The Snake

Justice Done.

CHAPTER IX.

(Continued.) now. I'm suffering most from hunger," she replied, with

He looked round eagerly but help

"There's nothing but bread and cheese," he said.

He sprang to the cupboard and

brought some to her "I'd make you a cup of tea, bu there wouldn't be time-What a con-

"Oh, tea and cheese! They wouldn't go well together, would they?" she

He saw that she found it awkward to hold it, and took it from her. "I'll hold it." he said. "I wish there

was something better. "Oh. don't apologise." she said. "I'v known the time when bread and cheese would have seemed a feast of

luxury." Her novel humility stirred him to the depths.

"Why did you tell me that-that yo were once poor?" he asked, impul

She raised her eyes-they wer very near his as he bent forward with the plate in his hand-and smiled pen

"I- don't quite know. Perhaps did not like you-anyone-to think that I was proud; proud of my birth and wealth. Perhaps it was because -Oh, I don't know! How nice this is! Though it's rither difficult eat

ing in this position-She made as if to raise herself high er on the hard horsehair cushion, and Ralph set down the plate quickly, and putting his arm round her helped he

into the desired attitude. "Thanks," she said, softly. "You are very strong- I want to tell you tha I am sorry I was rude to you yester day." Her eyes were raised to his for a moment then were downcast again

The transition was so sudden, the glance of the violet eyes so heart-

thrilling, that Ralph caught his breath.

"Yes," she said, almost meekly, as she nibbled daintily at the bread and cheese, and looked at him with halflowered lids. "I don't know what possessed me. I suppose it was temper. All women are bad-tempered

"No, no," he remonstrated with an almost indignant denial. "Not all!

"I am: very," she said, demurely. "I always was. Pride and ill temper go together, you know- How thirsty bread and cheese make one!"

"There's some beer-" he said doubtfully.

He sprang to the cupboard.

"Water, please," she returned. smoothly. "Oh, thank you! But it was ungrateful as well as ill-tempered after all your kindness."

Ralph's face went the colour of brick-dust.

"I-I-beg your pardon," he stam **Muscles** Useless

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ment-I only thought-blood-poisoning, you know-it's very dangerous-But great liberty-

"Yes," she said, with a gelam in he eves whose rays seemed to warm Spain burn to death because it was had caught alight at the fire before which his majesty was standing."

Ralph laughed, but it was a shaky

"And you ran some risk." she said, n a low voice. "Oh, no," he said, promptly; "not

it. And if I had-

He checked himself and glanced through the window; but Veronica ested her head more comfortably as

she did not share his impatience. "And what did Mr. Talbot Denby say to make you so angry?" she asked, as smoothly as before.

Ralph coloured. "Oh, I don't know us?" he broke off, penitently, "I'm

our temper," said Veronica, with sweet severity

"That's so," responded Ralph, with meekness which would have astonshed and gratified Talbot Denby. "And did you take the trout to Mr

lason?" asked Veronica, after Ralph nodded, his brow clearing a

arrassment. "Yes, and she was very much oblig-

"Very pretty girl, her daughter emarked Veronica, soft as butter. "Yes, oh, yes!" agreed Ralph, with

eut the slightest enthusiasm. 'You don't think so?" she said, with ide-open eyes of surprise

"Yes, oh, yes-at least. I haven't hought-oh, yes, I suppose she's pretty! To tell you the truth, I have

n't noticed her particularly." A smile-was it of satisfaction?surved the beautiful lips and shonsoftly in the lovely eyes, but she said, as if disappointed with him:

"Perhaps not." he admitted. " lon't admire that kind of face, I sup-

"Really! And yet it is a very favourite one: fair, good complexion.

with almost golden hair-" "Yes, I know," he admitted, absent-

"What type do you admire?" sh asked, with an affectation of casualwould have detected in a moment, bu which was lost on Ralph, who, o

course, promptly fell into the snare. "I like a girl with soft, dark hair and grey eyes, violet eyes, and rather are pale face—what do you call it? er a pale face-what do you call it?old ivory, and long lashes-"

He was gazing before him as if los n the effort to word his mental pic ture, and did not see the colour tha grew and grew in the "pale face o about the beautiful lips.

"Oh, that's a very common type, she said, contemptuously, but with a subtle sweetness in her voice. Ralph started from his reverie and

got up awkwardly. "I hear the carriage," he said. "They

ess and no longer self-possessed. If You Take a Few Doses of

ber, exclaiming in agonised accents:

"Oh, Miss Veronica!" "Oh it's all right" said Veronica

Don't make a fuss-"Take care! You'll strike your foo -vou can't hop into the carriage! eried Ralph, warningly

"I can't fly in!" she retorted, per ishly, "Help me, please!"

There was only one way of helping er; and, lifting her in his strong rms once more, he lifted her in. Ver nica sank back slowly, looking a im through her long lashes.

"Thank you very much," she said, it low voice. Ralph drew back, feeling dazed an

bewildered by the novel emotion and sensation which were throbbing with "Drive slowly!" he said, hoarsely

out in a tone of command that would hand went up to his hat, and he only

Ralph gazed after the carriage for moment or two, then drawing his hand across his brow as if to wipe away the mist that hung about his brain, h went into the hut.

A small, dark object lay on th floor beside the couch. It was Veron ica's handkerchief. He picked it un and opening it, gazing at it vacantly then he raised it to his lips

The touch of the cold, wet cambribrought him back to his senses.

"Oh, I'm mad!" he exclaimed, with a harsh laugh, and he flung the handkerchief away from him.

mutely from where it lay, and pres ently, after he had paced up and down it up and thrust it impatiently in hi breast pocket.

CHAPTER XI.

With the assistance of Goodwin who was much more flurried and up set than her mistress. Veronica hob bled to her room. The doctor ha already been sent for, and he hurries and by the time she had exchange her habit for one of the loose an costly robes which it pelases ladies o call a dressing gown, he arrived.

Lord Lynborough came up with him and, though he attempted to conceal exhibited a concern and anxiety which surprised and touched Veron-

"Why were you without a groom? ne asked, severely. "Are you in much pain? Isn't the foot very much swol len? Are you sure it's only a sprain?

"I sent Brown back," said Veronica, almost humbly. "There ar times when it annoys me to have him pounding after me; I enjoy my ride so much more when I am alone."

"I daresay. We most of us enjoy being alone and unhampered by at

He shrugged his shoulders as he looked down at her with his cynical

"It is only a sprain; there is noth ing broken I am rejoiced to find said the old fashioned doctor in his courtly way. "It was very wise of you to have the boot removed."

"It was not I who thought of it, bu Ralph Farringdon, the gamekeeper she said, reluctantly, as if she coul not withhold from him his due.

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"I hear the carriage," he said. "They can't drive up to the door, I'm afraid—"

His face went red.

But she shook her head as she raised herself.

"No, no; I can walk or hop; at any rate, if you will give me your arm—" for he was standing stiff with nervous-

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was he who caught the mare and car -took me to the hut and sent fo

Lord Lynborough frowned "It seems to me that this young man is very much in evidence. Bu I suppose you rewarded him? If not I will send for him--

"Oh, no, no!" sprang from her lips hastily: "please don't do anything of the sort-I mean"-the colour came

"Ah. ves: I remember he refused the sovereign I offered him the other day," remarked the earl. "A singular young man. Such pride is rather unam glad he was so thoughtful, and will send for him and thank him."

"I don't think you need do so," said Veronica, with a fine attempt at casalness "I thanked him"

"Ah, well!" assented the earl. "But trust this will be a lesson to you not to go out unattended for the fu-

"Oh, yes, the lesson is there al right enough," said Veronica, looking down at her foot on which the doctor was skilfully putting a cold compress. "I hope I sha'n't be lame long, Doctor Thorne?"

(To be continued.)

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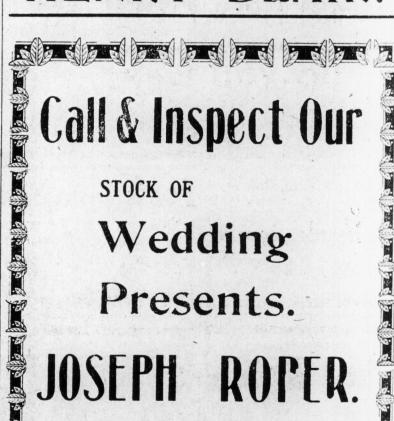
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