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Author of "A Beautiful White Devil". "A Bid For Fortune," "The Marriage of Esther," "Dr. Nikola," Etc.

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"Mr. Pennethorne, I believe?" he said, stopping me, and at, the same time raising his hat. "That is my name," I answered shortly, wondering how he knew me and what on earth he wanted. "What can I do for you?"

He signed to his driver to go, and

then, turning to me, said, at the same time placing his gloved hand upon my arm in a confidential way:

"I am charmed to make your ac quaintance. May I have the pleasure of walking a little way with you? I should be glad of your society, and

can then tell you my business."

His voice was soft and musical, and he spoke with a peculiar languor that was not without its charm. But as could not understand what he wanted with me, I put the question to him as plainly as I could without being ab solutely rude, and awaited his answer "I want the pleasure of your com-

pany at supper for one thing," he said. "And I want to be allowed to you are vitally interested, for another The two taken together should, I

"But I don't know you," I blurted out. "To the best of my belief I have never set eyes on you before. What business, therefore, can you have with

"You shall know all in good time." he answered. "In the meantime let me introduce myself. My name is Nikola. I am a doctor by profession, a scientist by choice. I have few friends in London, but those I have are the best that a man could desire. I spend my life in the way that pleases me most: that is to say, in the study of human nature. I have been watching you since you arrived in England, and have come to the conclusion that you are a man after my own heart. If you will sup with me as I propose, I don't doubt but that we shall agree admirably, and what is more to the point, perhaps, we shall be able to do each other services of inestimable value. I may say candidly that it lies in your power to furnish me with something I am in search of. I, on my part, will, in all probability, be able to put in your way what you most desire in the

Owing to the broad brim of his hat and the high collar of his cape, I could scarcely see his face. But his eyes rivetted my attention at once. "And that is?" I said.
"Revenge." he answered. sim.ou



The fear that you could not be cured may be deterred you from taking honest treatment you may have been one of the unfortunates, on have been treated in vain by inexperienced yields and the statement of the unfortunates, on the properties of the work of the unfortunates, on the properties of the properties, the treatments of the treatments of the work of the work

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"Believe me, my dear Mr. Penne-thorne, I am perfectly acquainted with your story. You have been wronged; desire to avenge yourself your enemy. It is a very natural wish, and if you will sup with me as I pro-pose, I don't doubt but that I can put he power you seek into your hands. to you agree?"

All my scruples vanished before that

magic word revenge, and, strange as it may seem, without more ado I con-sented to his proposal. He walked in-to the road and, taking a whistle from his pocket, blew three staccato note upon it. A moment later the hanson from which he had jumped to accos me appeared round a corner and car rapidly towards us. When it pulled up at the kerb, and the apron had been opened, this peculiar individual invitation. ed me to take my place in it, which nediately did. He followed my ex ample, and sat down beside me, then, without any direction to driver, we set off up the street.

For upwards of half-an-hour rove on without stopping, but which direction we were proceeding could not for the life of me discover The wheels were rubber-tired and made no noise upon the snow stream road; my companion scarcely spoke, and the only sound to be heard was the peculiar bumping noise made by orse's hoofs, and an occasional grunt f encouragement from the driver. At approaching our destination. orse's pace slackened: I detected the sharp rings of his shoes on a paved crossing, and presently we passed unler an archway and came to a stand

"Here we are at last, Mr. Penne horne," said my mysterious conduc-or, "Allow me to lift the glass and

open the apron."

He did so, and then we alighted. To ny surprise we stood in a square courtard, surrounded on all sides by lofty uildings. Behind the cab was a large the gate through which we had evidently entered. The houses were total darkness, but the light of the cab lamps was sufficient to show me a door standing open on my left hand.
"I'm afraid you must be very cold,
Mr. Pennethorne," said Nikola, for by
that name I shall henceforth call him,

as he alighted, "but if you will follow me I think I can promise that you shall soon be as warm as toast." As he spoke he led the way acros the courtyard towards the door I have

just mentioned. When he reached it he struck a match and advanced into the building. The passage was a narrow one, and from its appearance, and that of the place generally, I surmised that the building had once been used as a factory of some kind Half way. as a factory of some kind. Half-way down the passage a narrow wooden staircase led up to the second floor, and in Indian file we ascended it. On reaching the first landing my guide ppened a door which stood op nim, and immediately a bright

llumined the passage.
"Enter, Mr. Pennethorne, and let me make you welcome to my poor abode," said Nikola, placing his hand upon my shoulder and gently pushing me before him.

I compiled with his request, half expecting to find the room poorly furnished. To my surprise, however, it TAKE MY CURE, was as luxurfously appointed as any of the had ever seen. At least a dozen valucular of the had ever seen. At least a dozen valucular of the had ever seen. At least a dozen valucular of the house of the most cured have been valuable, though personally son toknow but little about such things—decorated the walls; a large and quaintly-carved cabinet stood in one corner, and held a multitude of china corner and held a multitude of china vases, bowls, plates, and other knick-knacks; a massive oak sideboard occupied a space along one wall and supported a quantity of silver plate; while the corresponding space upon the opposite wall was filled by a bookcase reaching to within a few inches works of every sort and description.
A heavy pile carpet, so soft that our ovements made no sound upon it, covered the floor; luxurious chairs and couches were scattered about here and there, while in an alcove at the further end was an ingenious ap-paratus for conducting chemical re-searches. Supper was laid on the table in the centre, and when we had warmed ourselves at the fire that glowed in the grate, we sat down to it. As if to add still further to my surprise, when the silver covers of the dishes were lifted, everything was found to be smoking hot. How this had been managed I could not tell, for our arrival at that particular moment could not have been foretold with any chance not have been foretold with any chance of certainty, and I had seen no servant enter the room. But I was very hungry, and as the supper before me was the best I had sat down to for years, you may suppose I was but little inclined to waste time on a matter of such trivial importance.

When we had finished and I had imbibed the better part of two bottles of Heidseck, which my host had assiduously pressed upon me we left the

duously pressed upon me, we left the table and ensconced ourselves in chairs on either side of the hearth. Then, for the first time, I was able to take thorough stock of my companion. He was a man of perhaps a little above middle height, broad shouldered, but slimly built. His elegant proportions, middle height, broad shouldered, but slimly built. His elegant proportions, however, gave but a small idea of the enormous strength I afterwards discovered him to possess. His hair and eyes were black as night, his complexion was a dark olive hue, confirming that suspicion of foreign extraction which his name suggested, but of which his speech afforded no trace. He was attired in faultless evening dress, the dark color of which heightened the extraordinary pallor of his complexion.

"You have a queer home here, Dr. Nikola!" I said, as I accepted the cheroot he offered me.

"Perhaps it is a little out of the common." he answered, with one of his queer smiles; "but then that is easily accounted for. Unlike the general run of human beings, I am not gregarious. In other words, I am very much averse to what is called the society of my fellow man; I prefer under most circumstances, to live alone. At times, of course, that is not possible. But the idea of living in a

fiat, shall we say, with perhaps a couple of families above me, as many on either side, and the same number below; or in an hotel or a boarding-house, in which I am compelled to eat my meals in company with half-a-hundred total strangers, is absolutely repulsive to me. I cannot bear it, and therefore I choose my abode else-where. A private dwelling-house I might, of course, take, but that would necessitate servants and other incum-brances; this building suits my pur-poses admirably. As you may have poses admirably. As you may noticed, it was once a boot and shoe factory; but after the proprietor com-mitted suicide by cutting his throat which, by the way, he did in this very room—the business failed; and until I fell across it, it was supposed to be haunted, and, in consequence, has re-

mained untenanted.' "But do you mean to say you live here alone?" I enquired, surprised at

the queerness of the idea.
"In a certain sense, yes—in another, no. That is, I have a deaf and dumb Chinese servant who attends to my simple wants, and a cat who for years

You surprise me more and more! "And why? Considering that I know China better than you know that part of London situated, shall we say, between Blackfriars Bridge and Charing Cross, and have spent many years of my life here, the first should not astonish you. And as I am warmly a tached to my cat who has accompan ied me in all my wanderings about the globe, I cannot see that you should be surprised at the other. Perhaps you would like to see both?"

As may be supposed, I jumped eager ly at the opportunia; and upon my saying so, Nikola pressed a knob in the wall at his side. He had hardly taken his finger away before my ear letected the shuffling of feet in the passage outside. Next moment the door opened, and in wafted the most hideous man I have ever yet beheld in my life. In Australia I had met many queer specimens of the Chinese race but never one whose countenance ap-proacted in repulsiveness that of the nan Nikola employed as his servant. In stature he was taller than his mas above six feet, and broad in propor tion. His eyes squinted inwardly, his face was wrinkled and seemed in every direction, his nose had plainly been slit at some time or another, and I noticed that his left ear was missing from his head. He was dressed in his native costume, but when he turned round I noticed that his pigtail had been shorn off at the roots.

"You are evidently puzzled about comething," said Nikola, who had been watching my face.
"I must confess I am," I answered.

"It is this. If he is deaf and dumb, as you say, how did he hear the bell you

rang, and also how do you communi-cate your orders to him?"
"This knob," replied Nikola, placing his finger on the bell-push, "releases smaller shutter and reveals a disc that signifies that I desire his services speak to him in his own language and he answers it. It is very simple.
"But you said just now that he "But you said just now that he is deaf and dumb," I cried, thinking had caught him in an equivocation

"So he is," replied my host, looking at me as he spoke, with an amused smile upon his face. "Quite deaf and

"Then how can you make him hea "Then how can you make him hear, And how does he reply?"
"As I say, by word of mouth. Allow me to explain. You argue that because the poor fellow has no tongue wherewith to speak, and his ears are incapable of hearing what you say to him, that it is impossible for him to carry on a conversation. So far as you can come from his lips, it is still pos sible for the words to be framed. In

our ears, and thus the difficulty is solved. The principle is a simple one, and a visit to any modern deaf and dumb school in London will show you the content of the conte its efficacy. Surely you are not going to ask me to believe you have no heard of the system before?" "Of course I have heard of it," I an-

swered, "but in this case the circumstances are so different."

"Simply because the man is a China-man—that is all. If his skin were white instead of yellow, and he wore English dress and parted his hair in the middle, you would find nothing extraor-dinary in it. At any rate, perpetual silence on the part of a servant and physical inability to tittle-tattle of the affairs one would wish kept a secret, is a luxury few men can boast."
"I agree with you; but how did the

is a luxury few men can boast."

"I agree with you; but how did the poor fellow come to lose his faculties?"

"To let you into that secret would necessitate the narration of a long and, I fear to you, uninteresting story. Suffice that he was the confidential servant of the Viceroy of Kwelchow until he was detected in an amicable plot to assassinate his master with poisoned rice. He was at ence condemned to die by ling-chi or the death of a thousand cuts, but, by the exercise of a little influence which, for tunately for him, I was able to bring to bear, I managed to get him off."

"I wonder you care to have a mancapable of concecting such a plot about you." I said.

"And why? Because the poor devil desired to kill the man he hated, is it certain that he should wish to terminate the existence of his benefactor, for whom he has a great affection? Moreover, he is a really good cook, understands my likes and dislikes, never grumbles, and is quite conscious that if he left me he would never get another situation in the world. In the nincteenth century, when good servants are so difficult to procure, the man is worth a gold mine—a Wheel of Fortune, if you like."

"You would argue, then," I said, disregarding the latter part of his speech,

"You would argue, then," I said, dis-regarding the latter part of his speech, "that if a man hates another he is jus-tified in endeavoring to rid the world of him?"

of him?"

"Necessarily it must depend entirely on the circumstances of the case," replied Nikols, leaning back in his chair and stedfastly regarding me. "When a man attempts to do, or sue-

ably repay him in his own coin. Pre-sume, for instance, that a man were world-the affection of your wife, shall we say?—in that case, if were a man of spirit you would justified in meting out to him punishment he deserved, either in the punishment he deserved, either in the shape of a duel, or seyere personal chastisement. If he shot at you in any country but England, you would shoot at him. Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth, was the old Hebrew law, and whatever may be said against it, fundamentally it was a just one." damentally it was a just one.

I thought of Bartrand, and wished I could apply the principle to him. A "I fear, however," continued Nikola, after a moment's pause, "that in personal matters the men of the present day are not so brave as they once were. They shelter themselves too much behind the law of the land. A man slanders you; instead of thrashing him you bring an action against him for libel, and claim damages in money. A man runs away with your wife; you proclaim your shame in open court, and take gold from your enemy for the affront he has put upon your honor. If a man thrashes you in a pub-lic place, you don't strike him back; on the contrary, you consult your soli-citor, and take your case before a magistrate, who binds him over keep the peace. If, after all is said and done, you look closely into the matter, what is crime? A very pliable term, l fancy. For instance, a duke may mit an offence, and escape scot free when, for the same thing, only under a different name, a costermonger would be sent to gaol for five years. And vice versa. A subaltern in a crack regiment may run up tailors' bills—or any others, for that matter—for several thousands of pounds and de-camp without paying a halfpenny of the money, never having intended do so from the very beginning, while of a chimney sweep were to purloin a bunch of radishes from a tray outside a greengrocer's window, he would probably be sent to gaol for three months. And yet both are stealing, though I must confess society regards them with very different eyes. Let clergymen and other righteous mem say what they will, the world in its heart rather admires the man wh the pluck to swindle, but he must de so on a big scale, and he must do se successfully, or he must pay the pen-alty of failure. Your own case, with which, as I said earlier, I am quite familiar, is one in point. Everyone who has heard of it, and who knows anything of the man, feels certain that

tion which has made him a million-aire he is. But does it make any differ-ence in the world's treatment of him? None whatever, And why? Because he swindled successfully. In the same way they regard you as a very poor sort of fellow for submitting to his in justice."
"Curse him!"
"Exactly. But, you see, the fact re mains. Bartrand has a house in Park Duke of Glendower dined with him the night-before last, and one of the members of the Cabinet will do so on Saturday next. Yesterday he purchased a racing stable and a stud, for which he paid twenty thousand pounds cash; while I am told that next year he in-

Bartrand stole from you the informa

while I am told that next year he in-tends building a yacht that shall be the finest craft of her class in British waters. It is settled that he is to be presented at the next levee, and al-ready he is in the first swim of the fashionable world. If he can only win the Derby this year, there is nothing he might not aspire to. In ten years if his money lasts and he is still alive he will be a peer of the realm and founding a new family."

"He must not live as long. Oh, if I sould only meet him face to face and repay him for his treachery!"

"And why not? What is there to pre vent you? You can walk to his house any morning and ask to see him. If you give the butler a fictitious name and a tip he will admit you. Then, when you get into the library, you can tate your grigarage and with it. It

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District Doings

THORNOLIFFE.

Miss Jane Garrison is improving Miss McKnight has been re-engag-

Miss Mabel Kerby, of Dawn, visited her brother Aaron on Sunday. R. Hazlett has returned from the Northwest after spending three years in that country.

Mr. P. Smith called on Thorncliffe friends last week.

Mrs. Smith, Ohatham Township,
who has undergome an operation in
the Chatham hospital, is improving

slowly.

A number from Red School attended the Free Methodist church Sunday

FLETCHER.

James Ross shipped a carload of attle from here the other day.
We are sorry that Mr. Bennie has
esigned his position here.
Mrs. George Lewis, who has been

criously ill for some time, is much better. James Colwood, of Tilbury, was a village caller on Tuesday.
P. T. Barry, of Wallaceburg, was calling on eld sequaintances on Thursday.

Miss M. Lewis has returned from ondon, where she has been attend-

wm. Barry intends coming out for M. Egan is all smiles—it is a gisl.
Mr. and Mrs. James Finlin, of Calgary, are visiting their parents here.

A number are leasing land in this vicinity for the oil companies.

Frank Eninsbury, who has been visiting his parents, has returned to Lethbridge, Alta.

There is to be a Christmas tree in the Prophytical Christmas tree.

the Presbyterian Church.

GLENWOOD.

Miss Flossie Watson, of Wheatley,

Misses Annie Shepley and Esther Newham, of Learnington, are spending the holidays at heir home here. Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Hardie left on Saturday for Detroit, where they will spend a week with relatives. Good deeds grow in places
Mr. John Horton is quite ill with they are looked for the least.

sciatic fleumatism. The Christmas entertainment on Friday evening was a desided success in spite of the stormy night and muddy roads. The children performed their parts well and a good program was given, at the close of which Mrs. Andrew Gilbert was pre-

sented with a handsome gold watch chain. Mrs. Gilbert has been a faith-ful worker in the S. S. for about ten years.
Mrs. Allard and children, and Miss

Violet Ellis, Thamesville, spent the holidays with their parents, Mr. and Mrs .Nelson Ellis. Misses Alice and Clara Estabrook. Chatham are nome for vacation.

Mr. and Mrs. Bates, Woodstock,
and Mr. and Mrs. Wm. MoGee, Kintore, are visiting at Mr.P. J. Mc-

Mr. V. Hillman, of Hillman, is in town visiting old friends.

ROMNEY

Miss Beatrice Fletcher, a former eacher, is visiting friends in this vicinity. Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin, of Port

Alma, were the guests of Mr. Wm. Wickwire on Sunday. Mrs. Peter Heatherington, of Kingsville, is visiting friends here for

Alingsville, is visiting friends here for a few days.

Quite a number of our people took in the Purvis sale at Leamington.

Miss Hattie Dawson has returned home after a short visit with Miss B. Hall, of Port Alma.

B. Hall, of Port Alma.

Tobacco growers expect to make their first shipment about the 21st of this month.

A number of farmers have sold their pork in this vicinity, prices ranging from \$7.85 to \$8.00 per cwt.

Ed. Suskey, of Dawson City, has returned here after a visit with friends in Michigan, Wallaceburg and St. Thomas.

Mrs. John Dawson has returned to her home in St. Thomas after a

her home in St. Thomas after a short stay with friends in Romney. Mrs. Campbell and Miss Rene Daw-son, of Wheatley, visited their par-ents here on Wednesday last. Mr. Ernest Suskey visited his parents near Detroit this week.

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