

OR COPY

The SALE OF THE MORICE HAZELINE

CHAPTER I

The Venetian Portrait.

Evelyn Grayson, meeting me on the old Boston Post Road, between Green- wich and Stamford, gave me a message from her uncle. That is the logical beginning of this story; though I make everything quite clear from the start. It may be better to back back a few months to the day on which Evelyn Grayson and I first met.

Then, as now, we were each driving our own car, she a great sixty horse-power machine, all glistening pale yellow, and I, a compact, six-cylinder motor, of dull dusty gray. But we were not on any such broad, rosy thoroughfare as the Boston Post Road. On the contrary, we were short-cutting through a narrow, rough lane, beset by stone walls and interrupted at intervals by masses of heavy and treacherous foliage.

I know I shall never forget the momentary impression I received. Out of the golden sunlight it seemed to me, there had emerged suddenly a tableau of Queen Titania on a topaz throne—the fairest Queen Titania in agitation ever conjured—and I, in my mad, panting speed was about to crash into the gauzy fabric of that dream creation and rend it with brutal, torturing contact of reluctant, hand-driven wheels. I take to credit to myself for what I did. Volition was absent. My hands, as you can imagine above and beyond all tardy mental guidance. For just a flashing instant the gray nose of my car rose before me, as its momentum sought to mount half way to the coping of the roadside wall. I felt my seat dart away from beneath me, was conscious of my body in swift, unperceived aerial flight, and then—but it is idle so attempt to set down the conglomerate sensation of that small fraction of a second. When I regained consciousness, Queen Titania lay leaning in the dust of the lane beside me—a very distressed and anxious Queen Titania, with wide, startled eyes, and quivering, sympathetic lips—and about us were a half dozen or more of the vicinal country folk.

Between that meeting in mid-May and this meeting on the old Boston Post Road in mid-September, there had been others, of course, for Queen Titania, whose every-day name, as I have said, was Evelyn Grayson, was the niece and ward of my nearest neighbor, Mr. Robert Cameron, a gentleman recently come to reside on what for a century and more had been known as the old Tobiasburg Estate, extending for quite a mile along the Connecticut shore of Long Island Sound in the neighborhood of Greenwich.

The intervening four months had witnessed the gradual growth of a near approach to intimacy between Cameron and myself, as was possible considering the manner in which Cameron was. By which statement I mean to imply naught to my neighbor's discredit. He was in all respects admirable—a gentleman of education and culture, widely traveled, of sound ideals and noble principles to which he gave rigid adherence. But I was about to qualify this by describing him as reserved and taciturn. I fear, though, to give a wrong impression. He was scarcely that. There were moments, however, when he was unresponsive, and he was never demonstrative. He had more poise than any man I know. He allowed you to see just so much of him, and no more. At times he was almost stubbornly reticent. And yet, in spite of these qualities, which appeared to be contradictory rather than inherent, he gave repeated evidence of a nature at once so simple and kindly and sympathetic as to command both confidence and affection.

To the progress of my intimacy with Evelyn there had been no such temperamental impediment. She was disarmingly unpoised, with a frankness born of unpolished innocence; barely six weeks having elapsed between her graduation from the tiny French convent of Sainte Barbe near Paris and our perilous encounter in that contracted, treacherous, yet blessed little Connecticut lane. And she possessed, moreover, a multiplicity of additional qualities, both of person and disposition—charms too numerous indeed to enumerate, and far too sacred to discuss. From which it may rightly be inferred that we understood each other, Evelyn and I, and that we were already considerably beyond the stage of condition of mere formal acquaintance.

It was no Queen Titania who now came gliding to a stand beside me on the broad, level, well-oiled highway, under a double row of arching elms. It was no gipsy-maid, but Hebe, the Goddess of Youth, with creamy skin and red lips and a lilting melody of voice.

"Well, Mr. Sir Phillip! We are well met!"

And then she told me that her Uncle Robert had telephoned for me, bidding me come to him at my earliest leisure

the round lenses of his spectacles; the high, broad, sloping, white brow and the receding border of dark brown, slightly grizzled hair. That, superlatively, was the face. But I saw more than that. In the visage of one naturally brave I saw a battle waged behind a mask—a battle between courage and fear; and I saw fear win.

Then the mask became opaque once more, and Cameron, giving me ample room for smile, was replying:

"There are anonymous letters and anonymous letters. Ordinarily your method is the one I should pursue. Indeed I may say that when, about a month or so ago, I received a communication of that character, I did almost precisely what you now advise. Certainly I followed one-half of your prescription—I forgot the letter; though, for lack of fire in the dog days, I did not burn it, but thrust it into a drawer with an accumulation of advertising circulars."

My apprehension lest Evelyn and I were personally affected had been by now quite dissipated. It was perfectly apparent to me that Cameron alone was involved; yet my anxiety was none the less eager. Almost a sympathy and co-operation were enlisted. I could only hope that he had mentally exaggerated the gravity of the situation, yet my judgment of him was that his inclination would be to err in the opposite direction.

"And now something has happened to recall it to your memory?"

"Something happened very shortly after its receipt," he replied. "Something very puzzling. But in spite of that, I have inclined to treat the matter as a bit of clever chicanery, devised for the purpose, probably, of extortion. As such, I again put it from my thoughts; but today I received a second letter, and I admit I am interested. The affair has features which, if it, indeed, uncommonly perplexing."

I fear my imagination was sluggish. Although, in spite of his dissembling, I saw that he was strangely moved by these happenings, I could fancy no very terrifying concomitants of the rather commonplace facts he had narrated. For anonymous letters I had ever held scant respect. An ambushed enemy, I argued, is admittedly a coward. And so I was in danger of growing impatient.

"When the second letter came," he continued, bringing his left hand forward to lean his right on the detailed white ground of the table's damask, "I searched among the circulars for the first, and found it. I want you to see them both. The writing is very curious. It has never seen anything just like it—and the signature, if I may call that, is still more singular. On the first letter, I took it for a blot. But on the second letter occurs the same black blot or smudge of identical outline."

Of course I thought of the Black Hand. Was that the natural conclusion, seeing that the newspapers had been giving us a surfeit of Black Hand threats and Black Hand outrages. But, somehow, I did not dare to voice it. To have suggested anything so grisly to Cameron in his present mood would have been to offer him offense.

And when, at the next moment, he drew from an inner pocket of his evening coat two thin, wax-like sheets of paper and passed them to me, I was glad that I had not uttered a word. For the letters were no rough, rude scraps of an illiterate Mafia or Camorra. In phraseology as well as in penmanship they were impressively unique.

"If you don't mind," Cameron was saying, "you might read them aloud."

He had written on a group of electric wall lights at my back, and I marked for the hundredth time his powerful shoulders, his leanness of hip and straightness of limb. He did not look the forty years to which he confessed.

One of the long French windows which gave upon the terrace stood ajar, and before resuming his seat Cameron paused to close it, dropping over it the roped curtain of silver gray velvet that hid the wall. In the succeeding moment the room was ghostly silent; and then, breaking against the stillness, was the sound of his voice, reading:

"That which you have wrought shall turn be wrought upon you. Take warning therefore of what shall happen on the seventh day hence. As sun follows sun, so follows all that is decreed. The ways of our God are many. On the righteous he showers blessings; on the evil he pours misery."

That was the first letter. The second began with the same sentence:

"That which you have wrought shall in turn be wrought upon you."

But there, though the similarity of tenor continued, the verbal identity ceased. It went on:

"Once more, as earnest of what is decreed, there will be shown unto you a symbol of our power. Precaution cannot avail. Fine words and a smiling countenance make no virtue."

He was leaning forward, a little constrainedly, his left hand gripping the arm of his chair, the fingers of his right hand toying with the stem of his gold-rimmed Bohemian liqueur glass.

"An anonymous letter!" I repeated, with a deprecatory smile. "Anonymous letters should be burned and forgotten. Surely you're not bothering about the writer?"

I wish I could put before you an exact reproduction of Cameron's face as I then saw it. Those rugged outlines, the heritage of Scottish ancestry, softened and refined by a brilliant intellectuality; the sturdy chin and square jaw; the heavy underlip meeting the upper lip in scarcely perceptible curve; the broad, honest nose; the small, but alert, gray eyes shining through

fore I had quite come to the end, my companion was speaking.

"Well!" he said. And the light cheerfulness of his tone was not only in marked contrast with his grave absorption of a moment before, but in jarring discord with my own present mood. "Well! What do you make of them?"

My annoyance found voice in my response.

"Cameron," I begged, "for God's sake be serious. This doesn't seem to me exactly a matter to be merry over. I don't want to alarm you, but somehow I feel that these—and I shook the crackling, wax-like sheets, "these cannot be utterly ignored."

"But they are anonymous," he retorted, not unjustly. "Anonymous letters should be burned and forgotten."

"There are anonymous letters and anonymous letters," I gave him back, in turn. "These are of an unusually convincing character. Besides, they tell him of that elusive encompassment of sinister portent which had so impressed me; of that malign foreboding beyond anything warranted by the words; but I stumbled in the effort at expression. 'Blessed,' I started again, and ended lamely, 'I don't like the look and the feel of them.'"

And now he was as serious as I could wish.

"Ah!" he cried, leaning forward again and reaching for the letters. "You have experienced it, too! And you can't explain it, any more than I? It is something that grips you when you read, like an icy hand, hard as steel, in a glove of velvet. It's always between the lines, reaching out, and nothing you can do will stay it. I thought at first I imagined it, but the oftener I have read, the more I have felt its clutch. The letters of themselves are nothing. What do you suppose I care for velvet threats of that sort? I'm big enough to take care of myself, Clyde. I've met peril in about every possible guise, in every part of the world, and I've never really known fear. But this is different. And the worst of it is, I don't know why. I can't for the life of me make out what it is I'm afraid of."

He had gone very pale, and his tired, capable hands, which toged with the two letters, quivered and twitched in excess of nervous tension.

Then, with a finger pointing to the ink-stain at the bottom of one of the sheets, he asked:

"What does that look like to you?"

I took the letter from him, and scrutinizing the rude figure with concentrated attention for a moment, ventured the suggestion that it somewhat resembled a boat.

"A one-masted vessel, square-rigged," he added, in elucidation.

"Exactly."

"Now turn it upside down."

I did so.

"Now what do you see?"

"The head of a man wearing a helmet. The resemblance was very marked."

"A straw helmet, apparently," he amplified, "such as is worn in the Orient. And yet the profile is not that of an Oriental. Now, look at your vessel again." And once more I reversed the sheet of paper.

"Can it be a Chinese junk?" I asked.

"It might be a sailing pros or banca," he returned, "such as they use in the South Pacific. But whatever it is, I can't understand what it has to do with me or with it."

I was still studying the black daub, when he said:

"But you haven't told me about the handwriting. What can you read of the character of the writer?"

"Nothing," I answered, promptly. "It is curious penmanship, as you say—heavy and regular and upright, with some strangely formed letters; especially the 's' and the 'p'; but it tells me nothing."

"But I thought," he began.

"That I heard?" So I did. When one writes as one habitually writes it is very easy. These letters, however, are not in the writer's ordinary hand. The writing is as artificial as though you, for example, had printed a note in Roman characters. Were they addressed in the same hand?"

"Precisely."

"What was the post-mark?"

"They bore no post-mark. That is another strange circumstance. Yet they were with my mail. How they came there I have been unable to ascertain. The people at the post office naturally deny that they delivered anything unstamped, as these were; and Barrie, the lad who fetches the letters, has no recollection of these. Nor has Checkbeedy, who sorts the mail here at the house. But each of them lay beside my plate at breakfast—the first on the fourteenth of August; the second, this morning, the fourteenth of September."

"And they were not delivered by messenger?"

"So far as I can learn, no."

"It is very odd," I commented, with feeble banality.

"I took the letters from his hands this morning, and held them in turn between my vision and the candle-light, hoping, perchance, to discover a watermark in the paper. But I was not rewarded."

"You examined the envelopes carefully, I presume?"

"I returned the sheets to the table."

"More than carefully," he answered. "But you shall see them, if you like. I found no trace of any identifying mark."

Thus far he had made no further mention of the "burning happening" which followed the receipt of the first letter, and in the interest provoked by the questions themselves I had foreborne to question him; but now as the words "burning happening" fell from his lips, standing out, as it were, from the rest of the script which lay un-

burned on the table before me, I was conscious of a stimulated concern, and so made inquiry.

"I wish you would tell me, first, whether anything really did occur on the seventh day."

"I was coming to say," he replied; but it seemed to me that prompt though his response was, there was a shade of reluctance in his manner; for he relapsed into silence for what must have been the better part of a minute, and with eyes lowered sat seemingly lost in thought.

Then he rose, abruptly, and saying: "Suppose we go into my study, Clyde," led the way from the dining room, across the great, imposing, grained and fretted hall to that comparatively small mahogany and green sycamore wherein he was wont to spend most of his indoor hours. It was always a rather gloomy room at night, with its high dark ceiling, its heavy and voluminous olive tapestry hangings, wholly out of keeping, it seemed to me, with the season—and its shaded lights confined to the vicinity of the massive polished, and gilt-ornamented writing table of the period of the First Empire. And it impressed me now, in conjunction with Cameron's promised revelation, as more than ever grim and awesome.

I remember helping myself to a cigar from the humidor which stood on the antique cabinet in the corner near the door. I was in the act of lighting it when Cameron spoke.

"I want you to sit in this chair," he said, indicating one of sumptuous upholstery which stood beside the writing table, facing the low, long book-cases lining the opposite wall.

I did as he bade me, while he remained standing.

"Do you, by any chance," he asked, "remember a portrait which hung above the book-shelves?"

I remembered it very well. It was a painting of himself, done some years back. But now my gaze sought it in vain.

"Certainly," I answered. "It hung there," pointing.

"Quite right. Now I want you to observe the shelf-top. You see how crowded it is."

It was indeed crowded. Bronze busts and statuettes; yachting and golf trophies in silver; framed photographs; a score of odds and ends, souvenirs gathered the world over. There was scarcely an inch of space unoccupied. I had frequently observed this plethora of ornament and resented it. It gave to that part of the room the semblance of a curiosity shop. When I had nodded my assent, he went on:

"On the afternoon of Friday, August twenty-first, seven days after the receipt of that first letter, I was sitting where you are sitting now. I was reading, and deeply interested. I had put the letter, as I told you, entirely out of my mind. I had forgotten it, absolutely. That seventh-day business I had regarded—if I regarded it at all—as idle vapor. That this was the afternoon of the seventh day did not occur to me until afterwards. I recall that I paused in reading to ponder a paragraph that was not quite clear to me, and that while in contemplation I fixed my eyes upon that portrait. I remember that, because it struck me, then, that the flesh tints of the face had grown muddy and that the thing would be better for a cleaning. I recall, too, that at that moment, the little clock, yonder, struck three. I resumed my reading, but presently, another statement demanding cogitation, I lowered my book, and once more my eyes rested on the portrait. But not on the muddy flesh tints, because—I had paused and leaned forward, towards me, speaking with impressive emphasis. 'Because,' he repeated, 'there were no flesh tints there. Because there was no head nor face there!'

I sat up suddenly, open-mouthed, speechless. Only my wide eyes made question.

"Cut from the canvas," he went on, in lowered voice, "clean and sharp from crown to collar. And the hands of the clock pointed to twelve minutes past three."

(To be Continued)

RHEUMATISM, LUMBAGO and LAME BACK

can be cured by the great fruit kidney and liver remedy.

F. G. PILLS

Brantford, Ont., Aug. 13, 1911

Your medicine, Fig Pills, has worked wonders for me. The rheumatic pains have entirely left me and I owe everything to you, remedy. You are at liberty to publish this.

R. H. GAILMAN

At all dealers 25 and 50 cents or mailed by The Fig Pill Co., St. Thomas, Ont.

The honest farmer who took in summer boarders greeted the new arrivals with truly rural enthusiasm. "I swan, I'm right down glad to meet ye," he cried as he extended his horny hand. "Heow's the folks to hum?"

The man of the party looked at the enthusiast with some suspicion. "Farmer," he said "your dialect strongly reminds me of the stage variety."

The agriculturist grinned.

"It's all right, ain't it?" he asked. "I gave an actor feller a month's board free to teach it to me."

For Sale by White Drug Co.

PROFESSIONAL.

BLYTH & IMRAY

ARCHITECTS

P. O. Box 111

MacDONALD BUILDING

L. P. ROY, C. E.

DEPUTY LAND SURVEYOR

Water St. Campbellton, N.B.

Professional

Manicuring, Shampooing, Curls, Bunsions and Ingrowing nails treated. Combing made into Switches.

MISS MILLIE ANDREW

Sept. 17-3mos. pd. Campbellton, N. B.

Dr. de Van's Female Pills

Reliable French regulator, never fails. These pills are exceedingly powerful in regulating the sensitive portions of the female system. Relieve all cheap imitations. Dr. de Van's are sold at 25¢ a box, or three for \$1.00. Mailed to any address. Write for Free Trial. Dr. de Van, Montreal, Ont.

For Sale by White Drug Co.

ZAM-BUK

MRS. A. SAICH, of Cannington Manor, Sask., writes:—"My brother suffered severely from eczema. The sores were very extensive, and burned like coals into his flesh. Zam-Buk took out all the fire, and quickly gave him ease. Within three weeks of commencing with Zam-Buk treatment, every sore had been cured."

This is but one of the many letters we are constantly receiving from people who have proved the healing powers of Zam-Buk. For eczema, piles, sores, burns, cuts and all skin troubles there is nothing like this wonderful balm. No skin disease should be considered incurable until Zam-Buk has been tried.

All Druggists, 50c. per Box. Refuse Substitutes.

ECZEMA

CLASSIFIED

Advertisements under this head are charged for at the rate of a cent a word a week. Minimum charge 25 cents.

DRESSMAKER

Alter Monday, 8 p.m. 29th I will be prepared to go out by the day for all kind of sewing.

FIFTH IRELAND

25 p.m. McKinnon Hill, P. O.

WANTED

A second class female teacher for District No. 5, parish of Dalhousie, Dunlee Settlement. Apply to

ALAN ANDER INNES, Secretary

Sept. 4-11

HOUSE TO LET

On Union Street, 7 rooms and bath, hot water, electric lights. Can have possession at once. Rent reasonable.

Apply to

ROSENHEK BROS.

Sept. 11-14

FOR SALE

One 4 yr. old mare, 1000 lbs., good and kind, price \$150.00.

One mare, 4 years old, weight 1050 lbs., known as the Wm. Montgomery mare, good all round animal. Price \$150.00.

One mare, 6 yrs old, weight 1200 lbs., good and sound and not afraid of any, a good driver. Price \$225.00. Reason for selling too many horses for demand. Apply to

H. P. DOYLE, Campbellton, N. B.

WANTED

Experienced sales girl wanted at once.

Apply to

COMMERCIAL FLOCK GROCERY

John Landry, Prop.

WANTED

Competent stenographer and typewriter for Quebec Oriental Ry. offices, New Carlisle, Bon. Co. Address,

C. R. SCOLES, New Carlisle

FOR SALE

A number of heavy horses, suitable for woods work. Apply to

R. P. JELLETT

Sept. 24th-1 p.m. Cross Point

NOTICE

JAMES GILLIS,

Matapedia

Rooms and board now ready in the Dr. Gillis House, close to the station.

Charges Moderate.

Sept. 25-2ms

The 1 Cent Bill

housewife to a hard job

new range is, which will an ordinary

hat the con- Without

s possible to various foods Economizer tely uniform.

is over, you ye your fire est heat in a le lever.

advantages means heat New Special ilder exposes

Gurney-Ox-

dsomely—it

SON

ance Company

CCES"

\$16,995,653.88

\$2,515,811.96

\$73,989,219.96

\$7,884,994.88

\$3,542,134.17

\$74,708.31

\$16,135,451.67

\$1,533,763.65

\$1,332,375.55

\$13,928,476.80

\$1,334,635.51

grs. for Mar. Prov'

mpbellton, N. B.