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But Egerton neither heeded nor saw in the blinding frenzy that possessed him. It would have been as useless

to attempt to stay the cataract as t

arrest him, in the act of wreaking th

It was but the work of a moment The hand of David had pulled the trigger. The report was followed by another in instantaneous succession

for his timid nature, once forced into

action for self-defence, could not con-

trol the nervous excitement that caus-

ed him to repeat what was certain to

prove a mortal shot. Egerton sank to the floor without a murmur, as Mr.

late to interpose.

In the bewilderment that ensued, no

correct impression of what had trans-pired could be gained by any of those

In an agony of unquestioning dis-

tress Steele knelt down beside the lifeless form of the man whom in boyhood he had so loved, over whose failings he had grieved, in whose sorrows he had sympathized, while

voiceless anticipations of wretched

ness thronged into his mind. Edith!-

oh that such a scene as this must

come to her knowledge; and even as he remembered her with an undefined

fear, his eye fell upon a letter that had

fallen from the unretaining grasp of

me dead man.

By the quick eye of love that writing was at once recognized; with the quick instinct of love he let his hand drop upon it, unobserbed by those assembled around the body. Had he been God-directed to this place of horzer to shield her name from the contract of the contract

ror to shield her name from idle criti-cism, and the meddlesome curiosity

of those whom delight in the herrible would collect upon the spot?

Escaping from the crowd, with their heartless comments and conjectures,

Steele paused for a moment in the street, divided between his duties as

priest and impulses as man; between the command that bade him go and

prepare the bereaved wife for the loss

Love won the victory, and hastening back to the hotel, he had the good for

in the doorway. His haggard face be

tune to find Mabel watching for him

tokening disaster froze upon her lips

"Where is Edith?" he asked, in a

into the nearest seat, pressing his hands tightly together.

he raised himself and rapidly recount ed the circumstances of the catastro

As she stood beside him, trembling

"But, oh! Mabel," he continued, in agony, "Mabel, she loved him—you understand. I have kept her secret faithfully till now, but, Mabel, what has broken her health and blighted her

outh was a hopeless love for this unhappy doctor. I may not explain to you now how ignorantly she was be-

trayed into bestowing her affections upon one who could never fulfil them;

but go to her, Mabel, watch over her, let no rumor reach her till I can

break it to her myself, poor child. Oh, my God, that it should be laid up-

on me to perform."

He buried his head in his hands for

one brief moment, then rose.

"I must go," he said, "and prepare his wife for the blow that has befallen her. Take care of Edith," and as he

pressed his sister's sympathetic hand, he added, impulsively: "Be tender

with her as you love me, for, Mabel, that little girl holds my life in her

After that rapid acknowledgment h was gone, and during the next hour he appeared only as the calm priest,

administering the consolation of religion to the bereaved. Mrs. Egerton's demonstration of grief was violent, and Steele remained with her long.

forgetful of his own anxious pain, striving in every way to mitigate her

It was late when he found himself once more in the street, with a more painful task yet before him; and in

the first moment of personal consideration the question of that letter rose

before his mind. Could she have writ-ten to him lately? Could she have

yielded to the weakness of her infatu-ation once more?

Pausing on the sidewalk, he drew forth the sheet of crumpled paper, and scrupulously avoiding every word that it contained, he turned to the date.

That he might examine without breach of honor. It das dated the preceding year, and, satisfied. Steele struck a match and burned it there,

setting his foot upon the ashes and dispersing them to the winds. The

contents of that letter were sacred to him who knew her history; and what-

ever bearing they might have upon the latastrophe that had just transpired, which he dimly suspected was the case, her name must be guarded by

destroying all positive proof.

Again on his way to the hotel, he er

tered it hours after the train for which they had been waiting had left

sofa, her cheeks burning with feverish excitement. The welrd sense of necessity under which he had acted all day culminated in a dread presentment of coming misery; and since she woke from that sleep of exhaustion she had

what is it, Ernest? for Steere dro

the inquiry as to what had detained

that had befallen her, and the lest the news might spread and reach the ears of Edith.

ummoned by the noise.

the dead man.

vengeance of a life-time

against a day of accusation when she might bring it forward and blast his haughty assumption of exemplary conduct. Often had the temptation been upon her to use this reserved wearon upon her to use this reserved weapon when her spiteful words failed to rouse him from his indifferent courtesy; but ever her courage had failed, till the him. It would be a stronger to the course of bitterness long brooded everspread with frightful corruption throughout her soul, and fanned by the poisonous breath of David, she trembled daily upon the brink of proclaiming her alous fury.

The critical moment arrived when the slumbering velcano could no longer retain its pent fires, and this moment retain its pent fires, and this most of-was coincidental with the arrival of-Steele and his party in Booneville. It chanced that evening that an altercation had occurred between the doctor and his unhappy wife. Some slight and unusual suggestion of his had been the office and the private room, too met by such an unnecessarily violent retort that Egerton was roused from the patient silence in which he had

"It passes endurance," he muttered between his set teeth. "Is it not posbetween his set teeth. sible for us at least to maintain civility in our intercourse?" Then his voice cose in indignant self-justification: "I have tried, heaven knows, to keep the peace. You have not the excuse that provoked you. You cannot say that have not tried"-

"Indeed, Dr. Egerton," she interrupt-"it is little concern of mine what you do. It has long ceased to be mat-ter of interest to me," and her voice increased in shriliness with excitement as the mad turmoil of her feelings rushed into one final expression. "Per-haps you tried," she added in bitter irony, "when that letter was written," and she suddenly, repidly, brought be-fore his view the missive she had vorn as a thorn in her side through

menths of jealous passion. Egerton heeded not the satire of the tone, as with a cry of recognition he caught up the little note and scanned the contents. Here was the missing link in that chain of mistakes. As he read the plaintive appeal to his strength as a man he saw with ach ing wretchedness how much pain and mortification might have been averted in the past, the betrayal of their secret to Steele and the deeper involving of Edith in what appeared a villainous sceme on his part. Lengthily, painfully, he dwelt upon that record of the trust the girl he loved had reposed in himself, which his subsequent conduct had apparently belied, till his wounded self-esteem brought him back to the cause of the error, the reason why her him. letter had never reached him. As an self-torture remorse merged into retributive justice. Ethel never forgot the fire that blazed up in his eyes as he suddenly raised and fixed them upon her, or the voice of



how she came by that letter.

how she came by that letter.

Frighteaed, cowering, she poured forth protestations in defense of an act which she had once anticipated as one of triumphant retribution, as she saw her sneering arguments that "a woman had some right to her husband's correspondence" wither away in the consuming heat of his just wrath; and she finally took refuge in pleading that she never had broken the seal; it had been given to her. Yielding up the confirmatory information which the quick intuition of Dudley hardly needed, she betrayed the name of her accomplice, and with one volley of invective against David, Egerton darted from the house, his heart one seething mass of demented passion.

God only knew where such derangement might end! While she who had fired the train, like many a woman the bayes contact the worst in

ment might end; While she wao had fired the train, like many a woman when she has roused the worst instincts in man, sank down on the floor and cowered and wrung her hands, shuddering over the possible result of her own work, with that awful look from those planting bright ever which from those piercing bright eyes, which had once beamed love upon her. burning into her soul, and the vertict of Fate ringing in her ears: "You cannot control affection."

CHAPTER XXII.

SAVED FROM COMMITTING A CRIME. When the apparition of Egerton, with his livid features, every muscle frightfully contracted, clenched hands and bloodshot eyes, burst unceremoniously in upon the tranquil apartment of the serene lawyer, it was no wonder the gentle David received a stunning shock.

stunning shock.

Physically Dudley was his inferior, as his worn, almost emaciated features bore witness, but there was the conhis worn, almost emaced the bore witness, but there was the concentrated determination of the madman in the gleam of his eye before which brave men would have qualled in terror, and a deadly noiselessness in his approach that was appailing. In act of turning over his documents, David glanced up to encounter the glare of those flery eyes, and like a stricken man no exclamation of alarm escaped him. For one chill moment he realized his doom approaching. His clerk sat paralyzed as one overawed by the presence of intende rapid motion, and David shrunk behind a chair, his guilty face imploring mercy, his the depot. Without delay he proceeded to his sister's apartment and knocked gently. Mabel opened it at once, disclosing Edith seated on the

exquisite gratieness in his tone and touch as he sat down beside her, speaking slowly and cautiously. How he framed the words Steele hardly knew; those words which no care in their utterance can soften. circumstances of the doctor's

death he cocealed as much as possi death he cocealed as much as possi-ble, but never could he forget the tone in which she repeated "Dead! Dead!" and then, as if the reiteration of the word had brought its meaning clear to her mind, broke into hysterical weeping, sobbing out, "Oh, my love, my love!" in accents that rung through Steele's inmost heart, in their aban-donment of suffering.

She had lost all consciousness that any one was present in the first bit-

any one was present in the first bit-terness of the blow, that Mr. Steele's arm was around her, that it was his hand detained hers, that she clutched so convulsively, that it was on his shoulder that he had forced her to sob shoulder that he had forced her sorrow, forth the violence of her sorrow, With the gentleness of a woman he soothed and controlled the pain that racked her, even with his support, and hushed its violent expression. But when the first transport subsided, Steele knew that she had become aware of his presence, for instinctively she drew away, extricating herself from his hold, and he recognized with a pang that returning conscious-ness set her once more at a distance from him, that she had found no in-trinsic solace in his condelence. How bitterly he longed at that moment that she should seek ease in his love, as her head had found rest while on his shoulder. Yet she retained his hand in her hold as she leaned back against the sofa faint and exhausted by weeping, and it was long before he ventur ' to address her. Mabel had walked to the window too deeply affected by the scene she had wit nessed, and trusting to her brother soothing to be more effectual than any word of her own. It was Edith's voice that first fell upon her ear after that long silence, broken only

"Mr. Steele," she said, in a quivering voice, "you told me to—to regard you as a friend, and ask you anything—I—I must see him again—I can love him now," and the reckless despair of the last word went to the minister's heart. He could not have fused her had the granting of the wish been attended by certain misfortune and in an instant the whole situation passed rapidly before him for con-sideration. Distinguished far and near as Egerton was, numbers would be collected at his funeral; and lost amid the crowd, he could easily procure for Edith that last look she craved, protected by his presence even if noticed among so many. But the public ordeal he feared would be a sadly trying one, and he turned a face of grave, thoughtful compassion upon

"My child." he and, appealingly, would be very har upon you. There will be so many pople-" "I can do it." she cried, "I promis

you I can control myself. You think me weak just now, but I will show you. Only let me go, listen to me, let me go," and as she roused herself in her insistance, Steele gave the promise that she should. She was so still and unnaturally sales during the next few days with that duil insensibilly to the full ex-

tent of her sufferi 2 which is merci fully sent sometime, that the paster and wished sincerely over; for he knew the strain under which she was controlling herse would result in alarming reaction Every incident of the case appeared in the papers, which it was his car to keep from falling beneath Edith' eyes; hints of the long fend that had existed between the cousins were broadly broached; and whispered explanations of the cause of the quarre were exchanged upon the street, ex-planations that were anything but creditable to Mrs. Egerton, at whose house David had been a constant guest during her husband's absence.

As to the lawyer himself, he had sucseeded in dying from the scene of his
own villainy, which was a great relief of Steele, in that it exempted him from bearing testimony concerning the tragedy of which he had inadvertent ly become a witness. When the day the hours, rejoicing that each drew him nearer to the last. It was a hard day, as he recalled it afterwards, the renewed discussion of the deceased carried on by strangers in the same car that was conveying them to the doc tor's beautiful suburban home, and the walk, which continued for some dis tance in the country after they reached the end of the car line, behind that procession of those who were ac that procession of those who were accompanying them to gather at the dwelling of the late leading physician of the city. Arriving late, as he had arranged that they should, they found the house crowded. Steele took lifs stand without the circle of those as a combled watching with anyier his sembled, watching with anxiety his charge, in her death-like stiliness and composure. She had promised him him that she could control herself, and she did, wonderfully, all during that half hour of waiting, while the service read within reached them in indistinct murmurs. At length there was a slight movement in the crowd and the gentleman in charge of the proceedings appeared at the door to announce that the friends of the de ceased were now permitted to enter.
Steele cast one last anxious glance at
Edith, but her face was composed as
chiseled marble. With a thrill of admiration for her fortitude, he drew her hand through his arm, and moved for hand through his arm, and moved forward towards the doorway. The house was thronged with people, but a narrow passage way had been made for those outside to enter, and slowly one by one the friends of the dead man passed into the silent room, and took their last look at his lifeless remains.

To be Continued

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meekly. "And might I have the dol-lar now?"—Philadelphia North Am-erican.

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