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A ROMANCE.

ay beguile the last slow moments of time before you go out into eter-

She set her lamp down on the floor mong the rats and beetles, and stood watching the small red flame a with a gloomy, downcast eye; and Sir Norman gazing on the beautiful darkening face, so like and yet so unlike Leoline, stood eagerly

awaiting what was to come. Meantime, the half hour sped, In the crimson court the last trial was over, and Lady Castlemaine, a slen-der little beauty of 18, stood conenned to die.

"Now for our other prisoner," exnation; "and while I go to the cell, ou, fair ladies, and you, my lord, rill seek the Black Chamber and await our coming there.

Ordering one of his attendants to recede him with a light, the dwarf skipped jauntily away, to gloat over his victim. He reached the dungeon floor which the guards, with some trepidation in their countenance, as they thought of what his highness would say when he found her majesty locked in with the prisoner, threw

"Come forth, Sir Norman Kings ley!" shouted the dwarf, rushing in Come forth and meet your doom! But no Sir Norman Kingsley obey ed the pleasant invitation, and a dull echo from the darkness alone answered him. There was a lamp burn-ing on the floor, and near it lay a form, shining and specked with white in the gloom. He made for it be-tween fear and fury, but there was something red and slippery on the ground, in which his foot slipped, Simultaneously there was a wild cry from the two guards and attendant, that was echoed by a perfect screech of rage from dwarf, as on looking down he beheld Queen Miranda lying on the floor in the pool of blood, and apparently dead, and Sir Norman Kingsley gone!

CHAPTER XIV. The intermin between Miranda set-

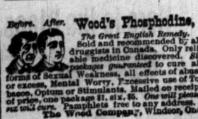
ing down her lamp on the dungeon

floor among the rats and the beetles, and the dwarf's finding her bleeding and senseless, was not more than 20 minutes, but a great deal may be done in 20 minutes judiciously experided, and most decidedly it was so in the present case. Both rats and beetles paused to contemplate them, Sir Norman paused to contem-plate her, for an instant or so. Her resemblance to Leoline, in all but one thing, struck him more and more—there was the same beau-tiful transparent colorless complexion, the same light, straight graceful same small, oval figure, the same small, oval, delicate features; the same profuse waves of shining dark, hair, the same large, dark, brilliant eyes; the same little, rosy, pretty mouth, like one of Correggio's emiliar appeals. The one thing wants smiling angels. The one thing wanting was expression-in Leoline's face there was a kind of childlike sim-plicity, a look half-shy, half-fearless, half-solemn in her wonderful eyes; but in this, her prototype, there was nothing shy or solemn; all was cold, hatd, glittering, and the brooding eyes were full of a dull, dusky fire. She looked as hard and cold and bit-She looked as hard and cold and bitter, as she was beautiful; and Sir Norman began to perplex himself inwardly as to what had brought her there. Sarely not sympathy, for nothing wearing that face of stone could even know the meaning of such a word. While he looked at her, half-mentarized half-outperly half-ou a word. While he looked at her, half-wonderingly, half-pityingly, half-ten-derly—a queer word that last hut the feeling was caused by her resemblance to Leoline—she had moodily been watching an old gray rat, the patriarch of the tribe, who was making toward her in short runs, stopping between each one to stare at her, out between each one to stare at her, out of his unpleasantly bright eyes. Suddenly Miranda shut her teeth, clenched her hands, and with a sort of fierce suppressed ejaculation, lifted her shining foot and planted it on the rat's head. So sudden, so fierce, and so strong was the stamp that the rat was crushed flat, and uttered a sharp and indignant squeal of expos-tulation, while Sir Norman looked at

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 'Madame, there is nothing in the her, thinking she had lost her wits.

Still she ground it down with a fiereer and stronger force every second; and blazing with reddish black flame, she said, in a sort of fiery hiss:
"Look at it! The ugly, loathsome

> more like him?"
> There must have been some mysterious rapport between them, for he understood at once to whom the solitary personal pronoun referred.
> "Certainly, in the general expression of countenance there is rather a mark-ed resemblance, especially in the re-

thing! Did you ever see anything look

gion of the teeth and eyes."
"Except that the rat's eyes are thousand times handsomer," broke in, with a derisive laugh.

"But as to shape," resumed Sir Norman, eyeing the excited and astonished little animal, still squealing with the glance of a connoisseur, 'I confess I do not see it. The rat is straight and shapely—which his highness, with all reverence, be it said-is not-but rather the reverse, if you will not be offended at me for

She broke into a short laugh that had a hard, metallic ring, and then her face darkened, blackened, and she ground the foot that crushed the rat flercer, and with a sort of passionate

of the dwarf under her heeel.

"I hate him! I hate him!" she said, through her clenched teeth, and though her tone was scarcely above a whisper, it was too horrible in its earnestness that Sir Norman thrilled with repulsion. "Yes, I hate him with all my heart and soul, and I wish to heaven I had him here, like this rat, to trample to death under my feet!"

Not knowing very well what reply to make to this strong and heartfelt which rather shocked his notions of female propriety, Sir Norman stood silent, and looked reflectively after the rat, which, when she perafter the rat, which, when she permitted it at last to go free, limped away with an inefably sneaking and crestfallen expression on his hitherto animated features. She watched it, too, with a gloomy eye, and when it crawled into the darkness and was gone, she looked up with a face so dark and moody that it was al-

'Yes, I hate him!" she ejaculated, with a fierce moodiness that was quite dreadful: 'yes, I hate him, and I would kill him, like that rat, if I could. He has been the curse of my whole life; he has made life cursed to me, and his heart's blood shall be shed for it some day yet, I swear.' With all her beauty there was some thing so horrible in the look she wore, that Sir Norman involuntarily noticed it, and both grew red and fiery as two devouring flames.

"Ah, you, too, would shrink from me, would you? You, too recoil in horror! Ingrate! And I have come to save your life!"

'Madame, I recoil not from you, but from that which is tempting you to utter words like these. I have no reason to love him of whom you si eak-you, perhaps, have even less but I would not have his blood, shed in murder, on my head, for ten thous and worlds. Pardon me, but you d not mean what you say.'

"Do I not? That remains to be en. I would not call it murder plunging a knife into the heart of incarnate like that, and would have done it long ago, and he knows it, too, if I had the chance."

"What has he done to make you so litter against him?"
"Bitter! Oh, that word is poor and pitiful to express what I fee when his name is mentioned. Loathing and hatred come a little nearer the mark, but even they are weak to the utter-the express stopped in a sort of white passion that choked her very words. They told me he was your hus

insinuated Sir Norman, un band," utterably repelled. 'Did they?' she said with a cole sneer; "he is, too-at least, as far as church and state can make him; but I am no more his wife at hear than I am Satan's. Truly of the two, I should prefer the latter, for then I should be wedded to so thing grand—a fallen angel; as it is have the honor to be the wife devil who never was an angel.' At this shocking statement Sir Nor man looked helplessly round, as if for relief; and Miranda, after a moment's silence, broke into another

mirthless laugh.
"Of all the pictures of ugliness you ever saw or heard of, Sir Nor-man Kingsley, do tell me if there ever was one of them half so impulsive or disgusting as that thing?"
"Really," said Sir Norman, in a

subdued tone; "he is not the most prepossessing little man in the world; but, madame, you do look and speak in a manner quite dread-ful. Do let me prevail on you to calm yourself, and tell me your story, as you promised."
"Calm myself!" repeated the gen-

tel lady, in a tone half snappish, half-harsh; "do you think I am made of iron, to tell you my story and be calm. I hate him! I hate him! I would kill him if I could; and if you, Sir Norman, are half the mar that I take you to be, you will rid the world of the horrible little mon-"My dear lady, you seem to forget that the case is reversed, and that he is going to rid the world of me,"

Said Sir Norman, with a sigh.

'No, not if you do as I tell you and when I have told you how mucl cause I have to abhor him, you will with me that killing him

above who rules this world, and will judge us all, why does he permit such monsters to live?"

Because he is more merciful than creatures," replied Sir Norman, with calm reverence, "though avenging hand is heavy on doomed city. But, madame, time is on the wing, and the headsman will be here before your story is tolf." "Ah, that story! How am I to tell

it, I wonder, two words will com-prise it all—sin and misery—misery and sin! For, buried alive here, as ¶ am—buried alive as I've always been
—I know what both words mean;
they have been branded on heart and brain in letters of fire. And that horrible monstrosity is the cause of all: that loathsome, misshapeh, hideous abortion has baned and cursed my

whole life. He is my first recolle As far back as I can through the dim haze of childhood' years, that horrible face, that grarled and twisted trunk, those devilisa eyes glare at me like the eyes of a wild beast. As memory grows stronger and more vivid, I can see that same face still—the dwarf! the dwarf! the dwarf!—Satan's true reresentative upon earth, darkening and blighting every passing year. do not know where we lived, but imagine it to have been one of the vilest and lowest dens in London though the rooms I occupied were for that matter, decent and orderly enough. Those rooms the daylight ever entered, the windows boarded up within, and fastened with shutters without, so that of the world beyond I was as ignorant as hild of two hours old. I saw but wo human faces; his'to hate him too much even to pro ounce his name-"and his ho keeper's, a creature almost as vile

as himself, and who is now a vant here; and with this precious pair to guard me I grew up to be fifteen years old. My outer life con sisted of eating, sleeping, reading — for the wretch taught me to read playing with my dogs and birds, and listening to old Margery's stories But there Awas an inward life, fiere and strong, as it was rank and mor bid, lived and brooded over alone when Margery and her master fancied me sleeping in idiotic content. How were they to know that the creature they had reared and made ever had a thought of her own-ever wonder-ed who she was, where she came from, what she was destined to be, and what lay in the great world beyond? That crooked little monster made a great mistake in teaching me to read; he should have known that books sow seed that grow up and flourish tall and green, till they become giants in strength. I knew enough to be certain there was a bright and glad world without, from which they shut me in and debarred

both for it, with a strong and heart-felt hatred, only second to what I To be Continued.

me; and I knew enough to hate them

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A TOO PREVIOUS DETECTIVE.

Means to licep it Lost. There is a certain detective in Cincinnati, well known to people who know the sleuthhounds of the law, who know the sleuthhounds of the law, who was once a little too gay—but he will not be again, at least on the same line. He lost his umbrella recently, and a certain bright young drug clerk found it in the drug store where he worked. It had been left there by the man who had borrowed it, probably, and when the clerk looked inside to see who it belowed to the terms of the Greek Dates. belonged to he found the Great Detec-

tive's name.

Thinking to do the latter a favor, the next' time the clerk went out of the store he went around to the Great Detective's office and walked in. The Great Detective was evidently busy, for he did not have time to receive the other politely, but asked, "What do you want here?"

"I just came to ask—— began the clerk, but the other shouted:

"You get out of here. You've got no

"You get out of here. You've got no business in my office." Rather taken aback by this peculiar reception, the y. d. c. backed to the door and started out. Just as he was leaving he said:

"I came to inquire, Mr. G., if you had lost your umbrella or not.' "Some one hypothecated it," returned the Great Detective, with a large display of dignity. "Why do you—" "Well," interrupted the clerk, "I only just wanted to know, you know. I meant to tell you where it was, but since you tell me to get out I guess I'll

It is understood that the Great De tective has all his idle men hot upon the trail of that lost umbrella, but he himself has gone to polishing up his manners a little for future use, as the lesson was not entirely wasted.—Cincinnati Commercial.

A Sad State of Affairs.



THE ARIZONA KICKER.

Live News Items From a Very Breezy Exchange.

[Copyright, 1900, by C. B. Lewis.] While The Kicker is not exactly an ndependent paper, we are not mixing politics to any great extent. The fact is, we want to hold our job as postmaster along under the next administration, and we don't propose to bounce ourself out by letting the eagle scream too loud. We used to be an enthusias tie political partisan, but we lived on roots and herbs as a reward.

We regret to learn that Captain Johnson shot himself in the foot the other day while pulling his gun on a man from Tombstone who doubted his veracity, but long, long ago we advised the captain to carry a squirt gun instead of a pistol. His intentions are good, but he never knows which end of a gun is loaded.

Very few of our fashionable people are out of town for the summer. In the first place, they can't afford to go, and in the next they are afraid of running across old acquaintances who will ask them whether they broke jail or were pardoned out.

We are the only postmaster in the known world who keeps his office open every day in the year and up to midnight every night, and yet there are folks in this town who want to know why in blazes we don't have some accommodation about us. We haven't shot anybody yet, but how much longer we can hold on is an unknown quan-M. QUAD.

Spoiling a Kid.

"They are just rulning that boy of mine at the kindergarten," said the

worried father. "What is the matter?" asked the friend, glad to hear one jarring note in the usual song of praise about "the

"He calls his chums 'William' and 'Henry' instead of 'Bill' and 'Hank.' Wouldn't that jar you?"

Quiet and Not Fatiguing. "Did you ever join in a fox hunt, Mr.

Tootles? "No, Miss Wimple, I nevah did. Too much wuff widing, don't you know. But I enjoy the excitement quite as well in my own quiet way."

"Where, Mr. Tootles?" "In the moving pictchahs, Miss Wim-

No Consolation There. "There, now, Clara, how would you like to be these people who can't get home from Paris because their funds gave out?"

"Well, dear me, Clarence, they are better off than we are, whose funds gave out before we got started.".

"Well, I might like to go back to school as well as Johnnie Evans does if you'd trained me as his mother train-

"How was that?" "She licked him every day so he'd be glad to go back."-Cleveland Plain

Hardly That. Gump-So you have gone out of polities?

Gump-Retired to private life, I supslump-Oh, no; not quite that. We

live in a flat. Force of Habit, Miss Gushy-Mr. Tipps is so impul

sive. He carries everything before Miss Gabby-Yes, of course he does He used to be a waiter.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Horrid Fear. He-Well, the miners have finally one on strike. That means a coal

famine. She-Gracious! I wonder if it will affect the fire sales?-Philadelphia

A Distinction With a Difference. Shopman-Here is a very nice thing in revolving bookcases, madam. Mrs. Newrich-Oh, are those revolving bookcases? I thought they called them circulating libraries.-King.



Who? Me? Why, everybody knows I'm the champion checker player Hayseed county."

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