

The White-Tailed King in the World

By MIRIAM MICHELSON (Author of 'The Bishop's Carriage' etc.)

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Theresa Pettinelli, ambitious and unsophisticated, seeks a position as a writer on a newspaper and is rebuffed by the editor, who, to get rid of her and discourage her, gives her an impossible assignment...

A sudden cruel desire to make her suffer came to the man, who would have given his life to shield her.

"What'll you do when he's hanged?" he demanded brutally.

The intonation seemed not to have reached her. "I'll die, too, then," she said, softly.

"Do you mean—Kerr's voice was hoarse—you'll kill yourself for—?"

"No, it'll kill me," she said, with quiet confidence.

A quick sigh of relief burst from him. "And if it shouldn't?" he persisted.

"What then—what then?"

"Oh, do you suppose I care," her voice rose for the first time, "what becomes of me then—after that?"

He took her hand in his and smoothed it with a loving touch.

"I care," he said, "for all I am and all I hope for. I'll learn you to care, too, little girl, and I'll wait forever if I have to—ill you do."

They passed within the gate and around to the side entrance of the Warden's house.

"You'll help me—then?" she stammered as she passed at the foot of the stairs.

"You'll take me to see him?"

"Never—so help me God!" He spoke under his breath.

"Oh, I must—I must see him! Don't you see it's killing me not to be with him—now, now when he needs me! Oh, I beg of you—"

"Never!" Kerr swore as he left her there.

Yet within a fortnight she had her wish. Though she did not know it, Manlyod had been in the hospital for some weeks, recovering from a slight operation.

Every afternoon, when the prisoners were in the yard on the other side of the prison, she was sent to the roof to bring down the freshly washed linen for the baby she tended.

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eyes. "Why, you know I came down from the farm to be with my aunt. She's all the folks I've got. And now, since—since you know—her voice trailed off into silence.

"Since what?" he asked, curiously.

"Since it's all been in the papers about you and—me," she stammered, "she won't have anything to do with me. No, her voice was firmer now, "I'll starve when I quit here, but what do I care?"

"I wonder why you care, Blossom," he said slowly.

"Because—I can't help it," she cried passionately, and covered her face, sobbing. "It's so cruel, and you—you're so brave about it."

"You don't catch Mother Manlyod crying when there's no reporter around. Say," he sat up with sudden suspicion in his voice, "are you in with them? Mother Manlyod's turning me into cash, writing weekly letters about her gifted son to the press. But if you dare, I'll find a way—I swear I will!"

"Oh, her astonished face hung appealingly over him, "don't you trust me? Do—do trust me. I'll kill myself before I'll hurt you again. I'd do anything in the world to prove it. You couldn't think of anything I'd not try for you."

He lay back, appalled, persuaded.

"Sweet little Blossom," he murmured, looking up.

She fell upon her knees there by the parapet, resting her hot face upon her arm, and, as she did so, suddenly she felt a hand upon her shoulder. She jumped to her feet and faced Kerr. His big square face was white.

"You can't do this. I'll see that you don't get another chance here, but if you find any other way I'll tell the old man, and out you go, sure as my name's Michael Kerr," he said, firmly. "Now, go down stairs."

She stood like a terrified thing, mechanically folding the clothing she had in her arms. But she let it drop with a gasp when Manlyod's voice came up to them.

"Take your hands off my girl, Kerr," he cried, with a sudden desire to assert himself audaciously to this quiet man, whose judgment of himself Manlyod's infallible instinct had divined. "Just keep off."

"I've ordered you back to your cell, Manlyod." To the girl Kerr's deep voice seemed to fall like lead upon the man below. "Keep a civil tongue in your head. You don't want to attract anybody else's attention to the girl and get her in trouble."

"When! Are you sweet on her, too?" laughed Manlyod. "Something in the jailer's voice had betrayed him to the murderer's keen ear, and he relished rivalry in which he had so clearly the upper hand."

The girl wrung her hands in silent agony.

"Go down stairs, I tell you," said Kerr to her.

"Blossom!" called Manlyod, "wait a minute. Can't you wait to say goodbye? It's the last time, you know, and—"

With a mad cry she fled from the jailer and flew to the parapet, her arms outstretched.

"You cur!" the jailer, as he stood beside her, was looking down now upon him—"to take advantage of an innocent little thing like her." He got between the girl and the parapet, faced her and keeping his eyes upon her, silently walked toward her. She retracted, half mad with misery and excitement, but step by step she moved back toward the stairs.

"Blossom—Blossom!" called Manlyod, a sudden resolution in his voice.

The girl attempted to answer, but Kerr pushed her roughly within and shut the door behind her.

CHAPTER VI.

"I pronounce you man and wife." The prison chaplain had hurried through the ceremony. He hurried away now from the death cell, like one who is glad to be done with an unpleasant affair.

For a moment the Peachblossom Girl stood, her hand still reached between the bars, resting in Manlyod's. Then she sank into a chair which the guard had placed for her in the corridor beside the grating.

The girl leaned her head against the grating. She seemed half dazed by the strain she had undergone and leaned dumbly against the grating. She had not spoken a word except the half-hearted "Yes" in answer to the chaplain's question.

The prison of her relaxed, helpless little figure found Manlyod.

"Funny little Blossom!" he said, carelessly.

"You look like an em. No, I thought you came to be in at the hanging. It'll be a nice one, they're feeding me up so I'll all go off fine."

She shook her head vigorously, like a child, but speechless and shuddering.

"Sure I did," he insisted, mockingly. "Is there anything I can do?" she asked, after another helpless negative and a silence.

"You don't care for a queer little thing like that?" she insisted.

"Haven't you just said I never cared for anybody but myself?" he demanded, brokenly.

"How ill tempered you are today. Just as if you hadn't brought enough on me and I hadn't got enough to worry me. Did they say in the Press yesterday that the pity of the mothers of the world must go out to Rebecca Manlyod in her loyalty to her miserable son? Well, anyway, it made the notice in the News much more valuable. I hope they sent you something for it. Money goes so fast now. Fortunately, in here you don't need much."

"No, but the girl may."

"Nonsense, Eustace! You can't be meaning to leave your share in the ranch to her?"

A gray shade seemed to be settling over his face as he sat up to look at her.

"Leave it!" he gasped. "Then, you too, Eustace! Why haven't you told me the truth?" he cried, his voice breaking hysterically.

She murmured a protest that she had believed he would get another trial—that she still believed, indeed, she did.

But he raved that it was a world of liars that deserved to have their necks wrung. As Drexler had been, for lying, just for lying, nothing else; that Shaw, too, had not been near him since he had signed over his share of the ranch to him; that he was left to die like a rat in a trap; that even if he were guilty—which he wasn't—wasn't—wasn't—many worse men had got off; that which he wished he could see just a day to show people what he thought of them!

Mrs. Manlyod shivered as she sat there helpless. She had never known the things mothers say—the native poetry of the race that, like a deep, sweet spring, is forever welling up from their hearts. She was afraid now, and, indeed, too, in a way that it had become rusty and inflexible. She had a sense of oppression, of nervous exasperation. She longed passionately for him to stop, to be his own hard, mocking self again, a self that had never required anything from her lean sympathies.

He did stop, for the German tapped Mrs. Manlyod on the shoulder and told her time was up.

"Goodbye, Eustace," she said, touching her lips to his perspiring forehead close to the bars. "Keep up your spirits; you'll be better soon. I'll tell Shaw he mustn't desert you now. And it'll be all right. Perhaps by the next time I come you'll have got the good news. I'll be here soon again. It was mean of him to take you last cent. He's made enough out of you, but a moment more—like a picture, mother—make these little trips out here."

"Trust you! I wish I could trust him, but I want you to promise, too, to be good to her—the girl—I do care, mother—care." The words came wrung from him.

She received the money it contained with a grateful exclamation.

"Promise me, Eustace, you won't let yourself break down," she said, as she kissed him again. "I don't want to have you so sorry about, too."

"I promise," he said in a low voice. "but I want you to promise, too, to be good to her—the girl—I do care, mother—care." The words came wrung from him.

He lay quite still after she was gone till the German asked him to get up and walk to the bars.

"I'll be better soon—tomorrow," said the German. Always as comes had in his cell at first.

But he did not answer. In that stumbling sentence he had had a swift, terrible vision of his predecessors who had passed out of the death cell.

He found himself writing under the phlegmatic, expressionless observation of the German guard, as though those calm, dull, unfeeling, animal-like eyes were boring holes through his brain. He threw himself upon his cot and tried to sleep. He had pulled the blankets up over his head, but presently he felt the German's hand upon his shoulder and his eyes again upon his face.

"Can't you let a fellow alone a minute?" he cried, wrenching roughly away from the man's touch, his voice breaking with self-pity.

Stolidly the German shook his head. "Dei kille deivels sometimes," he said. It seemed to him that he was fevered after this, and when his dinner came he sent it away untraced. He paced the cell with nervous, restless strides. He asked what time it was. He asked again after hours of agony and found that ten minutes had passed. He shrieked aloud in his relief, and then he was back in the cell. He looked at his watch. He threw himself upon his cot and tried to sleep. He had pulled the blankets up over his head, but presently he felt the German's hand upon his shoulder and his eyes again upon his face.

"The hanging's not over yet, you know, ma," he said, faintly, his pale lips writhing with the sarcasm.

She threw back her veil. "How can you be so unfeeling, Eustace," she exclaimed.

"But there, you always were. You never cared for my feelings—never for anybody but yourself. And this girl visiting you—see in what a position it placed me. I couldn't believe it at first. Did she really marry you? There was I sending in my article to the Press and not a word in it about the girl—forward, stupid piece of wax, thrusting herself into other people's affairs. Why didn't you tell me, Eustace? The Press people were awfully mad about it."

"Would you have given a big blow-out—bridesmaids, a church wedding and your blessing, ma?" he mocked.

She looked uncertainly at him, but continued complacently. "I'm glad of one thing, she did have the decency not to be interviewed about it herself. No reporter could get a word out of her, no photograph, not a decent snapshot. But I suppose she said 'yes' to you, made her dot."

He shook his head. "You don't have to make her do that sort of thing," he said very slowly.

She peered at him upon him sharply. "You don't—care for her, Eustace?" she exclaimed.

He was still.

"You can't care for a queer little thing like that?" she insisted.

"Haven't you just said I never cared for anybody but myself?" he demanded, brokenly.

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It's for you to drink, they can never kill you now.

the whole world. You don't believe I did it?" he whispered.

"No, no; how could I?"

"And if you should ever hear later. After—"

"No, no, never. Oh, believe me. You do trust me."

"I wish I could trust him, but I want you to promise, too, to be good to her—the girl—I do care, mother—care." The words came wrung from him.

His voice failed and he buried his face in his hands.

"Listen," she was clinging a moment longer to the bars—"always I will care for you. And I will never listen to a word against you, nor read one. And—no matter what the world will be saying the day after—afterward, you will know that one person knows truly about you. It's like—a picture," she went on, speaking rapidly now that she had but a moment more—"like a picture, mother—make these little trips out here."

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"Die know what it means?" Shaw was asking.

Manlyod shook his head. In his face was a vacant stare, a dullness of horror as of one who has suffered overmuch.

"Trace up here, brace up!" Shaw held a glass to his lips.

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pure in the supreme solemnity of death. And, as by an ennobling miracle of self-sacrifice, every eye that looked upon his dead face saw, not Eustace Manlyod, the murderer, but the living picture the Peachblossom Girl carried in her breast.

THE END.

STRUCK BY BOSTON TRAIN NEAR LINGLEY

Miss Madeline de Bury Overtaken While Walking on Track Saturday Morning—Now in Private Hospital Here—Injuries Not Thought Serious

While walking along the C. P. R. track a short distance above Lingley station Saturday morning about 11 o'clock Miss Madeline de Bury, daughter of Count de Bury, was struck by the Boston train. The train was pulling up at the time and it is thought she has escaped without serious injury. She was brought to town on the train and taken to the private hospital, where she was reported to be resting easily last night.

Miss de Bury holds the position of mathematical instructor in Dunham Ladies' College, Covansville (P. Q.) and has been spending the vacation with her sister, Mrs. Daniel Mullin, at the latter's cottage, about a quarter of a mile above Lingley. On Saturday morning Miss de Bury started to walk to Lingley station and as she was passing the practice of suburbanites in that vicinity, chose the railroad track.

The Boston train, in charge of Conductor J. Costley and Engineer Spencer Thompson, came along at the rate of about thirty miles an hour, it is said, and the trainmen say as soon as they caught sight of Miss de Bury on the track they rang the bell and applied the emergency brakes. Just as Miss de Bury was stepping from the track, however, the cross beam on the engine struck her between the shoulders, knocking her down. She was struck on the arm and one of the small bones in her right elbow joint was broken. It is believed her spine is not injured, and it is said no bruises were left.

The train was brought to a standstill and Miss de Bury was carried into a baggage car and made as comfortable as possible. The ambulance was at the station to meet the train and she was at once removed to the private hospital. At the request of the C. P. R., Dr. J. H. Grey boarded the train at Fairville and accompanied Miss de Bury to the city.

Mr. Mullin had been notified by telephone and was at the station. Miss de Bury recognized him and spoke a few words. Dr. T. D. Walker and Dr. P. R. Inches are now in charge of the case and report the patient's condition as very favorable.

ABSORBE

Cures Strained Puff Ankles, Swollen Feet, Rheumatism, Sprains, Bruises, Burns, Scalds, Itch, Eczema, and all skin diseases. It is the only medicine that cures all these ailments. It is sold in bottles of 50 cents and 1 dollar. It is made in Canada.

W. F. Young, P. D. F., Montreal, Canada.

Canadian Agents: Lyman Sons & Co., Montreal.

His head lay back upon its pillow, proud and serene in the supreme solemnity of death.