

## IN EXCHANGE FOR A SOUL

By DEREK VANE.

Regina Seymour was having breakfast in her flat in Grosvenor Mansions, and her chaperon and companion being in bed with a headache, she was reading the Morning Post for company, when a paragraph among the fashionable announcements suddenly caught her attention.

"A marriage will shortly take place between Douglas Scott, barrister-at-law, and Clover, daughter of the late Henry Massey."

That was all; but it was enough to drive the color from Regina's face, and to make her blind and deaf to all the beauty and music of the spring morning. The scent of the daffodils in her flower-box came faintly in from the window, the birds were singing with reckless gaiety not far off in the park; but she was only conscious that her heart lay, heavy and aching, in the breast of that all too sweet-faced girl who had been blotted out of her life.

"Douglas Scott to Clover Massey," she was saying to herself, "really over and over again, as though trying to impress it on her memory. Suddenly she threw the paper from her and started up.

"Oh, God! It can't be—it shall not be!" she cried wildly. "He is mine—he is mine. Have we not been friends for years? Did he ever look at another woman until this baby-faced girl came his way? Am I to be put on one side for her? Have I not all the more than she can lay claim to, except a little less youth? She is alone in the world, without influence or position, and he needs someone to help him in his career. I could. My money would give him the leisure he wants for his talents to have fair play. His future is ruined if he marries her; but I will have enough to do to provide common necessities without thinking of fame."

She had thrown herself down again in a chair by the window, forgetful of time and everything else, when a maid came in.

"Mr. Scott is in the drawing-room, if you please, m'am, and would like to see you if convenient."

"Very well. I will be there directly. It took her a minute to find her voice, and then it sounded a little strange in her own ears. She got up as the maid left the room, and went over to the looking-glass.

"I don't look quite the thing," she thought, as she passed her hands over her face. "But I will be ready in five minutes."

Presently she opened the door and saw a man who was looking restlessly about him. "What is the matter?" she asked. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

"I have come to see you," he said. "I have come to see you."

which was just as well. Picking his way slowly and carefully, he had reached the middle of the bridge, when something fell splash into the silent pool below; and, quivering in every limb, he recovered his footing with difficulty, and stood rooted to the spot. Regina was roused to wonder what was the matter.

As she looked down she saw a large gas on one side of the bridge just in front of her, where the rotten wood had given way. A step farther and she would have followed those broken planks down the chasm below.

"A narrow escape," she said, "a very narrow escape." Then she laughed, and the nervous, sensitive creature, who had saved her a shiver at the sound, Regina was always kind to animals, and she caressed the trembling pony, comforting it with words and caresses until she could lead it quickly away from that gaping rent. She let him rest a few minutes while she took a snapshot of the pretty rustic in her breast, and then she rode on with such a curious experience.

When she got back to the hotel she said nothing of her adventure, which, indeed, had had very little effect on her, but taking a book, went to sit on the verandah, which commanded a view of the path she had just traversed. She had not sat there very long when she heard the sound of horses' hoofs approaching, and as she looked up she recognized the riders. They were Douglas Scott and his wife. Douglas was accustomed to riding, and looked his best on horseback, but Clover was evidently a novice in the art, and did not show to advantage, as Regina observed. Exclamations of surprise and pleasure were exchanged.

"Who would have thought of meeting you in this little out-of-the-way place?" Douglas said, as he dismounted. "I was to drive to the hotel, but I wanted to see these woods in all their spring beauty, though I am afraid her pony took up a good deal of her time for her to do justice to the scenery."

He laughed as he looked at his wife, but his glance was cast at Regina as she sat there. The girl laughed back at him happily, with a half-sly look at her husband's handsome friend, of whom she stood in little awe. They were quite absurdly in love, and almost ostentatiously happy.

"Well, we mustn't stop now, as it is getting dark, and we want to sleep tonight at the chalet on top," Douglas said. "Have you been there?"

"No," Regina answered.

"Come, Clover, let's shall lose our way. Good-night, Regina, not goodbye, for we shall be down here again tomorrow, when we shall be able to talk over the matter."

And calling out another farewell they rode away up the bridge path.

Regina watched them until when they were out of sight, watched them as one under a spell.

"For the trees hang over it, I wonder why I did not speak! And yet why should I? Am I my sister's keeper?"

Besides, it is quite possible that nothing will happen. It depends on which side they ride. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide.

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

"I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide. I have left it to fate to decide."

and saw the look of peace and contentment on his face, she was well satisfied.

"You are happy, my dearest?" she asked a little wistfully.

"Quite," he answered with his grave smile, taking her hand in his. "And you?"

"Need you ask? Don't you know?"

With sudden passion, "that I have loved you all my life—that you are the beginning and end of everything with me."

A night or two later they were seated in the library of the new home after dinner, unpacking a variety of odds and ends, which had been sent on from Regina's flat, and which had to be sorted and arranged. Among other things Douglas found a packet of photographs, which had evidently not been inside since they came from the photographer's.

"You seem more enthusiastic over using your kodak than in examining the results," he remarked with a laugh. "This packet hasn't even been opened."

Regina was looking over some papers, and made an absent reply. He went on to the table, Douglas glanced at them at first with careless

curiosity, then with greater interest. They were the photographs Regina had taken in Germany more than two years ago, and which she had sent as usual to be developed, and then put away and forgotten.

Presently the sudden stillness struck Regina, and she looked up. "How quiet you are!" she said. "What have you got there?"

He handed her a photograph without a word. It was the one she had taken of the bridge, and it showed the gap in the middle plainly. She was conscious of a deadly coldness, and her senses seemed to be leaving her.

"I thought you told me you had never seen this," she said. "What voice saying, 'When was this taken? Before or after that night?'"

She knew her happiness was at stake, but something seemed to drag the truth from her. "Before," she murmured with white lips.

"So you knew when we met you on our way up the night it happened?"

"Yes," she said.

He rose slowly and heavily, but Regina sat as motionless as a statue and watched him leave the room. She listened breathlessly, and she heard the hall door shut. Then all was silence.

"Yes," said the gentlemanly burglar, "there is one class of men that I occasionally stumble upon in my midnight walk which I prefer to avoid. An inventor is always an unknown quantity, and it is unpleasant to risk one's house."

He might be as harmless as a child, or he might prove more diabolically cruel and cranky than an escaped lunatic. Only twice in his experience had he met such characters in their own homes. One was in a suburban house, where everything seemed so easy that I took my time about entering the open window, but after a while I stepped upon her tangled and made all sorts of noises.

"I tried to get out of the window as soon as possible, but I was so tied up in the search of my strings that I stumbled twice. Then the owner of the house appeared, aroused by the jangling noises made by his infernal things. There was a scene which nearly cost me my life. I escaped, however, by tearing around among the pipes and wires until the man went down on his knees and begged me to desist."

The other instance where I paid an unexpected visit to an inventor's home was in New York. The fellow was somewhat of a crank, I imagine, and he invented things for the pleasure of seeing more of you and talking to you. But any man who will leave his house to a stranger is a fool.

"Why do you frighten a man in that way?" he asked crossly. "Is it not bad enough to rob the house without making me up by such noises?"

"Any man who throws his shoes in the middle of the floor deserves to be rudely awakened," I answered, turning up the gas to study my man the better. "I owe you an apology, but I will make it up to you."

"You are wrong," he answered. "You do owe me an apology. If you had shut the door of my room behind you, I might have accepted the situation. But any man who will leave such a draught blowing on a sleeping man deserves to be—"

"I accept the correction," I replied, bowing and stepping toward the door. "I will apologize and at the same time close the door."

"The perfect composure of the man had aroused my suspicions, and I discovered that he was a thief. I backed toward the door and closed it. There was a click of the lock and the door banged sharply against the jam."

"You have closed it with a very bad grace, and with little thought of the consequences," the man added. "I have given me time to explain you, but I have saved myself a good deal of inconvenience. As it is now I think you have made the situation unpleasant for both of us."

"I don't understand," I muttered, more puzzled than ever by the man's words and attitude.

"I suppose not, but your ignorance does not alter the fact. I shall, however, seek to enlighten you. To do so I must go back somewhat to the beginning. I'm an inventor by profession—these words made me shudder—and I am just now at work upon a very great thing. In fact, it will prove a revolution in some lines of trade."

"I have invented a time lock which will prove superior to any on the market today. This lock will be of value in an infinite variety of ways, but chiefly for use on safes and bank vaults. It will enable me to do it to set it for a certain length of time, and no earthly power can unlock it. You may blow up the safe or vault, but the steel bolts will not move from their position. It will remain locked until the time expires, and then the steel spring will open it automatically."

"For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

For months he seemed stunned by the shock—he took no interest in anything, and Regina had just begun to judge that he was an utter breakdown. Gradually she succeeded in interesting him again in his work; he came to love his invention, and he was surrounded by him and thought and acted for him with a devotion that knew no weariness. She saved him all the terrible forms of torture that he had suffered between him and the outside world, so that he came to lean on her and look to her for everything. And then, when it was all over, she brought him back to England."

curiosity, then with greater interest. They were the photographs Regina had taken in Germany more than two years ago, and which she had sent as usual to be developed, and then put away and forgotten.

Presently the sudden stillness struck Regina, and she looked up. "How quiet you are!" she said. "What have you got there?"

He handed her a photograph without a word. It was the one she had taken of the bridge, and it showed the gap in the middle plainly. She was conscious of a deadly coldness, and her senses seemed to be leaving her.

"I thought you told me you had never seen this," she said. "What voice saying, 'When was this taken? Before or after that night?'"

She knew her happiness was at stake, but something seemed to drag the truth from her. "Before," she murmured with white lips.

"So you knew when we met you on our way up the night it happened?"

"Yes," she said.

He rose slowly and heavily, but Regina sat as motionless as a statue and watched him leave the room. She listened breathlessly, and she heard the hall door shut. Then all was silence.

"Yes," said the gentlemanly burglar, "there is one class of men that I occasionally stumble upon in my midnight walk which I prefer to avoid. An inventor is always an unknown quantity, and it is unpleasant to risk one's house."

He might be as harmless as a child, or he might prove more diabolically cruel and cranky than an escaped lunatic. Only twice in his experience had he met such characters in their own homes. One was in a suburban house, where everything seemed so easy that I took my time about entering the open window, but after a while I stepped upon her tangled and made all sorts of noises.

"I tried to get out of the window as soon as possible, but I was so tied up in the search of my strings that I stumbled twice. Then the owner of the house appeared, aroused by the jangling noises made by his infernal things. There was a scene which nearly cost me my life. I escaped, however, by tearing around among the pipes and wires until the man went down on his knees and begged me to