POOR DOCUMENT

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# The Man in The Basement

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CHAPTER XXXI—(Continued.)

The deponent then stated that Weston became addicted to drink and dissipation, that Throgmorton, her brother, likewise led an irregular life, and that the major, who in contrast to the other two, was in every way respectable in his conduct, became her constant visitor. She told him frankly her impression that the two men had no object but to defraud him of his money, and said she felt no interest in him and earnestly begged him to withdraw and leave her in peace. The major appeared not to believe in her words, but, nevertheless, repeated them to Weston; and it was this that caused the scene which, with regard to its importance in the case, is given in the deponent's own words, as taken down in shorthand by the examining magistrate:

"I can still remember that terrible evening—it was the 28th of April, a cold, wet evening. It was eight o'clock; I had turned on the light and sat in this room, where we are now, at that table by the fireplace where you are sitting. Major Johnson sat opposite to me, talking—I distinctly remember that he had the cat on his lap—the cat you call 'Amy's puss.' He took out of his pocket a silver chain, which he told me had belonged to his fiancee, Miss Derry—whose name is Amy, like mine. He was going to put this chain round puss's neck—to show me, as he said that his only thought was of me. Our only servant had left us; we expected a new servant to come in next day; we were alone.

"Then the door was flung open and Weston came in; he was intoxicated and spoke loudly; my brother stood behind him and tried to hold him back. I shall not attempt to repeat the words that were spoken. The blood froze to ice in my veins, so terribly did that man speak, so utterly low were his words that I only partly understood them. I still remember the last: 'Take her, James, take the hussy; and if she's prudish, just lick her into shape. I sell you the woman for that thousand pounds, you know. That's her price, she's worth it, and you're gone on her; for all I care she can go to ——.'

"I sprang up."

"Major Johnson had also risen.

"I tried to run from the room, but Weston put himself in my way; I can still fancy I feel his brandy-laden breath in my face, see his staring, blood- shot eyes, hear his coarse, rough voice—and then it was that it happened. He tried to seize me, and I believe—I say, I believe I snatched up a steel paper-knife that lay on the table and thrust it into his breast—I heard his cry—I fell to the ground and remember no more.

"When I came to myself I was lying on the drawing room sofa. Major Johnson stood bending over me. I screamed and clutched with my hands. The major was pale but very calm.

"'Mrs. Weston,' said he, 'you may depend upon me, no harm shall come to you. Remember that you may trust me. It was I who killed him—I did it, you understand.'

"I did not understand him—it was not till later that I learned what had happened—learned it while my whole being was shaken by terror and emotion; and I submitted to what those two wanted to do. I made myself my brother's accomplice—plunged myself into the misfortunes from which you alone—you, the only man I love—can deliver me."

Here the magistrate broke off the examination, which, in consideration of deponent's excited condition, could not be continued. It was now eleven o'clock in the evening.

The magistrate remarks here, that at this juncture he made every conceivable effort to calm the deponent, and that after the adjournment of the examination he continued his efforts, but that he by no means lost sight of the responsibility resting on him as examining magistrate.

In view of the peculiar situation he wishes to lay special stress on this; also on the fact that, in view of possible indisposition on the part of the deponent, he induced Madam Sivertsen to remove from her cabin and pass the night in a room immediately adjoining that of the deponent on the first floor.

The magistrate further remarks that in the preceding transcript of the examination he has included everything that seems to him to belong to the document, and that he has only omitted what appears to him of no importance. In conformity with the usual custom, the magistrate has not included in the document the proceedings which were preliminary to the confession contained in the above. It is therefore expressly remarked that the examination was opened by a conversation between the magistrate and the deponent, in the course of which the magistrate explicitly informed the deponent of the discovery of the body which had taken place in the house, and of the facts in connection with it which had called attention to her and given rise to a charge, which she then admitted to be justified—in any case, partly so.

The magistrate adds that it would have been desirable to have a shorthand report of the whole sitting of the court, but he is obliged by curcumstances to employ an incomplete version of the proceedings, which rests upon the reliance placed in the magistrate who conducted the examination.

Examination adjourned—accused remanded—court rose.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Continuation of the preceding examination:

On the 13th of July the court again met at the same place, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, constituted as before. Amy Weston again appeared, free from restraint or compulsion, and deposed as follows:

I passed the night after this event under the influence of a sleeping-draught. On the following day, contrary to all expectation, I found myself so well that I was able to take part in a consultation between my brother and Major Johnson about what had happened. It now appeared that my brother was not only Weston's equal in infamy, but even surpassed him. Major Johnson insisted that it was he who had killed Weston, and declared himself willing to take the responsibility; my brother tried to make it clear to him that this step would only ruin him and would do no good to us others. Weston was a ruined man, he himself was on the verge of bankruptcy, and those two had gone so far as to make use of my fortune. I was weak and ill; my brother took advantage of my weakness and of Major Johnson's incomprehensible lack of character. If the major had really attacked Weston at the same time as I did and given him a wound, he as a man should have been able to defend his action; while I shuddered at the thought of police and prison. I am only a woman, I let my brother do all he proposed to do. My brother then behaved like a scoundrel. He formed a plan by which Weston's infamy was continued after his death. He disposed of the corpse—how, I did not know until yesterday; he got Major Johnson completely under his influence, partly by hinting that I should be induced by his chivalrous behaviour to overcome my aversion for him, partly by playing upon the major's horror of being publicly involved in a scandalous case. My brother went so far as to obtain the major's agreeement to the latter's disappearance and to the spreading of a report that he had gone to Burma. All this he did—as appeared afterwards—in order to obtain a power of attorney to use his name and so keep him as the gold-mine he had been while Weston was alive. Whether the major had any positive complicity in the steps my brother took to conceal Weston's body I do not know, but I know that from that day begun that hateful existence which only ended on the day my brother was drowned, and the day you became mine——"

In reply to the magistrate the deponent stated that she was sure that she and not the major had struck the fatal blow at Weston; that she must have heard that the cat had disappeared the night after that event, but that she had not given the circumstance a thought until the day she again visited the house and found the cat. She compared this with what she had chanced to hear of her brother's actions after the event and what had passed at Mr. Armstrong's. She could now understand that the magistrate had followed up a clue and that the deed had been discovered; nevertheless, she adds that, if she has now made a full and free confession, this is entirely due to her love for the magistrate, in whose hands she places her destiny in this and all else.

Questioned as to Miss Derry, the deponent states that she does not know this lady, but only knows that she entertains a strong inclination for Major Johnson. The deponent supposes that is due to a common interest in racing. She knows that Miss Derry has searched for the major, and that it was for this reason that her brother insisted on Major Johnson's going under the name of the dead man, Weston. As to the major, deponent asserts that, in spite of his importunate behavior towards her, his feeble capacity and his irregularity in money matters, he does not appear to be a bad man, and that on one occasion he has really shown her a certain chivalrousness, which was only spoiled by his subsequent weakness and submission to her brother. As to her brother, she declares that he was in every respect a corrupt and abandoned person, and that she only obeyed him through fear of being involved in a public scandal, which would not only have brought about the discovery of the manslaughter but also of extensive frauds committed by him upon the major and perhaps upon others, which were now partly covered by the major's money.

After the deponent had declared herself willing to acquiesce in everything the magistrate might find proper, the examination was closed at one o'clock.

The court then rose.

Transcript certified correct.

HOLGER NIELSEN.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"Will you take a seat, major," said Dr. Koldby, "and you, Miss Derry, pray be seated."

Dr. Koldby had given them both a very urgent invitation to appear in his room at the Lokken Hotel, and they had duly presented themselves.

"Let me begin by saying, major, that I have to-day received a letter from my friend, Holger Nielsen, from London. This letter is dated from No. 48 Cranbourne Grove, a house of which, as Miss Derry is aware, Mr. Nielsen and I are the tenants. The cat discovered in this house, about which you, Miss Derry, already know, is Mrs. Weston's; the corpse discovered in the cellar of the same house, about which you, Major Johnson, have full information, is that of Mr. Weston. I assume, Miss Derry, that you will now abandon your attempts to aid your former fiance, and that you will both lay down your arms. I know all, and I am not going to waste time by finding out how much each of you knows or does not know. For you, Major Johnson, the wisest course is undoubtedly to acknowledge that you are Major Johnson and put Mrs. Weston out of your head. Your wisest course, Miss Derry, is to appeal to Major Johnson, and not to 'Mr. Weston.' I consider it my duty to give you an abstract of the information I have received from London, and I beg you to lend me your attention."

Hereupon Dr. Koldby read out an extremely careful selection of the documents Nielsen had sent him.

Miss Derry turned pale and finally burst into tears.

The major turned yellow and for a brief moment looked dangerous.

Koldby finished his reading and looked up inquiringly.

"Now, major, are you prepared to be escorted home to London by the police?"

The major blazed up, with all the assurance of the other day; but Koldby took no notice of him, and continued calmly:

"You are not, then; that's first rate, because it's a thing that I want to avoid. Are you inclined, then, to let Miss Derry escort you home? It seems to me she has deserved some consideration on your part——"

Miss Derry blushed, and at this moment the major drew a stolen glance at the handsome young woman.

Koldby continued imperturbably:

"I shall now ask you, Major Johnson, to be kind enough to confirm the truth of what Mrs. Weston has testified, and to sign this declaration, which I have drawn up in your own language. I will read it to you:

"'I, the undersigned, James Johnson, hereby declare that I was an eye-witness of the following: that on the evening of the 28th of April last, the deceased Mr. Weston, in his house, No. 48 Cranbourne Grove, London, being in a state of intoxication, overwhelmed his wife with abuses and laid violent hands upon her, and that his said wife, Amy Weston, formerly Throgmorton, in self-defense wounded Mr. Weston with a knife, which caused his death. And I declare myself willing, whenever it may be required of me, to give evidence of the same on oath before a Danish or English court.'"

The major flushed. "That means scandal and imprisonment."

Dr. Koldby shrugged his shoulders. "That can't be helped. You have committed an unpardonable fault, and you must pay the penalty; however, there is nothing to prevent your making this declaration before the local magistrate here. I don't suppose it would lead to any arrest, as you are not accused of any crime, and when you have made your declaration—you can do it to-morrow before the probate court—you will be perfectly free to leave here."

The major hesitated.

"No," he said. "You can have me arrested if you like—you won't get me alive."

Miss Derry looked at him through her tears.

"Very well," said Dr. Koldby. "So you think this step would bring death to you and sorrow to this young lady. At the same time you think that it will not bring Mr. Weston to life again, nor cause just punishment, as people call it, to fall upon the two guilty parties, Mr. Weston and the drowned Throgmorton. As far as that goes, you and I are agreed. But you forget that in the cellar at Cranbourne Grove lies a corpse, made partly unrecognizable, which may be discovered at any moment. In that case the question will be raised in spite of all we may do, or leave undone. Now that Mr. Throgmorton's affairs are to be wound up, there is every prospect of the house coming into the hands of the trustees. There is also a possibility that it may be kept outside the estate—but do you think that Mrs. Weston and Mr. Nielsen, who are now acting in common, will destroy the body? If so, let me tell you they won't. It will, therefore, only be a question of time when the matter will come up."

"Precisely," said the major. "Only postpone it for a little while, and I shall be gone. And let them see if they can find me."

"That is excellent," interrupted the doctor, "for you; but Mrs. Weston has a claim on your evidence. She does not want to be convicted, and she is guiltless of the only crime that has been committed—namely, that of concealing the body."

"So am I," said the major. "Throgmorton did that by himself."

"Throgmorton is dead," interposed the doctor shortly. "In any case you have been living here for a couple of months under the murdered man's name."

"And for that I am willing to go into exile," said the major.

"And I'll go with him," added Miss Derry pluckily, blushing as she said it.

Dr. Koldby smiled. "This is all very nice, Miss Derry; I admire you, and I should be glad to help the major, even if you have both been caught in an attempt to throw dust in my eyes, only I don't see how I can justify myself to Mrs. Weston and Nielsen."

"Doctor," said Miss Derry shamefacedly, "the major will sign the first part of your declaration, and then we'll go away. Then if Mrs. Weston wants to appeal to justice, don't you think it's reasonable to suppose that justice will turn out to be just?"

"It may be reasonable," said the doctor, "but it's not at all likely."

"Then I should let the body stay in the cellar and not bother about justice," said Miss Derry.

"So would I," said the doctor, "without a doubt. But you see, Nielsen won't. He's a lawyer and a criminalist and all that."

"But he loves her." Miss Derry blushed again.

"Love is an uncommonly fine thing," said the doctor; "but one's duty to society has to come first."

"I should have burnt that body—why didn't Throgmorton burn it?" she asked, rather doubtfully.

"I can assure you, Miss Derry, that I wish nothing better than that he had done so, though in that case I don't believe you would have found this man here. If only society were arranged at all rationally, the whole thing would be simple as A B C. But all this confounded institution of justice makes us obliged to act in defiance of it, simply to achieve our legitimate objects. I won't act Providence. Do as you please. Give me that declaration, which, of course, is of no use whatever, because it hasn't got the legal rigmarole, and then clear out, go as far as you like."

To this they soon agreed, and the major signed the declaration.

As they were about to leave the room the doctor checked them. "One moment," said he, as he pulled out of a drawer the watch he had found on the drowned man. The major and Miss Derry turned round.

"You see this?" said the doctor; "this was really the key to the riddle—the watch we found on Throgmorton's body. I must tell you that Nielsen and I have been guilty of one or two little irregularities; trifles such as robbery of corpses and so on. But now you had better take the watch and let the probate court keep the twelve hundred crowns; and if this is all you have on your conscience, it is a fairly healthy one."

Thus it was settled, and on the following day "Mr. Weston" and Miss Derry left Lokken together under the nose of the probate court and of the scandalized colony of visitors.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Lokken, July 19,19—.

Dear Friend:

I have received the documents in the case. You have yourself chosen the part of magistrate, that is your business; you have appointed me judge, made me the superior authority who has to decide whether the case is to be gone on with or not. My dear sir, you go too far. The gods be praised! I am no lawyer; that is the last thing I could have been. I protest against the duty you put upon me. I will not undertake it.

I admire your examination; I have not much difficulty in filling the pauses, and if I were young enough, I should envy you; youth and love are the only things I envy. You see, I am sitting here, on this barren shore, like an old gray crow, with my hoarse ominous cry. So now you know everything; you have settled who the murdered man is, and you have settled who is the murderer. Didn't I tell you it was a woman's work? The two lovers—in spite of the precaution of Madam Siverteen's change of quarters, a sacrifice to the spirit of British respectability, which I acknowledge but do not admire—are evidently on the point of making a match of it. I can supplement this by telling you that after an interview in my room, Major Johnson seems to be going to take pity on the faithful Amy No. 1, whom I always—you must excuse me this—have admired as much as it is possible for me to admire anyone of the female sex.

Thus the whole story appears to be finished; all the actors are disposed of as they ought to be in every story that ends properly.

And yet the most important of all is not disposed of.

The "man in the basement"—the corpse in the cellar!

A winse man of old time, whose name I forget, said that it is the dead who rule us mortals. They encumber our earth; they continue to live in their actions; they lay their bony hands upon us; they command, and we must obey. That is true; the dead made our laws, the dead claim our obedience, they determine our course—they rule.

The dead man in the cellar is not disposed of. What now? You ask yourself what is to be done, you are good enough to leave the decision to me. I decline to decide upon the case, I return a question to you.

What is to be done now?

Major Johnson and his Amy begged me so imploringly to preserve them from the dead man. I protested on behalf of your Amy, but I had to admit that it was absurd to ruin the lives of two human beings out of consideration for so-called justice, which is in the power of the unlamented dead. He was a scoundrel, he got his deserts, he cannot come to life again, as a dead man he has no claim to judicial vindication. But society, all right-minded people will say, society has that claim. I have exempted the major and Amy from rendering an account to society. They have gone; I did not ask for their address; I don't know where they went. Forgive me this. A scrap of paper, on which he wrote down what he had seen, is all I have; and, though I am no lawyer, I don't believe it is of any real value. For it would be such a reasonable thing to attribute weight to this piece of evidence, that I am sure no court of justice would do so. The courts, as we know, only attribute weight to things that ordinary people regard as perfectly indifferent.

But if the dead man has to let the major go, he will hang on to you or your Amy. And with good right, society will say—and she must stand face to face with society and answer for her deed. When a human tribunal has acquitted her, she will be free, not before. The justice we inherit from the dead demands that of her.

You know that; you are a lawyer, and you understand that the corpse which lies in the cellar at Cranbourne Grove has rights that you and she must respect. As a man, you know that everything is in order; as I said, everyone is disposed of. Weston fell as a result of his actions; no one has any interest in hearing anything about him; Throgmorton is dead, his guilt wiped out, since the world cannot or dare not pursue the dead, who rule over it. No one has anything to gain by this case being followed up, and yet the dead man claims his rights; society and the living demand that justice shall take its course, the justice that can kill the happiness of two innocent living persons.

The corpse in the cellar must be disposed of. Miss Derry, in her womanly ignorance, talked about destroying it; being a woman, all she said was that it would have been splendid if Throgmorton had destroyed it. And, of course, every other woman in the world, whether in trousers or not, would say the same thing; but as the case stands, they would all with one voice demand that the law should take its course.

The law means a trial for murder for your Amy, a trial that would bring her suffering and place her destiny in the hands of an entirely indifferent and fortuitous handful of men.

My dear sir, lawyer, vindicator of justice, whatever you like to call yourself—I said the story was done; it is only just beginning. You wished to avoid the inconveniences of a public prosecution of the case; I kept you up to it, and you avoided them; it was difficult, but it was done. Now you stand exactly where you did when you began. You can no longer avoid it; you really can't.

What you think I don't know; you are young and inconsistent; besides, you used some oily words about challenging the verdict of society, which always made me sick; as you know, nothing is more indifferent to me personally than the verdict of society.

But you?

To my mind, this case contains the one lesson, that we human beings have surrounded ourselves for our protection with something we call justice; something we ourselves have provided, as we have provided soldiers and cannon; something that has no intrinsic justification, does not rest upon itself, as we may say, but only exists for our protection, and which may become our enemy when we cannot control it ourselves, each one of us personally for himself. It is a watchdog which may turn its teeth against the flock it was intended to guard. Therefore do not speak of justice, but of a useful human institution, which is only defensible so long as it acts according to its objects. The rights of the dead Weston are nothing in themselves; the most one can say is, that society, for its own protection, may demand to have the circumstances clearly set forth; but I leave it to you to decide whether this general observation has its justification in your special case. And even when you have settled this, Weston's corpse will still be lying beneath the house which would shelter your newfound happiness.

It cannot be left to lie there!

I protest against and refuse the task you have appointed me; I will not decide what you are to do in this case. I will only address this question to you: Have you the courage to complete Throgmorton's work, have you the courage to spare your Amy by obliterating Weston's body from the realm of facts, whether by burning or by burial?

Have you courage for that—or do you condemn, with the remainder of living, upright society, the deed which it would call a crime? Consider and admit that only now is the case really beginning for you. Hic Rhodus—hic salta!

Your friend,

JENS KOLDBY.

P. S.—I'm a lover of clearness and thoroughness, so let me add here what the heat of argument made me forget before. Your statement of the case contains nothing about Amy's cat. You ought to have cleared up this not unimportant point. The cat as well as its collar was Amy Derry's. She had received it as a present from the major, and sent it back to him to remind him of his allegiance. it seems to me that of everyone concerned, that cat comes best out of it. it has really accomplished something worth talking about. I therefore wish to establish the fact that Miss Derry has given it to me. So now it is my cat, as you will please remember. She says it belongs to a very choice breed. So does the lady—her name is now Mrs. Johnson. J. K.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"Amy," said Nielsen, as he laid the doctor's letter on the table in the drawing room at Cranbourne Grove, where they were sitting after lunch, "here is a letter from Denmark from Dr. Koldby. I won't read it to you, as you don't know my friend and would not be able to judge of his words. But he is right. There is a dead man in the cellar of this house—a dead man who has not been disposed of. He has waited quietly and patiently for three months—waited as the dead can wait. Now he demands that we should act—demands it with all the authority of the dead."

Amy looked up; there was sorrow in her eyes—sorrow and silent horror. But she said nothing.

Nielsen continued: "When my friend and I found this dead man we formed an unusual resolution. We acted according to a theory—my theory, and every step we took led us on the right way. But at the same time the dull, gray theory gave way to bright, green life. Now it is life alone that decides our actions, theory is silent. Not for a moment have I forgotten that the dead man represents a right, not the right of the dead, but of the living—of society. I understand and acknowledge that society has a right to demand that no deed by which a living person becomes a dead one shall be arbitrarily concealed before being presented to the public judgment. Don't you see, Amy don't you feel as I do, that we cannot deny society its right, we cannot, as the doctor writes, destroy all traces of what has taken place in this house?"

Amy made no reply.

Nielsen went on: "It is an instinct which is born in us, and grows with us. Let it be granted that we both see that you acted justifiably when you struck him down. Or, if we have doubts of that, let us grant that what you did in that moment was not a crime. I believe that if you stood face to face with the men who by the laws of the land are our judges, and told them all you have told me, and awaited their judgment, they would say: 'Go thy way, woman, we condemn thee not.' But both you and I feel that we must challenge that judgment, do we not?"

"No," said Amy. "No—I have told you all; you understand me, but you cannot ask that I, the innocent, the defenceless one, shall expose myself to the gaping crowd, submit to the chance verdict of indifferent strangers? I feel that I am guiltless. What weight, then, should there be in the verdict of others? You understand me—and you say you love me."

Nielsen knelt at her feet and took her hand.

"My Amy," he said, "you are right, you are guiltless. But now rise and go down there—where the corpse lies below our feet—destroy it, burn it. You understand, wipe it out of existence. Do that, Amy, with your own hands."

She shuddered and bowed her head upon his shoulder; he felt her tears upon his cheek, while she whispered:

"I cannot, Holger—I cannot."

He kissed her eyes.

"Amy," he said mournfully, "you cannot do it, and therefore it must not be done. I could do anything in the world for you; even the hardest thing would be easy if I did it for you. But this I cannot do. I could explain it away, I could find plenty of charges against that society which will bring trouble to you and me by its demands. But as to the deed itself, I should hesitate, as you; I should say, as you, that I cannot do it. For me the inner voice is the supreme director of my actions. I feel what is right, I feel what is wrong, and before this feeling thoughts and words are silent. You and I are alone. What I do for you, I do for myself; if I could save you from conviction by doing this, I could not do it; I could not act as you—and I feel that we cannot."

"And if my life was at stake?" she whispered.

Nielsen looked up.

"There is no question of your life, you know that. There is only a question of consideration for all the others, a consideration to which we can rise superior—as we shall. We cannot lay down rules for what a person shall do under all circumstances. Whoever tries to do so breaks down. The founders of religions have tried this, and from that has resulted the fallacy of every doctrine, the fight between truth and falsehood. We men must look at each separate case by itself, as we must look at this. This is not so profound, not so comprehensive, but it is true to human nature. The question for us at this moment is not: Has a person the right, to save the one he loves, to cheat society of what he owes it? We cannot put the question in that way, we must put it far less comprehensively. The question is, Have I the right to destroy Weston's body in order to save you a trial? Only by seeing each little thing as the little thing it is can we men have a clear idea of what we ought to do. Let priests and poets talk about universal rules—doctors, lawyers, and ordinary people must take each single case by itself, as we must take this."

"Let us go abroad," said Amy: and Nielsen felt how she was trembling as she again pressed her cheek against his.

He shook his head "We cannot do that. There is only this to be done—to speak out and await the verdict of society, or to keep silence and burn the body. You know what you feel we ought to do—you feel as I do. We shall never be free of this if we fail now. No one with impunity can disobey the voice within. When an action is accomplished it can generally be defended; perhaps the action, too, could be defended afterwards, when what was done could not be left undone; but now, the dead man lies in the cellar beneath our feet; he is waiting, and you and I must act. We have no need of defence. What we need is to feel assured that we are acting rightly. And you and I know how we are to act to be acting rightly. Believe me, Amy, the proof of the justice of society's claim is only to be found when the individual asks himself and receives the same answer from within as from the thousand voices of his fellows."

"And the shame?" she whispered. "The shame of standing face to face with all these people! Oh, Holger, Holger, you must be able to feel how awful it is!"

"Amy," said Nielsen, putting his arm round her waist, "I once spoke to a club of young social democrats about crime and punishment. One of them put the question to me, whether I meant that all administration of justice ought to be public, and I answered that I did mean it. Still, I explained, I could imagine that a young woman who had been injured by a man might have a claim that the public should not learn anything about it—because of the shame, as you say, which may fall upon the innocent as well as the guilty. And the young workingman answered: 'Ought we not to educate society only to feel shame when an action has been committed which in itself deserves shame?' And I said nothing, for the young man was right."

"But the poor people live so much with one another that they can conceal nothing," said Amy. "You understand that I, who have lived so much out of the world, feel that the shame may fall upon me, even when I am the injured one. I beg you, Holger, to do this for me, for our love's sake."

Nielsen had risen—she rose, too, and threw her arms about his neck.

"Save me, Holger, save me for the last time from that terrible man and the evil he will do me."

Nielsen freed himself; he took her hands in his and kissed them one after the other. Then he bent down and kissed her forehead, her eyes, her mouth.

"Amy," he said, "I am by your side; if I refuse to listen to the voice within me I shall not only be false to myself, I shall be false to you. Come, this very day we will go to the authorities, and you will see—as soon as we have spoken our burden will be gone. We shall not do this because society rules us with its laws, but because we feel ourselves in agreement with the spirit that sustains co-operation between man and man, each for himself and for all the rest."

There was a ring at the front door. Madam Sivertsen came into the room.

"Mr. Nielsen," she said, "here is a telegram."

Nielsen took it and read it; it was from Dr. Koldby.

Amy fixed her eyes upon him; her cheeks burned; then she said hoarsely:

"Before you do this, Holger—speak to him—let me speak to him."

Nielsen smiled. "Do you know what he says? Only this: 'Meet me to-morrow evening at half-past seven, Southwestern Hotel, Southampton.'"

Amy took his hand. "Do that, Holger—do that before you do the other——"

Nielsen made no reply; but then next morning he had his bag packed and asked Amy to accompany him to Southampton.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Madam Sivertsen started as she opened the door and saw Dr. Koldby.

"Bless me! you here, doctor? Why, Mr. Nielsen has gone off to-day to Southampton to meet you. The lady has gone, too. You know the lady, don't you?"

"I know the lady," said the doctor, who was rather short-spoken and seemed to Madam Sivertsen very excited. "I had my reasons for asking Nielsen and the lady to go to Southampton. Now I am going to ask you, Madam Sivertsen, to go down there at once, this very evening, and give Nielsen this letter—give it to him personally, you understand. There's a train at six from Waterloo. You can catch it if you get ready at once. You will be doing me a great service, you understand—a great service by doing this."

Madam Sivertsen was taken aback, but, as before remarked, she was accustomed to do as she was told, and at six o'clock the express steamed away with her in it.

The doctor was left alone at Cranbourne Grove. He sat in the drawing room with the cat on his lap and held a litle oration.

"Amy's puss," said he, "you are a poor cat that nobody cares for. You have a good deal on your conscience, but if it came to light the whole world in its devout symplicity and in agreement with its traditions would exclaim that you were sent straight from headquarters with a silver collar on your neck in order that what has been sinned in secret might be proclaimed from the housetops. I won't take your glory from you, puss. I am a poor man, who do my best to act in a human way; I disregard generalities and keep to the single point. The responsibility, little puss, I take upon myself. I have always done so, and I intend to go on doing so. But you and I, puss, we must keep together, you know."

Puss arched her back and purred. But Dr. Koldby remained sitting a long while in deep thought. At last he got up with a start.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Madam Sivertsen found Nielsen and Mrs. Weston at the hotel at Southampton. They were expecting the doctor and were surprised to see her.

Nielsen opened the letter and started. It contained these words:

Dear Nielsen:

Come back to London to-morrow morning—you cannot come sooner. Take Madam Sivertsen with you and her you have chosen—as the saying is. Take my best wishes with you on your way towards life's sunshine. I liked you, I liked you very much; now you are out of my life. Only one piece of advice. Drop that confounded justice, give up the law. It's only fools who think they can reduce justice to a system; who believe in a rational justice, when there is nothing but a miserable system of expediency to be used in the wretched service of humanity. Seek the truth and happiness in life. Seek them with her. Quit "justice" of the inferior earthly manufacture, the only one we can find.

Be happy, Nielsen. Stay here, it is a nice, comfortable house with many memories. There is lots of room below there. You can take your bride and show her round, there is nothing to frighten her; what there was is gone, and that is my doing. Miss Derry gave me the idea. Now it is done, and no man on earth can make it undone. The major and Miss Derry have gone away to seek happiness. Help them in that. There is a thing we men need not be ashamed of doing. I myself am going away; I will not meet you yet—perhaps some time a long while hence. Only let me tell you, I will not go away alone; I am taking with me the only one who could betray me—Amy's cat.

Farewell,

Your friend,

JENS KOLDBY.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

In the far west of Cornwall, among granite rocks and wild moorland, lies Sennen Cove, a little fishing village, near the Land's End. West of the cove the cliffs of Pedn-men-du—Black Stone head—thrust themselves out among the waves of the Atlantic, which dash against the boulders at their foot. Here there arrived, one afternoon in July, a foreign painter, a Dane, who took up his abode in a little cottage near the cliff.

His luggage came in a cart from Penzance. Besides his portmanteau, easel, and color-box, it consisted of an immense packing case, which contained (so he said) a piece of sculpture, for he practiced that art as well as painting. It was the statue of a young woman, a work he loved, the masterpiece of his life.

The painter was accompanied by a well conditioned tabby cat, which went by the name of "Amy's puss." The natives of the place were used to the visits of "painter fellows," and took little notice of them; they saw no reason for distinguishing the new arrival from other "foreigners" from outside Cornwall: all were heathen folk and equally mad. The packing case had a room to itself at the cottage and was never unpacked.

One day when a northwesterly gale was raging against the cliffs the painter secured the services of a fisherman and a wheelbarrow, and with their help got the packing case to the edge of the cliff, from which he hurled it with his own hands into the seething depth beneath. It dashed the spray high into the air and sank to the deep rocky bottom.

This adventure only confirmed the fisher-folk in their opinion that the painter fellow was mad—madder, indeed, than the rest of his kind—but the event was soon forgotten in the round of their daily work, and the sunken statue was left among the wreckage and relics of smuggling days might lie in the deep water below the cliff.

Meanwhile Dr. Koldby left the village and wandered far to foreign shores—and Amy's cat went with him.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

It was Mr. Sydney Armstrong who sold the house, No. 48 Cranbourne Grove; a young painter bought it, and it suited him exactly and it was not dear. Mrs. Nielsen sold it, and went abroad with her husband, the young Danish lawyer, Holger Nielsen, whom no one knew or asked about.

They, too, crossed the sea, to visit the New World, where she saw once more her childhood's home in the West Indies. There they found summer and sunshine, and were happy in their love.

Amy did not quite understand how it happened—she did not wish to ask questions—but one summer night under the deep blue sky of the tropics she spoke.

"Holger,' she said, "why were you so much in earnest about—about what you said that day, when I cried and entreated you—and now you do not think any more about it?"

Nielsen put his arm around her waist and said with a smile:

"You surely didn't expect me to go to the police and say: There was a dead man in the cellar of my house, he is there no longer, my friend Dr. Koldby has unlawfully removed him?"

Amy moved a step away.

"For your friend's sake you would forbear, but my prayers were not enough to hold you back before—when you talked about the rights of society."

"Silly little girl," said Nielsen. "Have you forgotten the inner voice, the voice of which I inquired? It is silent now, is it not? And do you know why? Because we men and women cannot expect an answer to every question we ask. The voice within us speaks only of one single thing—a thing which is. When Jens Koldby acted in a way that he must himself justify to his own inner voice, he took this question away from us. You feel that, don't you? I find only one lesson attached to the dead man of Cranbourne Grove, namely that we who occupy ourselves with what is called law and justice must give up all hope of finding a golden rule. There is no such thing, but only a series of separate cases which must be judged one by one; for each human being the object must be to act rightly, as he feels himself to be acting rightly, and this series of righteous actions makes up the sum of justice."

Amy did not altogether understand him.

But he took her in his arms and said with a smile: "One lesson, I said—yes, that is all; but as a memorial of his death I won you, and you I shall keep, by the right of love."

So those two went forward to find happiness together.

THE END.

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## MISS BELYEA'S WEDDING TO NEW YORK CHAUFFEUR

### Bride Quoted as Saying Parents Knew Marriage Was To Be—Will Go to Paris Because of Publicity.

(Boston Globe, Friday).

New York, Nov. 28—Miss Elvira Belyea, daughter of Robert Belyea, a boat builder of St. John (N. B.), and a niece, so she says, of a sugar trust capitalist, was married Wednesday in Bath Beach by Rev. Charles W. Flint. The bride's desire to keep the wedding a secret was supposed to be due to parental disapproval, since the bridegroom, James D. Rockhill, her junior apparently by several years, was until recently employed as chauffeur by E. H. Ryan, a lawyer and real estate operator, but Mrs. Rockhill, at the hotel Belmont, where the bridal couple went after the quiet ceremony, declared that her parents had known for more than a year that she and Rockhill were to be married.

Mr. and Mrs. Rockhill registered from Wellesley (Mass.), where the bride said she had lived four years. She was not in college there, she said. Her father, declared Mrs. Rockhill, was only half a millionaire, and she had not eloped, and publicity given her wedding was so dreadful that she would go to Paris.

Rockhill, who said he had not worked for Mr. Ryan for more than a month, but was in business for himself, declared he, too, would quit New York. Mrs. Rockhill admitted that none of the relatives were present. She said the witnesses were Rockhill's brother and sister-in-law.

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