

come back. He might at least have had the decency to hand in his notice. You know how nervous I am with strange men—it is most inconsiderate of him."

"Perhaps he will come back," said the girl, with a confidence she did not feel.

"He won't," persisted Miss Pragg dogmatically. "He was a man of mystery from the beginning, and he's gone as mysteriously. I told you he was doing it for a wager, and you see now I was right." Her tone was final.

"You don't really know that, Aunt," said the girl impatiently.

"Margaret Assitas!—I never make mistakes—I say John Grey was a man of mystery, and he's gone."

"A man of mystery—and he's gone!" Peggy Assitas repeated the words involuntarily, her grey eyes fixed in a bewildered stare upon her aunt. "Gone!" she breathed again, and her face went an ashy white.

"Margaret!" exclaimed Miss Pragg with sudden energy, sitting bolt upright and fixing her keen eyes upon the girl's face. "Margaret—was he—the—man?"

THE girl's grey eyes dropped—she hung her head in confusion.

"You said, 'you had not been asked—never would be asked—and would never tell anyone who it was.'" Miss Pragg spoke solemnly.

"Margaret—he—is—the—man! I know!"

"What does it matter, Aunt? He has gone!"

Without another word, Margaret slowly left the room, going up to the one which was always hers when she stayed at the Maisonette. Locking the door, she paced to and fro, her hands clenched.

"John Grey! Oh, John Grey!" she moaned. "Why did you do it? My dear—my dear—even if it was hopeless—even if I did love you—there was no need for you to know it. You never would have known! You never would have known!"

In a little house in the mews there were mourning hearts over a vacant place. Suddenly, and without warning, John Grey had dropped out of their world.

Jacob had been to the garage many times, had been to John Grey's lodgings, had listened anxiously to the boys crying news, had asked first one and then another for tidings which they could not give; the earth seemed to have opened and swallowed him up, so completely had he disappeared.

Days passed into weeks without further sign of him. His few belongings were removed from his rooms and taken charge of by the Smilies.

Martha shook her head many times, and sighed.

"The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away—blessed be the name of the Lord."

Violet refused to be comforted.

"Does every one get lost in London?" she asked passionately. "First Rose—now John—the two I loved the most. Oh, it is too hard!" Alone in her little room she often broke into passionate weeping.

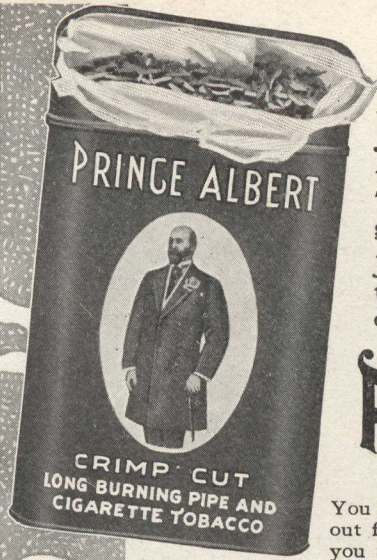
"John! Oh, John Grey—why did you do it? Where have you gone? Oh, John—where have you gone? I know it was hopeless—but you did not know how I loved you—John—John—you did not know—you never would have known."

With tears dropping upon her folded hands she would murmur brokenly the words of the song they had heard together—

"Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead

Will never come back to me."
(To be continued.)

A Choice of Evils.—Parson—"Why don't you get your boy to go to church instead of gadding about the street?" Parishioner—"Yes, sir, I've told 'im church is the right place and 'e ought to go, and 'is father often tells 'im that 'e wouldn't get no more 'arm in goin' to church an' listenin' to you than 'e picks up with the low fellers 'e loafers abahnt with all day on Sunday."—Printers' Pie.



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