

# THE DEAREST GIRL IN THE WORLD

"An ancestress of yours, Lady Billies, was murdered in that bed—murdered by her butler, a man named Norman Ross. She had collected, or had in her possession, a large sum of money, and locked it in her jewel case and went out in the grounds to take a walk. That walk that circles about beneath those trees is called Lady Billies' walk. She entered her room, and placing the keys under her pillow, retired. While she was in the grounds, her butler, Norman Ross, concealed himself beneath the bed just here, and when he thought she had fallen asleep he tried to steal the keys of the jewel-case. Lady Billies heard him, and spoke out, and he cut her throat with a case-knife. She lived three days and died, crying, 'Save Norman, poor misguided boy!' The butler, realizing what he had done, jumped from this window, which is barely four feet high, and broke his leg. He thereupon crawled under the shadow of the old stone fence there, near the old well, and lay there until he was almost dead from thirst, and he was found at the old well trying to get water. He begged to be hung, and he was hanged half way between Leith and Edinburgh in May, 17—.

I know the family history very well, don't I?"

Lord Wedderburn felt complimented and pleased. These old facts stamped on his memory since childhood, and it pleased him to think a stranger was interested in them.

"You do, indeed, and I thank you for your interest," was all the reply he could make. "They had to go now to another part of the old house. It was a small tower room, and in it they found their old bookcase, on the glass of which was an inscription in Latin and the name Patrick Home, 17—.

They climbed another flight of stairs, the steps of which were dangerous and broken away. They climbed these stairs to another storey of the gloomy old house. Here they saw two small rooms. In one there was a small fireplace, the hearth being covered with small, smoldering ashes. This room had been Norman Ross' bedchamber. In this room he had conceived the terrible deed that he had committed. There were traces of his writings on the walls, and the wooden pegs upon which he had hung his clothing. Miss McKay shuddered and followed Lord Wedderburn down the broken staircases.

"It's a most uncanny old place," she said, when they had reached the great arched front doorway, and seated themselves on the stone steps to rest before starting homewards.

"Indeed it is—such a monument of broken hearts and lives," he said, thinking of his own case.

"You believe, then, in broken hearts?" she asked.

"I believe as we have hearts, they may be broken," he said.

"I do, also. From the depths of my heart I pity people that have had heart troubles. I mean those whose hearts have been broken by their great love. God protect me from such a fate."

"Amen, I answer, most sincerely," he said, and there was a quiver in his voice.

"I wonder if it is possible to go through life without having heart-aches?" she said.

"I do not think it is," he said.

"I have had few, or none, thus far," she said.

"Perhaps it is not time yet. They may come," he said.

"I have been frank with you, now confide in me as well. Tell me, has your heart been broken? I am sure it has, for such a decided change has come over you in a few years. Confide in me."

"Then I will tell you that my heart is broken. That I have suffered with heart-aches, you have seen. I sometimes think my heart is dead and past recall. Do you think such a thing is possible?"

"I do not. I am sure there will be a time when some one will recall life and hope and love. It may not be now, but I say in time it will come."

"How can that be done?" he asked.

"You will see some one that will awaken you. Perhaps you will marry some good woman, and from the old dead love will spring up a new and tender one."

"Is there a good woman living that would accept such a love as I might offer?" he asked.

"She was not thinking of herself at all. I think there is, yes. It would depend on circumstances," she said, equivocally.

"Then let me state a strange case."

"There was a quiver on his lips and moisture in his eyes that called out all her sympathy at once. "What I say to you is in confidence. It lays bare a wounded heart, and I have a reason for laying that heart bare to you. A young man, having grown careless from contact with the world, is called out one night to the death-bed of an old friend. That old friend, knowing that she must die in a few hours, and leave a little foster child alone and unprotected, having no kith or kin to send her to, asks the young man to marry the child. It is a weird scene—the dying woman pleading, the child crying, etc., etc. The young man consents, and in a few minutes a man in attendance pronounces them man and wife. The young man is called away, expecting to be back in a day or two, and make every preparation for the future of his wife. He returns in a short time, and the man and child have disappeared as surely as if the grave doer over them. In fact, there was a railway accident, and a young woman answering the description was found among the killed. That has been five years, and no trace of either has been found, despite the most unrelenting research."

When Lord Wedderburn looked up, her face was white, hard and set.

"Then you are married?" she gasped.

"There was no proof that the man had the right to marry anyone, and, besides, there is every reason to believe that death has claimed him."

Her heart had gone out in tenderest love for this man, and it was beyond recall. It had indeed some her time to have heart-aches, but his words held some comfort. She heard the quiver in

his voice and saw the silver in his hair, and a great pity arose in her heart for him.

"Would anyone share such a blighted life as that? If they did so, would it not be sympathy that actuated them? I can not think there is earthly help in such a case, do you?" He forgot for the time being that he spoke of himself.

"I think there is. Very few people every marry their first loves, and perhaps it is well they do not. Perhaps the calm love that comes after is best. Yours, my lord, is a pitiable case. Believe me, I deeply sympathize with you. In fact, my heart aches for you."

She put her hand wearily across her eyes, and he saw the tear drops fall.

"He brushed them away gently.

"It was to you that I wished to offer such a poor offering. A broken heart and a broken life. Love is dead within me, but a life of devotion I can offer."

"It is a sad case," she said. "We will talk no more of it now," and they arose and walked slowly back to Castle Royal. Lady Alicia saw them from her window and her heart gave a great bound of pleasure. She knew she had gained her wish.

"Have you nothing to say to me?" he asked, as he left her at the entrance.

"Nothing more, I think, that you will make every investigation in your power. I can share a dead love, but not a living one." She turned abruptly away from him. There was a terrible conflict now between her love and herself. Lord Wedderburn watched her in pity. He knew that the offer he had made was such a poor one, and that she loved him. She had told him to make every effort to investigate for her sake and his, and he determined to do so.

The breakfast bell rang as they entered the hallway, and it was only the work of a few minutes to make themselves presentable. Miss McKay's face was exceedingly pale. She heard little or none of the bright conversation around her. Lord Wedderburn's face was a strange mixture of sorrow and contentment. He felt he had acted fairly. He told her he had no love to offer her, yet he must marry, and he had chosen to offer a life's devotion to her.

The great sorrow was for the past. He never forgot Dorothy for a moment. When she died his heart died. He thought of her a strange feeling came over him. It seemed of late that Dorothy was always with him. He never for one moment forgot her.

At the breakfast table the guests were talking gaily of the drive to the ruins. They were to visit old Buncroft Castle, and many weird legends hung over those old, decayed ruins.

It was decided that all should go, but Lord Wedderburn did not feel like going. He felt as if he had proven false to Dorothy, and this thought made him miserable. Yet he had to go with his guests. All that day he found no opportunity of being alone with Miss McKay. He took her arm within his, and walked over the ruins. He assisted her gently over the broken walls. Tenderness was displayed in his every act, but he could not shake off the feeling that he was acting a traitor to his Dorothy. He had one comfort, Miss McKay had told him to investigate, and while he was investigating he would remain true to her.

The day was spent pleasantly by all, but Miss McKay and Lord Wedderburn. Neither of them was happy.

When they returned in the evening Lord Wedderburn was almost ill. Miss McKay repaired at once to her own apartment and remained there. Lord Wedderburn did not join the guests at dinner. He pleaded a headache and was excused. After the dinner was over and the guests were assembled in the great drawing room, Lord Wedderburn heard the laughter from below. He could not think, save of Dorothy and his unfaithfulness to her.

He opened the window and stepped outside on a balcony. The moon shone bright and clear; old Leithill lay over in the distance. Lord Wedderburn made up his mind to walk over there. To-night he must bury all thought of Dorothy. He walked down the pathway. Once he thought he saw a shadow fall across his path, but he saw no one. He felt nervous and sad, but he walked on. He had that peculiar sensation of not being alone. He attributed this, also, to his state of mind. He reached the doorway, and sat down on the step. He sat there that night and waited until Dorothy came to him. A figure sprang from behind a marble column, and a bright steel blade flashed in the moonlight. Lord Wedderburn grasped his assailant's hand, knocked the knife in the air, and threw his assailant on the ground.

"Mercy! mercy!" cried the assassin.

"Why should I show you any mercy, you reptile, you?" said Lord Wedderburn.

"Mercy! mercy!" was all he could cry.

"You are a bungling murderer," said Lord Wedderburn, contemptuously, "and I wonder you ever had the courage to attempt such a thing. Who are you, and why have you?" for the second time, tried to do me harm?"

"I am an Italian, and Franz Marrot is my name," he replied.

"You have not told me why you seek my life," said Lord Wedderburn.

"Perhaps it was for some one else," said the wild would-be murderer, Lord Wedderburn understood it had been a mistake.

"I certainly think so, as I can think of no one now," said Lord Wedderburn. The W— asylum was situated in the outskirts of the city and was a long drive.

"I was desirous of seeing you on another matter, also. Do you remember the most important matter you entrusted us with? Well, we have had ample time to think it all over and have decided that you have no proof that the marriage was solemnized legally. In other words, that the man was a minister or a person having the right to perform the ceremony of marriage. We have no proof that the lady is dead, yet the circumstances are more than favorable to that belief. Now we were not decided when we spoke to you and now we have decided that while this is true, the evidence is almost nothing; and on the other hand we have no proof that the man was not a minister, or person having the power to perform the marriage ceremony, and we have no proof that your wife is not living."

"Now you cannot swear positively that the body you saw was that of your wife. In fact, I am told you held serious doubts. The features had changed—the hair was darker. Death may have changed the features, but I doubt it in regard to the hair. In fact, I doubt both. The clothing was entirely different. Now, if I understand matters clearly, your housekeeper made the garments she wore. She left Castle Royal to take the ill-fated train. It is not at all likely nor probable that she could or did change her clothing, and your housekeeper positively asserts that it was not at all the same material, color, nor make. Such, I believe, are the facts in the case. Now, on the strength of these doubts until they are clearly removed, you are a married man, and can not safely enter into another marriage. It is a most unfortunate situation, my lord, and I sympathize with you, but it cannot be helped. Before you can re-marry, with safety, there will have to be an action brought to have that marriage annulled."

Lord Wedderburn was stricken with remorse. He had now almost compromised his honor. He had placed himself and the lady in a most unfortunate position, but a hope crept into his mind. Miss McKay had clearly understood the case, and had told him to investigate—he was sure of her friendship.

"I cannot help but think that the lady will turn up most unexpectedly at some future time," said Mr. Miller as they drove up the entrance to the asylum. Dr. Sprague welcomed them heartily.

"Pardon the trouble I have given you my lord, but we wished to make an experiment in the interest of science, you know. The physician led the way into a small reception room. Then the trio were ushered into the hall where the patient was.

"My God! it's Boughman," said Lord Wedderburn.

"You know him then?" said the solicitor.

Lord Wedderburn shook as with a chill. Here was a ghost of the past arisen before him.

"Do not show the least agitation; go quietly up to him and shake hands with him as if there was nothing wrong," Lord Wedderburn did so, while the two men stood aside and watched.

"How do you do, Boughman?" said Lord Wedderburn, extending his hand. The man looked at him steadily as he gave his hand, but there was not the least sign of recognition.

"Do you not remember me, Boughman?" asked Lord Wedderburn. There was only the stare, but no sign of recognition yet.

"I saw you at Leithill—can't you remember anything of Dame Wynter?" asked Lord Wedderburn.

"Dame Wynter?" he repeated vacillantly—"let us pray," he said, and fell on his knees and prayed. "He has been a minister of the gospel," said the physician, "I am quite sure of that, for I have heard him preach as fine sermons as I ever heard."

When he had finished his prayer, and they found they could recall nothing to him, they left.

"I shall urge my own views strongly," said Dr. Sprague, "I intend to perform an operation on him, examine the brain, and I am sure I shall effect a cure—it is a simple matter and I shall attempt it, for I am confident of success." He led the way to the operating room. "I shall be glad to let you know the result of my operation since you know the man," said Dr. Sprague.

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Lord Wedderburn took a cab from the station, and went at once to the office of his solicitor.

"So glad you come, was just going to write you again. I do not know as yet that we have any reason to connect things, but a very strange thing has called our attention. There is a lunatic in the W— asylum that persistently calls Wedderburn all the time. Dr. Sprague called on me and wished me to try an experiment on the man. If he happens to know you and remembers you, that will decide a great point as to his being cured. I thought to ask you to accompany me and see the man, that you may tell us if you ever saw him before. My idea is that he has in some way heard the name, and it is one of those strange whims that which demented persons are addicted to."

"I certainly think so, as I can think of no one now," said Lord Wedderburn. The W— asylum was situated in the outskirts of the city and was a long drive.

"I was desirous of seeing you on another matter, also. Do you remember the most important matter you entrusted us with? Well, we have had ample time to think it all over and have decided that you have no proof that the marriage was solemnized legally. In other words, that the man was a minister or a person having the right to perform the ceremony of marriage. We have no proof that the lady is dead, yet the circumstances are more than favorable to that belief. Now we were not decided when we spoke to you and now we have decided that while this is true, the evidence is almost nothing; and on the other hand we have no proof that the man was not a minister, or person having the power to perform the marriage ceremony, and we have no proof that your wife is not living."

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**Zam Buk**

is the best remedy known for sunburn, heat rashes, eczema, sore feet, stings and bites. A skin food!

At Druggists and Stores—5c.

## Girl Cured of Disfiguring Pimples

By Cuticura Ointment. Broke Out on Face when Twelve or Thirteen. Were Most Embarrassing. Had Tried Everything.

A Nova Scotia girl, Miss Mabel Morash, of Dover West, writes: "When I was about twelve or thirteen years of age, my face broke out with pimples, and I tried everything to get rid of them, but failed. The pimples were the worst on my forehead and chin. They came out in groups and developed later into sores. Being on my face they caused great disfigurement, and were most embarrassing."

"After trying so many remedies without success, I saw the Cuticura Ointment advertised, and I sent for a box. I then applied it to the pimples, and in a week I saw a great change in my face. I kept using it, and in a few months it rendered a complete cure. Now you cannot tell I ever had pimples, thanks to the Cuticura Ointment." (Signed) Miss Mabel Morash, Mar. 31, 1911.

## Baby's Face Like Raw Beef

"My baby boy had a large pimple come on his forehead. It burst and spread all over his face which soon looked like a piece of raw beef, all smothered with bad pimples. It was awful to look at. The poor little thing used to scratch it and cry terribly. I took him to a doctor but he only got worse until I was quite frightened that he would always be disfigured. Then I got two tins of Cuticura Ointment together with Cuticura Soap, and in two months had quite cured him. Now of course I use Cuticura Soap for all my children." (Signed) Mrs. E. Perry, 99, Waterloo Rd., Aldershot, England, May 21, 1910.

Cuticura Soap and Ointment are sold throughout the world, but to those who have suffered much, lost hope and are without faith in any treatment, a liberal sample of each with a 32-p. booklet on the skin and scalp will be mailed free, on application. Address: Potter Drug & Chem. Corp., 29 Columbus Ave., Boston, U. S. A.

"Do you know I ought not to hear your cry for mercy?" asked Lord Wedderburn.

"I realized it, my lord."

"Then go, and remember, if you are ever tempted to do this again, that it is only through my generosity you are allowed to go forth free."

The Italian arose from the ground and moved off. Lord Wedderburn drew the dagger from his coat, where it had penetrated, having barely received a flesh wound, and put the dagger in his coat beside him and put it in his pocket. The man had lost it.

He sat down once more to his thoughts. He felt that the man had gone now, since finding out his mistake. He lay his head on his hands and sobbed. It was his farewell to Dorothy.

When he arrived home he remembered the letter and dagger. He placed it beside him on the table, and admired its keen blade and jeweled handle. It was of foreign make.

He took out the letter, opened it, and read:

"Dear Nephew: I enclose you— pounds, sufficient for your journey to what you do. Remember how much is depending on your steady hand, and we will do as I said, and you must admit it is a very generous offer. Let me hear at once how you have succeeded as promised."

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"How do you do, Boughman?" said Lord Wedderburn, extending his hand. The man looked at him steadily as he gave his hand, but there was not the least sign of recognition.

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