

PITCHERY - BIDGERY.

The Turning of the Long, Long Lane.

BY MONSIEUR DEMOULIN.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON THE TRACK.

Beatrice's disappearance was known at Brandon Hall on the following day.

The servants first made the discovery. They found her absent from her room, and no one had seen her about the house.

It was an unusual thing for her to be out of the house early in the day, and of late for many months she had scarcely ever left her room, so that now her absence at once excited suspicion.

The news was communicated from one to another among the servants. A friend of Potts' did not dare to tell her first, but first sought to find her by themselves. They called Mrs. Compton, and the fear which perpetually possessed her mind, this poor timid creature now rose to a positive frenzy of anxiety and dread.

No satisfaction therefore could be gained from her. The servants tried to find traces of her, but they were unable to find her at ten o'clock.

The rage of Potts need not be described here. That one who had twice defied him should now escape filled him with fury. He organized all his servants into bands, and they scoured the grounds till darkness put an end to these operations.

That evening Potts and his two companions dined in moody silence, only conversing by fits and starts about the girl.

"I don't think she's killed herself," said Potts, in reply to an observation of Clark. "She's got stuff enough in her to do it, but I don't believe she has."

thing in a country of law and order. They choose to walk rather slowly, and John led the dog by a strap which he had brought with him.

At length she was able to sit up, and then Langhetti saw her. He greeted her with all the ardor and impassioned warmth which was so striking a characteristic of his impulsive and affectionate nature.

There was something about this man which filled her with indefinable emotions. The knowledge which she had of the mysterious fate of his father did not repel her from him.

What was the feeling that arose within her heart towards this man, and what the one for her father who had inflicted on her father so terrible a fate how did she dare to look him in the face or exchange words with him?

Edith moved among the others with a strange far off air, an air at once full of gentle affection, yet preoccupied. Her manner indicated that she was not the love of one who was far above them.

She once questioned Mrs. Thornton, but received no satisfaction. Mrs. Thornton looked mysterious, but shook her head.

"Your brother treats her like a divinity," said Potts. "I suppose he thinks she is something more than mortal."

"Do you have that awe of her which I feel?" said Potts. "Yes, and so does every one. I feel toward her as though she belonged to another world. She takes no interest in us."

"She nursed me," said Potts. "Oh yes! Every act of love or kindness which she can perform she seeks out and does but now as you grow better she falls back upon herself."

During these weeks Paolo made known to her his plans. She embraced them eagerly. "You have a mission," said he. "It was not for nothing that your divine voice was given to you."

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"Your brother treats her like a divinity," said Potts. "I suppose he thinks she is something more than mortal."

"I cannot tell," said Langhetti. "I will therefore keep it a secret forever."

"I wish to spare you," said Langhetti. "That is not necessary. Am I so weak that I cannot bear to learn anything which you may have had to tell? You forget what a life I have had for two years. Such a life might well prepare me for anything."

"If it were merely something which might create sorrow I would tell it. I believe that you have a self-reliant nature, and that you will be able to bear it. But which I have to tell is different. It is of such a character that it would of necessity destroy any change of mind which you have, and fill you with hopes and feelings that could never be satisfied."

"You can not know anything," said Langhetti. "You may suspect much, but you have no proof. Yet I would not be wise to communicate these to you since they would prove ill and without result."

So the conversation ended, and Langhetti still maintained his secret, though Beatrice tried to find it out. At length she was suddenly recovered, and he began to begin the work which Langhetti wished to lead her.

It was August, and Langhetti was impatient to begin his journey. He had made preparations to depart, and in a few days they were in London. Edith was left with Mrs. Thornton, Beatrice had her room with her, and her maid, a chamberlain, had lady's maid.

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