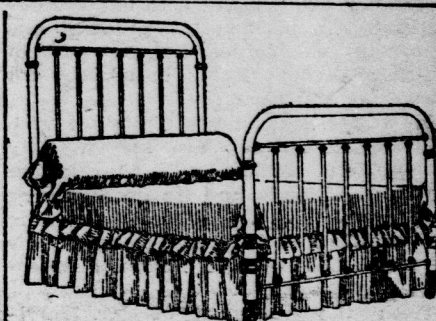
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