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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

Continued from Yesterday.

"Kisses," I said, as I took possession of her little hand, "you cannot guess what it costs me to tell you how impossible it is for me ever to link my lot with yours. The reason why I cannot tell you. My secret is the bitterest one a man can have to keep, and it must remain locked in my own breast for all time. Had I met you earlier it might have been very different—but now our ways must be separate for ever. Don't think where I am, for I am not there. I can help, dear, remember only that as long as I live I shall call no other woman wife. Henceforward I will try to be worthy of the interest you have felt in me. No one shall ever have the right to say you are again, and if by chance you hear good of me in the dark days to come, you will know that it is for love of you I rule my life. May God bless and keep you always."

She held up her sweet face to me, and I kissed her on the lips. Then, Mr. Maybourne returned to the verandah; and, half-an-hour later, feeling that father and daughter would like a little time alone together, before they retired to rest, I begged them to excuse me, and on a pretence of feeling tired went to my room.

Next morning after breakfast I drove with Mr. Maybourne into Cape Town, where I made the few purchases necessary for my journey. In extension of the kindness he had so far shown me, he insisted on advancing me half my first year's salary—a piece of generosity for which you may be sure I was most grateful, seeing that I had not a halfpenny in the world to call my own. Out of this sum I paid the steamship company for my passage—much against their wishes—obtained a ready-made rig out suitable for the rough life I should henceforth live, also a revolver, a rifle, and among other things a small gold locket which I wished to give to Agnes as a keepsake and remembrance of myself.

At twelve o'clock I returned to the house, and, after lunch, prepared to bid the woman I loved "good-bye." Of that scene I cannot attempt to give any description—the pain is too keen even now. Suffice it that when I left the house I carried with me, in addition to a sorrow that I thought would last me all my life, a little square parcel which, on opening, I found to contain a photo of herself in a Russian leather case. How I prized that little present I will leave you to guess.

Two hours later I was in the train bound for Johannesburg.

CHAPTER XI.

Six months had elapsed since I had left Cape Town and on looking back on them now I have to confess that they constituted the happiest period of my life up to that time. I had an excellent appointment, an interesting, if not all-absorbing, occupation, comfortable quarters, and the most agreeable of companions any man could desire to be associated with. I was far removed from civilization as the most misanthropic of men, living by civilized employment, could hope to get. Our nearest town, if by such a name a few scattered huts could be dignified, was nearly a miles distant, our mails only reached us once a week, and our stores every three months. As I had never left the mine for half a day during the whole of the time I had been on it, I had seen no strange faces, and by reason of the distance and the unsettled nature of the country, scarcely half-a-dozen had seen mine.

"The Pride of the South," as the mine had been somewhat grandiloquently christened by its discoverer, was proving a better property than had even been expected, and to my astonishment, for I had made haste to purchase shares in it, my luck had turned, and I found myself standing an excellent chance of becoming a rich man.

One thing surprised me more and more every day, and that was my freedom from arrest; how it had come about that I was permitted to remain at large so long I could not understand. When I had first come up to Rhodesia I had found a danger in everything about me. In the rustling of the coarse veldt grass at night, the sighing of the wind through the trees, and even the shadows of the mine buildings and machinery. But when week after week and month after month went by and still no notice was taken of me by the police, my fears began to abate until, at the time of which I am about to speak, I hardly thought of the matter at all. When I did I hastened to put it away from me in much the same way as I would have done the remembrance of some unpleasant dream of the previous week. One consolation, almost cruel in its uncertainty, was always with me. If suspicion had not so far fallen on me in England, it would be unlikely, I argued, ever to do so; and in the joy of this thought, I began dreams of the happiness that might possibly be mine in the future. Was it to be wondered at therefore that my work was pleasant to me and that the wording of Mr. Maybourne's letters of praise seemed sweeter in my ears than the strains of the loveliest music could have been. It was evident that my star was in the ascendant, but, though I could not guess it then, my troubles were by no means over; and, as I was soon to find out, it was on the edge of the bitterest period of all my life.

Almost on the day that celebrated my seventh month in Mr. Maybourne's employ, I received a letter from him announcing his intention of starting for Rhodesia in a week's time, and



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stating that while in our neighborhood he would embrace the opportunity of visiting "The Pride of the South." In the postscript he informed me that his daughter had decided to accompany him, and for this reason he would be glad if I would do my best to make my quarters as comfortable as possible in preparation for her. He, himself, he continued, was far too old a traveler to be worth considering.

I was standing at the engine-room door, talking to one of the men, when the store-keeper brought me my mail. After I had read my chief's letter, I felt a thrill go through me that I could hardly have diagnosed for pleasure or pain. I felt it difficult to believe that in a few weeks' time I should see Agnes again, be able to look into her face, and hear the gentle accents of her voice. The portrait she had given me of herself I carried continually about with me; and, as proof of the inspection I received, I may say that it was already beginning to show decided signs of wear. Mr. Maybourne had done well in asking me to see to her comfort. I told myself I would begin my preparations at once, and it should go hard with me if she were not pleased with my arrangements when she arrived.

While I was mentally running my eye over what I should do, Mackinnon, my big Scotch overseer, came up from the shaft's mouth to where I stood, and reported that some timbering which I had been hurrying at large so long I could not understand. After we had visited it and I had signified my approval, I informed him of our employer's contemplated visit, and wound up by saying that his daughter would accompany him. He

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shook his head solemnly when he heard this.

"A foolish thing," he said, in his slow manner of fact, "a very foolish thing. This country's no fit for a lady at present, as Mr. Maybourne kens well eno'. An' what's more, there'll be trouble among the boys (natives) before vera long. He'd best be out of it."

"My dear fellow," I said, a little testily I fear, for I did not care to hear him throw cold water on Mr. Maybourne's visit in this fashion, "you're always thinking the natives are going to give trouble, but you must confess that what you prophesy never comes off."

He shook his head more sagely than before.

"Ye can say what ye please," he said, "I'm nae nae for a prophet, but I canna help but see what's put plain before my eyes. As the proverb says—'Forewarned is forearmed.' There's been trouble an' discontent all through this country-side for months past, an' if Mr. Maybourne brings his daughter up here—well, he'll have to run the risk of mischief happenin' to the lass. It's no business o' mine, however. As the proverb says—'Let the wilful gang their own gait.'"

Accustomed as he was to look on the gloomy side of things, I could not but remember that he had been in the country a longer time than I had, and that he had much more experience of the treacherous Matabele than I could boast.

"In your opinion, then," I said, "I had better endeavor to dissuade Mr. Maybourne from coming up?"

"Nae! Nae! I'm nae sayin' that at all. Let him come by all means since he's set on it. But I'm not going to say I think he's wise in bringing the girl."

With this ambiguous answer I had to be content. I must confess, however, that I went back to the house feeling a little uneasy in my mind. Ought I to write and warn Mr. Maybourne, or should I leave the matter to chance? As I did not intend to send off my mail until the following day, I determined to sleep on it.

In the morning I discovered that my fears had entirely vanished. The boys we employed were going about their duties as usual, and the half-dozen natives who had come in during the course of the day in the hope of obtaining employment, seemed so peaceably inclined that I felt compelled to dismiss Mackinnon's suspicions from my mind as groundless, and determined on no account to alarm my friends in such needlessly silly fashion.

How well I remember Mr. and Miss Maybourne's arrival. It was on a Wednesday, exactly three weeks after my conversation with Mackinnon just recorded, that a boy appeared with a note from the old gentleman to me. It was a single sheet of paper, and stated that they had got so far and would be with me during the afternoon. From that time forward I examined my preparations with a critical eye, discussed the meals with the cook to make sure that he had not forgotten a single particular, drilled my servants in their duties, and do what I could to bring them up to the standard of near perfection as it was possible for me to get them, and in one way and another arranged about generally until it was time for my guests to arrive.

I had fitted up my own bedroom for Miss Maybourne, and made it as comfortable as the limited means at my disposal would allow. Her father would occupy the overseer's room, that individual sharing a single bed with me. The sun was just sinking to his rest below the horizon when I espied a cloud of dust on the western veldt. Little by little it grew larger until I could distinctly make out a buggy drawn by a pair of horses. It was traveling at a high rate of speed, and before many minutes were over would be with us. As I watched it my heart began to beat so tumultuously that it seemed as if those around me could not fail to hear it. In the angle where approaching was the woman I loved, the woman whom I had made up my mind I should never see again.

Five minutes later the horses had pulled up, and I was standing on the porch, my hand on the handle of the door, waiting for the woman I loved. Never before had I seen her look so lovely. She seemed quite to have recovered from the horrors of the shipwreck, and looked even stronger than when I had first seen her on the deck of the Fiji Princess, the day we had left Southampton. She greeted me with a fine show of cordiality, but under it it was easy to see that she was as nervous as myself. Having handed the horses and buggy over to a couple of my boys, I led my guests into the house I had prepared for them. Evidently they had come with the intention of being pleased, for they expressed themselves as surprised and delighted with every arrangement I had made for their comfort. It was a merry party, I can assure you, that sat down to the evening meal that night—so merry, indeed, that under the influence of Agnes's manner even Mackinnon forgot himself and ceased to prophesy ruin and desolation.

When the meal was finished we adjourned to the verandah, and lit our pipes. The evening was delightfully cool after the heat of the day, and overhead the stars twinkled in the firmament of heaven like countless lamps, lighting up the sombre veldt till we could see the shadowy outlines of trees miles away. The evening breeze rustled the long grass, and across the square the figure of our cook could just be seen, outlined against the ruddy glow of the fire in the hut behind him. How happy I was I must leave you to guess. From where I sat I could catch a glimpse of my darling's face, and see the gleam of her rings as her hand rested on the arm of her chair. The memory of the awful time we had spent together on the island, and in the open boat, came back to me with a feeling that was half pleasure, half pain. When I realized that I was entertaining them in my abode in Rhodesia, it seemed scarcely possible that we could be the same people.

(To Be Continued.)

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District Doings

JEANNETTE'S CREEK.

The drainage pumps are running day and night.

It. Forbes fell through a trap door in his barn and has been laid up for a few days.

Taxes seem to be interesting our citizens just now. An hundred and eighty acre farmer has over two hundred dollars taxes to pay.

The Marine City sugar beet factory has already secured two hundred acres of land in this locality for next season's sugar beet raising.

Few fish are being shipped just now, but those that are shipped bring high prices, hard fish bring twenty-five cents per pound and soft twelve cents.

OUVRY.

James Caughey had two toes cut off a few days ago. Dr. Oliver performed the operation and Jim is getting along alright.

Mr. Crouch had a brood mare die yesterday morning from inflammation.

James Webb has moved to James Pardo's house at Pardoville.

Wilbur Guyett has returned from Windsor, where he had been working this winter.

Rev. S. L. Toll and bride have left for their home in South Woodlee. Before leaving, their father, Mr. P. Toll, they gave an oyster supper to a large circle of old friends.

Miss Nettie Toll and Mr. Oummersford, of South Woodlee, visited here last week.

Brook D'Clute left this morning for Dakota. He has been at his old home for the past two or three weeks.

Captain Hugh D'Clute and wife, of Sandusky, are visiting at Captain John D'Clute's.

Mr. Softly preached in the English church on Sunday. Mr. McQuillan filling his place at Morpeth.

James Magill, former storekeeper of this place, has been visiting at Harry Gill's and James Goullet's.

The losing side of the Epworth League contest gave a social this evening.

It's lots easier to slide down a banister than to climb up a flight of stairs. You can slide down to security without trouble, but it takes climbing to be somebody.

Conscience that is mainly exercised within the limits of the personality, is thus set to guard, and increases the common stock of righteousness.

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