with a man's brutal yielding to the

ner. The next I knew I received a

dered her away to Europe, as her

health was extremely poor. Terribly

'She received me with hysterical

tenderness. The baby, I was told, was

alarmed, I ran down to see her.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A FRISH MYSTERY.

cheerfully as though with an old What I have to say to you is upon a friend; then when she had finished

'There! she exclaimed, smiling, "I have tested your hospitality well and feel much better. I was so afraid moody silence, then leaned against you would turn me away. Then I should have gone to the Seine.'

'Did you think we were heathens?' 'No; but most people in the world particularly unwilling to burden themselves with a stranger.

ceased speaking, for some one had Mr. Lansing?' entered. It was Meredith Lansing. He stopped short, gazed at her curiously, a ghastly pallor slowly overspreading his face.

'Come in, Lansing,' cried Quintard, more gravely than he had spok his eyes holding those of the man been in many days. 'I must introduce you to our gift from the stars. Miss! Mignon Moreau, let me present Mr. Lansing.

Instead of the formal bow which Mignon evidently expected, Lansing strode suddenly forward and grasped her by the arm.

'Your name is Mignon Moreau,' he gasped, his face distorted with emo tion. 'What was your father's name?

'Maurice,' she answered almost inaudibly, 'Maurice Moreau.' A low cry, a smothered exclama-

tion of "Thank God! At last!' and Meredith Lansing fell at full length

Even as he lay there, death-like in mit Erle Chidees.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Meredith Lansing's Secret. HEN Meredith Lansing re-

The bewildered expression gave place to one of agonizing entreaty and that secret is.' doubt. His glance passed Childes had Meredith Lansing moved. Activand seemed to search the room vain- ity and intelligence seemed to have

hoarsely, raising himself upon his ghastliness. elbow, and seizing Childes' arm at last!

You mean Bebe?' asked Childes

Where is she?'

She is all right and sale enough. mal that helplessly faces death, know-terwards she returned as suddenly as Calm yourself, my friend; you will be ing that no escape is possible.

for illness. Let me see her. Bring her here, won't you?'

'No. You frightened her before, and you had better be quite yourself which I have kept for years, and when she came up to me of her own before you see her again. What you would make a madman of me, must be ed. have to say to her will keep.

'Nothing that I cannot tell you an-

other time.' see that I'm on fire? Don't you un- selves. He was dumb.

derstand that the anxiety, the sus- Then Meredith Lansing, grasping pense will kill me?' What I have to say has nothing to began again, his voice too dead to ad-

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I thing of her except that Quintard told me her father is dead and sent her was the handsomest girl, the most HARLES QUINTARD. Here is exquisite bit of womanhood whom your luncheon. Now let us had ever met, and it is not to be wonsee you make up for time dered at that I fell violently in love with her at the beginning of our acquaintance. She lived with an aunt To make her feel quite comfort- to me, asking me to take her to Amable he ate with her, chatting as crica. I have scarcely spoken to her.

> different subject entirely.' 'What? Go on! I must hear ev erything! If you have any pity go

> For a moment Childes stood curiously upon Lansing's disturbed,

think of themselves alone, and are call upon-upon-Miss Virginia Beau sent to ask if he might not se m I went to him and found him dying She glanced toward the door as she perhaps. Who do you think he was

The white face had grown a shade naler and twitched horribly. 'How should I know?' Lansing ex-

claimed, almost fretfully. 'It was Eldridge Appleton Childes, my uncle,' returned Childes slowly.

for the still, white horror that overspread the suffering face. The twitch ing had ceased. The frozen stillness of the face was that of death. 'Eldridge Childes!' he whispered

after a long, terrible silence. 'I was told that he was killed by the caving in of a mine.' 'You were told that he was killed!

replied Childes coldly. 'And yet you told me that you were beside him when he died. You told me that he left his large fortune in your hands The girl shrank away from him, her for me. You gave that money into fixed upou the hagggard face with my keeping. Now I find my uncle alive, if dying. I find that he has been always unfortunate and poor I find that he never possessed a dollar which he could have entrusted to you have come to me, an utter stranfortune to which I had no right Why should you have taken me, man whom you never saw before, but his stillness, the door opened to ad- who was under the most horrible ban that ever shadowed any life, into the very bosom and heart of your family? Why should you have deceived your innocent daughter into becoming my wife when you knew so well that I had no love to give her? covered consciousness he confess that I have acted like a weak found himself lying on his own that, such an idiot but that I can see fool all through, but I am not, for all bed, with Erle Childes bending over there is some terrible secret underlying all this. Mr. Lansing, the time

has come when I must know what Not once during the long speed left him at once. He listened in dumb 'Where is she?' he whispered anguish, his blue lips fallen away from his white teeth with hideous

When Erle Childes ceased speaking For God's sake, tell me that I did a silence that seemed almost tangible not dream it, that I have found her oppressed the room. It seemed to weigh upon them both with a heavi-

ness that was suffocating. At last, when Childes could bear it 'No. no; not Bebe! That other; seemed to issue from the very depths | me that she would return a better one, Mignon! Mignon! Mignon of the man's soul; then he was con- wife to me. Moreau she said her name was, scious that Meredith Lansing had risen, but, being unable to stand, was intensity of its pleading touched me. crouching back in an armchair, his I consented. She left the house with-

He lifted his hand feebly and rais-No, no: not now. This is no time as though its weight distressed him. 'It has come at last!' he said, un der his breath, in a tone that none would have recognized. 'The secre: which I have always told myself made known, and to you! to you! Oh. 'How strangely you look at me' God! If I might but have escaped it. What is the matter? Has anything I am a coward, Erle! A frightful.

cringing coward. Give me time!' Childes was striving with all his 'No, I must hear it now! Can't you no words seemed to suggest them-

the arms of his chair to gain strength do with Mignon Moreau. I know no- mit of even a quiver.

iserably enough. ed earnestly.

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the foot of the bed, his eyes fixed at the time of our meeting, a sister forgot that. For some months I wor- strength and precocity, but totally shipped in silence; then, unable to blind. How I adored them both! keep my secret longer, I told it to Mignon. When I had done it I was artled at myself for my temerity. expected nothing but my rejection out to my surprise and delight Mig non said she would be my wife. There was none of that shy tenderness her manner that characterizes

woman who loves; but, blind fool that was, I could see nothing of that She did not resist when I drew he to me and kissed her, and in my wild ecstasy I saw nothing of that which afterward came to me with stunnin force: the strange whitening of he face, the cruel clinching of the small hands, the look of desperation in the passionate eyes.

'The time that followed was a bliss ful dream to me then, and afterward torturing curse. I loathed mysel pecause I had been a blind fool! oathed -- God! Let me get awa from that time and go on. We were married. I shall never forget the day. I did not see Mignon until she joined me in the church upon the arm of her father; but, madly infatuated as I was, the terrible pallor of her face, the wild yearning in her eyes standing beside her, I had forgotter it. I don't know how to tell you o what followed. It was horrible! hor-

'From the moment of our marriage my wife seemed to take the most frightful dislike to me. If I came in



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to her presence, she uttered a low cry and fled through another door. If by accident met her in the hall she rembled like a frightened animal She locked her door upon as though she feared my presence. Then or day, when I was about yielding to the hideous belief that she was mad, I received a letter from her. In it sh entreated me to allow her to go away no longer, he heard a groan that for a time with her aunt, assuring

'To tell it sounds so cold, but the 'In the other room with Quintard. eyes glittering like those of an ani- out seeing me, and four months afshe had departed. Her aunt had written me several times that Mignon ed the damp hair from his forehead was well and would be home soon giving me no address, however. When ny wife came, the terrible pallor o her face, her wasted form, shocked me; but you can never realize my joy accord and lifted her face to be kiss-

> 'Meredith,' she said, 'I want you to forgive me for my conduct to you, will you not? I have been very wrong, but I am sorry, dear. If you can forgive me, you shall have noth might to find something to say, but ing to complain of in future. If had not loved you before, your pa tience would have made me love you

"Then you do love me?" I asked 'More than my life,' she answer

'From that day, Erle, existence be gan anew for me. My life was dream. My wife was tenderness in self, and I was happy, until- On day she came to me and asked if she might go for another trip with her aunt. She was very much out of health, and as I could not leave my usiness then I consented.

and mother and daughter were doing well. God! how happy I was. Still,

chains of business, I did not go to Adams, Fred, Pennywell Road Curnew, Wm. letter from the physician who had attended her, saying that he had or-Anderson, Sophie, card Andrews, Miss Eliza late Gen'l Hospital Alcock, Miss Stella, care Mrs. Cross Associated Mail Dealers, Duckworth St.

suffering with its eves, and until the doctor had procured some sort of an arrangement for it, the little thing could not be taken from the dark Bradford, H. room. I held it in my arms and kiss-Barrett, Mrs. Leonard

ed it, but I never saw its face. "Well, Erle, she went away. Her letters, gentle and loving, came regularly. Her health was improving, she told me: but while the baby was remarkable constitutionally, she was rapidly growing blind. She was astonishingly large, astonishingly strong, astonishingly precocious, but what matters it when or where? She it seemed that nothing could save her sight. It was a terrible grief to me. her father's, a grasping, hard- I had my wife take her to all the best specialists in Europe, but it was usename of woman. I was rich, but in less. At the end of a year she returned. The child was a marvel of

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