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The Web;

— OR, —

PASSION. LOVE'S TRUE

CHAPTER XL.

Retribution.

They raised him, and Jack tore open his collar, and laid a hand upon his heart. Then he looked round at the rest, and spoke the one dread word:

"Dead!"

For a moment or two they stood speechless and awestruck; then, with compressed lips, Jack opened the dead man's coat, and took from the pocket some letters.

Cyril bent forward.

"They are mine," he said, almost inaudibly.

Jack handed them to him, and as he took them something fell on the floor. Jack picked it up, and Cyril with a shudder exclaimed:

"My ring! the ring I gave Becca! And—my God, Jack!—and here is the letter I wrote that night at the fete and gave to her!" and he covered his face with his hands.

Jack rose.

"I shall get my answer after all," he said. "Light that lantern, Ferndale."

In awestricken silence, but with a feverish eagerness and dread, they searched the grim place from room to room; then, after a moment's thought, Jack led the way to the garden, followed by the trembling old woman uttering inarticulate cries of terror.

Jack stopped before the heap of leaves, and stooped down.

"Get me a spade, some one!" he said, hoarsely.

Lord Ferndale brought one, and they stood round while Jack worked.

A suspense of a few minutes that seemed ages, and then they heard his voice, solemn as a knell:

"I have found the answer; it is here!"

* * * * * * * *

Two years later the artistic world was thrown into a state of excitement by a certain picture in the Academy exhibition of that season.

It was a landscape—a small one, but with two figures, a lady and a child. The lady was seated under an apple tree in a most delightful orchard, and the child was lying on its back, vainly endeavouring to bite an apple at least three times the size of its mouth.

It was so fresh in treatment, so delicately painted, that the connoisseurs were unanimous in their approbation and praise, but the general public, who know little and care less for compositions, were quite content with being charmed by the exquisite beauty of the mother and the delightfully lifelike youngster. It was the picture of the year, and it was found necessary to place before it the protecting rail and policeman which only appear before the great event of the exhibition. Critics praised it, the papers rhapsodized it, the public crowded to see it, and for some days after that on which the exhibition opened everybody was asking who and what the painter was, for the name in the catalogue was evidently an assumed one, and told nothing.

The mystery only heightened the public and artistic curiosity and interest, and at dinner parties and in the pauses of the dance one heard people saying to each other:

"Have you seen the mother and child in the apple orchard? Splendid, isn't it? Wonder who on earth the man is?"

The secret was very well kept—for nearly a month. At the end of that time, however, the veil was lifted, for a famous critic, who was sharper than his fellows, happened to visit the gallery one afternoon, and found the popular Countess of Arrowdale standing before it.

As he looked first at the picture and then at her she happened to smile. Now, the mother was not a portrait of Norah, but Cyril had perhaps unconsciously bestowed upon the painted face a reflection, a hint of the smile which was one of the charms with which Norah worked her spells, and the critic divined the truth.

"Lady Arrowdale," he said, growing red with the excitement of his discovery, "your husband painted that picture."

Norah flushed and smiled.

"Oh, please, don't tell," she said. "It was to be a secret, and—and we have kept it so well."

"Yes, you have," returned the critic, who, of course, meant to rush off as soon as he could and proclaim his important find. "Yes, indeed you have. I know Lord Arrowdale's pictures pretty well, I think, but, though they are good, as I've said very often, they are nothing compared with this. It is such a sudden jump. How do you account for it, Lady Arrowdale?"

Norah smiled, and looked at the picture in silence, but some one spoke for her.

"Permit me, Lady Arrowdale," said Jack, who had stepped up and heard the little speech. "This picture is so far and away the best of my friend, Lord Arrowdale, because he mixed his colors with the oil of happiness, drew the orchard by the light of love, and gave his whole heart to the mother and the child. And now you know not only how Arrowdale came to paint such a picture, but why he calls it 'Joy.' Am I not right, Lady Arrowdale?"

And Norah, as she put her hand on his arm, could only assent by a smile, which the critic afterward declared made him feel as if the tears were in his eyes as well as in hers.

THE END.

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After the Ball;

— OR, —

The Mystery Solved at Last.

CHAPTER I.

Two Letters.

"Chud!" he said, drawing a long breath, "we are ruined!" and uttering a groan, he leaned his arm on the mantelpiece and buried his face in it.

The son said nothing, but the twitching of his lip and sudden pallor proclaimed how great a struggle the calmness cost him.

There was a dead silence, in which the ticking of the antique bronze timepiece, with its figure of the inexorable Father Time crushing down the minutes with a sweep of his deadly scythe, sounded harsh and foreboding.

Suddenly a burst of music floated into the room, and a girl's clear voice rang out joyfully from the room above in some simple ballad.

The father started, as if he had been struck—the brother hid his face in his hands and groaned.

"Oh, Heaven—my Maud, my Maud!" breathed Sir Fielding, all the books in his heart turned out to make place for his darling. "My poor child! Chud, what shall we do?"

"Ay, what shall we do? That is the question," said Chudleigh, catching eagerly at the escape from the dread apathetic despair and drawing himself up to his full height. "Bear up, sir; all is not lost yet. Surely, there is some one——"

Sir Fielding raised his head, startling Chudleigh at sight of his face, which looked ten years older than when he had seen it last.

"Some one, aye, but where? No, no, Chud; I have no friends now. I have been living out of the world for nearly twenty years. Once," and he walked to the window, Chudleigh following him—"once," raising his hand and pointing it for a second at the tall, crumbling chimneys of the rectory, "there would have been refuge, for no Durant ever closed his hand against a Chichester, nor a Chichester ever denied a Durant. But," and he sighed, with a world of mournfulness, "where is a Durant now? No, Chudleigh, that was our only chance; but you know how utterly that is lost to us."

And once more the baronet, gazing at the deserted house, sighed wearily and with utter hopelessness.

CHAPTER II.

The Orphan.

Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eyes,
In every gesture dignity and love.
—MILTON.

THE first of December had arrived, and with it Lady Mildred, covered with furs, and accompanied by her friend and companion, Carlotta Lawley.

Chudleigh had been compelled to go to town the preceding day to see the family solicitor, and had not returned when her ladyship arrived, so that Sir Fielding and Maud did the honors of the house—Maud with some little shyness and reserve, for Miss Lawley had taken her by surprise. She had expected to see a beautiful and accomplished girl, from her aunt's purposely obscure description, but the portrait her imagination had drawn fell so far short of her reality that she was startled and surprised.

To say that Carlotta Lawley was beautiful was to assert but little. She was more proud and more bewitching than charming. Taller than Maud, a brilliant brunette, with dark, piercing eyes that shone like a jewel, or a gypsy's—a graceful form, almost queenly in its bearing, and a mouth that rivaled Cleopatra's in its coral-like curves and fullness—she was indeed, what the best Parisian judges of woman's looks had called her—superb.

Beside Maud's fresh, fair loveliness, her beauty shone to its greatest advantage, and Sir Fielding, who came from his dream world, with all the Chichester courtliness, to welcome her, muttered a half audible note of admiration, which it was well for Carlotta's vanity did not reach her ear.

She was very quiet, naturally, thought Maud, but expressed her admiration of the grand old house with such fervor as to win Sir Fielding's and Maud's love immediately.

Said Maud, stopping before an open door through which a small sitting-room could be seen.

"These rooms are Chudleigh's. Oh, I forgot to tell you," she exclaimed, in answer to the look of interrogation on Carlotta's face. "Chudleigh is my brother. He is so good—so kind. We all of us lean on him. Papa is—is very busy in the library, you know, always, and everything is left to Chud. And everything fares well, too. Oh, you must like Chudleigh."

"I am sure I shall, if he resembles you in the slightest," murmured Carlotta, kissing her again.

"He went to London on business, yesterday, but he will be back to dinner, I hope. You must let him take you all over the hall—I mean in the closed-up rooms, you know. He can tell you the history of every room."

"If he will only take so much trouble, I shall only be too grateful," said Carlotta. "I am fond of old houses and their histories."

"And now you must come and see my room," she said, winding her arm around her new friend's waist, and leading her into the little, rose-coloured boudoir and bedchamber which was honored by the title, "Miss Maud's." "Do you like them? If you do, you shall have them while you stay. And I wish that might be forever."

"Do you?" said Carlotta, leaning down, with a sudden moisture in her dark eyes, her voice ringing tremulously musical—more musical than Maud had ever heard or thought it possible for a voice to be. "So do I! How very kind you are! You must forgive me if I seem somewhat cold; until I met Lady Mildred, I never experienced such goodness."

And the lips quivered slightly, although the eyes lit up with a mournful smile.

Maud drew her closer to her.

"You must not say such things; I am not kind. It seems so ridiculous to hear you say that to me," and she laughed merrily, as she glanced at the grand beauty of the other, against which she looked so fresh and child-like. "It's you who must be good to me. You will try and love me, won't you? I love you already."

Again the dark eyes filled with tears, but the lips said nothing, as she stooped to kiss her. "And now you must rest after your journey. See, I will make up the fire, and cover you up with these furs. Then, while I go and see whether Aunt Mildred is comfortable, you can have a quiet sleep."

(To be Continued.)

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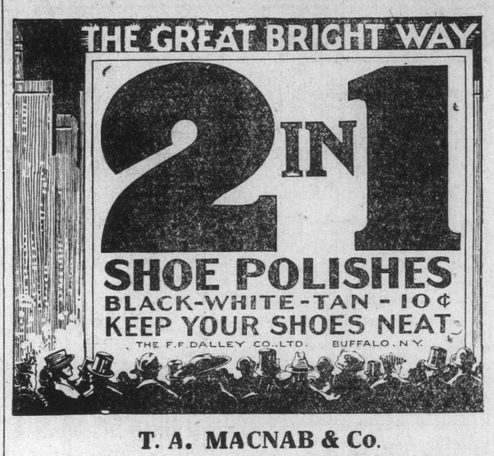

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Thos. Corbin, Corner Brook Islands
Wm. Tracey, Carrol's Cove, dor
David Bulger, West St. Mo
Mark Odell, West St. Modi
Reuben Osborn, Grand Ban
Joe Taeggaeli, Pushthrough
Jno. Simmons, Botwood
Art Pollard, Botwood
Jacob Noseworthy, Pouch C
Harold Snow, Hr. Grace
Geo. Bradbury, Hr. Grace.
Raymond Turner, St. John's
Thos. Hall, St. John's
Pierce Parsons, Lewisporte
Jno. Curtis, S.W. Arm, St. Bay.

The number of enrolments is 4,993. Lieut. H. Winter ha toon of men at the Southsi Range yesterday. The shooti good, conditions considered.

Juvenile T. A. B. S Annual T

The annual treat for the members of the T. A. and B. took place yesterday afterno was attended by close on fou dred abstainers. At 5 p.m. tended a free picture show Crescent Theatre and after an enjoyment they formed rank marched to their hall whe young people were sat arou tables loaded down with good prepared by the lady friends Society. After the tea the indulged in various games and leaving for home were each bag containing candies, fruit a

At night the senior branch Society held a successful dance 150 couples attended, the T. A furnishing the music. The pr and those who assisted are to gratulated on the successful in which the affair was run

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