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The Face Behind the Mask.

A ROMANCE.

overheard."

man.

were an earnest hope that I had been edified and improved by what I had

"She saw you, then?" said Sir Nor-

"See me? I believe you! She has

more eyes than Argus ever had, and

each one is as sharp as a cambric

needle. Of course I apologized and

so on, and she forgave me handsome

"Love, of course," said Sir . Nor-

"Yes, mingled with entreaties to

take off her mask that would have moved a heart of stone. It moved,

what was better-the heart of La

Masque; and, Kingsley, she has con-sented to do it, and she says that it

after seeing her face, I still love her,

"Is it possible? My dear Ormis-

ton, I congratulate you with all my

"Thank you! After that she left me, and I walked away in such a

frenzy of delight that I'couldn't have

told whether I was treading this earth or the shining shores of the

seventh heaven, when suddenly there

flew past me a figure all in white— the figure of a bride, Kingsley, pur-

sued by an excited mob. We were both near the river, and the first

thing I knew, she was plump into t, with the crowd behind, yelling to-

stop her, that she was ill of the

"Great Heavens! and was she

"No, though it was not her fault

The Earl of Rochester and his page

you remember that page, I fancy-

were out in their barge, and the earl

picked her up. Then I got a boat,

set out after her, claimed her-for I

recognized her, of course-brough her ashore, and deposited her safe

"Ormiston," said Sir Norman, catching him by the shoulder, with a

ry word of it! And the most extra-

her dip in cold water has effectually

cured her of the plague; not a trace

Sir Norman dropped his hand and walked on, staring straight before

him, perfectly speechless. In fact, no human language in the world could have done justice to his feel-

ings at that precise period; for three

different times that night, in three

different shapes had he seen this same

Leoline, and at the same moment he was watching her decked out in roy-

al state in the ruin. Ormiston had

cold bath in the river Thames.

words altogether too feeble to

probably been assisting her from her

Astonishment and consternation are

press his state of mind; but one idea

cemained clear and bright amid all

his mental chaos, and that was, that

the Leoline he had fallen in love with dead, was waiting for him, alive and

"Think! I can't think-I've

past that long ago!" replied his friend hopelessly. "Did you re say Leoline was alive and well?"

"And waiting for you—yes, I did, and I repeat it; and the sooner you get back to town, the sooner will see her; so don't loiter."

"Ormiston, what do you mean? Is

it possible I can see her to-night?"
"Yes, it is; the dear creature is

waiting for you even now. You see, after we got to the house, and she

had consented to become a little ra-

tional, mutual explanations ensued,

by which it appeared she had ran

away from Sir Norman Kingsley in a

state of frenzy, had jumped into the

river in a similarly excited state of

down on her pretty knees and thank

the aforesaid Sir Norman for saving

her life. What could any one as gal

lant as myself do under the circum-stances, but to offer to set forth in

quest of that gentleman, and she promptly consented to sit up and

wait his coming and dismissed me with her blessing. And, Kingsley,

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mind and was most anxious to

"Well," said Ormiston, "you don't speak! What do you think of all

very excited face, "is it true?"
"True as preaching, Kingsley,

and sound in her own house.

do you think of that?"

of it remains."

well, in London.

she will be my wife.

heart!

dro.wned?'

ly, and then we fell to discoursing-

need I tell you on what subject?'

and mount him and ride as if the de- that lady's first words of greeting mon were after you tack to Lon-

"Back to London? Is the man crazy? I shall do no such thing, let ne tell you, to-night."

me tell you, to-night."
"Oh, just as you please," said
Ormiston, with a great deal of indifference, considering the urgent
nature of his former request. "You
can do as you like, you know, and
so can I—which translated means, I
will be and tell her you have declined." will go and tell her you have declined to come."

"Tell her? Tell whom? What are you talking about? Hang it man! exclaimed Sir Norman, getting somewhat excited and profane, "what are you driving at? Can't you speak out and tell me at once?"

"I have told you," said Ormiston, testily; "and I will tell you again, she sent me in search of you, and if you don't choose to come, that's

our own affair, not mine." This was a little too much for Sir Norman's overwrought feelings, and in the last degree of exasperation he laid violent hands on the collar of Ormiston's doublet and shook him as if he would have shooken the

name out with a jerk. 'I tell you what it is, Ormiston, you had better not aggravate me! I can stand a good deal, but I am not exactly Moses or Job, and you had exactly Moses or Job, and you had Better mind what you are at. If you don't come to the point at once and tell me who 'she' is, I'll throttle you where you stand; and so I give ou warning."

Half indignant and wholly laughing, Ormiston stepped back out of he way of his excited friend. 'I cry you mercy! In one word, en, I have been dispatched by a ady in search of you, and that lady

It has always been one of the inscrutable mysteries in natural philosophy that I never could fathom, why men do not faint. Certain it is that I never yet heard of a man swooning from excess of surprise or joy, and perhaps that may account for Sir, Norman not doing so on the Present occasion. But he came to an abrupt standstill in their rapid car-eer; and if it had not been quite so excessively dark his friend would ave beheld a countenance wonderful to look on, in its mixture of utter

astonishment and sublime consterna-"Leoline!" he faintly gasped. "Just

stop a moment, Ormiston, and say that again—will you?" "No," said Ormiston, hurrying un-concernedly on; "I shall do no such Central c. H. Gunn
thing, for there is no time to loose, and if there were I have no fancy for standing in this dismal road. Come on, man, and I'll tell you as

Thus abjured, and seeing there was no help for it, Sir Norman, in a daz-ed and bewildered state, complied; and Ormiston promptly and briskly relaxed into business.

You see, my dear fellow, to begin at the beginning, after you left, as I stood at ease at La Masque's door, awaiting that lady's return, and was presently rewarded by seeing her

come up with an old woman called Prudence. Do you recollect the woman who rushed screaming out of the house of the dead bride?"

"Yes, yes!" that was Prudence. She and La Masque were talking so earn-estly they did not perceive me, and I—well, the fact is, Kingsley, I stayed and listened. Not a very handsome thing, perhaps, but I couldn't resist it. They were talking of some one they called Leoline, and I, in a moment, knew that it was your flame, and that neither of them knew any more of her where-

abouts than we did,"
"And yet La Masque told me to come here in search of her," interrupted Sir Norman,

"Very true! That was odd-wasn't it? This Pradence, it appears, was Leoline's nurse, and La Masque, too, seemed to have a certain authority over her; and between them, I learned she was to have been married this very night, and died—or, at least, Prudence thought so an hour or two

before the time."
"Then she was not married?" cried Sir Norman, in an ecstasy of de-

"Not a bit of it; and what is more, didn't want to be; and judg-ing from the remarks of Prudence, I should say, of the two, rather pre-ferred the plague."

"Then why was she going to do You don't mean to say she was it?

forced?" "Ah, but I do, though! Prudence owned it with the most charming candor in the world."
"Did you hear the name of the per-son she was to have married?" ask-

ed Sir Norman, with kindling eyes. "I think not; they called him the count, if my memory serves me, and Prudence intimated that he knew nothing of the melancholy fate of Mistress Leoline. Most likely it was the person in the cloak and slouched hat we saw talking to the watch-

Sir Norman said nothing, but he thought a good deal, and the burden of his thoughts was an ardent and heartfelt wish that the Count L'Estrange was once more under the swords of the three robbers, and waiting for him to ride to the rescue—that was all.

"La Masque urged Prudence to go back," continued Ormisten; "but Prudence respectfully declined, and went her way bemoaning the fate of her darling. When she was goraly affected by you as you are by her; for, when I mentioned your name she blushed, yea verily to the roots of her hair; and when she spoke of

of her hair; and when she spoke of you, couldn't so much as look me in the face—which is, you must own, a very bad symptom."
"Nonsense," said Sir Norman, enercetically. And had it been daylight his friend would have seen that he blushed almost as extensively as the lady. "She doesn't know me." "She doesn't know me."

"Ah, doesn't she, though? That shows all you know about it! She has seen you go past the window many and many a time; and to see you," said Ormiston, making a grim-ace under cover of the darkness. this to love! She told me so herself!"
"What! That she loved me!" said

Sir Norman, his notion of propriety to the last degree shocked by such a revelation.

"Not altogether, she only looked that; but she said she knew you well by sight, and by heart, too, as I in ferred from her countenance when she said it. There, now, don't make me talk any more for I have fold you everything I know, and ari alout noarse with my exertions." "One thing only-did she tell you

who she was?" "No, except that her name. Vus Leoline, and nothing else—which struck me as being slightly ma probable. Doubtless, she will tell you everything, and one piece of advice I may venture to give you is you may propose as soon as you like without fear of rejection. Here we are at the Golden Crown, so go in and get your horse and let us be

other, and the profoundest that state never lasts longer they are plunged back into misery and distraction; but while it does last it is very intense and delightful

ordinary part of the business is, that

very unusual for his heart to beat, seeing that it never did anything else, but on that occasion its motion was so much accelerated that any doctor feeling his pulse might easily have set him down as a bad case of heart disease. A small bright ray of light streamed like a beacon of hope from an upper window, and the lov-er looked at it like a beclouded mar-

would only be right, you know. "I don't mind going in and intro-

take care of yourself. Come on.' air of a man—quite at home, follow-ed more decorously by Sir Norman. "tapping on the chamber door," a sweet feminine voice called

own beauty, with as much satisfaction as any other girl might justly do. She had changed her drenched

lashes lovely as a vision, in the cen-

obeying your ladyship's commands,' began Ormiston, bowing low. "Mistress Leoline, allow me to present Sir

Norman Kingsley."
Sir Norman Kingsley bent almost as profoundly before the lady as the lord high chancellor had done before Queen Miranda; and the lady courtes-ied in return, until her pink satin skirt ballooned all over the floor. It

such lips would be enough to repay me, had I done a thousandfold more," responded Norman, laying his hand on his heart with another deep

To be Continued.

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All this time Ormiston had been leading his own horse by the bridle and as Sir Norman silently complied with this suggestion, in five minutes more they were in their saddles, and galloping at breakneck speed toward the city. To tell the truth, one was not more inclined for silence than the thoughtfullest silence was maintained thoughtuniest shence was maintained till they reached it. One was thinking of Leoline, one of La Masque, and both were badly in love and just at that particular moment very happy. Of course the happiness of people in that state payer lests longer than half an hour at a stretch, and then

Our two friends having drained the bitters had got to the bottom of the cup, and neither knew that no sooner were the sweets swallowed than it was replenished with a doubly bitter dose. Neither of them had dismounted until they had reached the house of Leoline, and there Sir Norman secured his horse, and looked up at it

with beating heart. Not that it was

iner at the sight of the north star. "Are you coming in, Ormiston?" he inquired, for the first time in his life almost bashful. "It seems to me it

after you have been delivered over you may fight your own battles and The door was unfastened, and Ormiston sprang up the stairs with the The door of the lady's room stood ajar, as he had left it, and in answer

"Come in. Ormiston promptly obeyed, and the next instant they were in the room, and in the presence of the dead bride. Certainly she did not look dead, but very much alive, just then, as she sat in an easy chair drawn up before the dressing table, on which stood the solitary lamp that had illumined the chamber. In one hand she held a small mirror, or, as it was then called, a "sprunkling glass," in which she was contemplating her

dress during Ormiston's absence, and now sat arrayed in a swelling amplitude of rose-colored satin, her dark hair clasped and bound by a circle of milk white pearls, and her pale, beautiful face looking ten degrees more beautiful than ever, in contrast with the bright rose silk, shining dark hair and rich white jewels. She rose up as they entered, and come forward with the same light in her eyes that one of them had seen before, and stood with drooping eye-

ter of the room.
"You see, I have lost no time in

was quite an affecting tableau. And so Ormiston felt, as he stood eyeing

it with preter-natural gravity.

"I owe my life to Sir Norman Kingsley," murmured the faint, sweet voice of the lady, "and could not rest until I thanked him. have no words to say how deeply thankful and grateful I am."

"Fairest Leoline! one word from

USELESS TO LINGER. "I am waiting," said the old codjer,
"to find a friend without fault."
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fellow who tells unpleasant truths,
"and cease waiting. Move on. You'll
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