

"Mr. Thiers, you have received—letters—from my wife." A slight shade of surprise passed over the other's face. "Yes," he said.

"You admit it!"

"Yes. I presume Mrs. Morgan has told you."

"No. I have learned the facts from a servant."

"Ah! Then I trust you will consent to have these letters published?"

"Published!"

"Why, yes. At least for private circulation. They show that your wife possesses literary talent of the rarest order."

"You jest, sir!"

"No, no! I have shown them to even sterner critics than myself, and they have pronounced them unequaled of their kind in the whole field of imaginative literature."

The hand of the older man ceased fumbling at his coat pocket and rested on the table. "I do not understand. I fear I am growing old. Will you explain?"

"Why, Mr. Morgan, your wife has been submitting to me a collection of love letters for publication. I received the final one but yesterday. See, I have brought the proof sheets for her correction." He took from an inner pocket a roll of uneven slips of printed paper. "Your wife has not spoken of this to you, as she wished to surprise you with a copy of the complete volume."

The other took the parcel into his hands and fluttered the sheets aimlessly. "My wife writing a book!" He said. "A novel—like Howells or Meredith!"

The younger man nodded gravely.

"And that letter she sent you yesterday was—was one of a book of letters? Not—not—" The proof sheets fell from the speaker's hands to the floor and he stooped to pick them up, when a cry escaped him and he pitched headlong across the carpet, unconscious.

"He has fainted," said the man who was standing.

The woman caught her breath suddenly, as a revolver fell from the pocket of the unconscious man. "Does he still suspect me?" she breathed.

"No, your plan has saved us. He thinks those letters are for a book."

"Oh, if I were but sure!"

"We will make assurance doubly sure; we will publish your letters as a book. And then—"

"Then?"

"Then we must be more cautious, my darling!"

"Hush!"

The prostrated form stirred consciously, and the wife turned quickly and stole from the room, leaving behind her a warm fragrance of violets, that soothed the reawakening senses of the husband and brought up in his mind the picture of a beautiful girl of twenty in shimmering bridal dress.

The Society Stationery Shop on Columbia Street is the most exclusive establishment of this nature on the Coast. In so many cases we find that where enterprise starts, courtesy finishes, but the proprietors, Messrs. Neatby & Shanstrom, combine both and the results are very pleasing.

They are representatives of the celebrated "Samuel Ward's" Boston firm of Stationers and have some very new exclusive imported tissue lined stationery. A peculiar thing about this paper is, you can purchase it for less than that made at home. This is difficult to understand for the imported stock is in a class by itself.

SERIAL STORY

A Brigand in Love

By LOUISE WINTER.

(Continued from last month.)

IV

That night Loring started for home. Numb with sorrow, she lived only in the memory of the days that had been so sweet. The murmur of the swiftly moving train beat into her brain. "A mile further away! A mile further away!"

Six months at least must elapse before she could broach the subject of a trip to Japan. She would take Frances, Miriam's eldest daughter, with her. The longer journey to Manila would follow; she would find some plausible excuse for that. Then there would be a month or two of courtship, and how delightful that would be with behind it all the knowledge of their precious relationship!

And so the hours passed. On the third day, as Loring gazed readily out of the window, seeing nothing but a vision of her own conjuring, there was suddenly a violent jar, a noise of crashing wood and broken glass. She screamed and tried to struggle to her feet. Then came oblivion.

The newspaper accounts of the wreck gave among the list of the dead, the name of Mrs. Percy Bryce, of New York. The body was frightfully charred, but was identified by a bag containing papers bearing her name and by some jewelry. This was the news which greeted Paul Redding when he arrived at Manila. He could not believe it, and he cabled to the railroad company and to Loring's bankers in New York. But they confirmed the report. It was some time before the truth became known and it was discovered that Nanette's body had been mistaken for that of her mistress, and that Loring lay for weeks in a country hospital, unknown and unknowing.

This later information, however, did not reach Redding, and he abandoned himself to his grief, living over every moment of the past and finding his only consolation in the few letters Loring had given him to be read on the trip out. They were beautiful letters, reiterating all the tender avowals of her love and devotion. She had written them at odd moments when he was on duty. After she had given herself she had no more doubts, and did not scruple to let him share her inmost thoughts. But through them ran a fantastic strain of superstition. Would they be allowed to live on in perfect bliss, or would the gods become jealous and punish them for snatching prematurely at happiness? There was a price to pay for everything.

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