

THE PLUNDERER.

It was no use; men might come and go before her, but Kittie Cline had eyes for only one man. Pierre made no show of liking her, and thought, at first, that it was a passing fancy. He soon saw differently. There was that look in her eyes which burns conviction as not to be as the furnace from which it comes; the hot, shy, hungering look of desire; most childlike, painfully infinite. The day Pierre first saw it he had come upon her at Guidon Hill. She turned, and this wonderful flame came out of her eyes and spread upon her face. He would rather have faced the cold mouth of a pistol; for he saw how it would end. He might be beyond wish to play the lover, he knew that every man can endure being loved. He also knew that some are possessed—a dream, a spell, what you will—for their life long; Kittie Cline was one of these. He thought he would go away, but he did not. From the hour he decided to stay misfortune began. Willie Haslam, the clerk at the Hudson Bay Company's fort, had learned a trick or two at cards in the East, and imagined that he could, as he said himself, "roast the cool of the rooster." He meant Pierre. He did for one or two evenings, and then Pierre had a sudden increase of luck (or design) and the lad, seeing no chance of redeeming the L.O.L., representing five years' salary, went down to the house where Kittie Cline lived and shot himself on the doorstep. He had had the misfortune to prefer Kittie to the other girls at Guidon Hill though Nellie Sanger would have been as much to him. It Kittie had been easier to win. The two things together told hard against Pierre. Before, he might have gone; in the face of difficulty he certainly would not go. Willie Haslam's funeral was a public function. He was young, innocent-looking, and handsome, and the people did not know what Pierre would not tell now—that he had cheated grossly at cards. Pierre was sure before Liddall, the surveyor, told him that a movement was apace to give him trouble—possibly fatal. "You had better go," said Liddall; "there's no use tempting Providence." "You are tempting the devil," was the cool reply; "and that is not all joy, as you shall see." He stayed. For a time there was no demonstration on either side. He came and went through the streets, and was found at his usual haunts, to observers as cool and nonchalant as ever. He was a changed man, however. He never gazed away from the look in Kittie Cline's eyes. He felt the thing wearing on him, and he hesitated to speculate on the result; but he knew vaguely that it would end in disaster. There is a kind of corrosion which eats the granite out of the blood and leaves fever. "What is the worst thing that can happen to a man?" he said to Liddall one day after having spent a few minutes with Kittie Cline. Liddall was an honest man. He knew the world tolerably well. In writing once of his partner in Montreal he had spoken of Pierre as an "admirable, interesting scoundrel." Once when Pierre called him "Mon ami," and asked him to come and spend the evening in his cottage, he said: "Yes, I will go. But—pardon me, not as your friend. Let us be plain with each other. I never met a man of your stamp before." "A professional gambler—yes? Bien?" "You interest me; I like you; you have great cleverness—"

self. Pierre quietly caught her about the waist, and shut the door. She recovered and gently disengaged herself. He made no further advance, and they stood looking at each other for a minute; he as one who had come to look at something good he was never to see again; she as at something which she hoped to see forever. They had never before been where no eyes could watch them. He ruled his voice to calmness. "I am going away," he said, "and I have come to say goodbye." Her eyes never wavered from his. Her voice was a whisper. "Why do you go? and where are you going?" "I have been here too long. I am what they call a villain and a plunderer. I am going to—I do not know." He shrugged his shoulders, and smiled sardonically. She leaned her hands on the table before her. Her voice was still that low clear murmur. "What people say doesn't matter." She staked her all upon her words. She must speak them, though she hated herself afterward: "Are you going—alone?" "Where I may have to go I must travel alone." He could not meet her eyes now; he turned his head away. He almost hoped she would not understand. "Sit down," he added; "I want to tell you of my life." He believed that telling it as he should, she would be horror-stricken, and that flame would die out of her eyes. She sat down. Neither he nor she knew how long it was they sat there; he telling with grim precision the evil life he had led. Her hands were clasped before her, and she shuddered once or twice, so that he paused; but she asked him firmly to go on. "When all was told he stood up. He could not see her face; but he heard her say: "You have forgotten some things that were not bad. Let me say them." And she named things that had done honor to a better man. He was standing in the doorway. She glided forward, her hands quivering out to him. "Oh, Pierre," she said; "I know why you tell me this; but it makes no difference—none. I will go with you wherever you go." He caught her hands in his. "She was stronger than he was now. Her eyes mastered him. A low cry broke from him, and he drew her almost fiercely into his arms. "Pierre! Pierre!" was all she could say. He kissed her once upon the mouth and as he did so, he heard the sound of footsteps and muffled voices without. He put her quickly from him, and sprang toward the door, threw it open, closed it behind him, and drew his revolver. A half-dozen men faced him. Two bullets whizzed by his head and lodged in the door. Then he fired swiftly shot after shot, and three men fell. His revolver was empty. They were three men left. One shot and then another came from the window, and a fourth man fell. Pierre sprang upon one, the other turned and ran. There was a short, sharp struggle; then Pierre rose up—alone. The girl stood in the doorway. "Come, my dear," he said, "you must go with me now." "Yes, Pierre," she cried, a mad light in her face. "I have killed men too—for you." "E. J. RYAN'S. Together they ran down the hillside, and made for the stables of the Fort. People were hurrying through the long street of the town, and torches were burning. They came by around about way to the stables safely. Pierre was about to enter, when a white dog came out. It was Liddall. He kept his horses there. He had saddled one, thinking that Pierre might need it. "But must the girl go, too?" he said. "It will increase the danger; besides, she is interrupted hoarsely: 'I have killed men; we are the same.'" Without a word Liddall turned back, threw a saddle on another horse, and led it out hurriedly. "Which way?" he said, "and where shall I find the horses?" "West to the mountains. They horses you will find at Tete Blanche Hill if you get the white dog." If not, there is money under the white dog at my cottage. Goodbye!" They galloped away. But there were mounted men in the streets, and one was making toward the bridge over which they must pass. He reached it before they did and set his horse crosswise in its narrow entrance. Pierre urged his mare in front of the girl's, and drove straight at the head and shoulders of the obstructing horse. His was the heavier animal and it bore the other down. The rider fell as he fell, but without doing injury, and, in an instant, Pierre and the girl were over. He fallen man fired again, but missed them. They had a fair start, but the open prairie was ahead them, there was no chance to hide. Pierre and the girl were there in full view. For an hour they rode hard. They could see their hunters not very far in their rear. Suddenly Pierre started and sniffed the air. "The prairie is on fire," he said. Almost as he spoke, clouds ran down the horizon, and then the sky lighted up. The fire travelled with incredible swiftness; they were hastening to meet it. It came on wave-like, hurrying down at the right and left as if to close in on them. The girl spoke no word. She had no fear. What the man did she would do. He turned round to see his pursuers; they had wheeled and were galloping back the way they came. He and she were riding neck and neck. He looked at her with an intense, eager gaze. "Will you ride on?" he said. "We are between two fires." He smiled, remembering. "Ride on," she said, in a strong, clear voice, a kind of wild triumph in it. "You shall not go alone." There ran into his eyes now the same infinite look that had been in hers—that had conquered him. The flame rolling toward them was not brighter or hotter. Far behind upon a divide the flying hunters from Guidon Hill paused for a moment. They saw with hushed wonder and awe a man and woman stark and weird against the red light, ride madly into the flicking surf of fire.

WAS TRUE AFTER ALL.

It was under the arches of the old bridge boating by moonlight, the sound of a flute played softly at rest, when all of a sudden the keel of his boat came sharply in contact with somebody's else ears. "Hallo, you?" cried a clear voice. "Where are you going?" "Old Mortimore," he responded. "Why, who on earth would have thought of finding you dreaming on the Thames? Come into my boat and let me introduce you to Miss Sophy Adriance." "I looked as sharply at Miss Sophy as the moonlight and my own modesty would let me, for I knew that she was the especial admiration of my friend, Charley Dresden. She was pretty, slight, round and rosy, with china blue eyes, a dimple in either cheek, and golden-brown hair worn in long, loose curls, with none of the fashionable abominations of crimps, frizzes, and artificial braids about her. Hardened old bachelor though I was, I felt as if I could have fallen in love with her on the spot, if I hadn't known so well that Charley had the first inning. We rode home together, and we parted the best of friends. A week afterward Dresden and I met face to face in James street. "Hallo, Mortimore," said Charley. "What's the good of that?" "I think she is a pearl!" I answered. "Congratulations, then," cried Charley, beaming all over "for I am engaged to her! Only last night! Look here!" opening a mysterious silver case which he took from his inner vest pocket. "What do you think of that for an engagement ring?" "A fine diamond," said I, critically putting my head to one side, "and fancifully set." "We're to be married in October," said Charley, lowering his voice to the most confidential tones. "It might have been sooner if I hadn't undertaken that business in France for our firm. But I shall be sure to be back in October." "I spent an evening with her afterward at the West End house, where she and her mother dwelt in the cosiest apartments, furnished in dark-blue reps, and with canaries and geraniums in the windows. And I was the more ready to come," said Sophy, with a gentle pressure of the hand, when I went away. "I'm so glad to welcome Charley's friends." Charley Dresden went away, and as he didn't particularly leave Sophy Adriance in the lurch, I didn't feel called upon to present myself. I supposed, naturally enough, that all was going right, until one day I received a note from my old friend Bullion, the banker. Bullion wrote to Brighton. He asked me to be his best man. Bullion was to be married! "Of course you'll think it a foolish thing for me to do," wrote Bullion; "even at sixty a man has not entirely outlived the age of sentiment, and when once you see Sophy Adriance you will forgive any seeming inconsistency on my part." "Sophy Adriance!" Was this the way poor Charley's fiancée was serving him with her charms, when once you saw her a little money for her sake? My heart rebelled against the fickleness of woman. I went straight to the pretty West-end house. It was possible that I might be misled by the similarity of name, although even that was unlikely. "Is Miss Adriance at home?" I asked of the servant who answered the bell. "No, sir. Miss Adriance is spending a few days with a friend at Brighton," she answered. "That was enough. I went home and enclosed Bullion's letter in an envelope, directing it to poor Charley Dresden's address, post restant, Paris, adding a few lines of my own, wherein I undertook to give him some consolation and philosophy as apply as possible. "It is an ungracious thing for me to do, sending this letter," wrote I, "but believe it to be the part of a true friend to undecypt you as promptly as possible. Bullion is a millionaire. Sophy is possibly but a tallible mortal after all. Be a man, Dresden, and remember that she is not the only woman in the world who would rather be an old man's darling than a young man's slave." And then I wrote curly, declining to "stand up" with old Bullion. It was but a few days subsequently that the water showed an elegantly dressed young woman into my room at the hotel where I was stopping. I rose in my surprise. Aside from old Aunt Jane Platt and my landlady, my lady visitors were few. But the instant she threw up her thick tissue veil, I recognized the soft blue eyes and damask-rose cheeks of Sophy Adriance. "Oh, Mr. Mortimore!" she cried, piteously. "I know you won't mind my coming to your hotel, because you seem exactly like a father to me." I winced a little at this. "But I have received such a letter from Charley; and as—as you've known him for a long time, I thought perhaps you could explain it to me. Oh, I have been so wretched! And indeed, indeed, I didn't deserve it!" She gave me a tear-blotted letter, and then she sat down to cry quietly in the corner of the sofa, until such time as I should have finished its perusal. It was a fit mirror of Charley Dresden's impetuous nature, full of bitter reproaches, dark immoderacies, hurling back her truth, and hinting gloomily at suicide! When I read it I scarcely wondered at poor Sophy's distress. "What does he mean, Mr. Mortimore?" asked Sophy, plaintively. "When he accuses me of deceiving him, or selling myself to the highest bidder? Oh, it's so dreadful!" "Are you about to become the wife of Mr. Bullion, the banker?" I asked, sternly. "Oh, dear, no," said Sophy, "that's mamma." "Eh?" gasped I. "It's mamma," answered Sophy. "She's to be married next week. Didn't you know it?" I stared straight before me. "Look here, Miss Adriance," said I; "I will tell you all about it." So I did. I described old Bullion's letter, my own false deductions therefrom, and the rash deed I had committed in sending the banker's correspondence to Charley Dresden.

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SHE HAS LOTS OF NERVE. VOL. V., NO. 250. A sketch of Her Moncton Life—When a Baby Arrived at the Household—How Mr. Crossman's Boy Came to Light—What came of Him? MONCTON, Feb. 9.—The excitement over the Hallett-Stevens case, in Moncton seems not to have abated in the least. The proceedings before the magistrate of the greatest possible interest to people. The court room is thronged soon as it is opened, and hundreds wait to gain admittance go away disappointed. At the time this is written, the examination is not finished, but it is thought today, or at the furthest, tomorrow, will be the end of the proceedings before the magistrate, and that the accused will set up for her trial before the Court which meets early in March, in Quebec. The chances are that the magistrate will exercise his discretion and send Mrs. Stevens to bail, but if he does not choose to do this, no doubt an application will be made to a judge for such order. The extraordinary coolness and balance of the prisoner have caused variety of comment some of them favorable but most of them unfavorable to Mrs. Stevens. Instead of appearing stricken and crushed with shame she carries her head with the air of a Lizzie Borden, and laughs and chats as she walks the streets to and from the examination. No one will question the boldness and nerve of woman after this; those who knew thoroughly before were, indeed, not posed to do so and her present attitude but emphasized their opinion as to ability to carry through any project untroubled. Ever since she went to Moncton as wife of H. T. Stevens, Mrs. Stevens has been a bold woman, or rather a fearless woman. She has never considered the opinion of a social public or of a private neighbor. On the contrary she has defied the public, she has defied her father, she has defied her plans, executed them, she has laughed at the tongue of Mrs. Grundy, she has been well imagined therefore that she could be as popular as she might have been. She has always occupied a well defined position in society as the wife of one of the prominent and popular men of the town society does not care to be slighted or opinion ignored and Mrs. Stevens did hesitate to risk the consequences of being her society friends to talk when plans demanded it. Although a married woman of some years she had not the happiness of having a son, and it was in consequence of this she and her husband concluded to adopt the ill-fated child, Mabel Hallett. She was some six or seven years ago, and people who knew the Stevens and the Hallett families were inclined to congratulate them upon the move that had been made. It was not very long afterwards—a year or two perhaps—when it became whispered about in the mysterious way that such things get about that the long wished for child of the Stevens' family was to happen. Mrs. Stevens were assured of the correctness of the rumor, which further substantiated by the fact that the necessary accompaniments of such interesting events, dressmakers, began to have exceedingly busy time of it in the Stevens household. Nothing was too good for expected new stranger, woman was lavished without stint upon the outfit which was his or her's when born. Then one bright March morning following morning paper of the town, Times came forth with the announcement that a son had come to the house of Stevens and the joy of the inmates was complete. Mrs. Stevens was then the active editor of his newspaper and he made appropriate references to the elegantly bound child of his name. Dr. Jas. D. Ross was the attending physician. There was no nurse save domestic of the house who at that time until Mrs. Stevens appeared in person again performed the delicate duties required of her. But a few hours before this, in a house in the town, a bright bouncing boy came into the world. Mrs. Crossman's mother her father was absent home. His coming was expected to brighten this poor household no lavish preparations were made for the baby. There were no dainty garments and nothing to indicate that he had come to make a lengthy sojourn in the house of his mother. This proved too true for scarcely had the infant become used to the warm wool by which he was surrounded the was taken from his parent. He had bargained for before he saw the light day, the only condition being that the must be a boy. A sum in the vicinity of \$250 was paid the mother and new owner of the boy started off with the small wicker basket that