JOHN ARTHUR'S WARD;

OR, THE DETECTIVE'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"A WOMAN'S CRIME," "THE MISSING DIAMOND," ETC., ETC.

It was wonderful how these two understood each other. She knew that he had for her a plan fully matured, and wasting no time in needless questionings, waited to hear the gist of the whole matter, assured from past experience that he would suggest nothing that would be an undertaking unworthy of her talent, and he knew that she would weigh his suggestions while they were being made, and be ready with her decision at the close.

Long had they plotted and prospered together, these two Bohemians of most malevolent type; and successfully and oft played into each other's hands. Never yet had the good fortune of the one been devoid of profit to the other; knowing this, each felt safe in accepting, unquestioned, the suggestions of the other; and because of this, she felt assured now that, in this present scheme, there was something to be gained for him as well as herself.

When the looker-on wonders idly at the strength of ties such as those which bound together these two, and the length of their duration, he has never considered their nature—the similarlity of tastes, similarity of pursuits, and the crowning act of the mutual benefit derived from such association.

Find a man who lives by successful manipulations of the hand-book of chance, and who bows to the deity of three aces; who finds victims in fortified places, and whose most hazardous scheme is surest of success; who walks abreast the admired of his contemporaries, who envy him his position as fortune's favorite in proportion as they pity their own similar trade near the foot of the ladder of chance, who shows to men the dress and manner of a gentleman, and to the angels the heart of a fiend—and you will find that man aided and abetted, upheld and applauded by a woman, his fitting companion by nature or education. She is unscrupulous as he, daring as he, finding him victims that his arm could not reach; plying the finer branch of a dangerous but profitable trade; sharing his prosperity, rescuing from adversity; valued because necessary, and, knowing her value, fearing no rival.

Cora was beautiful in Davlin's eyes, and secure in his affections, because she was valuable, even necessary, to him. He cared for her because in so doing he was caring for himself, and placing any "card" in her hands was only the surest means of enlarging his own pack. While she, for whether a woman is good or bad she is ever the slave of her own heart, recognizing the fact of the mutual benefit resulting from their comradeship, and improving, in her character of a woman of the world, every opportunity to profit by him, yet she saw in him the one man who possessed her love. Though she life she had led had worn out all the romantic tendencies of her nature, and had turned the "languishing of her eye" into sharp glances in the direction of 'the main chance, still she lavished upon him the best of her heart, and held his interest ever the equal of her own. After the manner of such, they were loyal to each other.

"Then," pursued Lucian, "listen, and a tale I will unfold."

In his own way, he proceeded to describe the intended victim, his home, his wealth, his state of solitude, together with the facts he had gathered up here and there relative to his leading characteristics and weaknesses, whereby he might be successfully manipulated by skilled hands. The boldness of his plan made even Cora start, and instead of her usually ready decision and answer, she favored him with a wondering, thoughtful stare.

"You see," concluded Lucian, "he can's live forever at the worst, and the estate is a handsome one. You could easily make yourself queen absolute of the situation, and go and come at your own sweet will. I think as a good brother I should be a magnificent success, and an ornament to your country mansion in the lazy summer."

"And if I don't approve of the speculation after a trial, I can commit suicide or vanish," Cora said, meditatingly.

"Just so," laughed he; "and take the spoons."

"You are sure there are no incumbrances; perfectly sure of that?" she questioned.

"Perfectly sure. There was a stepdaughter, but she ran away with some foreigner;" here he smiled, and veiled his eyes, less she should read aright his expression. "He would not give her a penny, or a crust of bread, were she to return. He hated her from her earliest day; but she is not likely to re-appear in any case."

"If she should, you might marry her, you know," she suggested maliciously.

"So I might," he said, shutting his eyes again; "and we would all settle down into respectable members of society—charming picture. But, jesting aside, how do you like the prospect?"

She tossed away her cigarette and, rising, paced the room in silence for a few moments.

Lucian whistled, softly, a few bars from a favorite opera; then lighted a fresh cigar, and puffed away, leaning lazily back and watching her face furtively out of half closed eyes.

"I think," she said, resuming her seat, "that I will take a nearer view of this 'prospect' of yours."

He nodded his head and waited for her to proceed.

"I think the role of widow might interest me for a little time, so I'll take myself and my 'delicate constitution' down to your promising haven of rest. I'll view the landscape o'er, and the prospect of an opportunity for a little sharp practice will make my banishment more endurable; of course, my resignation will increase as the situation becomes more interesting."

"Which it is sure to do," he said, rising quickly and crossing to the window. "The thing is as good as done; you always accomplish what you undertake; and you'll find the game worth the powder. The fact is, Cora," he continued seriously, "you and I have engineered so many delicate little affairs successfully, here in the city, that, as a combination, we are pretty well known just now; too well, in fact, for our own ease and comfort. Your supposed trip to Europe was a lucky thing, and will throw all officially-interested ones off your track completely. I shall limit my operations here for a time; shall make this merely headquarters, in fact, and 'prospect,' like yourself, in fresh fields. And now, it being nearly morning, and quite necessary that you should be on your victorious march, let us consider final ways and means."

In a concise, business-like way, they arranged and discussed, the result of the whole being briefly this:

Cora would drive at early dawn to a suburban station, and from thence go by rail to a village midway between the city and her final destination; and there await her luggage, and the arrival of Lucian. He would join her shortly, and proceed with her to Bellair, in his character of brother; see her comfortably settled, and leave her to her new undertaking.

And thus it was that in the gray of morning a veiled lady, sweet-voiced and elegant in manner, stepped from a close carriage at a little wayside station, and sped away at the heels of the iron horse.

And thus it was that Lucian Davlin, re-appearing in Bellair and listening in well-simulated surprise to the story of the sudden disappearance of John Arthur's step-daughter, effectually put to flight any idea—forming in the brains of the few who knew, or conjectured, that these two had met—that he had aught to do with her mysterious flitting. In truth, none save old Hagar knew of the frequency of their clandestine meetings, and she never breathed to others the thoughts and suspicions that haunted her brain.

And thus it was, too, that Cora Weston, in her new roll of languishing widow, secluded carefully from the vulgar gaze, heard never a word of Madeline's flight. And when, later, the fact was revealed to her, none save old Hagar could have named the precise date of the event. So even wise Cora never connected the fate of the unfortunate girl with the doings of Lucian Davlin.

CHAPTER VI.—A WARNING.

Early morning in the great city, but the buzz and clamor were fairly under way, and the streets as full of busy, pushing, elbowing life as if night and silence had never rested above the tall roofs and chimney pots.

With the rattle of the first cart wheel on the pavement, Madeline had started broad awake. As the din increased, and sleep refused to return to the startled senses, all unused to these city sounds, she arose, and completing her toilet with some haste, seated herself at her window to look out upon the scene so new to her.

What a world of strange emotions passing and re-passing beneath her eye! What hopes and fears; what carelessness and heartache! How they hurried to and fro, each apparently intent upon his own thoughts and purposes.

She gazed down until her vision wearied of the motley, ever-changing, yet ever the same crowd; and then she reclined in the downy depths of a great easy chair, closed her eyes, and thought of Lucian. After all, what meaning had this restless moving throng for her? Only one; Lucian. What was this surging sea of humanity to her, save that, because of its roar and clamor, they two were made more isolated, therefore, nearer to each other?

The morning wore away, and she began to realize how very soon she would be with her lover hero, and then no more of separation. Her heart bounded at this thought.

Some one tapped softly at her door. She opened it quickly, thinking only of Lucian. It was not Lucian, however, but a veiled woman who stepped within the room, closing the door as she came.

Madeline fell back a pace, and gazed at the intruder with a look of startled inquiry which was, however, free from fear. She had not thought of it before, it flashed across her mind now that this fact was odd; but in all her morning's ruminations, she had not once thought of the mysterious stranger of the railway episode. Yet now the first words that took shape in her mind, at the entrace of this unexpected visitor, were "Clarence Vaughan, M. D." She almost spoke them.

With a quick, graceful movement, the stranger removed the shrouding veil; and Madeline gazed wonderingly on the lovelest face she had ever seen or dreamed of. It was a pure, pale face, lighted by lustrous dark eyes, crowned by waving masses of dark silky hair; exquisitely molded features, upon which there rested an expression of mingled weariness and resignation, the look of

"A soul whose experience
Has paralyzed bliss."

One could imagine such a woman lifting to her lips the full goblet of life's sparkling elixir, and putting it away with her own hand, lest its intoxicating richness should shut from her senses the fragrance of spring violets, and dim her vision of the world beyond.

They formed a decided contrast, these two, standing face to face.

One with the calm that comes only when storm clouds have swept athwart life's sky, leaving behind marks of their desolating progress, but leaving, too, calm after tempest; after restlessness, repose.

The other, stretching out her hand like a pleased child to woo the purple lightning from the distance, buoyant with bright hopes, with nothing on brow or lip to indicate how that proud head would bear itself after it had been bowed before the passing storm.

"Pardon me," said the lady, in a sweet contralto. "I think I am not mistaken; this is the young lady who arrrived last evening and is registered,"—she looked full in the girl's eyes—"as Miss Weir?"

Madeline's eyes dropped before that searching gaze but she answered simply: "Yes."

"You are naturally much astonished to see me here, and my errand is a delicate one. Since I have seen you, however, I have lost every doubt I may have entertained as to the propriety of my visit. Will you trust me so far as to answer a few simple questions?"

The words of the stranger had put to flight the first idea formed in her mind, namely, that this visit was a mistake. It was intended for her, and now, who had instigated it? She looked up into the face of her visitor and said, with her characteristic frankness of speech·

"Who sent you to me?"

The abruptness of the question caused the stranger to smile.

"One who is the soul of honor and the friend of all womankind," she said, with a soft light in her eyes.

Madeline's eyes still searched her face. "And his name is that," she said putting the card of Clarence Vaughan upon the table between them.

"Yes; and this reminds me, I have not yet introduced myself. Here is my card."

She placed in the hand of Madeline a delicate bit of cardboard bearing the name, "Olive Girard."

Silence fell between them for a moment, and then Olive Girard spoke.

"Won't you ask me to be seated, and hear what I wish to say, Miss Weir?"

She hesitated over the name, and Madeline, perceiving it, said:

"You think Weir is not my name?"

"Frankly I do," smiled Miss Girard; "but just now the name matters little. Pardon me, but I am more interested in your face than your name. I came here because it seemed my duty, and to oblige a friend; now I wish to serve you for your own sake, to be your friend, if you will let me."

Still Madeline's brain kept thinking, thinking; and she put her questions rather as commentaries on her own thoughts than as her share in a conversation.

"Why did Mr. Vaughan send you to me?"

They had seated themselves, at a sign from Madeline, and Mrs. Girard drew her chair nearer to the girl as she answered:

"Because he feared for you."

"Because he feared for me!" Madeline's face flushed hotly; "feared what?"

"He feared," said Olive Girard, turning her face full upon her questioner, "what I feel assured is the truth, having seen you—simply that you do not know aright the man in whose company you came to this place."

Madeline turned her eyes upon her guest and the blood went slowly out of her face, but she made no reply, and Mrs. Girard continued:

"I will ask you once more, before I proceed further, do you object to answering a few questions? Of course, I am willing to be likewise interrogated," she added, smiling.

Over the girl's face a look was creeping that Aunt Hagar, seeing, could readily have interpreted. She nodded her head, and said briefly: "Go on."

"First, then," said her interrogator, "are you entirely without friends in this city? Except, of course," she added, quickly, "your escort of last night."

"Yes." Madeline's countenance never altered, and she kept her eyes fully fixed on her companion's face.

"Are—are you without parents or guardian?"

"Yes."

"As I thought; and now, pardon the seeming impertinence of this question, did you come here as the companion of the man who was your escort, or did mere accident put you under his charge?"

"The 'accident' that put me in the charge of Mr. Davlin was—myself," said the girl, in a full, clear voice. "And he is my only guardian, and will be."

Olive Girard pushed back her chair, and rising, came and stood before her, with outstretched hand and pleading, compassionate eyes.

"Just as I feared," she sighed; "the very worst. My poor child, do you know the character and occupation of this man?"

Madeline sprang to her feet, and putting one nervous little hand upon the back of the chair she had occupied, moved back a pace, and said, in a low, set tone:

"If you have come to say aught against Lucian Davlin, you will find no listener here. I am satisfied with him, and trust him fully. When I desire to know more of his 'character and occupation,' I can learn it from his own lips. What warrant had that man," pointing to Clarence Vaughan's card, "for dogging me here, and then sending you to attempt to poison my mind against my best friend? I tell you, I will not listen!"

A bright spot burned on either cheek, and the little hand resting on the chair back clinched itself tighter.

Olive Girard drew a step nearer the now angry girl, and searched her face with grave eyes.

"If I said you were standing on the verge of a horrible precipice, that your life and soul were in danger, would you listen then?" she asked sternly.

"No," said Madeline, doggedly, drawing farther away as she spoke; "not unless I saw the danger with my own eyes. And in that case I should not need your warning," she added, dryly.

"And when your own eyes see the danger, it will be too late to avert it," said Olive, bitterly. "I know your feeling at this moment, and I know the heartache sure to follow your rashness. What are you, and what do you hope or expect to be, to the man you call Lucian Davlin?" She spoke his name as if it left the taste of poison in her mouth.

The girl's head dropped until it rested on the hands clasped upon the chair before her; cold fingers seemed clutched upon her heart. Across her memory came trooping all his love words of the past, and among them—she remembered it now for the first time—among them all, the word wife had never once been uttered. In that moment a thought new and terrible possessed her soul; a new and baleful light seemed shining upon the pictures of the past, imparting to each a shameful, terrible meaning. She uttered a low moan like that of some wounded animal and suddenly uplifting her head turned upon Olive Girard a face in which passion and a vague terror were strangely mingled.

"What are you saying? What are you daring to say to me!" she ejaculated in tones half-angry, half terror-stricken, wholly pitiful. "What horrible thing are you trying to torture me with?"

She would have spoken in indignation, but the new thought in her heart frightened the wrath from her voice. She dared not say "I am to be his wife," with these forebodings whispering darkly within her.

She turned away from the one who had conjured up these spectres, and throwing herself upon a couch, buried her face in the cushions, and remained in this attitude while Olive answered her and for long moments after; moments that seemed hours to both.

Olive's eyes were full of pity, and her tone was very gentle. Her woman's quick instinct assured her that words of comfort were of no avail in this first moment of bitter awakening. She knew that it were better to say all that she deemed it her duty to say, now, while her hearer was passive; and, stepping nearer the couch, she said:

"Dr. Vaughan, who saw you in the company of a man so well known to him that to see a young girl in his society he knew could mean no good, came to me this morning with a brief account of your meeting of last night. He is too good a physiognomist not to have discovered, readily, that you were not such a woman as could receive no contamination from such as Lucian Davlin. He feared for you, believing you to be another victim of his treachery. Your coming to this hotel assured him that you were safe for the time, at least; and this being a subject so delicate that he, a stranger, feared to approach you with it, he desired me to come to you, and, in case his fears were well founded, to save you if I could. My poor, poor child! you have cast yourself upon the protection of a professional gambler; a man whose name has been associated for years with that of a notorious and handsome adventuress. If he has any fear or regard for anything, it is for her; and your very life would be worth little could she know you as her rival. Judge if such a man can have intentions that are honorable, where a young, lovely and unsophisticated girl like yourself is concerned."

She paused here, but Madeline never stirred.

"Come with me, continued Olive, drawing a step nearer the motionless girl; "accept me as your protector, for the present, at least. Believe me, I know what you are suffering now, and near at hand you will find that which will aid you to forget this man.

Madeline slowly raised herself to a sitting posture and turned towards the speaker a face colorless as if dead, but with never a trace of a tear. Her eyes were unnaturally bright, and her lips were compressed, as if she had made, and was strong to keep, some dark resolve.

"What is it that I am to find?" she said in a low, intense tone.

"A girl, young as you, and once as beautiful," replied Olive sadly, "who is dying of a broken heart, and her destroyer is Lucian Davlin."

Madeline gazed at her absently for a moment. "I suppose I had ought to hate you," she said, wearily; "you have made my life very black. Lucian Davlin will soon be here—will you please go?"

"Surely you are going with me?" said Olive, in amaze.

"No."

"You doubt me? Oh, I have not made you feel your danger! You think I am an imposter!"

"No," said the girl, in the same quiet tone; "something here," putting her hand upon her bosom, tells me that you are sincere. My own heart has abandoned me; it will not let me doubt you, much as I wish to. I cannot thank you for making my heart ache,—please go."

Still with that air of unnatural calm, she arose and walked to the window.

Of the two, Olive Girard was by far the more agitated. "Tell me," she said, in eager entreaty; "Oh, tell me, you are not going with him?"

Madeline turned sharply around. "I shall not add myself to the list of his victims," she said, briefly.

And then the two gazed at each other in silence for a moment.

"This is madness," said Olive, at length. "What rash thing do you meditate? I will not leave you to face this man alone; I dare not do it."

Madeline came from the window and stood directly before her. "I am not the weak child you think me. You can do nothing but harm by remaining here. I will meet Lucian Davlin, and part with him in my own way," she said, between her teeth.

Olive saw, in the set face and stern eye, that she was indeed dealing with a character stubborn as death, and devoid of all fear. She dreaded to leave her thus, but felt assured that she could do nothing else.

"Will you come to me afterward?" she asked. "You have no friends here, you tell me, and you need a friend now. Promise me this and I will go."

"Thank you," said the girl, wearily; "at least I promise to go to no one else; good-by."

Turning away, she resumed her position at the window, and never looked once at Olive after that.

"I will write my address on this card," said Olive. She did so; then turning on the girl a look full of pitying tenderness, said: "I need not tell you to be brave; I should rather bid you be cautious. Remember, your life is worth more than the love and loss of such a man. Put this behind you, and come to me soon, believing that you are not friendless."

She lowered her veil, and, casting one more wistful glance at the silent figure by the window, went out and closed the door softly.

CHAPTER VII.—A STRUGGLE FOR MORE THAN LIFE.

It is a fortunate provision of Providence that calamity comes upon us, in most cases, with a force so sudden and overwhelming that it is rather seen than felt. As we realize the full torture of an ugly wound, not when the blow is struck, but after the whole system has been made to languish under its effects, so a blow struck at the heart can not make itself fully felt while the mind is still unable to picture what the future will be like now that the grief has come. We only taste our bitterest grief when the mind has shaken itself aloof from the present woe, to travel forward and question what the future can hold for us, now that our life is bereft of this treasure.

Madeline's condition, after the departure of Olive Girard, was an exponent of this truth. Fast and hard worked her thoughts, but they only encountered the ills of the present, and never glanced beyond.

She had set her lover aloft as her ideal, the embodiment of truth, honor, and manhood. He had fallen. Truth, honor, manhood, had passed out of existence for her. And she had loved him so well! She loved him even yet.

The thought brought with it a pang of terror, and as if conjured up by it, the scenes of the day previous marshalled themselves again for review. Could it be possible? Was it only yesterday that she listened to his tender love words, beneath the old tree in Oakley woods? Only yesterday that her step-father was revealed in all his vileness—his plots, his hopes, his fears? Her mother's sad life laid bare before her; Aunt Hagar's story; her defiance of the two men at Oakley; her flight; Clarence Vaughan; the strange, great city; Olive Girard; and now—now, just a dead blank, with no outlook, no hope.

And was this all since yesterday?

What was it, she wondered, that made people mad? Not things like these; she was calm, very calm. She was calm; too calm. If something would occur to break up this icy stillness of heart, to convulse the numbed powers of feeling, and shock them back into life before it was too late.

She waited patiently for the coming of her base lover, lying upon the soft divan, with her hands folded, and wondering if she would feel much different if she were dead.

When the summons came, at last, she went quietly down to greet the man who little dreamed that his reign in her heart was at an end, and that his hold upon her life was loosening fast.

When Madeline entered the presence of Lucian Davlin, she took the initiatory step in the part she was henceforth to play. And she took it unhesitatingly, as if dissimulation was to her no new thing. Truly, necessity, emergency, is the mother of much besides "invention." Entering, she gave him her hand with free grace, and smiled up at him as he bade her good-morning.

He remarked on her pale cheeks, but praised the brightness of her eyes, and accepted her explanation that the bustle and the strangeness were unusual to her, as a natural and sufficient reason for the pallor.

"You will soon grow accustomed to that," he said, as they descended to the carriage, "and be the rosiest, fairest little woman on the boulevard, for I mean to drive half the men jealous by taking you there often."

Madeline made no reply, and they entered the carriage.

Davlin was not surprised at her silence; he was prepared for a little coyness; in fact, for some resistance, and expected to have occasion for the specious eloquence always at his command. Of course the result would be the same.—he had no doubt of that, and so in silence they reached their destination.

"Up a broad flight of stairs, and then a door. Lucian rings, and an immaculate colored servant appears, who seems as well bred as an English baronet, and who expresses no surprise at the presence of a lady there.

"Welcome to your kingdom, fair queen," says Lucian, as they enter. "This is your abiding place, for a time, at least, and I am your slave for always," and he kneels playfully before her.

Madeline turns away, and, finding it easiest to do, in her then state of mind, begins a careless tour of the rooms, making a pretense of criticism, and finding in even this slow promenade some relief from absolute quiet and silence.

She guarded her face lest it should display too much of that locked, sullen calm underneath, and replied by an occasional word and nod to his running comments upon the different articles undergoing examination. Fingering carelessly the rare ornaments upon a fine set of brackets, her eye rested upon an elegant little gold mounted pistol. She turned away quickly, and they passed to other things.

Her replies became more ready, and she began questioning gravely about this or that, listening with child-like wonder to his answers, and winning him into a pleasant bantering humor.

Finally he threw himself upon a chair, and selecting a cigar, proceeded to light it.

Madeline continued to flit from picture to statuette questioning with much apparent interest. At last she paused again before the bracket which held the tiny toy that had for her a fascination.

"What a pretty little pistol," she said. "Is it loaded?"

"I don't know," replied he, lazily. "Bring it to me; I will see."

He was inwardly wondering at her cool acceptance of the situation; and felt inclined to congratulate himself. Seeing her look at the little weapon doubtfully, he laughed and strode to her side, taking it in his hand.

"It is not loaded," he said. "Did you ever fire a pistol?"

"No; show me how to hold it."

He placed it in her hand, and showed her how to manipulate the trigger, and to take aim.

"I should like to see it loaded," she said, at last.

"And so you shall."

He smiled, and crossing the room took from a little inlaid box a handful of cartridges. Madeline watched him attentively, as he explained to her the operation of loading. At length expressing herself satisfied, and declining his invitation to try and load it herself, she turned away.

Davlin extracted the cartridge from the pistol, and returned it to its place, saying: "You might wish to practise at aiming, and won't want it loaded."

"I shall not want such practice," she replied.

A rap at the door, and the servant announced that dinner was come.

"I ordered your dinner here to-day," explained Lucian, "thinking it would be more cosy. You may serve it, Henry," to the servant.

Dinner was accordingly served, and Lucian found occasion to criticise, very severely, the manner of his serving man. More than once, his voice took on an intolerant tone.

Sitting opposite, Madeline saw the man, as he stood behind his master's chair, dart upon him a look of hatred. Her lips framed a smile quite new to them; and, after dessert was placed upon the table and the man dismissed, she said:

"You don't like your servant, I judge?"

"Oh, he's as good as any," replied Lucian, carelessly. "They are pretty much alike, and all need a setting back occasionally—on general principles, you know."

"I suppose so," assented Madeline, indifferently, as if the subject had lost all interest for her.

Slowly the afternoon wore on, moments seeming hours to the despairing girl. At length, Lucian finding her little inclined to assist him in keeping up a conversation, said:

"I am selfish not to remember that you are very tired. I will leave you to solitude and repose for a little time, shall I?"

"If you wish," she replied, wearily. "I suppose I need the rest."

"Then I will look in upon some of my friends. I have almost lost the run of city doings during my absence. Meantime, ring for anything you may need, won't you?"

"I will ring;" and she looked, not at him, but at the bracket beyond.

"Then good-by, little sweetheart. It is now four; I will be with you at six."

He embraced her tenderly, and went out with that debonnair grace which she had so loved. She looked after him with a hungry, hopeless longing in her eyes.

"Oh, why does God make His foulest things the fairest?" she moaned. "Why did He put love in our hearts if it must turn our lives to ashes? Why must one be so young and yet so miserable? Oh, mother, mother, are all women wronged like us?"

Madeline arose and commenced pacing the floor restlessly, nervously. She had come here with no fixed purpose, nothing beyond the indefinite determination to defy and thwart the man who had entrapped her. She had never for a moment feared for her safety, or doubted her ability to accomplish her object.

A plan was now taking shape in her mind, and as she pondered, she extended her march, quite unthinkingly, on into the adjoining room, the door of which stood invitingly open. The first object to attract her attention was the light traveling coat which Lucian had worn on the previous day; worn when he was pleading his suit under the trees of Oakley; and in a burst of anger, as if it were a part of him she was thinking of so bitterly, she seized and hurled it from her. As it flew across the room, something fell from a pocket, almost at her feet.

She looked down at it; it was a telegram, the one, doubtless, that had called him back to the city the day before. A business matter, he had said. Into her mind flashed the words of Olive Girard, "a professional gambler." She would see what this "business" was. Stooping, she picked up the crumpled envelope, and quickly devoured its contents.

Must see you immediately. Come by first train; am waiting at your quarters.

Cora.

To be Continued

SUMMER MILLINERY

—AT—

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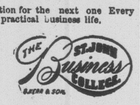

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