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LUCY GRAHAM'S SECRET

(Continued.)

But strange as the picture was, it could not have made any great impression on George Talboys, for he sat before it for about a quarter of an hour without uttering a word—only staring blankly at the painted canvas, with the candlestick grasped in his strong right hand, and his left arm hanging loosely by his side. He sat so long in this attitude, that Robert turned round at last.

"Why, George, I thought you had almost gone to sleep!"

"I had almost."

"You've caught a cold from standing in that damp tapestried room. Mark my words, George Talboys, you've caught a cold; you're as hoarse as a raven. But come along, Robert Audley took the candle from his friend's hand and crept back through the secret passage, followed by George—very quiet, but scarcely more quiet than usual.

They found Alicia in the nursery waiting for them.

"Well!" she said, interrogatively. "We managed it capitably. But I don't like the portrait; there's something odd about it."

"There is," Alicia said; "I've a strange fancy on that point. I think that sometimes a painter is in a manner inspired, and is able to see, through the normal expression of the face, another expression that is equally a part of it, though not to be perceived by common eyes. We have never seen my lady look as she does in that picture; but I think that she could look so."

"Alicia," said Robert Audley, imploringly, "don't be German!"

"But, Robert—"

"Don't be German, Alicia, if you love me. The picture is—the picture; and my lady is—my lady. That's my way of talking things, and I'm not metaphysical; don't unsettle me."

He repeated this several times with an air of terror that was perfectly sincere; and then, having borrowed an umbrella in case of being overtaken by the comb storm, left the Court leading the passive George Talboys away with him. The sound of the stupid clock had skipped to nine by the time they reached the archway; but before they could pass under its shadow they had to step aside to allow a carriage to dash past them. It was a fly from the village, but Lady Audley's fair face peeped out at the window. Dark as it was, she could see the two figures of the young men black against the dusk.

"Who is that?" she asked, putting out her head. "Is it the gardener?"

"No, my dear aunt," said Robert laughing; "it is your most dutiful nephew."

He and George stopped by the archway while the fly drew up at the door, and the surprised servants came out to welcome their master and mistress.

"I think the storm will hold off to-night," said the baronet looking up at the sky; "but we shall certainly have it to-morrow."

CHAPTER IX.

AFTER THE STORM

Sir Michael was mistaken in his prophecy upon the weather. The storm did not hold off until the next day, but burst with terrible fury.

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THE GUARDIAN OFFICE
 Bay Roberts.

over the village of Audley about half an hour before midnight.

Robert Audley took the thunder and lightning with the same composure with which he accepted all other ills of life. He lay on the sofa in the sitting-room, ostensibly reading the five days old Chelmsford paper, and regaling himself occasionally with a few wisps from a large tumbler of punch. But the storm had quite a different effect upon George Talboys. His friend was startled when he looked at the young man's white face as he sat opposite the open window listening to the thunder, and staring at the black sky, rent every now and then by forked streaks of steel-blue lightning.

"George," said Robert, after watching him for some time, "are you frightened of the lightning?"

"No," he answered, curtly.

"But, dear boy, some of the most courageous men have been frightened of it. It is scarcely to be called a fear; it is constitutional. I am sure you are frightened of it."

"No, I am not."

"But, George, if you could see yourself, white and haggard, with your great hollow eyes staring out at the sky as if they were fixed upon a ghost. I tell you I know that you are frightened."

"And I tell you that I am not."

"George Talboys, you are not only afraid of the lightning, but you are savage with yourself for being afraid and with me for telling you of your fear."

"Robert Audley, if you say another word to me, I shall knock you down," cried George, furiously; having said which, Mr. Talboys strode out of the room, banging the door after him with a violence that shook the house. These inky clouds, which had shut in the sultry earth as if with a roof of hot iron, poured out their blackness in a sudden deluge as George left the room; but if the young man was afraid of the lightning, he certainly was not afraid of the rain; for he walked straight down-stairs to the inn door and went out into the wet high-road. He walked up and down, up and down, in the spaking shower for about twenty minutes, and then, re-entering the inn, strolled up to his bedroom.

Robert Audley met him on the landing with his hair beaten about by the wind, and his garments dripping wet.

"Are you going to bed, George?"

"Yes."

"But you have no candle."

"I don't want one."

"But look at your clothes, man! Do you see the wet streaming down your coat-sleeves? What on earth made you go out upon such a night?"

"I am tired, and want to go to bed—don't bother me."

"You'll take some hot brandy-and-water, George?"

Robert Audley stood in his friend's way as he spoke, anxious to prevent his going to bed in the state he was in; but George pushed him fiercely aside, and striding past him, said, in the same hoarse voice Robert had noticed at the Court.

"Let me alone, Robert Audley, and keep clear of me if you can."

Robert followed George to his bedroom but the young man banged the door in his face, so there was nothing for it but to elave Mr. Talboys to himself, to recover his temper as best he might.

"He was irritated at my noticing his terror of the lightning," thought Robert, as he calmly retired to rest, serenely indifferent to the thunder, which seemed to shake him in his bed, and the lightning playing fitfully round the razors in his open dressing-case.

The storm rilled away from the quiet village if Audley, and when Robert awoke the next morning it was to see bright sunshine, and a peep of cloudless sky between the white curtains of his bedroom window.

It was one of those serene and lovely mornings that sometimes succeed a storm. The birds sang loud and cheerily, the yellow corn uplifted itself in the briar fields, and waved proudly after its sharp tussle with the tempest, which had done its best to beat down the heavy cars with cruel wind and driving rain half the night through. The vine-leaves clustering round Robert's widow fluttered with a joyous rustling, shaking the rain-drops in diamond showers from every spray and tendril.

(To be continued.)

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PICTURE OF OUR SAVIOUR PRINTED ON PRISON WALL

On the wall of the chapel at the United States penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia, there is a magnificent painting of Jesus Christ, the work of Max Sasanoff, a Russian convicted of forgery in New York City and now serving his term of imprisonment, Sasanoff now hopes to gain a pardon thru his remarkable achievement.

The painting, which just has been completed after nearly six months of intensive effort has evoked the praise of art critics of Atlanta and the South, many of them declaring that it compares favorably with the mural decorations in some of the most famous churches of Europe.

It depicts the Saviour on the steps of the temple while all about him are gathered the sick, the lame and the feeble and the weary. Above in the clouds are cherubim, symbolic, as Max says, of the angels of mercy.

Prisoners were posed for Max for various figures while the idea was given to him by Father Hayden, rector of the chapel and a man universally loved by all the prisoners.

Max has dedicated the painting to Father Hayden as a memorial and further, as he says, "to show how much a man appreciates kindness."

An Artist of Note

Max first came into local prominence by his singing at a radio station here, and investigation by Lambdin Kay, director of the station, disclosed that he not only had been a grand opera star of considerable magnitude but was an artist of some note. He told Kay of the painting and promised him that when it was completed he would be the first to see it.

Accordingly, Kay and a group of Atlanta artists were invited to the prison and the painting was unveiled.

So pleased were they with the work that they immediately started the ball rolling to get Max a pardon. Kay has taken up the movement and initiated negotiations with Washington officials seeking to get Max released.

Officials of the prison say Max has been a model prisoner during his stay, while Father Hayden says his investigation of the forgery case convinced him that Max was but the tool of a gang of New Yorkers.

Sasanoff himself says he didn't know what he was doing and that when he found out what the forgery was for he tried to stop but that his gang made him go on with the work under the penalty of death and that he was forced to finish the work.

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75.—(1) A Ship belonging to a British Subject shall hoist the proper national colors—

- (a) on a signal made to her by one of His Majesty's ships, including any vessel under the command of an officer of His Majesty's navy or full pay, and
- (b) on entering or leaving any foreign port and
- (c) if of fifty tons gross tonnage or upwards, on entering or leaving any British Port.

(2) If default is made on board any ship in complying with this section the master of the ship shall for each offence be liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds.

At time of war it is necessary for every British Ship to hoist the colours and heave to if signalled by a British Warship; if a vessel hoists no colours and runs away, it is liable to be fired upon.

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