### The Woman in the Alcove

By Anna Katharine Green Author of "The Millionaire Baby," "The Filligree

Ball," "The Leavenworth Case," Etc., Etc. [Copyright, 1906, The Bobbs-Merrill Co.]

CHAPTER II.

I must have remained insensible for, with me, you know." mpty and the two hundred guests I and he made a movement as if to leave had left seated at table were gathered me. in agitated groups about the hall. This "I must go," he began, but stopped at

and me in the general disturbance I did even to the very mention of the word not stop to inquire. It was enough for blood." me, in spite of the thrill of surprise tion. with which I recognized his extreme "W pallor and a certain peculiar hesitation some one say."

in his manner not at all natural to it. Meanwhile, some words uttered near what fierce rejoinder. Then, as I made a move, "What! You do not wish to my benumbed brain. The waiter who follow the crowd there?" had raised the first alarm was endeavoring to describe to an importunate group in advance of us what he had and together we passed down the hall. people in the drawing-room first," was look a here, Miss-er-

some strong instinctive feeling I could this man—to marry him, do you mean?" Several men had gathered around duracted with her and seen that she was dead. She hod been stabbed and some strong instinctive feeling I could this man—to marry him, do you mean?" Several men had gathered around duracted which had been struck, and my fate see if Mr. Durand were near enough to hear. He was not, and I allowed my "And I wanted to be a teacher, so as breast, but there was blood"

seasoned with horrified cries followed this simple description. Then a general movement took place in the direction of the alcove, during which Mr. Durand stooped to my ear and whisp-

not strong enough to stand such excitement. Don't you think we can escape by the window over there?" "What, without wraps and in such a

snowstorm?" I protested. "Besides,

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PATTERN DEPARTMENT, ADVERTISER, LONDON, ONT. uncle will be looking for me. He came

any minutes, for when I returned to An expression of annoyance, or was full consciousness the supper-room was, it perplexity, crossed Mr. Durand's face,

was what I first noted; not till after-ward did I realize my own situation. I was lying on a couch in a remote corner of this same hall and beside me, but not will take you to your uncle. This—this looking at me, stood my lover, Mr. Dur. dreadful tragedy, interrupting so gay a scene, has quite upset me. I was al-

me at that moment to look up and So was I, but not to the point of see him so near. Indeed, the relief was cowardice. But then I had not just such vehemence, I do not know even so great, the sense of his protection so come from an interview with the mursemforting that I involuntarily dered woman. Her glances, her smiles, stretched out my hand in gratitude to- the lift of her eyebrows were not fresh ward him, but, failing to attract his attention, slipped to the floor and took
my stand at his side. This roused him
was certainly due him for the shock he
must be laboring under. Yet I did not
have been been the state of the shock he
must be laboring under. Yet I did not and he gave me a look which steadled know how to keep back the vital ques-

"Who did it? You must have heard

"I have heard nothing," was his some-

"I wish to find my uncle, and he is in that crowd."

Mr. Durand said nothing further, ome upon in that murderous alcove. | and together we passed down the nail. | people in the drawing-room hist, was carrying about a tray of A strange mood pervaded my mind. In- my perverse reply. "I don't know why fces," he was saying, "and seeing the lady sitting there, went up. I had expected to find the place full of gentlemen, but she was all alone, and did not move as I picked my way over her long train. The next moment I had dropped train. The next moment I had come face to see and hear everything, not from curiosity, such as moved most of the people about me, but because of some strong instinctive feeling I could this man—to marry him, do you mean?"

filled me with utter repugnance, I reit a desire to see and hear everything, not from curiosity, such as moved most of the people about me, but because of some strong instinctive feeling I could this man—to marry him, do you mean?"

The young woman burst into tears. Several men had gathered around durative feeling I could this man—to marry him, do you mean?"

A hubbub of disordered sentences allowed to circulate among the now to hear such further details as were words. well frenzied guests. No one knew the plainest, most uninteresting puss in the the foreman on the arm. perpetrator of the deed nor did there whole city." My uncle smiled. "And I "I'll go with her, Dan," he whispered. appear to be any direct evidence cal- believe he loves me; at all events, I culated to fix his identity. Indeed, the know that I love him." in the midst of festivity might have most affectionate of glances.

> her breast and the instrument "He's an acquaintance of the murdered cated the washing of his hands in conof death removed from the wound. So woman, and it is only right for you to nection with the whole fool business, far, the casual search which had been know that you will have to leave him and returned to his wire cable. instituted had failed to produce this behind when you start for home. All As the 7 o'clock whistle was splitting weapon; but the police would be here who have been seen entering that al- the air above the engine room of No. soon and then something would be done. cove this evening will necessarily be 8 the next morning the lady As to the means of entrance employed detained here till the coroner arrives." mission appeared at the tipple and By this he had doubtless entered and cupant, the Englishman. He was seated not hide seductive little curls which escaped. The long plush curtains before a table, and his appearance was peeped out over the white forehead. which, during the early part of the such as precluded any attempt at in- At the bottom Jack filled and handed evening had remained looped back on trusion, even if one had been so diseither side of the casement, were found posed. There was a fixity in his gaze ly and transported at arm's length. The at the moment of the crime's discovery and a frown on his powerful forehead shot firer loaded fier with advice, which closely drawn together. Certainly a which bespoke a mind greatly agitated, suspicious circumstance. However, the large not far may be received with murmurs of gratisuspicious circumstance. However, the It was not for me to read that mind, question was one easily settled. If any much as it interested me, and I passed where the miners were at work, the

show it. Mr. Ramsdell had gone out to I can not say how much time elapsed see. He would be coming back soon. before my uncle touched me on the arm said, and she shook them anyhow. "Do you think this a probable ex- with the remark: through which some three hundred he's gone away now."

"You forget the awning." He spoke tive want of me? I had nothing to do The woman solicitor had a way of a crowd. The probabilities are against at this moment he was nowhere to be that she was brave and pretty. It is the pajama age and not alone any of them having looked up." His seen. Was I afraid on his account? Impossible: yet—

The way she side tracked for mule trains and crawled through cross-cuts for grown-ups, but for the small folks brow had cleared; a weight seemed re- possible; yetas well. Mothers find them very praction his mind. "When I went Happily just then the word was can't be so easily kicked off on cool window looking out. I remember the as had been requested to remain to very simply made and yet quite attractive. The upper part has seams hind her. The pink velvet—the soft part.

enect of her spiendor against the should feel themselves at liberty to debody seemed to feel the richer for the opportunity. under the arms and on the shoulders, and buttons up snugly to the green of the curtains on either side— The time had now come to take a throat. They may be made of gingham, madras or outing flannel, and a plain cotton or wool braid makes a line that way. Her figure would be plain as long as any excuse could be found. The time had how come to take a stand and I informed my uncle, to his a complete haul had been made in the mine, Miss Hunter turned to her escort.

At the end of the second day, when a complete haul had been made in the mine, Miss Hunter turned to her escort.

"I guess you think it funny, Mr. pretty finish for the edges of neck and to any one outside, and if she moved for staying. must be ways by which a desperate ally lessened and the great hall and wives, who are up on earth." man might reach that balcony. I be- drawing-rooms began to wear a look of

lieve-" How eager he was and with what a gentle protest: look he turned when the word came filtering through the crowd that, though supposed. Do you think it wise to stay "I began in the mines of Wyoming,"

"Mr. Durand has suspicions of his place—before that impertinent little friend, and I--" own," I explained determinedly to my- man dares to come around again," he self. "He met someone going in as he stepped out. Shall I ask him to name this person?" No, I did not have the this person?" No, I did not have the inoved by his hind sogget and way, at least vou've been with me two whole days

turned away.

artfully added.

two with another stranger of seeming

"Miss Van Arsdale, I believe?" I nodded, too choked to speak.

CAUTION. — Be careful to inclose from Mr. Ramsdell for us all to go into saw Mr. Durand, appeared at the end of TION. — Be careful to inclose from Mr. Ramsdell for us all to go into saw Mr. Durand, appeared by some nanded min a size of patillustration and send size of patthe drawing-room. This led to various the hall, led by a very small but self-im\_
package, neatly tied up. The shot era wanted. When the pattern is bust cries from hysterical lips, such as, "We portant personage whom my uncle imfirer thanked her warmly and assisted negative, you need only mark, 32, 34, or are going to be searched!" "He bewhatever it may be. When in waist lieves the thief and murderer to be still who had twice come to the door near her. Then he opened his present. It stare, 22, 24, 26, or whatever it in the house!" "Do you see the diamond which I stood. As this man looked up was a picture of the young woman who

"They will." remarked some one close authority, he detached himself from the

to my ear. four days from the date of order. The But quickly as I turned I could not and, approaching me respectfully group he had ushered upon the scene, guess from whom the comment came. enough, said with a deprecatory glance Possibly from a much-beflowered, be- at my uncle whose frown he doubtless jeweled, elderly dame, whose eyes were understood: fixed on Mr. Durand's averted face. If so, she received a defiant look from mine, which I do not believe she forgot

AMIABLE YOUNG LADY DOWN IN A COAL MINE might say searching glance I surprised directed against him as we made our

way to where I could see my uncle

gone about that Mr. Durand had been

the last one to converse with Mrs. Fair-

In time I had the satisfaction of join-

brother prior to the tragedy.

his own arm, saying:

one of the guests."

My uncle looked surprised.

here long," I ventured.

as he gives the word?"

"You had better not advance any

yourself should have none on a subject

so gruesome. I shall never cease re-

posed to await the action of our host."

"No; most of us will be relieved!

WENT GUNNING UNDERGROUND struggling to reach us from a short side hall. The whisper seemed to have FOR COLLEGE COURSE.

As Dan Gronoway, foreman of Northwestern colliery No. 8, near ing my uncle. He betrayed great relief Macon, Ga., was directing the installaat the sight of me, and, encouraged by tion of a new wire cable in the tipple his kindly smile, I introduced Mr. Dur- on Wednesday he was signaled by a and. My conscious air must have pro- good looking, stylishly dressed young duced its impression, for he turned a woman standing on the track by the startled and inquiring look upon my box car loader.

companion, then took me resolutely on this own arm saving:

"Mr. Gronoway?" she chirruped, extending a gloved hand to the sooty one the mine boss reluctantly held out. antness ahead for all of us. I do not the air of a man to whom time is "There is likely to be some unpleas-"The same, ma'am," said Dan, with go till that diamond has been looked

"My name is Ethel Hunter," she said for. This is a very serious matter, How he came to know my state and ways sensitive to the sight, the smell. dear. So many think the murderer was representative for the Ladies' Delight, in a friendly way. "I am traveling; a beautiful publication, and when I sell "I think so, too," said I. But why I thought so or why I should say so with thought so or why I should say so with the websence I do not know the such vehemence I do not know the such vehemence I do not know the such that I see in the university."

"Yes'm," was the foreman's brief response, as he began edging off.

"I want to go down in the mine." "The de-I mean, yes'm," said Dan, opinions," he advised. 'A lady like recovering himself.

"When can I go?" "Ye can't go at all."

gretting bringing you here tonight. I "But I have a written order from Mr. shall seize on the first opportunity to Thurston, the manager." take you home. At present we are sup-"Then let Mr. Thurston come and show ye around.' "He can not keep all these people

The young woman looked with troubled eyes into the stern face of the foreman. "I heard you were such a nice man," soon. Had you not better get your

she said. wraps so as to be ready to go as soon "They be telling lies on me," returned Dan, though not unkindly. "But, "Hunter."

> "Miss Hunter-it's as dark as a stack of black cats down there, and there be mule trains whizzing by every

We were consequently among the first enthusiasm to escape in a few quick to support my poor old mother and little brothers and sisters," she sobbed. "He has chosen me," I said, 'the A slight framed, wiry man touched

The Good Samaritan was Jack Richsudden death of this beautiful woman My uncle sighed, while giving me the with a big family responsibility wiped "We must get out of this. You are been looked upon as suicide, if the "It's a pity you should have come to slight framed knight. By a contemptujewel had not been missing from this understanding tonight," said he. ous shrug of his shoulders Dan indi-

> by the assassin, there seemed to be but My uncle and I strolled toward the sought her cavalier. She was attired in one opinion. The alcove contained a drawing-room and as we did so we a coarse, black garment and wore a window opening upon a small balcony. passed the library. It held but one oc\_ heavy shawl over her head, but it did

> one had approached by the balcony on, chatting, as if I had not the least lady proceeded to business. The sooty men bashfully withheld their hands. but she didn't mind a little dirt, she

> planation of the crime?" I demanded of "The police are here in full force. I necessary to go into details about the Mr. Durand at this juncture. "If I re- saw a detective in plain clothes look in widowed mother and little children member rightly this window overlooks here a minute ago. He seemed to have before the dollar came for the Ladies' the carriage drive; it must, therefore, his eyes on you. There he is again! Delight. Where they didn't have the be within plain sight of the door What can he want? No, don't turn; money she took an order on the guests have passed tonight. How could Frightened as I had never been in all would look mean, they thought, to anyone climb to such a height, lift the my life, I managed to keep my head up turn down a handsome lady who had window and step in without being and maintain an indifferent aspect. defied the horrors of the underground What, as my uncle said, could a detec- world to visit them.

> quickly and with unexpected vivacity. with the crime; not in the remotest talking which made each man think "The awning runs up very near this way could I be said to be connected she had gone down on purpose to see window and quite shuts it off from the with it; why, then, had I caught the at- him. , They had never heard of the sight of arriving guests. The drivers tention of the police? Looking about, I Ladies' Delight, and wouldn't have of departing carriages could see it if sought Mr. Durand. He had left me on known it from an almanac of the vintthey chanced to glance back. But their my uncle's coming up, but had re- age of 1876, but they did know this eyes are usually on their horses in such mained, as I supposed, within sight. But young woman knew how to talk and

tical for little girls and boys, because into the alcove to see Mrs. Fairbrother, passed about that the police had given She stopped timbermen staggering unthey are warmer than nightgowns and she was sitting in a chair near this orders that, with the exception of such der heavy loads, flagged mule drivers, nights. The pajamas sketched here are effect of her splendor against the snow answer questions, the guests generally ment in the Ladies' Delight, and every-

"I guess you think it funny, Mr. front. For the medium size 41/4 yards and the diamond shone—Don't you see He said nothing at the time, but as in the mine after men to sell them a what a probable theory it is? There the noise of departing carriages gradu- woman's paper rather than see their

"It did look a little odd at first," desertion he at last ventured on this replied the shot firer, "but I believe I know the reason now." "You have more pluck, Rita, than I

footsteps had been found in the snow on here? Will not people imagine that she said, "and then took them through pointing directly toward the balcony, you have been requested to do so? Look Kansas. I've been in every mine in there was none on the balcony itself, at those waiters hanging about in the this district. Out there at 61, where proving, as any one could see, that the different doorways. Run up and put on they employ Italians and negroes who attack had not come from without, your wraps. Mr. Durand will come to can't read, over half of them subsince no one could enter the alcove by the house fast enough as soon as he is scribed. If I'd worked them on top I the window without stepping on the released. I give you leave to sit up for wouldn't have taken six subscriptions. him if you will; only let us leave this Now, you've been good to me, my

"Don't mention it," said Jack, back-

ing off. But I stood firm, though somewhat moved by his final suggestion; and, be-

now, and I know the time of a gentle-Suddenly my anxiety became polg-The next excitement was a request nant. A party of men, among whom I Here—take this."

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