

# LOST, A PEARLE

— BY —

## Mrs. Georgie Shelden

### CHAPTER XXXIII. The Doctor's Story

"Before I begin my story," the young doctor began, "allow me to introduce myself to you. My name is George Murdock; I am a physician, and my residence is in London, where I have been practicing for the last five years; how I happen to be here just at this time, you will soon learn. I suppose, according to the laws of our country, I have been guilty of a very wrong thing; and yet, in doing what I have done, I am actuated only by the most humane feelings.

"It has been my practice during my residence in London to visit the morgue whenever I heard of an unusual accident, hoping to increase my stock of information thereby and benefit other sufferers. Hearing of the railway casualty which occurred more than a year ago, and to which you have referred, I visited the morgue early the following morning, and found the body of the girl who had been the only victim. I cannot describe to you my feelings as I looked upon the lovely unfortunate. A strange thrill went tingling through all my nerves, and a feeling of bitter rebellion arose in my heart against the sad fate that had slain her and sent her to that place to be gazed upon by the idle and curious.

"It was early, as I said, I was the first one who had come there that morning, for which I have always been thankful; for, I fear, I should never have had the nerve to do what I did in the presence of a prying throng. I went alone into the room where she lay, so white and still, and so delicately beautiful, and stood gazing upon her, wondering who she could be, and if the news of her untimely end would reach her friends and they come to claim her, before she should begin to grow hideous and repulsive. She lay as if asleep. Her abundant hair had become loosened, and rippled over her shoulders and bosom in great luxuriant waves, and was as smooth and glossy as satin. Her face was rounded and fair, and very, very fair to look upon, excepting a bruise far up on one side of the forehead. Her lips were slightly parted, showing the even rows of white teeth between, and one hand rested upon her breast; the other lay by her side, and I noticed upon the third finger of this a broad gold band.

"She has been married," I said to myself; and then I observed that she was clad in black—her dress and mantle, also her bonnet and veil, which lay beside her, were all black. A young widow, perhaps, I thought, though there was no crape to indicate deep mourning; and then the feeling impressed me that perhaps she had no friends, perhaps she was alone in the world; she might even be one of those unfortunate ones who discouraged with life and rendered

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Mrs. Stephen G. Thwaites, Box 205, Jordan, Ont., writes: "My brother I had a bad case of eczema on his legs. I was troubled nearly all one fall and winter with it, and could not work for days at a time. He tried different salves and ointments, but none cured him. One day he tried Dr. Chase's Ointment, and it gave almost instant relief. He continued its use, but had not quite finished the second box when he was cured. It is now about five years since then, and it has never returned. We certainly can recommend Dr. Chase's Ointment, and are very grateful for my brother's cure."

(Rev. S. P. Coffman, Vineland, Ont., states: "This is to certify that I know Mrs. Thwaites and the party to whom she refers, and her statements are correct.")

Mr. J. E. Jones, 228 University Avenue, Kingston, Ont., writes: "I had eczema in my hand for about five years. I tried a great many remedies, but found that while some of them checked it, none cured it permanently. Finally I tried Dr. Chase's Ointment, and in six weeks my hand was completely better. I would not do without a box of Dr. Chase's Ointment in the house if it cost \$2 a box. I am giving my name to this firm so that it will get to those who suffer as I did."

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desperate by its troubles, had sought her own death.

"I involuntarily took in mine one of the soft, white hands, which seemed like wax outlined against the deep black of her dress; and it was a beautifully shaped hand. To my surprise it was not rigid, as I had expected to find it, but soft and pliable almost as my own; and, as I looked, a thrill like the piercing of a knife shot through me—one of the slender fingers twitched!

"It is but the result of my imagination," I said, chiding myself for becoming so unduly excited; but even as I said it, my own fingers sought her pulse. My heart bounded into my throat, and a terrible trembling seized me as I felt it feebly vibrate beneath my touch. "She is not dead," I whispered, feeling my own face blanch, and a cold perspiration starting out all over me.

"No; she was not dead, for still holding that wrist, I could feel the faint pulsations that had startled me so. But I knew she would die unless she had immediate and vigorous treatment. My first impulse was to notify the authorities, and have her taken to the hospital; but the hospital was a long distance from the morgue, the officials would have no interest in the case, and there might be a long delay that would be fatal to the faint promise of life in that almost lifeless form. No one had come to claim the body; indeed, her friends might be living a long distance from London, even if she had any; if I left her there and said nothing, I should go away feeling guilty of murder. Whatever I did I must do quickly, and it was then, on the impulse of the moment, that I resolved to do a bold thing. I never stopped to consider what the consequences would be if my act was discovered. I only thought of bringing back to life that beautiful, unknown girl, whose face had impressed me as no other had ever done.

"I went out to the authorities and claimed her as mine—my sister; and I think they never once doubted my word, for my white face and trembling tones had all the appearance of grief and horror over a fate so terrible to a relative. I have often been troubled since, when thinking of the distress of the real friends, should any come to claim her, but I have never for one moment regretted the step I took.

"I had her conveyed at once to my own humble home, where, after relating my story to my mother, she joined me heart and hand in my efforts to resuscitate the apparently lifeless girl. We were rewarded, after long and arduous labor; suspended animation was restored; the girl breathed, moved, and swallowed the restoratives we gave her, but showed no signs of consciousness. A tedious brain fever followed this, and many times we despaired of her life; but my mother is an excellent nurse, and to her our patient owes her life; it was a tough struggle, however, between life and death; but she had evidently been in perfect health at the time of the accident, and she had also a strong and vigorous constitution, so she at last rallied and began to recover physically, but, to my dismay, I found that her reason was wrecked—she was an idiot!

"I could not account for it at first; the bruise upon her head had not been severe enough to cause either death or idiocy; there were no other injuries that were very severe, and her sickness could not have produced any such fatal results. In only one way, I reasoned, could it have been caused, and that must have been the shock and fright she experienced on perceiving, as she supposed, that she must be killed.

"She has been very sweet and attractive in her imbecility; there has been nothing repulsive about her condition. She has never been strong since her sickness, and demands constant care and attention; but she has been so sweetly patient, gentle, and lovable, that my mother and I have grown to love her most tenderly. I have had a theory of my own all through her illness, although I have never given expression to it until today. I have read of instances where imbecility was caused by some shock or fright, and the recovery was produced in a like manner. A great shock had deprived our charge of her reason, and I have felt that it was barely possible that something of this kind might restore it again. To-day an event occurred which has led me to hope that such is indeed the case."

"Is it possible?" interrupted Pearle, with almost breathless interest. "Oh! I hope so, if—can it be possible that she is Amy's mother?"

"Wait until I tell you the rest of my story, Miss Melfert, before you allow yourself to hope too much," the young doctor said, with a kindly smile into her excited face. "I took my fair charge out this afternoon, and we went to a little arbor at the

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end of the south walk. She had been nervous all day—she has nervous attacks occasionally, which leave her quite weak, and it is often very difficult to quiet her; sometimes by singing to her we can soothe her very quickly, and so I have grown into the habit of singing to her frequently. To-day I was only half through my song when I was startled by something white darting past me, with a cry that made every nerve in me tingle, and the next moment I saw a little golden-haired child spring into the lap of my patient, and fall sobbing and crying upon her bosom.

"May uttered a piercing shriek, and fainted dead away; but the little one, seeming to be nearly wild, continued kissing her lips, patting her pale cheeks and calling 'Mamma! mamma!'"

"Amy," murmured Pearle, feeling faint herself, as she began to realize toward what all this tended.

"Yes, it was the little girl whom I have often seen with you; but I could not stop to inquire the cause of her grief and strange actions then. I gave her into the care of the maid, who just then came for her, and I brought May directly back to the hotel. She has received a fearful shock, for she kept relapsing into fainting fits for more than an hour, and I was beginning to fear for the result, when she revived, and I was instantly startled by remarking a strange look in her eyes. It was not the look of confidence and trust she usually regarded me with, but a curious, puzzled expression, as though she did not know me, and almost immediately she began glancing anxiously about the room, and asked for her 'baby,' her 'Amy,' her 'precious pet.'"

"I was almost as much agitated at this as I was when, in the morgue, I first saw her finger twitch and knew that she was not dead. I realized that my theory was correct. This shock, I believe, has restored the reason which I had feared must be forever clouded. Of first I hardly knew what to do. I could not believe that his child was really hers; I thought it might be a singular coincidence of resemblance, and I almost feared to send for her again, at her request, lest a disappointment should produce a relapse into her former state.

I expressed no surprise at her questions regarding the little one, and when I thought her strong enough to bear it, I sent for her. I was not left in doubt long, for the moment the door opened, little Amy bounded to the bedside, and mother and child again recognized each other.

"I cannot tell you how this strange occurrence has affected me," Dr. Murdock continued, with emotion. "I am deeply grateful for this change in my patient—grateful, too, that she will be restored to the friends who love her, and that the mystery which has so long enveloped her will now be cleared away; and yea, she has grown so dear to my mother and—and to me, that it will be very hard for us to part with her."

There was a hushiness in George Murdock's voice as he concluded, and a mist like unshed tears in his eyes.

"Heaven be thanked!" Pearle ejaculated, "my darling is no longer motherless!" and she almost sobbed with joy that the terrible mystery which had so long shrouded beautiful Alice Renau was at last solved. But how strangely solved!

"Yes," returned the doctor; "it is certainly a matter to be deeply grateful for. As soon as I deemed it safe to leave my charge, I came to seek you, hoping that you would be able

to throw some light on the subject. Do you know anything of her past history beyond what you have already told me?" he asked, with considerable anxiety.

"No, nothing of any moment," Pearle answered; and then she told him how she happened to go to Madam Renau, of her sojourn there, of the old lady's death, and her subsequent adoption of little Amy.

"You have done a noble deed, Miss Melfert, in caring for this motherless child," Dr. Murdock said, with a glance of admiration, when she concluded; then, the look of anxiety returning to his face, he asked: "Did you say that May—that Amy's mother was a widow?"

"No; I learned nothing of her private history; but from the fact of madam's telling me that the little one was called Amy Renau, I judged that her mother must have been a son's wife, although madam never spoke of a son, and the servants knew nothing about it. There seemed to be something rather mysterious about the family," Pearle replied.

The doctor looked grave, but, after a thoughtful silence, he said, with a sort of regretful smile:

"I am afraid you and I will have cause to regret much, as well as to be thankful for much, when we are called to part with our charges."

"Yes, indeed," Pearle replied, the tears quickly starting to her eyes again. "I have grown to love Amy as well as if she really belonged to me; in fact, I had come to regard her as mine, as I had despaired of ever finding any one to whom she belonged."

"She is a charming little fairy. I had supposed, until a day or two ago, that she belonged to the family with whom you are engaged," said the doctor.

Pearle's face fell at these words, for they at once brought back to her mind her own precarious situation, which, in listening to the physician's tale, she had entirely forgotten for the time.

George Murdock noticed her troubled manner, and at once connected it in his mind with her interview with the man whom he had seen in the reception parlor, but of course he did not wish to appear curious, and so waited for her to break the silence. He knew she wanted to speak of it, from the anxious glance she cast at him every now and then.

"Would you like to come in and see my fair charge?" he asked, at last, to break the awkward pause.

Pearle started, and at once became violently agitated.

"Yes," she said; "but, Dr. Murdock, I find myself in a very trying position just at this time. My interview with you has inspired me with confidence in you, and though I know you have care enough on your mind just now, I feel impelled to trespass still further upon your kindness, and throw myself upon your protection until I can communicate with my friends."

He gave her a frank look of sympathy, as he replied:

"Anything that I can do to serve you, Miss Melfert, you may be assured I shall be most happy to do."

"Thank you; you are very kind, and I must tell you the truth, for you will doubtless learn it in some other way, if I do not. It seems a strange thing that a woman should be obliged to seek protection from her own husband, but such is the fact. The man whom you saw in the parlor with me, I am compelled to acknowledge, stands in that relation to me," Pearle exclaimed, with drooping eyes and crimson cheeks.

She did not think it right to allow him to remain in ignorance of this fact, though it was terribly humiliating to her to confess it.

"Ah," he said, with a start of surprise. He had not once thought that

she could be a wife.

"Yes; and I have been trying to hide from him for a long time." Then thinking he might wonder why she did not claim protection of Lady Fennelsea, she continued: "He has followed me here, and has had an interview with Lady Fennelsea, who, upon discovering the fact of which I have just spoken, considers that I am no longer fit for the position which I have hitherto occupied, and she has accordingly dismissed me. I was feeling very miserable and forlorn indeed when you sought me so opportunely."

She then proceeded briefly to give him some account of her trouble, and the exceedingly uncomfortable position in which she now found herself.

"You need protection, surely," he said, when she concluded, "and you shall have it until you can communicate with your friends, which—pardon me for the suggestion—I should advise you to do at once. You are not fitted to combat single-handed with such villains as the one whom you have described."

"Thank you. The world seems very large, but it really is exceedingly small when one wants to hide one's self. If I am to lose Amy I shall need comfort, and I believe I shall go back to my brother's care—at least for the present," the lonely girl said, with quivering lips and tear-laden eyes.

The young doctor felt for her deeply; she was so beautiful, and he had never dreamed of her having so tragic a history.

"Shall I demand an interview with— with that man, and acquaint him with the fact that I have taken you under the shadow of my wing, and warn him of the consequences if he attempts to molest you?" he asked, trying to speak lightly.

"I do not believe that will be necessary," she answered. "I only wish wish to feel that I may appeal to you in case he should seek to compel me to accompany him from this place."

"Very well; then consider yourself one of my family until your friends come for you; and now will you come and see Amy's mother?"

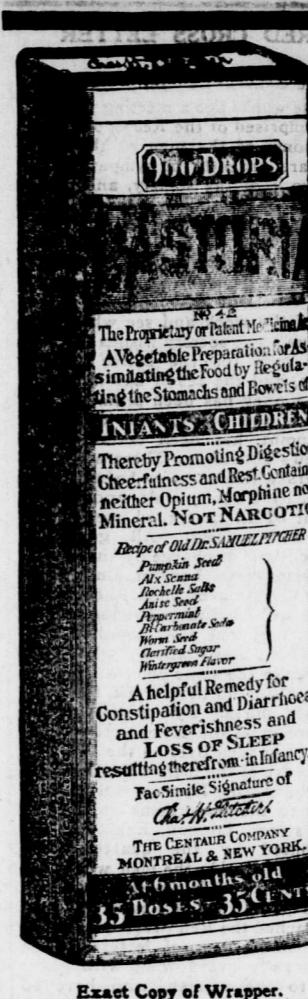
Pearle assented, and he led the way into another room, where they met Mrs. Murdock, whose motherly face had attracted Pearle from the first. The doctor introduced them, and asked after his charge.

"She is very comfortable," was the reply, "but in a state of curiosity regarding both herself and the little one, who, she declares, has grown half since she saw her; and," his mother added, smiling, "she does not know what to make of either you or me."

"We will soon explain all that to her," her son returned; and drawing Pearle's arm within his, he drew her into a chamber beyond, where the fair invalid lay, very pale and wan, but looking, nevertheless, a perfect picture of happiness and beauty, as she hugged to her bosom her newly recovered treasure, and looked down, with the light of reason and recognition once more in her beautiful brown eyes, into the deep blue orbs of this her child, who, with her little arms twined lovingly around her neck would not consent to be taken from her mother.

CHAPTER XXXIV.  
Dr. Murdock's Love for Alice  
As the door opened, and Pearle entered the room with the doctor, Amy cried out joyously, her cheeks flushed with excitement, her eyes dancing with happiness:

(Continued on page 7)



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LOST-

(Continued)  
"Auntie! aun pretty mamma Pearle with her tears at her too at and her bright part company.

But she will that of her es to the bedside she could look eyes which we estly and ques "Are you Ab gently, but ar quivered in he "Yes, that v fair stranger looked greatly tion, and put in a puzzled w call something stained her c eager look be "And are yo little one is yo timed."

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