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The Crimson Slipper.

BY DORA LANGLOIS, Author of "A Bolt From the Blue," "The Red-headed Woman," "The Kiss of Judah," "The Secret's Daughter," "Victoria's Dream," etc.

(Continued) I followed Herman's injunction, and a moment or two later he joined me, behind the trees, just as a man of a cycle rounded the bend. As the cyclist approached us, Herman gave a whistle, and in an instant, the newcomer was off his machine and coming in our direction. "Is that you Clarkson?" he demanded, the query proving that Herman had correctly mistaken the whistle he had heard once before that night. "He has been to the police-station," Herman said in a low voice. "Yes, yes," retorted the newcomer. "I've had him in view the whole time. Markham's cycle has broken down; the car's ahead, isn't it? Good Heaven! Who are you?" "My name is Herman," my friend replied, "and Mr. Duncan is here also. We wanted to have a few words with you."

can only prove our bona fides by accompanying him with what grace we may. We are sacrificing something to let him do his duty according to his lights. Come, let us go to the car!" I turned, and Herman followed me in dog-like silence. I need not say that the position was galling, but the thought that the situation could only be saved by him kept us helpless. I don't want to boast, but I think I may say with truth that to face the "imminent deadly breach" for the old country's sake would not have taxed our resolution or cost either of us so much as it cost us to keep our hands off the man and do his bidding. Of the drive I can say nothing; I was not out to admire the scenery. Little Bob did his duty, and logged on at his best pace. Our companion soon showed that he was not a good cyclist; the road was hilly and there was a head wind. Once I offered to take his cycle and give him a seat in the trap but he declined rather ungraciously. Still, I suppose he thought it his duty to take no risk of getting separated from one of the other of us; and it is true enough that I might have cycled off, leaving him to settle with Herman before he could pursue me. We got to H—at last, and requesting us to come into the office with him he despatched a long cipher wire from the post-office. Outside he turned to me and said more graciously, "You—ah—I dare say know this hole of a place better than I do," he said. "Is there some hotel where they keep a night porter where we could put up for a few hours?" "There may be," I answered; "but—"



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my soul, would say to her, "You are my prisoner." I could not bear the thought. In spite of what she had done it seemed a desecration. In these moments of inaction, strive as I would, I could not separate the real Mary from the woman still held in heart and soul. My trouble pressed on me, stifled me. The room of the house itself, seemed too small to hold me, and my mystery, so, throwing the window open, I passed out on to the lawn. Here on this spot only yesterday Herman had spoken jestingly of the blight on the ill-tended flowers. He was right, there was a blight upon the place indeed. I moved towards the tall hollyhocks he had praised for their bright colours, and as I did so a massing of I forgot that with a dilapidated billycock bobbed down behind the hedge. In an instant my blood was up and running at an invigorating race through veins in which it seemed only to have stagnated since last night. Who was this new spy, who was on the track of one who had given his best to his country, and so far received only a dog's thanks? I forgot that the man was little and my hand was a sledge-hammer, meant that he should feel its weight, as King, Kaiser, or plenipotentiary would assuredly have felt it had such a one crossed me then. I was over the hedge in an instant, and came down on the soft line as drew with the crown of an ox; then I struck out and hit the man. For answer I got a blow, which, though not heavy, was remarkably well directed, and the following spring he adopted a scientific attitude of defence, and began to parry. "I'm sure I beg your pardon, sir, for looking over into your garden," he said, "but I don't see what you wanted to strike me for all that."

CHAPTER X.

I let Herman have his way, and a few stones thrown at the window having brought Minton down in sleepy delirium we entered the room. It was Sunday morning now, but I was not really in a forgiving or generous mood, when I proposed to feed my enemy; the simple fact was that for me the barrier between loved and hated was overthrown, and the line as drew between friend and foe was expunged; most men, and all women, were false, and therefore I was in the great class. The man against whom Herman shut the door might for aught I cared, sit at my board and eat with me, but I lacked nothing, but I doubt whether, at that moment I would have given myself the trouble of arguing with Herman to feed a starving friend. So we went to breakfast and bed. But though I promised my friend to follow his lead, and turn in, I struggled in the breakfast-room, when he had gone up stairs, and fell to working out a useless calculation. It was now nearly seven a. m. at ten, the night before Mary Densell had been in this very room. Nine hours had passed; the trouble and cares of years seemed to have gone over my head since then, yet to the rest of the world they were nine ordinary hours capable of holding only so much human activity. Presuming that the fugitives had caught that train from Santrigg to York, and there again taken the first possible train for London, they could not fall to reach town in time to get across to Cannon-street or Charing Cross for the Continental mail at nine a. m. If they had escaped at York, it was only to be trapped later. There were men in blue waiting for her now; enemies my hand had raised crowding every exit, barring her way at every turn. At nine o'clock at latest, some man would lay his hand upon her shoulder, and looking into those beautiful eyes, in which I had lost

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