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The Lust of Hate

BY GUY BOOTHBY

Author of "A Beautiful White Devil," "A Bid For Fortune," "The Marriage of Esther,"

"Dr. Nikola," Etc., Etc.

That night's camp, so short a distance from my Eldorado, was an extraordinary one. My anxiety was so great that I could not sleep, but spent the greater part of the night tramping about near the fire, watching the eastern heavens and wishing for day. As soon as the first sign of light was in the sky I ran up my horses, saddled them, and without waiting to cook breakfast, set off for the hills which I could see rising like a faint blue cloud above the tree tops to the south. Little more than half-an-hour's ride from my camp brought me to the creek, which I followed to the spot indicated on the chart. My horses would not travel fast enough to keep pace not travel fast enough to keep pace with my impatience. My heart beat so furiously that I felt as if I should choke, and when I found the course of the stream trending off in a south-easterly direction, I felt as if another hour's expresses must break the stream trending of hour's suspense must inevitably ter

minate my existence.

Ahead of me I could see the top of the range rising quite distinctively above the timber, and every moment expected to burst upon the plain which Ben had described to me. When which Ben had described to me. When I did, I almost fell from my saddle in sheer terror. The plain was certainly there, the trend of the river, the rocks and the hillside were just as tney had been described to me, but there was one vital difference—the whole place, was covered with tents, and alive with men. The field had been discovered, and now, in all human probability, my claim was gone. The very thought shook me like the ague. Like a madman I pressed my heels into my horse's shook me like the ague. Like a mad-man I pressed my heels into my horse's sides, crossed the creek and began to climb the hill. Pegged-out claims and a thousand miners, busy as ants in an ant heap, surrounded me on every side. I estimated my five hundred paces from the rocks on the creek bank, and pushed on until I had the blasted gum, mentioned on the chart, bearing due south. Hereabouts, to my despair, the claims were even thicker than before—not an inch of ground than before—not an inch of ground

was left unoccupied.
Suddenly straight before me, from a shaft head on the exact spot described by Ben, appeared the face of a man I should have known anywhere in the world. world—it was the face of my old enemy Bartrand. Directly I saw it the whole miserable truth dawned upon me, and I understood as clearly as day-light how I had been duped. Springing from my saddle and leav-

Springing from my saddle and leaving my animals to stray where they would, I dashed across the intervening space and caught him just as he emerged from the shaft. He recognized me instantly, and turned as pale as death. In my rage I could have strangled him where he stood, as easily as I would have done a chicken. "Thief and murderer," I cried, beside myself with rage and not heeding who might be standing by. "Give up the mine you have stolen from me. Give up the mine, or, as I live, I'll kill you."

you."

He could not answer, for the reason that my grip upon his throat was throttling him. But the noise he made brought his men to his assistance. By main force they dragged me off, almost foaming at the mouth. For the time being I was a maniac, unconscious of everything save that I wanted to kill the man who had stolen from me the one great chance of my life. "Come, come, voung fellow, easy "Come, come, young fellow, easy does it," cried an old miner, who had come up with the crowd to enquire the reason of the excitement. "What's all this about? What has he done to

Without a second's thought I sprang upon a barrel and addressed them. Speaking with all the eloquence at my command, I first asked them if there was anyone present who remembered me. There was a dead silence for nearly a minute, then a burly miner standing at the back of the crowd shouted that he did. He had worked a claim ing at the back of the crowd shouted that he did. He had worked a claim next door to mine at Banyah Creek, he said, and was prepared to swear to my identity whenever I might wish him to do so. I asked him if he could tell me the name of my partner on that field, and he instantly answered "Old Ben Garman." My identity and my friendship with Ben having been thus established, I described Ben's arrival at Markapurlie, and Bartrand's treatment of us both. I went on to tell them how I had nursed the old man until he died, and how on his deathbed he had told me of the rich find he had made in the Boolga Ranges. I gave the exact distances, and fourished the chart before their faces so that all might see it. I next described Gibbs as one of Bartrand's tools, and commented upon the ink-stain, on the back of the plan which had aroused my curiosity after my illness. This done, I openly taxed Bartrand with having stolen my secret, and dated him to deny it. As if in confirmation of my accusation, it was then remembered by those present that he had been the first man upon the field, and, moreover, that he had settled on the exact spot marked upon my plan. After this, the crowd began to imagine that there might really be something in the charge I had brought against the fellow. Bartrand, I discovered later, had and whis bullying had made himself objectionable upon the field. For this

callowed his old Queensland tactics, and by his bullying had made himself objectionable upon the field. For this reason the miners were not prejudiced in his fayour.

In the middle of our dispute, and just at the moment when ominous cries of "Lynch him" were beginning to go up, there was a commotion behind us, and presently the Commissioner, accompanied by an escort of troopers, put in an appearance, and enquired the reason of the crowd. Having been informed, the great man beckoned me to him and led me down the hill to the tent, which at that time was used as a Court House. Here I was confronted with Bartrand, and or-

······ the most I could of the facts at my disposal. The Commissioner listened attentively, and when I had finished turned to Bartrand.

"When did you receive the informa-tion which leaves

"When did you receive the information which led you to make your way
to this particular spot?" he asked.

"From the same person who gave
this man his," coolly replied Bartrand.

"If Mr. Pennethorne had given me an
opportunity, I would willingly have
made this explanation earlier. But on
the hill yonder he did all the talking,
and I was permitted no chance to get
in a word."

"You mean to say then," said the
Commissioner in his grave, matter-of-

"You mean to say then," said the Commissioner in his grave, matter-of-fact way, "that this Ben Garman supplied you with the information that led you to this spot—prior to seeing Mr. Pennthorne."

Mr. Pennthorne."

"That is exactly what I do mean," replied Bartrand quickly. "Mr. Pennethorne, who at that time was in my employment as storekeeper upon Markapurlie Station, was out at one of the boundary riders' huts distributing rations when Garman arrived. The letter was feeling very ill, and not knowing how long he might be able to get about, was most anxious to find sufficient capital to test this mine without delay. After enquiry I agreed to invest the money he required, and we vest the money he required, and we had just settled the matter in amicable fashlon when he fell upon the ground in a dead faint. Almost at the same instant Mr. Pennethorne put in an appearance and behaved in a most unseemly manner. Unless the seemly manner. Unless his motives are revenge, I cannot conceive, your worship, why I should have been set upon in this fashion."

The Commissioner turned to me.
"What have you to say to this?" he asked

asked.
"Only that he lies." I answered furlously. "He lies in every particular. He has been my enemy from the very first moment I set eyes upon him, and I feel certain as that I am standing before you now, that Ben Garman did not reveal to him his secret. I nursed the old man on his deathbed, and if he had confided his secret to any one he would have been certain to tell me. But he impressed upon me the fact that he had not done so. When he was dead I became seriously till in my than

that he had not done so. When he was dead I became seriously ill in my turn, and the information that led this man's taking up the claim was stolen from me, I feel convinced, while I was in my delirium. The man is a bully and a liar, and not satisfied with that record, he has made himself a thief."

"Hush, hush, my man," said the Commissioner, soothingly. "You must not talk in that way here. Now be off, both of you, let me hear of no quarrelling, and to-morrow I will give my decision."

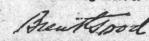
We bowed and left him, each hating

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"Mr. Pennethorne," said he, when the trooper had departed, "I have sent for you to talk to you about the charge you have brought against the proprietor of the 'Wheel of Fortune' mine on the hillside yonder. After mature consideration, I'm afraid I cannot further consider your case. You must see for yourself that you have nothing at all to substantiate the charge you make beyond your own bald assertion. If, as you say, you have been swindled, yours is indeed a stroke of bad luck, for the mine is a magnificent property; but if, on the other hand—as I must perforce believe, since he was first upon the field—Bartrand's statement is a true one, then I can only think "Mr. Pennethorne," said he, when upon the field—Bartrand's statement is a true one, then I can only think you have acted most unwisely in behaving as you have done. If you will be guided by me, you will let the matter drop. Personally I do not see that you can do anything else. Bartrand evidently received the news before you did, and, as I said just now, in proof of that we have the fact that he was first on the field. There is no gain-saying that."

"But I was ill and could not come," I burst out. "I tell you he stole from

me the information that enabled him to get here at all."
"Pardon me, I do not know that.
And now it only remains for me to ask you to remember that we can have no disturbance here."
"I will make no digressors." burst out. "I tell you he stole

"I will make no disturbance." I answered. "You need have no fear of that. If I cannot get possession of my property by fair means I shall try elsewhere."

"That does not concern me," he rerhat does not concern me, he re-plied. 'Only, I think on the evidence you have at present in your possession you'll be wasting your time and your money. By the way, your name is Gil-bert Pennethorne, is it not?"

"Yes," I said, without much interest, "and much good it has ever done me."
"I ask the question because there's an advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald which seems to be addressed to you. Here it is!"

He took up a reserved. He took up a paper and pointed to a few lines in the "agony" column. When he handed it to me I read the

"If Gilbert Pennethorne, third son "If Gilbert Pennethorne, third son of the late Sir Anthony William Pennethorne, Bart., of Polton-Penna, in the County of Cornwall, England, at present believed to be resident in Australia, will apply at the office of Messrs. Grey and Dawkett, solicitors, Macquarie Street, Sydney, he will hear of something to his advantage."

I looked at the paper in a dayad cost.

I looked at the paper in a dazed sort of fashion, and then, having thanked the Commissioner for his kindness, withdrew. In less than two hours I was on my way to Sydney to be the commissioner for his kindness. withdrew. In less than two hours I was on my way to Sydney to interview Messrs. Grey and Dawkett. On arriving I discovered their office, and when I had established my identity, learned from them that my father had died suddenly while out hunting, six months before, and that by his will I had benefited to the extent of five thou

ter disappointment through which had lately passed brought on a re-lapse of my old illness, and for near-ly a fortnight I hovered between life and death in the Sydney Hospital. it was to learn that Bartrand was the

the richest gold mine in the world, and that he, after putting it into the hands of reliable officers, had left Australia for London.

As soon as I was quite strong again I packed up my traps, and, with the lust of murder in my heart, booked a passage in a P. and O. liner, and followed him.

CHAPTER II

When I reached England, the icy hand of winter was upon the land. The streets were banked feet high with snow, and the Thames at London Bridge was nothing but a mass of floating ice upon which an active man could have passed from shore to shore. Poor homeless wretches were to be seen sheltering themselves in every nook and cranny, and the morning papers teemed with gruesome descriptions of dead bodies found in drifts, of damage done to property, scriptions of dead bodies found in drifts, of damage done to property, and of trains delayed and snowed up in every conceivable part of the country. Such a winter had not been experienced for years, and when I arrived and realized what it meant for myself, I could not but comment on my madness in having left an Australian summer to participate in such a direful state of things.

Immediately on arrival I made my

my madness in having left an Australian summer to participate in such a direful state of things.

Immediately on arrival I made my way to Blankerton's Hotel, off the Strand, and installed myself there. It was a nice, quiet place, and suited me admirably. The voyage home from Australia had done me a world of good—that is to say as far as my bodily health was concerned—but it was doubtful whether it had relieved my brain of any of the pressure recent events in Australia had placed upon it. Though nearly three months had elapsed since my terrible disappointment in the Boolga Ranges, I had not been able to reconcile myself to it; and as the monotonous existence on board ship allowed me more leisure, it probably induced me to brood upon it more than I should otherwise have done. At any rate, my first thought on reaching London was that I was in the same City with my enemy, and my second to wonder how I could best get even with him. All day and all night this idea held possession of my brain. I could think of nothing but my hatred of the man, and as often as I saw his name mentioned in the columns of the Press, the more vehement my desire to punish him became. Looking back on it now it seems to me that I could not have been quite right in my head at that time, though to all intents and purposes I was as rational a being as ever stepped in shoe leather. In proof of what I mean, I can remember, the constant stream of passers by and to wonder if Bartrand were ameng the constant stream of passers by and to wonder if Bartrand were ameng the constant stream of passers by and to wonder if Bartrand were ameng the constant stream of passers by and to wonder if Bartrand were ameng the constant stream of passers by and to wonder if Bartrand were ameng the constant stream of passers by and to wonder if Bartrand were ameng the constant stream of passers by and to wonder if Bartrand were ameng the constant stream of passers by and to wonder if Bartrand were ameng the constant stream of passers by and to wonder if Bartrand were ame

Next morning a trooper discovered me camped by the Creek, and conduc-ted me to the Commissioner's pres-ence. I found him alone, and when I was ushered in he asked me to sit

gas-lit thoroughfare, and then, when is had revealed my identity, drawing a knife from my sleeve and stabbing him to his treacherous heart. On another occasion I spent hours concocting a most ingenious plan for luring him on to the Embankment late at night, and arranging that when I got him there I would seize him with trresistible force and throw him over into the stream. I wild picture him stragalling among the loe floes, the freezing water numbing his limbs freezing water numbing his limbs more and more with every passing second; and, in fancy, would follow him along the bank, taunting him with with his treachery, until the cold proved too much for him and he dis-appeared from my sight. Hundreds of appeared from my sight. Hundreds of such schemes occupied my brain to the exclusion of almost every other thought, and the more I perfected them the more my hatred grew. At this point I must pause to make an explanation. I am quite aware that in thus candidly revealing the depraved condition of my heart at that particular period I am not presenting myself in a very favorable light; but, I contend, if I desire to set this chronicle of the blackest portion of my life before my reader in such a way that he may see for himself exactly what induced me to consider the awful temptation which was afterwards placed before me, I must not keep any single item back from him. To refrain from revealing the motives would be to give a false notion of the effects, and that

a false notion of the effects, and that

I have no desire at all to do.

The day following my return to the mother country was destined to prove an eventful one. According to custom I rose early and went for a stroll. It was half dark and a bitterly cold morning, the air along the Embank-ment, which I chose for my promen-ade could only be described as Arctic. to bank, and flocks of ravenous gulls wheeled and screamed above my head. The scene was depressing in the extreme, and I turned to retrace my steps to my hotel, feeling about as miserable as it would be possible for a man to be. What did life contain for a man to be. What did life contain for me now? I asked myself this question for the hundredth time, as I walked up the sombre street; and the answer was, Nothing—absolutely nothing. By judiclously investing the amount I had inherited under my father's will I had secured to myself an income approaching two hundred pounds a year, but beyond that I had not a penny in the world. I had been sick to death of Australia for some years before I had thought of leaving it, and my last great disappointment had not furnished me with any desire to return to it. On the other hand I had seen too much of the world to be able to settle down to an office life in England, and my enfeebled constitutions even had I desired to do so, would have effectively debarred me from enlisting in the debarred me from enlisting in the Army. What, therefore, was to become of me—for I could not entertain the prospect of settling down to a sort of vegetable existence on my small in-

come I could not see. "Oh, if only I had not been taken ill after Ben's had not been taken ill after Ben's death," I said to myself again and again; "what might I not then have done?" As it was, that scoundrel Bart-rand had made millions out of what rand had made millions out of what was really my property, and as a result I was a genteel pauper without a hope of any sort in the world. As the recollection of my disappointment came into my mind, I ground my teeth and cursed him; and for the rest of my walk occupied myself thinking of the different ways in which I might compass his destruction, and at the same time hating myself for lacking the necessary pluck to put any one of them into execution.

As I reached the entrance to my

As I reached the entrance to my hotel a paper boy came round the cor-ner crying his warez. to Be Continued.

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