skown.

should be found and this is here among

her jewelry there is no connection

"You are right, certainly right," ex-claimed Sir Jaffrey. "Let us go to her reom and put it there."

'Certainly, inspector, certainly,

hing serious had happened

CHAPTER XXI

BERYL'S RUSE.

all the trouble that had followed

tive belief which this necessitated.

ward denied-that Lola had in truth

thought and sought to kill him by

stamping on his hands when he hung

sense of being goaded to momentary

his fingers in her paroxysm.

It was an awful deed; but, knowing

for Lola to have done, and her feeling

for the unfortunate victim of this vil-

lain's cruel cunning was much more

that of pity than of censure.

Nor did her pity step short at the

If she could have gone to her new and helped her, Beryl felt that she

in her power Beryl vowed that she would lighten rather than increase it.

The question was, however, where Lola had fled. It was clear that she

must have gone away during the night after she had been seen by Sir Jaffray.

Her course up to that time was plain

manifestly begun to terment her in con

sequence of his failure to get Beryl her-self out of the way. In the middle of

the interview between the two Sir Jaffray had appeared and turned the

Frenchman out of the house. Then he had written to Lola to meet him, and

she, fearing possibly some violence or maybe moved by a desire for revenge, had taken her dagger with her.

They had met by the cottage, and in a moment of passion she had stabbed him

and killed him. Then, when making off, she had tried to leave the wood and

had been frightened by the appearance

Owing to his trouble with the restive horse, he had been unable to follow her

at once, and she had thus hidden and

managed to evade him, slipping out of

the wood in the darkness and away

probably to some railway station. That was the manifest reason of the conduct which to Sir Jaffray had seemed like

the planless and purposeless wanderings

Beryl's heart bled as she thought of

what Lola must have suffered during

The girl went in to Lady Walcote un-

The old lady welcomed her warmly.

"There is much that we cannot yet

the night and since the moment of the terrible deed by the wall of the ruined

cottage in Ash Tree wood.

of Sir Jaffray.

of a lunatic.

had happened.

enough to Beryl. The Frenchman had

nmission of the crime.

elpless clinging to the rock ledge at her

coherent plans and ideas.

to Lady Walcote's room.

Neither Sir Jaffray nor Beryl dared to look at one another during this description, and at the close neither said

Both knew the dagger only too well. Like the bracelet, it had been bought when on the wedding tour in America. Sir Jaffray to Beryl's father, and it was at the present moment in the collection of arms at Leycester Court. Mr. Gifford himself seemed to feel

that there was some strong reason for

the silence, and he made haste to break thought I'd better bring these two things here," he said, pointing to the bit of lace and the little gold trinket, "and I'd have had the other if it hadn't been that it would have been seen at I'll keep this bit of lace. I shall want that, and you'd better say nothing about it. I suppose you want me to go on with the matter, Sir Jaffray?" And

he looked up as if waiting for instruc-"Yes, you must go through with it. Sift it to the bottom."

"There's not much to sift now. The man who puts his hand on the owner of that dagger and that little bauble there and this scrap of lace won't have any difficulty in finding the murderess of

the Frenchman.' His two hearers shuddered at the "I'm not at all sure that you're right," said Sir Jaffray, "but you must find out at any cost. Of course," he added, with some hesitation, "you un-

derstand that you are acting privately for me, and you have no need to tell anything of what you find out to any one else. Your fees will be paid by me The man's eyes gleamed in an instant with a sort of restrained avarice.
"I have done my best, Sir Jaffray. I know the extreme pain and trouble which may often be saved by a little silence. If you will excuse me now, I

will go. You know all so far. I had better be out and doing, because the police make such mistakes at times."

He took his hat and went away, and Sir Jaffray and Beryl remained aghast at the story to which they had listened

and all that it threatened. Sir Jaffray was standing by the window leaning against the side shutter and pressing his head heavily against his hand, while Beryl sat quite still in her chair by the table, pressing her hands together feverishly in her lap and feeling so chilled that she trembled vio-

"She must be mad! It is the only possible cause," burst from Sir Jaffray like a mean of pain.

Then a knock was heard at the door, and Mr. Gifford came back into the room again, shut the door carefully be-hind him and advanced right into the middle of the room before he speke.
"Excuse me, Sir Jaffray, but there's a point which you'll perhaps like to have put very plain to you. I don't ask

any questions about the ownership of dagger, but of course you'll see that a great deal must turn on it. I don't know whether you think that the grave complications which would certainly arise if it were proved to belong to any one particular can be in any way minute's heedless delay. I thought I'd mention the point; that's all.'' And without saying any more he went away

Sir Jaffray hung his head in bitter

But Beryl jumped up.
"Are you going?" he asked as if disappointed at her leaving him. "I want to talk all this over with you. It's got

"I shall come back again, but I must go home. For one thing I want to see how my father is," she answered without meeting his eyes.

She went out to her carriage, and, get-ting in, told the coacaman to drive home as quickly as possible. In an inconceivably short time she was back again, and she found Sir Jaffray still pasing the room where she had left him, fighting dewn the fears which would force themselves upon him as the result of Mr. Gifford's discoveries.

"What have you been doing, Beryl?" he asked as she entered. "I have been home, Jaffray. Mr. Gifford started an idea in my thoughts, and I have been home to carry it out. Let us be frank with one another in this terrible business. Have you any idea of what it all means or of what we

"There is only one possible explana--if this man's thoughts have any foundation—only one. My poor wife has gone mad, and all these awful consequences are the outcome. I have been thinking and thinking and thinking about it all until I am almost mad myself." And he threw up his hands with a gesture of despair. "It is horrible, horrible beyond belief, horrible! And I

feel as helpless as a child." "Well, I have thought of one thing that we can do," said Beryl, "and I have been home to prepare for it." "What is it?" asked Sir Jaffray

"It is not necessary to believe all that Mr. Gifford says and seems to think, but we may act as though what he believes is correct and do what we can to make any proof much harder. You heard what he said about the dagger, and we know to whom it really be longs, and we know what people will think if it is found out that such a weapon were ever taken from the manor

"How can they help finding that out?" burst in Sir Jaffray. "I have been thinking of that, and that was why I went home. You remember you brought home two of those daggers from America and that one of them was given to papa? Well, I have been to fetch it, and I thought that if it were placed where the other ought to be, supposing, as we fear, it is not there, it would help to turn aside sus-

picion, for a time at any rate." "You are a true friend, Beryl!" ex-claimed Sir Jaffray, taking her hand and pressing it. "Let us go at ence and put it there. It was always kept in that old oak cabinet in the blue draw-

ing reom."
They went at once to the room and found the dagger gone, as they had ex-jected, and the cabinet locked, but with the key in the lock.

In a moment the dagger which Beryl had brought was put into the place of the other, the outline of the weapon showing on the plush lining exactly the

spot where it had lain. Sir Jaffray locked the door of the cabinet and put the key in his pocket with a sigh of relief. "I thought your wits would help me,

She leved the girl, and now in the time of the sorrew and trouble which had fallen on the house she was infinitely Beryl," he said, feeling very grateful to her. "Yeu were always a clever glad of the comfert of her presence.
"This is a sad house, Beryl," she eeunselor."

"I have had another idea," she said.

"That little gold filigree ball was taken
off one of the pair of bracelets of which
Lole gave me one. I have brought it
with me, and I should like to put it
hack among her jewelry, as it will destroy another of the links which seem
to have had such affect upon Mr. GMJord. Even if the rest of the bracelet said after she had kissed her and made her bring a steel and sit close by her lenees. "I have been sitting alone here thinking till my poor brain reels and is dizzy with it all. Hew is Jaffray new? Where is he? He has been like one distracted. Oh, Beryl, how could she treat

They went up without saying anyting more, and after searching infectedly among Lola's jewels for the bracelet they put Beryl's among them.
"What shall we do about the mother, Jaffray?" asked Beryl when they had "The day will come when you will locked up the jewels.
"I will not tell her more than is

necessary; but, if there is to be any real trouble through this, of course she will have to be told. I am afraid for her, pathy in vain." and she will feel is the more keenly and broad on it so much because she is

back first and tell papa."
"You will take one great load off my shoulders if you will," seid Sir Jagray, Lady Walcote shook her head and made as if to reply again sternly, but, inexpressibly thankful to her.
"I will go to her pow," said the girl meeting Beryl's eyes, said nothing and sertion of her sternness. quietly, "and will tell her all that need be told and as gradually as possible." They had reached the bottom of the

The baronet stood in the great hall, Beryl being two or three steps above him, with her hand on the balustrade, in the act of turning back to go to Lady Walcote.

"Your presence in the house is a great comfort, Beryl," said the baronet. "I can't thank you yet as I gest that he was killed by violence. "Is there no end to the scandal which that man brings upon us all?" exclaim-'I am sorry for all the trouble that has come to you, Jagray," she answer-

ed, pausing to look down on him. "If I can help you, of course you know I will. There is no need for any mention of thanks between such old friends." At that moment there was a commotion in the hall, and Mr. Gifford entered, followed by a pelice inspector.

"Here is Sir Jaffray himself, Mr.

Borderham," said the private detective. 'The inspector would like to see you. sir, about this most distressing affair."
"If it's convenient, Sir Jaffrey," addplied the baronet. "Come into the study." And, bracing himself for the interview, he led the way, followed by the two men, while Beryl went on man's respect for a baronet of such wealth and influence as Sir Jaffray Walcote.

As she looked at them across the hall Mr. Gifford, who was the last of the "I have come to ask you, Sir Jaffray three, turned for a second and shrugged his shoulders and lifted his hands with a gesture which she read to mean that Then, full of disquiet, she went on

Before going into her dear old friend's rooms Beryl walked up and down the "I had words with him and told him long, broad corridor for some minutes. She was half bewildered by the rapidity with which these terrible events "I can, if necessary, but it were crowding one upon the other, and

had had the interview with Pierre Turabout telling you." rian which appeared to have precipitated with a bow. umstances have a grudge against

Holding the secret key to Lola's ac-"No, of no one. I should think I was as hot against him as any one could Frenchman, Bervl did not for the mebe," said Sir Jaffray, with a grim amile. "I horsewhipped him yesterday. I may say that I returned home in time to find him insulting my wife, and, in madness. Whatever ale might be. Lela was no more mad than Beryl herself.
Yet the girl shuddered at the alternafact, assaulting her, and I horsewhipped him and turned him out of the house. gare,

"I am comparatively certain," answered Beryl. "At least I am so certain that I shall be surprised indeed if it is not. This," touching the bracelet, She recalled the story which Pierre Turrian had told at the dinner table and the incident which he had after-That is the whole matter.' "Will it be convenient for me to se Lady Walcote presently?"

"Left the manor!" echeed the spector in manifest surprise. "Do you mean—in what sense do you mean left?" he asked, changing the form of

madness of passion in which she might have driven this dagger into her persecutor's heart, as she had before crushed "I mean only that she has left the manor and that for the moment I do not know where she is." impression which this fact made upon him by stooping over his netebook and making an elaborate note. the man, Beryl could not bring herself to say it was at all an impossible thing

> "It is a very painful fact, inspector, replied the barenet.
>
> 'Will you tell me under what cir-

would do so cheerfully. It was a fear-some deed to have wrought, but Lola Jaffray promptly and firmly. "I cannot say today exactly what are the ircumstances which have led to hell leaving had been driven to bay.

Beryl had been glad thus to have an opportunity of fending off some of the suspicion which had threatened her, manor-I shall be able to do so in and she vowed to do all she could to a day or two, of course-but I am eerhelp her in any way.

The sin had been grievous, but the tain there can be no more connect than that of a coincidence in time.' punishment had been swift to follow and terrible to bear, and so far as lay

"After. She did not go until the ear ly evening, leaving word that she was going to Leyeester Court. It was some time before dinner. The man had been gone some hours.

been some whisper to that effect, but I do not attach any belief to it whatever." "Will you tell me what were the relations between her ladyship and this French gentleman? Were they cordial?"



'Who saw him last when he lef "Two servants. I told them to tur "Can I see them?

In reply Sir Jaffray rang the bell, and the two men were summoned and questioned by the inspector and then sen "Could you tell me how Lady Wal-

was the next question. "No. I cannot. I did not see her aft er about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, but her maid may have seen her, and, if you like, you can see her and question He rang the bell and sent for her, but

on the matter of dress.
"I did not see my lady after I gave her the letter which was brought for

"No; it is not that," said the old lady decisively. "You don't think that, "What letter was that?" oried the in-I am sure. She has deceived him. She is bad, Beryl—bad to the core. She comes of a bad stock and is bad herself. spector sharply.

"I do not know, sir. I don't read my mistress' letters. I know no more than that I think it was the letter contained That Frenchman is mixed up in this in some way. I never liked him—always in the envelope which I found in her ladyship's room in the evening and gave to this gentleman," pointing to Mr. suspected him, with his handsome face

torted Mr. Gifford, with well acted

warmth, "but perhaps I know as much about the importance of little things as

any one else. If it had been the letter itself, I'll give in it might be worth

ence to the inspector's opinion.
"There was a letter addressed to my

wife on that afternoon in a lady's hand," said Sir Jaffray. "I myself gave it to her. It was from Miss Beryl Leycester, and I believe I heard my wife say that in it Miss Leycester asked

her to go over to see her at the Court.

Miss Leycester is in the manor now, Mr. Borderham, if you would like to

Bervl was sent for.

manor here?"

the two articles elosely.

me what was in 16?"

at Leycester Court.

replied Beryl.

"I should," the latter said, and then

While they were waiting the inspect-

or teck from his pocket a small parcel and opened it, and Mr. Gifford began to feel much keener interest than he

had yet felt, because he knew that it contained the dagger which he had de-

soribed and the remaining pertion of the gold filigree bracelet of which he himself had found the pendant.

"I may show you these while we are waiting," said the inspector. "This is

the knife with which this man was

killed, and this is a bracelet which was

found near the body, as if dropped in a struggle of some kind. De you recognize

either of them? I ask because I have been told that they come from the

At this moment Beryl entered the roam, and Sir Jaffray and Mr. Gifford had their heads bent down examining

"I wanted to ask yes, Miss Leycestor," said the inspector, leaving the matter of the dagger for a moment, "about the letter which you wrote yesterday to Lady Watsote. Can you tell

"Did she come!"

way."
"She left word here that she was

"I am quite sure." Beryl looked closely at the three men and saw that

the matter had reached some sort of

"Then as to the weapon, Sir Jaffray,

"They are mine," interposed Beryl, speaking steadily and clearly. "At

east that bracelet is mine, and that

dagger is from our collection of curios

"Are you sure?" asked the inspector,

mable to conceal his intense surprise at

the turn to matters which this answer

"was given me by Sir Jaffray's wife when she returned from America, she

having an almost exact duplicate, and

this," pointing to the dagger, "is the

dagger you gave to papa, Jaffray, un-less, of course, it's the fellow which

you kept for yourself. But surely we can settle that easily. I think I know

some little marks on it. Let us go and

net. It was in the blue room, you know."

She speke quite naturally and coolly

suspected him, with his handsome face and his lying tongue."
"She loved Jaffray," began Beryl, when Lady Walcote burst in bitterly:
"Yes, as Delilah loved Samson or "Very well; that will do. Thank you," said the inspector, dismissing her. Jael Sisera and as Circe used to love the fools she turned to swine. Women When she had gone, he turned to Mr. don't elope from those they love and with those they hate, do they? Non-sense, child! When you've lived as long "What envelope is that? You didn't tell me."
"Didn't I? Well, that was stupid!] in the world as I have, you'll learn t know falsehood when you see it and

meant to. She gave me an envelope addressed in an ordinary hand and with nothing in it, and I tore it up, thinking nothing of it." He told the its well, with all the air of a stupid man who lies when you hear them. She nev loved Jaffray, never."

"No; you are quite wrong," answered Beryl in a firm, clear tone, "and some day you'll be the first to own it." has been oaught committing a blunder and thinks to face it out doggedly. "I don't see why you should take her "You made a bad blunder when you

"You made a ban bunder when you did that, Mr. Gifford," said the inspector severely. "You should leave these things to those who are able to understand what is important and what do the same, dear," answered Beryl sweetly, smiling and stroking the old woman's hand, "for I have never known a heart in trouble to turn to you for sym-

understand, dear," answered Beryl soothingly. "Do you know Jaffray's thoughts? He fears that Lola has for

the time gone out of her mind."

who wrongs and shames my son," was like, I will stay with her tonight and much of temorrow, but I must drive heart against the plaint of genuine and desolate misery." itself, I'll give in it might be worth something, but not even a provincial impector of pelice could make much of an empty envelope addressed, so far as I recall, in a lady's hand. However, if you choose to think I've done wrong, do it and welcome." And he sneered as if in somewhat contemptuous indifference to the impector's onition.

tented herself with the unspoken as-"You must banish all that hardness." said Beryl after a pause, "and collect all your strength of endurance. There is more trouble than even this flight of Sir Jaffray's wife. This Frenchman who left yesterday is dead—died sud-denly under circumstances which sug-

ed Lady Walcote, wringing her hands. "How did it happen? Tell me," Bervl told as much of the case as she thought necessary and parried the ques-tions which Lady Walcote put to her, and she was still occupied thus when a servant knocked at the door and said

With Sir Jaffray matters had reached a point that seemed to promise an ugly

some surface shrewdness, and as he was very anxious to find an opportunity of helping forward his own promotion and thought he could see in this case one that might help him he was resolved to make as much of it as possible. At the same time he had all an English police-

whether you can give me any informa-tion as to this unfortunate affair. I be-lieve you identify the deceased man." "Oh, yes. He is M. Pierre Turrian, a Frenchman or a Swiss, I think-a musician—who has been staying in this country in pursuit of some musical object and for the last two days has been stopping here in the manor. He left yesterday suddenly.''

'Oan you tell me why he left?"

it seemed to her almost impossible that barely two days had passed since she purely private matter. "I should like to knew." "Very well, then; I will consider The inspector received the answer him at all, and who might under any

"No, I am sorry to say. For the present it is impossible. She has left the

If she could do that—
If she was mad, it was only in the

and led the way to the cabinet.

"It's leeked. Do you know who has the key, Jaffray?' she asked. "There is the dagger. I knew this was ours." Sir Jaffray produced the key, and the dagger was taken out and examined "This is very susprising intelligence, Sir Jaffray," he said at length. olosely, first by the inspector and then

by Mr. Gifford.

After that they went up stairs and cumstances she left and whether you connect the fact in any way-with—with looked for and of course found the bracelet among Lela's jewelsy. the man who is dead?"
"Certainly I do not," answered Sir "I was sure of the bracelet, of course, and almost sure about the danger. But new do you mean to tell me they have any sort of connection with this terrible deed?'' she asked the inspector.

He explained how they had been found and then exclaimed in the tone

of a man absolutely puzzled and be "Did her ladyship leave before or after this M. Turrian?" and shrewdness in his eyes as he said:

"Mad there been any communication between the Frenchman and her lady. you made one mistake-there was no ger. But he didn't notice it. I wa "On the contrary, my wife objected

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"Well, I can't understand it!"

Soon after he went away. Then Mr. Gifford turned to Beryl, vith a look of indescribable cunning

"I think you're one of the cleverest

women I ever met in the world, but

lust, not even a particle, on that dag

And then, without giving her time to

eply, he hurried away after the in-

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