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The Mystery of Rutledge Hall

"The Cloud With a Silver Lining"

CHAPTER XVI.

What did he mean, she wondered, by saying that Stephen had his own reasons for wishing the world to believe in his guilt? What did he mean by the assertion that by marrying her Stephen had erected a barred road?

"Good-morning, Mrs. Daunt," said a pleasant voice behind her at this juncture. "Are you thinking that a southerly wind and a cloudy sky are proclaiming a hunting morning?"

Sidney turned quickly, with a little nervous start. Mr. Milner, smiling and pleasant in his hunting costume, had come along the gallery from his room, his steps inaudible on the thick Turkey carpet.

"Good-morning," she said, giving her hand with a little smile. "I forgot that you were going to hunt to-day. Where is the meet?"

"At Cotley Hall. I thought you would go with us." "No," she answered, with a little shake of her pretty head. "I shall not hunt this winter. Are we late, I wonder? Stephen does not like to be kept waiting on these occasions, or indeed on any other," she added, with a laugh. "I do not know any one who does."

Stephen Daunt, also attired in hunting "pink" and faultless "tops," was in the dining room, glancing over the morning papers, and Dolly, in a bewitching costume of seal-brown velvet, was hovering between the window and the table, and glancing impatiently at the clock now and again.

At sight of Sidney she uttered a little exclamation of disappointment. "Oh, Sidney, have you forgotten? We promised Lady Cotley we would drive over for the meet," she said eagerly; and Sidney looked over at her blankly.

"I had quite forgotten, dear," she answered hurriedly—"I really had quite forgotten." Lloyd Milner was not so completely entranced by the charming little vision in brown velvet, with the pouting expression of disappointment on its fair face, but that he saw the cold conventional greeting which passed between Sidney and her husband—as greeting perfectly courteous, and yet as perfectly indifferent as if they were visitors at the same country-house, but had only a very slight acquaintance.

"It is the perfection of a hunting morning," Stephen said heartily, as Sidney walked to the head of the table, and began to make the tea. "You are favored, Milner."

"Yes, I was just saying to Mrs. Daunt that we had the proverbial

southerly wind and cloudy sky," Milner returned, smiling. "You don't hunt, Miss Daunt?"

"No, I ride to the meet sometimes," Dolly answered, "but I hoped Sidney would drive me there to-day."

Sidney said nothing; her slim white fingers were moving deftly among the delicate old china and silver, and she seemed not to have heard. In reality she was wondering how she could surmount the difficulty which had suddenly arisen to hinder her going to Lynmouth. She had utterly forgotten her promise to drive to Cotley; but, if Dolly did not go, she—Sidney—would have no opportunity of going to meet Frank.

"How did you sleep, Milner?" Stephen asked, as he threw aside the newspapers and came over to take his place at the table. "Well, I hope?"

"Tolerably well," said his friend, with a laugh. "Easthorpe is too new a residence to possess the distinction of a ghost, I presume?"

"I suppose so," Stephen answered carelessly. "Why do you ask?" "Because, if it were not, I should say I heard one last night," was the reply. "Mrs. Daunt, may I send you some of this omelet?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Milner?" said Dolly eagerly. "Did you hear any sounds in the house last night?" "Yes," he replied smilingly, glancing at the pretty, eager face. "I heard soft swift footsteps and the rustling of a woman's gown alone—"

A little clatter drowned the remainder of the words. Sidney had let the sugar-tongs fall from her unsteady fingers, and they had broken one of the fragile old china cups of the costly breakfast-service. Dolly, an ardent china maniac, looked dismayed.

"Oh, Sidney, what a pity! One of those lovely old cups!" "It was very awkward," Sidney murmured with pale lips, looking far more startled than such a small catastrophe warranted, and uneasily conscious that Lloyd Milner's sharp eyes were watching her with a keen scrutiny.

"It is not worth while getting so pale over," Stephen said kindly, glancing at the little pale face. "It is a very small misfortune and easily repaired. Why, Sidney," he added, with a smile, "you look as frightened as if you had seen Milner's ghost!"

If Lloyd Milner had thought his young mistress pale before, he was startled now by the strange, almost ghastly pallor which spread over her face. What was its cause? he wondered. Had she an absurd dread of the supernatural, or—

"Tell us something more about your ghost, Mr. Milner," Dolly broke in gayly. "I shall be frightfully jealous if Stephen and Sidney set up a ghost here when we do not possess one at Lambewold. I have always been so sorry not to have a legend or something equally delicious associated with it."

"I am afraid the Easthorpe ghost will turn out something so very prosaic that you will not envy its possessors," said the barrister calmly, eating his breakfast, yet keenly observant of Sidney under his air of indifference.

"Prosaic! How can a ghost be prosaic?" asked Dolly, laughing. "How can swift footsteps and mysterious rustlings be prosaic?" "Perhaps the term is misapplied," the young man answered, with a smile, "for surely there is nothing prosaic in midnight rendezvous given 'au clair de la lune.'"

He was looking at Dolly, as he spoke, but his keen vision took in also Sidney's pale face and drooping figure.

"The plot thickens," Dolly said, laughing, and affecting to shudder. "To soft swift footsteps and mysterious rustling robes we have to add midnight and moonlight. Pray go on, Mr. Milner; I am on thorns with curiosity."

"Do you find the position a pleasant one?" he asked, looking over at her with a smile. "By no means. Release me from it," she pleaded, with a delicious little mouth.

"Dolly, what a chatterbox you are!" said Stephen, laughing. "Let Lloyd get his breakfast in peace."

"I will as soon as he relieves me from the agony of curiosity which prevents me from enjoying my own breakfast," she answered. "Come, Sidney, are you not curious also?"

"Devoured by curiosity," Sidney said, with a little unsteadiness in her low tones and with her eyes downcast. "But," she added in a moment, raising them suddenly and looking over at her guest with a glance of mingled entreaty and defiance, "I think Mr. Milner has drawn as largely upon his imagination as he is capable of doing at one sitting."

"No, on my honor," the young man declared laughingly. "I am dealing solely with facts this morning, Mrs. Daunt."

"Are you?" she said coldly. "Then forgive me for being skeptical as to your supernatural visitors." "You cannot be more skeptical than I am as to their connection with the spirit world," he replied.

"Mr. Milner," put in Dolly impatiently, "pray be more explicit, I can keep my curiosity within bounds no longer." There was a short silence. Stephen was glancing over his letters, and not paying much attention to the conversation between his sister and his friend. Sidney, her heart beating to suffocation, was dreading with a terrible dread what Milner might say next.

"It was a beautiful moonlight night," began Mr. Milner, gravely, breaking the top of an egg, and speaking with great deliberation. "Well?" Dolly said, impatiently, as he paused. "You begin like the old song."

"'Twas a beautiful night And the stars shone bright And the moon over the waters played."

"And, if you like, I will continue in the same manner," he said.

"When a gay cavalier To a bower drew near, A lady to serenade."

Dolly laughed. "La suite a demain," she said, with a pout. "You are inventing as you go on."

"Not at all, I assure you. I am merely putting into poetical language what you are anxious to hear," he answered, quietly.

"Do you mean that any cavalier was serenading a lady in this bower?" (To be continued.)

NERVES AND FAINTING SPELLS

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NO PROMISES.



His feet were wet with morning dew as he came down the hill; he asked me for a plunk or two, his famished craw to fill; he talked so ably that he drew a large five dollar bill. "This money will relieve my woes," as down the road I went, I thought to myself, "I shall have to fill a sack; as for the coin, I don't suppose I'll ever pay it back, I know," he said, "the common sense who works this sort of game, and borrows Jack, will set a date when he'll repay the same; all sorts of vows and pledges great unobtainable he'll frame. Although I am an old man, with nothing in my pack, I am a strictly honest man, my word I do not crack; as for this coin I hold and scan, I'll never pay it back." "Ods-bodikins," I made reply, "you're a refreshing sight; a bum who will not tell a lie is scarce to the sight, and I'll give you a custard pie to show you my delight. For I'm tired of making loans to pilgrims out of luck, who swear by Christopher, his bones, 'they'll pay back every' buck, what time, in loud and solemn tones, the thirteenth hour is struck. They swear by all the gods they know, in language bold and free, that they'll return the borrowed dough next week, at half past three; and then they teeter to and fro, and think no more of me. They're fatal to my faith, in main, they leave it lying flat; they follow up a vicious plan, there's no denying that; but you may ride in my sedan and wear my Sunday hat. You come and seek me in my booth and touch me with a V, and have the gall to tell the truth—that bill no more I'll see; come to my arms, oh gallant youth, you're a relief to me!"

Emperor Cook

INTERNATIONAL MINERS DISOWN HIM.

The Committee of the International Federation of Miners met in Brussels recently under the presidency of Mr. Herbert Smith. After a long discussion the following resolution was passed: "The committee has taken note of the declaration attributed to Mr. Cook in Berlin and Essen, according to which German Socialists lack the international spirit. The committee declines all responsibility for these declarations and, if they are true, disavows them. The matter will be further discussed at a meeting in the near future." The British members of the committee stated that the British Miners' Federation would prevent such quantities of Welsh anthracite coal from being sent to Canada and the West of the United States as would compromise the success of the strike of American miners. The British delegate also said that it was only an armistice that had been concluded between coal owners and miners in Britain.

Emperor Cook, the Communist secretary of the British Miners' Federation, attended a mass meeting under Communist auspices in Berlin on August 30, and said, among other things: "Germany is establishing a coalition of labour. We do not fear India or China, but we do fear Germany, because German workers accept low conditions of labour. Britain regards

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Extreme Luxury of a Couple Who Lived in New York, Now Separated.

NEW YORK, Sept. 18.—Arguing for alimony of \$60,000 a year for Mrs. Ida May Symington, whose husband, Thomas H. Symington, used her unsuccessfully for divorce, says Max D. Steur, attorney for Mrs. Symington, the lawyer.

yesterday, said in the Supreme Court the couple during the five years of their married life spent a total of \$990,000. He maintained that Mrs. Symington, having become accustomed to such luxuries, required sixty thousand dollars a year for reasonable expenses.

"It would strain the ordinary man's imagination to grasp the extreme luxury in which the couple lived," said Justice Wasservogel reserved decision.

He told how they maintained a \$80,000 home at Morristown, N.J., a \$100,000 houseboat which cost \$200,000, in addition had an apartment in most expensive apartment hotel in world. Flocks of servants were employed, he said.

Justice Wasservogel reserved decision.

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