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LORD MORDEN'S DAUGHTER

— OR —

THE TRAGEDY OF THE CEDARS.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

At Charing Cross he examined the interior of his cab, and picked up the telegram, which Dora had carried in the sleeve of her jacket.

He read it, and sniffed the air, suspiciously.

"It ain't all on the square," he muttered, doubtfully. "This smell o' sweet apples means chloroform. The lady is Mrs. Locksley, and the old man called himself her dad. Now what's the best thing for me to do?"

He turned his eye upon the official form of a policeman, who paraded the platform, and smiled contemptuously, adding:

"I'm a better 'tec myself than he is!"

This opinion seemed to give him great satisfaction and he resolved to keep his eye upon the house at Islington. He would do so that very night.

Just then another train was signaled, and his thoughts turned to the possibility of a fare. He only hoped that he would get one who wished to be taken some part of the way to Islington, as that would facilitate matters greatly.

"I've got my twenty-seven and six to hand in to-night, or there is no cab for me to-morrow," he thought. "That must be paid. Hullo! Here's a chance, and another Richmond train, too!"

A young man was hurrying toward the cab rank, yards ahead of everybody else.

"Keb, sir—keb?"

"One question," the young man said, rapidly. "Can you tell me if you or any other cabman here saw a young lady who came by the 6.15 from Richmond?"

"I'm your man," replied the cabby gleefully. "Here! read this."

He handed the telegram to the young fellow who read it quickly, uttered an exclamation of satisfaction, and said:

"You took the lady somewhere?"

"I did; with an old gentleman who met her. And I've marked the house, sir!"

"I am Frank Rogers," said the young man, "and as I never sent any such telegram, there is foul play. Take me to the house where you left Mrs. Locksley. Quick!"

He jumped into the hansom, and in half an hour the horse was pulled up with a jerk, the steam rising from his reeking body in clouds.

"This is the place," called the cabman, and Frank sprang down. In a moment he was ringing the bell, and had taken the precaution to signal a policeman from the opposite corner.

The door opened, and an elderly woman appeared. She was a perfect specimen of the London lodging-house keeper—thin, tired looking, and calculating, and greeted the policeman with a nod.

"Ha!" she eclaimed. "More cabs; but hey've gone. They took the second floor for a month, and paid in advance; but two days has satisfied em. Cabs! I never see such folks for cabs. They were no good, that's certain. Too fond o' locking their doors and speaking in whispers to suit me, and the woman——"

"One word," interrupted Frank, impatiently. "A young lady arrived here an hour since."

"That's right," nodded the landlady, "and she were in a dead faint. They took her away like that, too, professing they was going to a doctor, but my Johnny says as how they drove right away toward St. Pancras station, him a-hanging on the back o' the cab, too!"

"St. Pancras!" muttered Rogers, doubtfully.

"They changed cabs midway," exclaimed the landlady, "and he lost sight of them 'cause a bobby cuffed his ears for trying to follow."

"Thank you," replied Rogers, after a minute's thought; then he jumped into his cab, saying, quickly:

"London Bridge station, sharp."

He consulted a time-table as the hansome sped away, and muttered:

"Mr. Marlowe and Esther Marsh intend catching the Dover boat train, unless I am very much out of my reckoning. From Dover they will go to Deal, probably by road. I think I shall be able to thwart their plans!"

He looked at his watch. Only ten minutes until the train was due!

He urged on the driver, and the cab bowled along at a pace that elicited cries of warning from the police on duty.

As it dashed into the station yard, Frank jumped out, and ran onto the plat form.

"Ticket!" said the official at the gate as he barred the way.

The whistle sounded, and pushing the man roughly aside, Rogers raced onward, shouting:

"This train must wait! I am a detective!"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The guard was in the act of giving the final signal, but he paused, and a hundred heads shot out of the carriage windows. Among these was the terrified face of Richard Marlowe.

Had it not been for the vigorous grasp of Esther Marsh, he would have left the train, and tried to escape among the crowd.

"It is that accursed Rogers!" he gasped.

"Keep your wits cool," Esther retorted. "We are not outside the law. I'll face it out!"

"I am a detective!" repeated Frank. "And am under the impression that a lady is aboard this train, under the influence of chloroform. She is being abducted by one Marlowe. Yes," he added, cooly stepping toward the comparment occupied by Marlowe, Esther Marsh and the insensible Dora, "this is my man!"

"Produce your warrant!" sneered Esther. "This young lady is my mistress. We are acting under the instructions of her legal guardian."

"Unlock the door, guard," Frank said, quietly, "and signal an officer at the station. I charge these people with decoying this lady from her home by means of a false telegram in my name; with administering to her a drug, for the purpose of producing insensibility—which is, in itself a criminal act. I shall also charge them with forgery and conspiracy."

Mr. Marlowe and Esther Marsh were ordered to quit the train forthwith. It could not be kept waiting any longer. They protested indignantly, but were told that they had their remedy, if they could prove that the charges were false.

The station detective was commissioned to keep both in confinement until the young lady had recovered her senses, as her testimony, together with that of others, would not admit of the prisoners even being released on bail.

Dora was taken to a private room beyond the refreshment bar, where she awakened from her dreamful sleep, knowing nothing of the danger from which she had been rescued.

In the meanwhile, Rogers sent the cabman for Fred Fairfax, and that night a number of serious charges were made to a police superintendent against Marlowe and Esther Marsh, among which, and foremost of all, was the suspicion that they were directly implicated in the strange disappearance of Edmund Locksley, and might yet have to answer for the crime of murder!

After her first expression of rage, Esther Marsh contented herself with sending a message to her friends in Deal, one of whom was Captain Deene; but Marlowe was sallow with fear.

"I did not know that Locksley had been murdered," he protested. "I honestly thought that he had run away. The game is up, and I am ready to admit my share of it. Oh, dear, I must not stand in the dock. It will ruin me, commercially and socially. Withdraw your charge, gentlemen, I beg of you, and I will confess all that I know—everything."

"No," replied Fairfax. "We shall press it to the utmost, until the mystery of Locksley's fate has been cleared up. This much I will tell you—his hat has been found in the Thames."

Marlowe groaned with horror.

"I knew nothing of this—I never suspected it."

"You inserted the libel about him in a scurrilous society paper," was the stern rejoinder. "And represented yourself to be Captain Deene, or some near relation of Mrs. Locksley."

"I only did it under the instructions of another," Marlowe sobbed. "Oh, this disgrace—the disgrace of being charged in open court with these things, will ruin me—will kill me!"

"It is all you deserve," was the barrister's cold reply. "Who has been your tutor?"

"I will tell you to-morrow—after I have seen him," Marlowe promised. "I am sure that I can clear myself! I have only obeyed Captain Deene in most things!"

(To be continued.)

THE COUNSELOR.

WALT MASON

I sometimes offer good advice to youths who smoke cheroots; I say, 'You'll pay a fearful price for this, you young galoots! I hand you counsel wise and ripe, at which you should not shy; just wait until I light my pipe, and I will tell you why. Tobacco is a solace fine when you are young and hale; it has an influence benign, if you are feeling stale. It cheers when grievous problems irk, this friendly nicotine; yet all the time gets in its work on heart and nerves and spleen. Tobacco is a snare to catch the feet of heedless men; has one among you got a match? My pipe's gone out again. Oh, children, harken to my rede, don't be tobacco's slaves; avoid the rank envenomed weed that fills untimely graves!" They say, "It came with evil grace, the counsel you just spoke, while you were blowing through your face all kinds of rancid smoke. If you would guide the erring jay from habits base and mean you ought to throw your pipe away and wash your whiskers clean." Such sophistries I always meet when anxious to advise and save from ruin and defeat the young and growing guys. Oh, who is in a better place to roast the deadly weed than one from whose protesting face tobacco smoke is freed? The youngsters cannot understand why one who puffs and stokes would see the weed forever banned, and hates it while he smokes. But smoking graybeards are sincere when they address the lads, and say, "Avoid this habit drear—be wiser than your dads!"

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