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The Countess of Landon.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

He looked at her and wiped the sweat from his face.

"Come where?" he panted, sullenly.

"Anywhere—away from these!" she said, quickly. "I ask you to do so for my sake. You shall not be hurt or interfered with, I Madge, promise you. You will come, Jake?"

There was command as well as entreaty in her voice, and he seemed moved by it.

"Well, if you put it that way," he said, growling round at the spectators, "I don't say as I'll refuse. Look there," he burst out, "I haven't any grudge against you, Madge, understand that. It isn't you as has treated me like a dog—me, who could, if I choose, say a thing or two—that."

She pressed his arm and drew him aside.

"Silence!" she whispered. "You do not know what you are saying or doing. Come with me, and at once."

He glared at her, at first with angry amazement at her courage, then his face fell sullenly.

"Very well," he said. "But if I do it ain't to say that I've done with them all. No, I'll have something for all this, till—"

She drew him away, as he was muttering, down to the front door. She signed to one of the footmen to open it, but Royce sprang forward as if to accompany her.

"No," she said in a low voice, "you shall not come. I am not afraid, and it is only I who can manage him. Go to the countess, Royce. Ah! for God's sake, leave him to me!" she burst out in piteous despair.

Royce stood still, not knowing whether to obey her or not. The next instant she had passed out with Jake. Royce was even then about to follow them, but felt his arm caught, and looking round, saw that it was Rochester who had detained him.

"Do as she says, Royce," he said, gravely. "Go to your mother, she is ill and needs you," and he led Royce away by something very near sheer force.

Madge's hand was still on Jake's arm as they stood on the steps. He flung it off and tugged his torn coat into its place, looking down at the rent, and swearing under his breath. Then he looked up at her.

"Well?" he said, sullenly, for she was looking straight before her into the starry night, as if she had forgotten him. Her hands were clasped tightly, her eyes filled with a half-vacant, dreamy despair. "Well," he repeated, gazing at her, "what have you got to say now I've come out! Here, wake up!"

She shivered as if with cold, and turned her eyes upon him.

"I Now Feel Fine"

Mrs. F. G. Murdoch, Box 433, Portage la Prairie, Man., writes:

"I was troubled for years with biliousness, constipation, kidney and liver troubles. I tried many different kinds of medicine, but nothing did me much good until I tried Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills. I now feel fine, but am never without these pills in the house. Dr. Chase's Ointment has relieved my husband of piles, from which he used to suffer badly."

DR. CHASE'S KIDNEY-LIVER PILLS

GERALD S. DOYLE, Distributor.

The look in them almost sobered him. He shrunk back and sat on the stone coping, wiping his forehead with a gaudy handkerchief, but with his eyes still fixed on her.

"What d'ye look at me like that for?" he growled at last. "It wasn't no fault of mine. I shouldn't have gone in if they'd left me alone. And I haven't said anything against you, have I? I haven't done you no harm."

She stood looking at him with a half-dreamy, half-despairful gaze.

"You have ruined me, that is all!" she said, as if she were communing with her own anguished heart rather than speaking to him. "You have destroyed all my chances of happiness. It is all over now—all!"

She was thinking of the look on Royce's face, the raging crowd, the shame, the humiliation which had fallen on her.

He stared at her stupidly.

"What 'ye say, eh?" He struck his hand against his forehead. "I've ruined you? What d'ye mean? What are you talking about? How have I ruined you? I never said anything against you, Madge. I haven't got anything to say. It was that proud one, 'my lady,' and that Seymour—"

He stopped, and bit at his crimson scarf, as if he had been on the point of going too far.

Madge looked down at him as if she was only half-conscious of his hateful presence.

"What is it you want?" she said, slowly, with an unnatural calmness.

"Why did you come? Did you come for money?"

He stared up at her lovely face, so white that it might belong to a corpse rather than to a living being.

"Money," he said, "money," and his eyes grew crafty. "How should I get any money by coming? More I likely get 'six months' hard,' eh Madge?"

"I do not know," she said. "You would not have come if you had not thought you could extort money from me. How much do you want? How much will send you away forever?"

He looked down at the ground, and then up at her face with a crafty keenness.

"If you like to help an old pal who's down on his luck—" he began.

"How much?" she said in the same voice. "I will give you what you want—" Then she stopped and sighed. "But I cannot, I have no money."

"No money?" he said, "and all them diamonds? Come, that won't wash, Madge."

She looked at him vacantly.

"The diamonds!" she said. "If I give them to you, will you go? Will you go away forever? You can not undo what you have done—nothing can do that—but will you go if I give them to you?"

Jake glanced thirstily at the sparkling jewels.

"Look here, Madge," he said, "I am a gentleman—leastways, I was once—and I give you my word as a gentleman that if you set square by me I'll set square by you. No harm shall come to you—"

"Harm?" she repeated, dreamily. "No further harm can come to me."

"That's what I said," he said, eagerly. "No harm can come to you, whatever happens, I tell you—I swear it!"

"You will go away?" she said. "You will not come back to—disgrace and shame him?"

He looked at her curiously.

"What makes you so anxious about him?" he asked. "Why, I could see you hated each other like poison."

"Hated each other!" She started. "He hates me!" and her hands went to her heart.

Jake stared at her.

"Why of course he does!" he retorted. "I could see it in his face. He said I was your friend, and tried

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to put the blame of the shindy on you."

"He—Royce?" she said in dull amazement.

Jake stared at her, then whistled.

"It was not him, but the other fellow. His lordship—Seymour—is the man I'm talking about."

Madge drew a long breath.

"Yes, he hates me," she said, with a sigh of relief. "I thought—"

"You thought I was talking about Jack—Royce—your husband?" said Jake. "I wasn't. He's all right. I don't bear him any grudge, though he did treat me pretty rough. He's all right. You want me to say that I won't do him any harm. Right you are, Madge. He's all right. It's the other fellow, curse him! Oh, Jake—or whatever you call him—is fond of you, by jingo! I'll stand by him, and I'll stand by you, you'll see, Madge."

She looked at him with the same half-vacant expression.

"If I give you these," she said—and as she spoke she took the diamonds from her neck and the pendants and bracelets from her neck and arms—"you will go—you will not come back?"

Jake's eyes glistened greedily.

"On my soul—" he commenced, fervently.

Madge held the diamonds out to him.

"Take them and go!" she said. "I have no money."

He clutched the ornaments and thrust them into his pocket.

"All right," he said, "Don't you be afraid Madge; I'm not going to harm you—no, nor your husband. You can bet your life on that. You've acted square by me and I'll act square by you. Now you can go back to your swell friends with a light heart. Go back and enjoy yourself, Madge, and if any of 'em asks who I am, you can say that I've gone for good. You might put in a kind of apology for me, if you like—say I was overtook with liquor"—she turned from him and he clutched at her sleeve—"and look here, Madge, don't you stand any nonsense from that old lady and that beast, Seymour. Don't you, now! If he comes it too strong, you let me know, and I'll pretty soon—"

She drew away from him, leaving a part of the lace of her sleeve in his grasp, and entered the hall.

A portion of the crowd was still standing in groups, from which rose a hurried, excited murmur, which ceased as she passed up the hall.

The music was still playing, but only a few—a very few—of the guests were dancing, and they ceased as she moved slowly, with the dreamy, despairful look on her face, across the room.

None of the guests had gone, but carriages had been ordered, and the sound of wheels could be heard amid the music and the buzz of voices. Every eye turned on her as she passed up the hall-room, and every eye noticed that the diamonds which so many had declared—how many times that night—had been eclipsed by her eyes.

She walked slowly, with the dignity which a great despair confers even upon the humblest, to where the footmen sat, and stood looking down the room.

New Digging Mystery

SEARCH IN RUINS OF VILLAGE INN—WIFE WHO VANISHED IN A FIRE.

The Hertfordshire Police have just taken steps to elucidate a mystery which has been puzzling the people of this part of the county for nearly seven years.

It concerns the death of Mrs. Emily Brightling, wife of Mr. Joseph Brightling, at one time licensee of the Red Lion public house, in the little hamlet of Aspenden, a mile from here.

In the early morning of August 18, 1917, when Mr. and Mrs. Brightling were the only occupants of the house, the Red Lion was burnt to the ground, and Mrs. Brightling, a woman of 57, perished in the flames.

It was not possible to hold either an inquest or a funeral service, for no trace of the woman could be found, although the debris of the building was searched several times. About a year ago a man named Barker, working casually on the debris, unearthed the wedding ring which Mrs. Brightling was wearing at the time of her death. It was quite bright, having apparently in no way suffered in the intense heat through which it must have passed.

Five Hours' Search.

Although they were satisfied with the inquiries they made at the time of the fire, the police decided on Thursday to make a fresh search, and four constables, under Detective Sergeant Herbert, from Haslewood, Aspenden, and four and a half miles among the ruins of the Red Lion. They dug holes and searched cesspools and wells, and after five hours' work went away no nearer a solution.

I found Mr. Brightling, now a white haired man of 70, working, as he goes every day, in the Red Lion grounds; and asked him if he could shed any light on the mystery. He replied:

"I should like to know what it all means. They are saying that I murdered my wife—the accounts. We were as happy together as could be. Of course we had a jangle occasionally, like every married couple, but I always gave her everything she wanted.

We went to bed almost directly we closed on the night of August 18, 1917, and it was, I think, about four o'clock in the morning when my wife woke me up saying, 'Joe, the place seems full of smoke.' She jumped out of bed and went to the window and said, 'Joe, the place is on fire,' and then tumbled down at the foot of the bed."

I went downstairs, and, directly, I opened the door, found the flames shooting out of the bar and out of the stairs. Twice I tried to get to my wife, and once nearly got to the top of the stairs, but had to turn back and attend that I don't remember much more, because they found me senseless under the back door. See, here are the burns on my hand and throat.

It is understood that for the moment the police are satisfied with the investigations they have made, and may not renew their search about the ruins of the Red Lion for some days, if at all.

Tourists Fight on a Bridge

TURNED BACK BY FIREMEN'S JETS.

NEW YORK.—Yuma Bridge, famous for many melo-dramatic encounters in the gold-rush days of 1849, was the scene yesterday of an amazing conflict arising out of the prevalence of foot-and-mouth disease in California. The bridge connects the States of Arizona and California. At this point, for a week past, crowds of tourists have endured agonies due to the rigid quarantine regulations imposed by the Governor of Arizona, who refuses to allow any travellers to cross the boundary.

After having been without shelter, baked by the sun in the daytime and almost frozen to death during the nights, motorists yesterday in desperation broke the chain across the bridge and invaded Arizona, only to be met by a barrage of water aimed at them by the brigades and State troops.

National guardsmen, armed with machine guns, are to-day patrolling the Arizona side of the bridge, while on the California side the police, who have been equipped with shot guns, are furiously proclaiming their intention of firing on the Arizona troops if they dare to cross the border.

Back to Work in Four Days

If you are a sufferer from kidney or bladder trouble, read how this man was relieved—

"I have used GIN PILLS for bladder trouble and general kidney disease. I suffered from an aching back and bladder trouble, and was unable to get up my stairs, for about two months. Then I used GIN PILLS, and after four days, so that I could get back to work. I have also used GIN PILLS and recommend them to any one who suffers from bladder trouble." (Signed) Herbert Wain.

GIN PILLS will relieve you, too. Get a box to-day, 50 cents, at your druggists.

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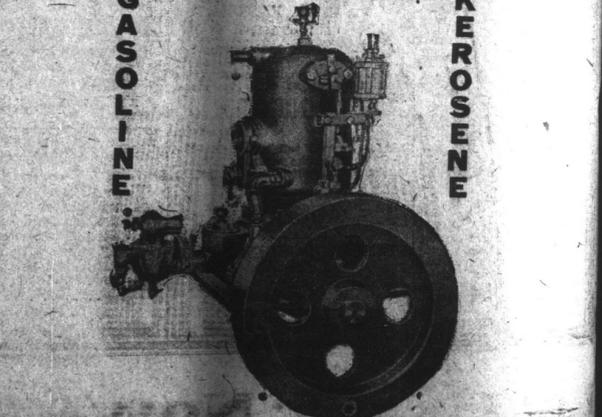
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