

A Courageous Girl.

The detective took a swift survey of the room before answering. It was evident that he had no intention of allowing his captive to escape him now after all his previous efforts to secure her.

"Yes," he replied, "I will go with you into the hall if that will do." He knew that in the hall he should be able to keep his eyes upon both doors of the drawing room and no one could pass in and out without his knowing it, while there was no other way of egress.

The four gentlemen accordingly withdrew, thus leaving Irene and Mrs. Montague by themselves.

Irene seated herself by a window and as far as possible from the woman for she shrank with the greatest aversion from her, while she felt that her own presence must be oppressive and full of reproach to her.

But the woman's curiosity was for the moment greater than her anxiety or remorse, and after a brief silence, she abruptly inquired: "How did that detective find that box of diamonds?"

"He did not find them. I accidentally discovered them," Irene replied. "You? What were you prowling about in my room for?" crossly demanded Mrs. Montague.

"I was simply looking for a pair of scissors which I had left there the day before we went South. But why did you look me in the room for I suppose it was you?"

"Because I was desperate," was the defiant response. "I had just learned how you had escaped from Louis, but I had not a thought of finding you here. When I saw you in my room, however, a great fear came over me that you would yet prove my ruin. I imagined that you had just arrived in New York and had come here to take away your things, and were perhaps searching my room for proofs of your identity. So on the impulse of the moment I locked you in, intending to make my own terms with you before I let you go."

"Did you suppose, after my experience in New Orleans that I would trust myself with you without letting some one know where I could be found?" Irene quietly asked.

"If I had stopped to think I might have known that you would not," the woman said, sullenly. "But how did you get out of that hotel in Havana?"

"Mr. Justin Cutler assisted me," Mrs. Montague flushed hotly at the mention of that name.

"Yes, I know, but how?" she said. Irene briefly explained the manner of her escape then inquired, in a voice of grave reproach:

"How could you conspire against me in such a way? How could you aid your nephew in such a foul wrong?"

"I have already told you to make your fortune secure," was the cool retort.

Irene shuddered. It seemed such a heartless thing to do, to plan the ruin of an unprotected girl for the sake of money.

Mrs. Montague noticed it and smiled bitterly.

"You surely do not suppose I bore you any love did you?" she sneered. "I have told you how I hated your mother and it is but natural that the feeling should manifest itself upon her child, especially as you both had usurped the affection of my husband."

"Such a spirit is utterly beyond my comprehension," gravely said the girl, "when your only possible reason for such hatred of a beautiful girl was that my father loved and married her."

"Well, and wasn't that enough?" hotly exclaimed Mrs. Montague. "For years Walter Dinsmore's aunt had intended that he should marry me—that was the condition upon which he was to have her fortune—and I had been reared with that expectation. Therefore it was no light grief when I learned by accident three weeks after he sailed for Europe, that he had married a girl who had come to New York to earn her living as a milliner. They went abroad to—"

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gether and registered as Mr. and Mrs. Richmond Montague. I was wild, frantic, desperate, when I discovered it; but I kept the matter to myself. I did not wish Miss Dinsmore to learn the fact, for I had a plan in my head which I hoped might yet serve to give me the position I coveted. I persuaded Miss Dinsmore that it would be wise to let me follow Walter to Europe, and I promised her that if such a thing were possible I would return his wife. Six weeks after he sailed with his bride, I also left for Europe with some friends. I kept on the track of the unsuspicious couple for four months, but it was not until they had settled in Paris for the winter that I had an opportunity to put any of my plans into action.

"If you please Mrs. Montague, I would rather you would not tell me any more," Irene here interrupted with a shiver of repulsion. "My father wrote out the whole story, and I know all about it. You accomplished your purpose and wrecked the life of a pure and beautiful woman—a loved and loving wife; but truly I believe if my mother could speak today she would say that she would far rather have suffered the wrong and wretchedness to which she was subjected than to have exchanged places with you."

"Do you dare to twist me out of my present extremity and misery?" cried Mrs. Montague angrily.

"Not at all; I was not thinking of these later wrongs of which you have been guilty," Irene gently retorted, "but only of the ruin which you have wrought in the lives of my father and mother. I cannot think that you ever happy even after you had succeeded in your wretched plots."

"Happy?" repeated the woman with great bitterness. "For two years I was the most miserable creature on earth. I will tell it and you shall listen; you shall hear my side of the story," she went on fiercely, as she noticed that Irene was restless under the recital. "As I said before, when they settled in Paris for the winter I began to develop my plans. I went to a skillful costumer and provided myself with a complete disguise in the same hotel, although I took care to keep out of the road of Walter Dinsmore and his wife. One day he went out of the city on a hunting excursion and met with an accident—he fell and sprained his ankle and lay in the forest for hours in great pain. He was finally found by some peasants who bore him to their cottage and kindly cared for him. His first thought was of course for his wife, and he sent a message to her telling her of his injury. I saw the man when he rode to the door. I instinctively knew there was ill news. I said I knew Mrs. Montague and I would deliver the letter. I opened and read it, and saw that my opportunity had come. Walter Dinsmore, with many sickening protestations of love, wrote of his accident and said it would be some time before he should be able to return to Paris, but he wished that she would take a comfortable carriage the next day, and come to him, if she felt able to do so. Of course, I never delivered the letter, but the next day I went to Irene Forester and told her that her lover had deserted her; that she was no wife, for their marriage had been but a farce; that he had not even given her his real name; that he was already weary of her, and she would never see him again, for he was pledged to marry me as soon as he should return to America."

"At first she would not believe a word of it—she had the utmost confidence in the man she idolized—but as the days went by and he did not return she began to fear there was some foundation for my statements. Then a few cunning suggestions to the landlord and his wife poisoned their minds against her. They accused her of having been living in their house in an unlawful manner, and drove her out of it with anger and scorn."

"She left on the fifty day after Walter's accident and I hired the butler of the house to go with her and make it appear as if she had eloped with him. He carried out my instructions so faithfully that their sudden flitting had every appearance of the flight of a pair of lovers. When Walter received no answer from his wife and she did not go to him, as he requested, he became very anxious, and insisted upon returning to Paris, in spite of his injured foot. Immediately upon his arrival he was told that his lady had eloped with the butler of the house, and the ad-

gry landlord compelled him to quit the place also.

"I did not set eyes on him again for more than two years when he returned at Miss Dinsmore's earnest request, for she had not long to live. He did not seem like the real man, and apparently had no interest in life. When Miss Dinsmore on her deathbed begged him to let her see the consummation of her one desire he listlessly consented and we were married in less than a month. Then he confessed his former marriage to me and told me that he had a child; that her home must be with us, and to escape all scandal and remark we would go to the far West. I was furious over this revelation, but I concealed the fact from him, for I loved him with all my soul, and I would have adopted a dozen children if by so doing I could have won his heart. I consented to have you, the family provided that you should be reared as his niece and never be told of your parentage. He replied with exceeding bitterness that he was not anxious that his child should grow up to hate her father for his lack of faith in her mother, and his deep injustice to her."

"We went to San Francisco to live but I hated you even more bitterly than I had hated your mother, and every caress that I saw my husband lavish upon you was like a poisoned dart in my heart. But he never knew it—he never knew that I had anything to do with the tragedy of his life, until more than a year after our marriage."

"My own child—a little girl—was born about ten months after that event; but she did not live, and this only served to make me more bitter against you; for although my husband professed a great deal of sorrow that she could not have lived to be a comfort to us and a companion to you, I knew that he would never have loved her with the peculiar tenderness that he always manifested toward you."

"When your mother fled from him and Paris she left everything that he had lavished upon her save what clothing she needed and money to defray necessary expenses during the next few months; and so after my marriage I found pocketed away among some old clothing belonging to my husband the keepsakes that he had given to her and also their marriage certificate. I took possession of them, for I resolved that if you should outlive your father you should never have anything to prove that you were his child; if I could not have my husband's love I would at least have his money."

"One day a little over a year after our marriage, on my return from a drive I was told that a man was waiting in the library to see me. Without a suspicion of coming evil, I went at once to ascertain his errand, and was horrified to find the butler—the man whom I had hired to act as your mother's escort to London. He had been hunting for me for three years to extort more money from me and finally traced me from New York to San Francisco."

"He demanded another large sum from me. It was in vain that I told him I had paid him generously for the services he had rendered me. He insisted that I must come to his terms; he would reveal everything to my husband. Of course I yielded to that threat, and paid him the sum he demanded, but I might have saved the money, for Walter Dinsmore, who had that morning started for Oakland for the day, had changed his mind and returned while I was out, was sitting in a small alcove leading out of the library, and had heard the whole conversation."

"Of course there was a terrible scene, and he obliged me to confess everything although he had heard enough to enable him to comprehend the whole, and then he sternly repudiated me; but, scorning the scandal which would attend proceedings for a divorce, he gave me a meager stipend for separate maintenance, and told me he never wished to look upon my face again. He settled his business, sold his property and returned to New York with you and your nurse, leaving me to my fate. He forbade me to live under the name of Dinsmore, but I would not resume my maiden name and so adopted that of Mrs. Richmond Montague. But I still treasured that certificate and my own also, for I meant, if I should outlive him to claim his fortune, and also kept myself pretty well posted regarding his movements."

"Shortly after our separation my only sister died, and her son, Louis,

was thus left destitute and an orphan. I believed that I could make him useful to me, so I adopted him. We roved a great deal together for we have had to eke out my limited income by the use of our wits. My best game, though, was with the crochets which Miss Dinsmore gave me as a wedding present, and which I had duplicated several times. Early last fall we came to New York, for in spite of all the past I still loved Walter Dinsmore and longed to be near him."

"I felt as if the fates had favored me when I heard that he had died without making his will, and I knew from the fact that you were known only as his niece, Miss Irene Montague, that you must still be in ignorance of your real relationship toward him. So it was comparatively easy for me to establish my claim to his property. I did not appear personally in the matter, for I was leading quite a brilliant career here as Mrs. Richmond Montague and I did wish to figure as the discarded wife of Walter Dinsmore, so no one save Mr. Corbin even suspected my identity. If Walter Dinsmore had never written that miserable confession, or to California, I need never have been brought to this. As matters stand now, however, I suppose you will claim everything," she concluded, with a sullen frown.

Irene thought that if the law had its course with her she would need but very little of the ill gotten wealth upon which she had been flourishing so extravagantly of late. But she simply replied in a cold, resolute tone:

"I certainly feel that I am entitled to the property which my father wished me to have."

To be continued.

A MILLION DOLLARS SQUANDERED.

It is estimated that this sum is wasted every year by people trying to find a cure for catarrh. Foolish for sufferers to experiment when it's so well known that Catarrhoxone is the only remedy that cures permanently. Other treatments only relieve but Catarrhoxone cures and prevents the disease from ever returning. "I had catarrh in its worst form," writes G. F. Fadden of Royan, Que. "I was so bad that ordinary medicine didn't even relieve; but Catarrhoxone cured perfectly." No chance of disappointment with Catarrhoxone—it's certain as death to cure your catarrh—try it.

BURNING OF PICKERING COLLEGE

Strong Gale Frustrated Firemen's Efforts—Loss \$30,000.

Pickering, Jan. 2.—Pickering College, one of the best-known scholastic establishments on the American continent, was destroyed by fire on Saturday. The outbreak occurred at about 8.30 a. m. in the northwest corner of the building in the apartments of the Principal, Mr. W. P. Firth, M. A. The pupils were away on their Christmas holidays, and the building was only occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Firth, the matron and servants. Mr. and Mrs. Firth had not long left the college for Pickering station to take train for Toronto, when the fire was first noticed, and they were summoned back by telephone just before the train started.

The wind was blowing a gale from the northwest and drove the flames across the building, and frustrated the firemen's efforts. The fire burned fiercely for several hours and before noon the whole of the main building had been completely destroyed, the walls and chimneys being all that remain. The gymnasium and other outbuildings are intact.

The loss is estimated at about \$30,000, which is partially covered by insurance.

The college, which was erected in 1878, was carried on under the auspices of the Society of Friends and was the only Friends' College in Canada.

Big Fire at Truro, N. S. Halifax, N. S., Jan. 2.—Gunn's Opera House at Truro was totally destroyed by fire Sunday morning. A number of firms were burned out. The loss is estimated at \$50,000, partly covered by insurance.

Fire in Asylum Cottage. Mimico, Jan. 2.—Although the building in which they were confined was burning down over their heads, many of the patients in Cottage No. Two at Mimico Asylum, which was destroyed by fire Sunday morning, absolutely refused to be rescued. They finally had to be removed by force. The twenty or more patients in the house were, however, safely carried out. The loss is about \$15,000.

Wheatley Block Burned. Wheatley, Jan. 2.—About 2.30 o'clock Sunday morning fire broke out in the new Jackson block, corner of Erie and Talbot streets, occupied by Stewart Anderson as a general store. The building and stock are a total loss. Loss on building, \$2,500; loss on stock, about \$5,000.

British Commercial Agents.

London, Jan. 2.—(C. A. P.)—It is probable British commercial agents will be appointed to Colonies. Mr. O'Hara's letter caused the matter to be seriously discussed. On behalf of the Board of Trade it is pointed out that Canada will not be entirely neglected. As to the Colonies in general men have been sent to make inquiries in South Africa and the Australias, with the result that agents have been appointed to Africa, and will apparently be chosen for Australia. The probability is that similar measures will be followed in regard to Canada.

Hamilton Man Killed.

Hamilton, Jan. 2.—Elliott Lowndes, who lived near the Jockey Club, was employed by the Imperial Canadian Co. on his way to work between 6 and 7 o'clock Saturday night, accompanied by his sister, when he was struck by a C. T. R. train from the east and was killed instantly.

Up-to-the-minute in styles, and down to the deepest depths in price.

Make-room Sale!

Dress Skirts AT COST.

We are selling our skirts out quickly, but not quickly enough—we must have more room for our spring goods.

Here are a few extra-special prices for Tuesday. We have lots of others, but we have only one of a kind, so if you want a nice skirt come early Tuesday morning. You will find it worth while.

Tweed Skirts, newest styles—we sold a lot of them at \$6—Tuesday only 4.00

A Plaid Kilted Skirt, very stylish, regularly \$15, Tuesday only 10.00.

Remember, we never advertise anything that we cannot show you in the store.

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A pair of our Unshrinkable Blankets makes a handsome and useful Christmas present. Call and see our stock before leaving.

TEN PER CENT. DISCOUNT FOR CASH DURING DECEMBER.

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STORK WAS BUSY BIRD.

VISITED NEW YORK CITY ONCE EVERY FIVE MINUTES.

New York, Dec. 31.—Once in every five minutes during the year just coming to a close did the stork visit New York City. From these visits alone the city's population was increased by 102,552.

These figures, which were given out yesterday by Commissioner Darlington of the Department of Health, show an increase in births for the year of more than 4,000 over 1904. In the same period there were 42,667 marriages, against 39,436 in 1904, an increase of 3,231. The deaths in 1905 were 70,440 against 75,060 in 1904, a decrease of 4,620.

The death rate per 1,000 of population was 18.25, as against 20.01 in 1904. According to the report the death rate for the year was, with one exception, the lowest on record, and the contagious disease record lower than ever before reported.

FIVE YEARS FOR BANKER.

PRESIDENT OF SYRACUSE INSTITUTION MISAPPROPRIATED THE FUNDS.

Auburn, N. Y., Jan. 1.—The jury in the case of Manning C. Palmer, charged with misappropriating funds of the American Exchange National Bank of Syracuse, of which he was president, this forenoon returned verdict of guilty. The jury was since Saturday night.

Mr. Palmer was sentenced to five years in Auburn prison and was committed to the custody of the United States marshal pending an appeal from the case.

Pale sickly children should Mother Graves' Worm Expeller. Worms are one of the principal causes of suffering in children and should be expelled from the system.

The dullest detective can next in a barber shop.

To Cure a Cold in One Day

Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets.

Small bottles of this medicine sold in past 12 months.

This signature, E. W. Laxative.

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