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At the Mouth of the Treacherous Pit

STORY OF LOVE, INTRIGUE AND REVENGE

CHAPTER XXIV.

"You will hear all in time, my Gertrude," answered Dolores. "When Lord Rhysworth had been dead two years, I married Sir Karl Allammore, your father, Gertrude. I had been acquainted with him before my first marriage. He loved me very much indeed, and I loved him. Now comes the part of my story," Dolores continued, "that I do not care to tell. Lola de Ferras loved Sir Karl, and always hoped that one day she would become Lady Allammore, but Sir Karl had never thought of her in that way. She was very angry about my marriage. She came to see me, and she insulted me very cruelly, she said that I had stolen her lover, and that, if I had not come between them, he would have married her. It was a most unpleasant scene, and at its termination she made a terrible vow that she would have her revenge, even if she waited years for it. Ah, my children, she had it. No home was ever happier than ours; no wife was ever so blessed, so beloved! You, my Gertrude, were born; and I do not think the sun ever shone on such a household. I could never tell you what Sir Karl was to me. He loved you both so dearly; he never made the least difference between you. It is Sir Karl whom you remember, Kathleen, not your own father. Our home was an earthly paradise; my father spent the greater part of his time with us. I always had a strange dread that our happiness was too great to last. I told Sir Karl so, but he laughed my fears away. I must inform you that in the meantime Lola

had gone away. After awhile news came that madame was dead, and after that her very name seemed to be forgotten in the neighborhood. One morning—oh, my children, just as the serpent entered Eden—a letter came from Lola de Ferras to Sir Karl. I was seated at the table with my husband, my father, and you, my two children, happy—ah, Heaven, who so happy as I? I have never been happy since, and I never shall be again. Sometimes," added Dolores, "I am wicked enough to think that unless Sir Karl is with me in heaven I shall never be happy even there. Oh, my children, what am I saying? But I loved him so!" And her fair head drooped on her child's, the child who was so inexpressibly dear to her because she had her father's face. "The sunlight has never appeared so bright; the flowers have lacked their perfume; everything has seemed changed to me since that day," she said, with a bitter, long-drawn sigh. "When my father died," she continued, "I could bear the disgrace no longer. I gave up Scarsdale, my home, my friends, even my name, and came hither, where I hoped to be able to forget my sorrow and live in peace—forget the shame that in England was ever present with me. You will find the shame and sorrow follow you as it did me, and that people will regard you with kindly pity. Ah, give me anything rather than that."

"But, mamma," said Kathleen, "we have no cause for shame; we had nothing to do with what happened."

"It falls and rests on us just the same," she replied. "A deserted wife! Ah, children, when you know more of the world, you will understand all that that means! A deserted wife is branded even by the pity and compassion she excites."

Then Sir Karl's daughter rose from her mother's side and stood erect in the white moonlight. She raised her clear, delicate face to the sky. She had been a child when she knelt in the long grass two hours before; she was a woman now, with the light of a high resolve on her face.

"Mamma," she said, "have you the two letters written by this woman? Will you show them to me?"

"I will. I have your father's portrait, too. I have not looked at it for sixteen years; but I will show it to you."

"Thank you. And during these years you have not heard one word of the man who loved you and his children so dearly?"

"No—not one, Gertrude."

Gertrude lowered her childlike face to her mother.

"And you believe, mamma, that for sixteen years he has been with—with this rival of yours?"

"I must believe it, Gertrude. Surely, if he had been anywhere in the wide world but with her, he would have written to me. Why should he not? We parted on the most loving terms."

"But, mamma, that argument cuts both ways. If you parted on such loving terms, so much the less reason is there for deserting you in such a fashion."

Dolores looked in bewilderment at the child; she had never viewed the matter in that light before.

"Mamma," said the girl, with a grave solemnity, that startled Dolores, "I do not believe it—I will not believe it. If my father was the good and honorable man you describe him, would one hour's interview with a

person for whom you say he had little affection or respect make him false to his whole life—false to you and to us? A thousand times no! If the whole world swore to me that my father was guilty, I would maintain his innocence as I would maintain the truth of Heaven. He is innocent, mamma," continued Gertrude, "as surely as the stars shine in the sky above us. Oh, how could you who loved him have believed him otherwise?" She turned and pointed to the river. You might as well say that suddenly and without course that water became black as ink. Oh, mamma, how could you believe that my father was false?"

"What else could I do, Gertrude, my child?"

"Do? Trust him! I am only his child, and I do not remember one line of his dear face, but I would scorn to believe him guilty on the word of such a woman as that."

"Oh, child," said Dolores, faintly, "you have a golden heart!"

The depths of her soul were stirred it was as though an angel stood before her and spoke for the long-lost man. From the hour in which she had accepted her husband's guilt as a matter of course.

"But Gertrude," she said, piteously, "do you not see that is the only possible explanation of his absence? If he is elsewhere, why has he not written to me? He must have known that, loving him as I did, every hour of his absence would be torture to me and, if he is not under baneful influence, I repeat, why has he not written to me?"

"I do not know. You will say, mamma, that reason or judgment does not enter into my counsels. I go by my instinct, by my feeling, by the voice of my own heart, and I know he is innocent—innocent as you or I."

Dolores' fair head dropped on her breast; she felt repudiated by the firm faith of her daughter.

"I am sure of this," said Gertrude, her fair face glowing with excitement—"that the truth will be discovered one day. If murder will out, innocence will be vindicated. My father's name will yet be as unsullied as the stars in the heavens. Rely upon it, mamma, there has been someone or other a terrible mistake."

Could it be possible? A terrible mistake! In what way? Dolores knew Lola's writing only too well. Her husband had vanished—there was no doubt about that.

What mistake could there be? Was it possible that she had allowed her jealousy to be too easily roused, that she had been quick to judge and condemn? But every one else had judged Sir Karl in the same manner. Almost before she had time to form a thought herself, she had read the story in a dozen different journals, in a hundred different voices. How could she be mistaken?

"Innocence will be vindicated," repeated Gertrude. "I know there are people so weak of faith that they think Heaven does not interfere with the concerns of this lower world. If the falling of a sparrow be a matter of moment, of how much greater importance is the character of a man? Mamma, I believe most solemnly that what we thought chance—the dropping of that lady's purse—was the very finger of Providence. For sixteen years men and women have believed my father guilty; but something tells me that the terrible mystery will be cleared up. I will devote my life to the task of clearing my father's name."

And again Dolores murmured: "You have a golden heart, Gertrude! You are so like him!"

(To be continued.)



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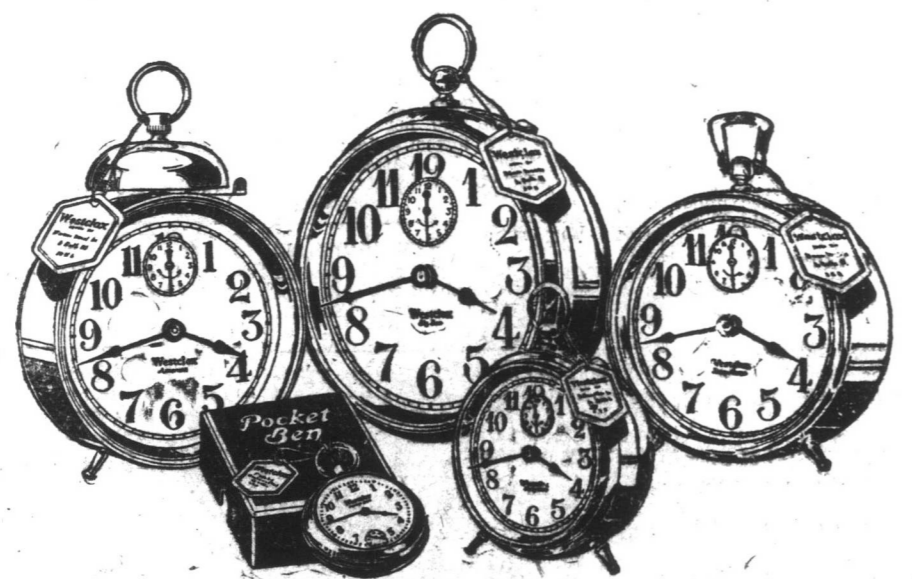
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"River Clyde" on Fire

THE FAMOUS GALLIPOLI LANDING SHIP.

A Lloyd's cablegram from Philadelphia states that the Spanish steamer Angela (3,313 tons) has been on fire while loading sugar, and that the fire has been put out after some damage, chiefly to the cargo, had been done.

To the Angela the whole proceeding proved very tame, no doubt, for what is a small fire in a sugar cargo, compared with the storm of shell fire to which she was accustomed in the days of the Gallipoli landing.

Then she was known as the River Clyde, and it is now a matter of history how she was run ashore on the beach at the beginning of the Dardanelles campaign, how she was held

Lost Exports

What is the Government Going to do About It?

Speaking in Edgbaston Botanical Gardens, Birmingham, recently, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, M.P., said the Prime Minister thought the country was satisfied with the Government

MRS. COFFMAN ILL SEVEN YEARS

Saved from an Operation by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

Sidell, Ill.—"I was a nervous wreck. I was suffering from a pain in my left side, which was almost unbearable, and I could not even let the bed clothing rest on my body at night. I had been sick for seven years, but not so bad until the last eighteen months, and had become so run-down that I cared for nobody, and would rather have died than live. I couldn't do my work without help, and the doctors told me that an operation was all there was left. I would not consent to that, so my husband brought me a bottle of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and begged me to take it. I have taken fourteen bottles of it and I feel ten years younger. Life is full of hope. I do all my housework and had a large garden this year. I never will be without the Vegetable Compound in the house, and when my two little girls reach womanhood I intend to teach them to take it. I am never too busy to tell some suffering sister of my help, and please use my name and letter to spread the good news of Lydia E. Pinkham's medicine."

—Mrs. Ida M. Coffman, R. R. 2, Sidell, Ill.

there while through great doors cut in her sides troops of the 29th Division were rapidly disembarked under terrific fire, and how she lay there, shot to pieces, during the whole of the Gallipoli adventure, eventually to be refloated, repaired, and sold to foreign owners.

and that the people would break their hearts if the Government left them. Just fancy if they were to go out and the Unionist Government come in. We might send the Bolsheviks home again, and shake hands with our friends from across the sea instead. We might stop giving doles to foreigners and keep them for our own people. We might build some houses instead of talking about them. We might put back the McKenna duties and safeguard our industries for our own workers.

The unemployment problem was worse to-day than a year ago. In the case of the cotton trade, the greatest of our export trades, he was told that 90,000 men were out of work and many more were on short time.

Our iron and steel industry was not back to its pre-war position, although Belgium, France, and the United States were in either as good or a better position.

Unless something was done to give a stimulus to our trade this country was faced by disaster. What was the Government going to do about it? If they did nothing the country would not wait for them to go out; it would kick them out.

Fashions and Fads.

Leaves of gold tissue suggest the Empire waistline on a slim frock of black chiffon.

Very narrow gold fringe is used on a frock of amber crepe, embroidered in gold beads.

A charming evening slipper of white and gold brocade is embroidered in gold beads.

Strands of jet, reaching to hip length, make a cape-back for a slim frock of black silk.

Black tulle edges the brim of a wide hat of leghorn, to wear with a sheer summer frock.

A scalloped fish of crisp white organdie is worn on a frock of apple-green organdie.

The very fashionable, small felt hat may be quite severe in its lines, or else seltzy crushed.

Black pumps, with or without buckles, are among the most fashionable for daytime wear.



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is an old Axiom.

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