

## THE MASTER OF THE MINE.

BY ROBERT MCHANAN.

### CHAPTER XIV.

A SUNBEAM IN THE COTTAGE.

It seemed as if the days of my boyhood had come back to me. Never since then had I experienced such feelings as now filled my heart, for with her fading they had faded, and during the years of our separation I had passed my time with tolerable tranquillity; but now that she had been so miraculously restored to me, the old fire was rekindled in my soul, and I became another man.

Her very presence in the house that night drove away all thoughts of sleep. I paced my room with restless footsteps, and when the dawn broke I hurried off to the shore.

What a change had come! The wind had died, the sea was like glass, and the only record left of the storm was the wreckage which had been cast upon the sands. Early as I was, there were others before me, gazing eagerly seaward, and searching along the cliffs for a prize.

I took a walk round by the mine, and, having made a hasty inspection, I hurried back to the cottage, eagerly hoping, yet half dreading, to see Madeline. But I was disappointed. My uncle had gone to his work. My aunt was busy, but alone. I looked around the kitchen, and my heart gave a great throb. After all, the events of the past night were real. There, hanging beside the fire, was the cloak—a rich mantle of silk and fur—which had been clinging round Madeline's form when I took her from the wreck.

I inquired eagerly for Madeline. "Have you seen her, aunt?" I asked. "Is she well? How does she look?"

I suppose there was something peculiar in my manner, for my aunt gazed at me anxiously, and said:

"Who is she, Hugh? Don't know who she is."

"Yes," I replied; "she is Miss Madeline Graham. She was at school with me long ago. Just before my father died she left, and I have never seen her since."

At that moment the door opened, and the figure of the black woman appeared. In the light of day she looked foreign indeed—a slight, delicate girl, shivering with the cold of our raw climate. I asked her how her mistress did. She made no answer, but stared vacantly at me; and I then discovered that she knew no language but the one in which she had spoken to Madeline. I looked at my aunt, and she understood—she went herself into the bedroom to see how her guest was getting on.

She was away only a few minutes, yet it seemed to me an hour. When she came back, she smiled at my anxious look.

"It be all right, lad, it be all right," she said. "The lady be nawn the worse o' her waiting; but she be tired and will stave in bed to day. She be a pratty creature, Hugh, and rich, I darsay; for her fingers be covered wi' dawmond rings."

All that day, overcome by the fatigue through which she had passed, Madeline remained in her chamber; while I, utterly unable to work, hung like a restless spirit about the house. The next morning she awoke refreshed; and when we three sat at breakfast, she astonished us all by appearing amongst us, fully dressed, and looking bright and well.

Her advent caused a general exclamation; my aunt ran forward to her assistance; my uncle placed our most comfortable chair beside the fire; while I, dumb and powerless, stood in the background doing nothing. Madeline! Could this be Madeline?—the girl I had dreamed of all these years, whose hands had been covered with my passionate kisses and marked with

my tears, and who had even wept a little herself at parting with me; could this be the same?—this glorious creature, with dreamy black eyes, warm brown skin, and glorious black hair! Her form was tall and straight as a willow; she moved like a queen!

As all her own clothes had been lost in the wreck, she wore a dress of my aunt's; over it she had thrown the cloak, which she had worn on the wreck, and which was now thoroughly dried. She came forward languidly, leaning on the shoulder of her black attendant, and sank down into the chair which my uncle had placed for her, while the native began crying and kissing her hands. They spoke together in a foreign tongue; then Madeline raised her eyes and looked quietly around. All this while I had been standing in the background, longing, yet dreading to speak to her; for I saw clearly enough that to her all the past was forgotten; but now, as her eyes swept the room and finally rested with a look of recognition on my face, I felt the hot blood mount to my temples.

"Am I mistaken?" she asked, softly; "did you take me from the wreck?"

I bowed my head. In a moment all her languor disappeared, the old fire darted from her eyes, the old flush suffused her cheeks—she was the Madeline of my childhood once more. She looked at her hand, with one quick movement pulled off the most valuable of her rings and held it toward me.

"Will you take it?" she said, with a bright smile. "You saved my life."

Her whole manner was that of a lady speaking to an inferior. Under my excitement I hardly noticed it. Scarcely knowing what I did, I sprang forward and took the ring; then, eagerly kissing her hand, I placed it again upon her finger.

"Madeline," I said, "don't you know me? Madeline—Miss Graham!"

She looked at me more critically, and shook her head.

"Have you forgotten Munster's?" I said, "and Hugh Trelawney?"

"If I expected a wild outburst of pleasure at the mention of my own name, I was quickly disappointed. She only smiled; and, with her eyes fixed upon vacancy as if she was reviewing the past, said:

"Munster's? Hugh Trelawney? Oh, yes; of course, I remember now! Hugh Trelawney was the nicest of those Munster boys, and we were friends; but," she added, fixing her eyes anxiously upon me, "surely you are not that boy?"

"Yes," I replied, "I am Hugh Trelawney!"

Her eyes opened wider, she glanced from me to my uncle and aunt, then round the kitchen, then she was silent.

I felt that some explanation was due, and I gave it. I told her of my father's death—of the kindness of my uncle and aunt, and of my subsequent life at St. Gurlott's.

"St. Gurlott's?" she said. "Is this St. Gurlott's in Cornwall?"

I answered in the affirmative. "Then I have an aunt living in a place of that name," she continued. "Perhaps you may know her; her name is Mrs. Redruth."

"Lard a mussey! wha, that be our master's mother!" broke in my aunt. But I added:

"Are you sure it's the same, Miss Graham? This Mrs. Redruth has a son who owns the mine."

"Yes, I know—my cousin George!" she answered; while my heart misgave me at the familiar manner in which she mentioned the name. "Oh, it must be the same," she continued, enthusiastically; "and to think I should be shipwrecked here, of all places in the world! Mr. Trelawney, are they far away? Would it be possible to let them know that I am here?"

It will be quite possible. Shall I take a message?"

"Will you be so kind? Perhaps if you tell her the story and show her this," she continued, drawing a quaint signet ring from her finger, "my aunt will come to me. This was my dear father's ring, and she knew it well, for he always wore it—and he had it on even when he died!"

I took the ring from her hand and started off on my mission.

The events of the last few hours had made me a changed being. I began to wonder if it was all real; whether I had really seen Madeline, and whether the one real romance of my life had been ruthlessly swept away. It was clear to me now that she thought little of the past, and cared for it even less. While I had been living upon the memory of those dear days, she had let other events obliterate it entirely from her mind. Well, it was clear I must do the same. I must deliver her up to the custody of her relations as coldly as if she were a stranger who had casually been cast in my path for a day.

Having made my decision, I became calmer, and walked with a steady step up to Redruth House. I inquired for the young master; learned that he had left for London two days before. I asked for the mistress, and she saw me. She listened to my story quietly enough; when I showed her the ring, her white face flushed, her hand trembled, and her eyes filled with tears.

"It is my poor brother's, my poor brother's," she said, more to herself than to me; then she added, "My piece is at your cottage; you say?"

"Yes, madam." "Tell her I will come to her at once."

I left the house, and, instead of returning to the cottage, walked straight down to the mine. Where was the use of my returning to Madeline: to stand by and see that grim and stony-hearted woman bring to her queenly eyes the light of happiness, to her lips the cry of joy, which the sight of my face had failed to do? No; such a sight might have roused all that was bad in her nature. I was better away.

All day I worked with a fierce persistence which alarmed me. I looked at myself in my mining suit, then recalled Madeline as I had seen her that morning—with her soft hands sparkling with gems, and the black servant crouching at her feet—and realized more than ever the distance that divided us from one another.

She was the mistress, born to command; I the servant, whose business it was to obey.

I returned home in the evening, and found the cottage much the same as it had always been. Madeline was gone.

"She be up at Redruth House, Hugh," said my aunt. "The awld missus came and took her away, and right glad she was to go, poor lass!"

She showed me a five-pound note which Madeline had given her, borrowing it from her aunt to do so. She put the note into an old work-box where the most of her treasures were kept, and set about getting the tea, imagining that the romance of last night's wreck was ended.

(To be Continued.)

### STEAD RELEASED.

LONDON WOMEN GIVE HIM A NEAT ROLL OF MONEY.

London, Jan. 19.—Mr. Stead, editor of the *P.M. Gazette*, who in November was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for his connection with the Eliza Armstrong abduction case, was released from prison yesterday. Mr. Stead is well and will speak to-night at a meeting of his friends and sympathizers. He will then take a fortnight's holiday. At a meeting last evening in Exeter Hall, Mr. Stead last evening was presented with a purse of \$565, which had been subscribed in penny donations by women.

Mrs. Fryer, of Glencoe, wife of the departed postmaster, has secured a situation in Calgary, and will leave for there shortly.

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of the highest grades. Parties contemplating the purchase of a piano will do well to await the opening of their wareroom. They have secured the services of Mr. G. W. Seammun, of Boston to attend to the tuning of their instruments. He will receive and promptly attend to all orders for piano tuning and repairing.