

# POOR DOCUMENT

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**Carol Richmond** THE MAN WITH THE BLACK GLOVE.

THE MAN WITH THE BLACK GLOVE.

Every day that passed served to increase the feeling of mingled dread and hatred which the one bore toward the other, and Lawrence Richmond was fast becoming desperate.

This last demand on the part of the soldier for his daughter served to cap the climax. In spite of his terrible temper and strange actions at times which would seem to belie the fact, this man sincerely loved his child.

She was the only link that bound him to a past that had been full of happiness and sunshine until that dreadful blow came which deprived him of his loved ones except Carol, and left him behind to mope alone in a dreary, unlovely room.

The Captain held his secret, and it must needs be a terrible one to cause a man of Lawrence Richmond's iron will to bow the knee to one whom he looked upon as his inferior. Could it be, then, that this frightful devastation in his household was the visitation of Providence, as a just reward for the crime of the past?

Alone in his library the master of the Terrace paced to and fro like a caged tiger.

His hands were behind him, his head low upon his breast, and his every step quick and agile, showing his irritable, nervous temperament. That he was wrestling with some fearful question could be plainly seen; and there was only one thought that had power enough to chain his mind at present.

So earnestly was he engaged in this strange species of amusement that he did not notice the presence in the room of the Captain, until the latter gave utterance to a low, metallic laugh.

It was a strange thing for him to be hunting down this old man while at the same time he had an avenger on his trail in the shape of his antagonist in the duel—Nora Warner, the wronged wife of Roger Darrel, who had escaped from the mad-house, and was on the trail of vengeance. But it is ever thus with human nature—diamond cut diamond—the world over, and it would be indeed hard to find any object in the shape of mankind so low and insignificant but what there may be some to do him homage and fear the end of his head.

The old man looked up quickly, and the keen-eyed soldier noticed a wild, half-crazy look upon his face that he had never seen there before.

He has settled upon something; I can see it by the glitter of his eyes and the way he shuts his teeth. Have a care, my old gentleman, or you will find your claws nipped still closer, for no man ever plays with fire unless he gets his fingers burnt, and to you I and the secret I hold constitute that fire.

That he muttered, as he waited for Mr. Richmond to speak.

providing for me with a small portion of your immense worldly goods, or else turning the whole of them, your liberty and, perhaps, your life. That you have chosen the former only proves your wisdom.

You hate me, you say. What can I do for you? Had it been another man, duty would have led him taking the other course, and you would have lost all. No; on the contrary, you should thank me. There was always a chance of finding it out, and lightning seldom strikes the same tree twice. I hold your secret, and while you act like a rational being there is no chance of its being discovered by any one else. Dely me, and—well, what is the use of threats? You know me enough to be sure of what I would do.

There was conscious power in the voice of the Captain that was peculiarly aggravating to the old man, but he calmed himself as well as he was able, though his eyes still glittered with that strange, metallic gleam that boded no good to the object of his anger.

I hate you, not so much for what you are doing, man, but because you know I am perfectly innocent of that crime, and yet knowing this you still blackmail me. That is why my brain seems bursting at times, and I could cut your very soul from your body to send to Hades, where it properly belongs.

That is a very nice statement for you to make, dear sir, but how are you going to prove it in any way? Had I, schemer, there more of your cunning crops out. The papers that would exonerate me you have stolen, and hold over my head. To save them from being destroyed and myself from future trouble, I have been buying your silence and consideration in the past, but now your demands are growing too pretentious. For the last time I ask for your mercy, your forbearance. I would not have your blood upon my hands for a great deal, but I feel like a man hunted by a human blood-hound, and who must, unless the dog gives up the chase, either fall himself or destroy the hound. Plainly, Captain Grant, is it your life, or mine?

Then hear me, old man; I utterly refuse to compromise. I have no other means of living at present except on you, and as for reasons of my own, I expect to make America my home in the future, I may as well provide against a rainy day. You have too much, I too little. It is but fair, then, and there should be an equitable division; so make up your mind to that. Lawrence Richmond knew, then, that this man possessed a heart of adamant, and that words would not leave the faintest impression upon it.

His own face whitened, and the skin seemed drawn like parchment over his bones. His teeth were clenched as if set in agony, and the wild gleam deepened in his eyes.

He reached out his hand and it fell upon a peculiar nail in the wainscot, a brass-headed nail which would not have been there had he not been there. His finger pressed against this, a portion of the oiled floor of the library suddenly yawned open, leaving an aperture of perhaps a width of four feet, and into this the Captain would have hurried like a cannon-ball, but for the fact that he saw an agile young girl as the trap fell, that landed him beyond the danger line.

The trap was an old relic of revolutionary days, and possessed quite a thrilling history, but it has nothing to do with our story.

Quickly the Captain whipped out a little, silver-mounted revolver.

Fallen again, old man! You see it is useless to fight against fate, for your limbs are tied. I am ready for any such emergency. Better luck next time; and turning, he left the room.

Cries on his mistress's, the old man, deeply moved, he bears a charmed life. Satan protects his own; but I will yet break asunder the bonds of fate, and then let his beware!

CHAPTER VII. LIKE A WOMAN, SHE WENT. Carol Richmond knew not the deadly warfare existing between her father and the man who wore the mysterious black glove, but she was well aware of the fact that the captain held some power over her parent, else he would have never acted toward her in the way he did.

She was writhed as any girl could be. The days went by without any light coming to her, and yet to her there was little or no difference in them, for when hope and anticipation have utterly fled out of the heart, it makes no difference whether the sun rises or sets, for the same dreary future lies beyond, which cannot be lightened by any earthly means.

In spite of all that had come to her, she loved Roger still.

To her, he had come as a knight in the olden days of chivalry, and he had wooed and won her so gently, that when he had gained her love it was forever. She believed in him so thoroughly that, although he was now apparently lost to her forever, she would hold him in reverence until the day of her death.

any time he could get a divorce from her and had been hoping that all would yet turn out well, while he allowed himself to be carried along by the restless current fate into the climax had come.

Carol looked at the matter in a different light.

To her, divorce was something that she thought of with horror, and yet she knew that the act was sanctioned in the olden times by God, but all her life she had believed that it was not right for either party to marry again during the lifetime of the other.

With such a bleak future stretching out before her, it is not to be wondered at that Carol paid but little heed to affairs passing around her.

She saw that the Captain came home wounded, and it instantly entered her mind that he had been engaged in a duel with her lover. The thought filled her with alarm, and she could not rest until she had seen Roger riding on his horse, and evidently unhurt.

This was witnessed from the shelter of the trees, for she would not have let him see her for the world, after what had passed between them.

When he had gone from her sight, she wandered on, almost unconscious of the direction she had taken, and finally came to a point at the old trysting spot by the brook, where clustered memories that were now sweetly sad to her.

While she stood there, she became conscious of the fact that she was no longer alone, and turning found herself face to face with a stranger. She would have moved away, but there was some strange fascination in his eyes that seemed to bind her there.

A strange shudder passed over her frame, as if her soul recognized in this person one who was destined to be connected with her future.

I did not intend to alarm you, Miss Richmond, but seeing you here, the impulse came to me, and I am here. I would like to speak a few words to you. That I have no wrong intentions in doing so, I will prove by saying that I am talking to you for your own interest. I come to speak to you of your lover.

Carol realized then that she had not been mistaken when, in her heart, she suspected the presence of this man was connected in some way with her whole future.

She summoned up her resolution and stood there bravely.

Whatever you have to say to me, say it at once, and without fear as to the result, for I am prepared to hear anything. You speak bravely, and believe me, I do not wish to inflict needless pain upon you. What I say now may seem cruel to you, but it will save you from a more fearful fate in the future. You believe in your lover—must believe in him, else you could never love him. To you he is, no doubt, a noble, brave, and chivalrous man, but he is not what you think.

CHAPTER VIII. "YOU ARE THE MAN." When the giggy girl, Barbara Merriles, rushed away from the spot where stood the young master of Darrel Chase, she had no idea whether she went, so that for the first time she had been deceived. He had done much for her in the past, and yet it seemed as though she was fated to be the curse of his life. Unintentionally she had stepped into the line of the cause of much trouble to him, and now through her hand had come this last terrible blow.

Her mother, the old grey queen, believing him to be the Roger Darrel who had robbed her of her child, had cursed him and his forever, and it was to this legacy of hate that the young man referred when he spoke about Barbara Merriles and the past, at the time Carol told him what she had discovered.

For quite a time the black-eyed giggy girl ran like a deer through the woods, and at length, finding herself far away from the spot where she had left the other, she came to a pause.

hear. Something arose whereby it was necessary for him to be free from her, and in this dilemma, he proved himself capable of anything. Too cowardly to take her life, even when she begged him to do so—to kill her, in fact, and let her lie dying senseless—too cowardly to do even this, I say, the infamous wretch had her seton and borne away to a mad-house, where for weeks and months she was kept a prisoner, subject to all the horrors of such an institution, gotten up to make people mad first, and then keep them in that condition.

You are speaking of Nora Warner? cried the girl, excitedly.

Yes, I am speaking of Nora Warner, though you came to know of her I cannot conceive, since he would never dare to whisper her name. She remained an inmate of that mad-house, God alone knows how long. It may have been but months, though to her it seemed years. Then she effected her escape. Mad rage filled her heart instead of the idiotic love she had entertained for him; yet she would torture him before she dealt him his death-blow. At last she has found him, after a long chase through Europe, and it may be that in this quiet place the tragedy will be made complete. Look at me, fair girl. I am but a wreck of my former self, but such as I am, you gaze upon Nora Warner!

Carol shrank back as she saw the hat removed and the shower of curls descended upon her. She had never seen the woman who had held the position she had hoped to occupy, and who had often inflamed the torments of the madhouse for love, that handsome devil, who had been her evil genius.

She felt no loathing for her.

On the contrary, it seemed as though some kindly spirit drew them together. Both were victims of man's inhumanity, and the fact knit the bonds of sympathy more firmly.

I have told you all that is necessary now. Understanding that you were about to marry him, I thought if my duty to warn you. Have I done well, or do you blame me, Carol Richmond?

Thank you. Though you have added to the load on my heart, and almost crushed me, yet the fault is not with you. Leave me now please; I would be alone. We will perhaps meet again.

With rare tact the disguised girl saw that poor heartbroken Carol wished to be alone, that she might find solace in tears, and with low, muttered words on her lips against the arch-fiend, Nora Warner withdrew.

What amazement and tremulous joy would have filled Carol's heart could she have known that Nora Warner's words were meant for another than the one she left behind. A wail to the sea sufficient. We will perhaps meet again.

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In her excitement, however, she seemed to forget that she had ruined the happiness of Carol Richmond and the man she loved, by the secret she had passed on to the girl, believing, as she did at that time, that the master of Darrel Chase was to be the husband of the girl, and that she was to be the cause of much trouble to him, and now through her hand had come this last terrible blow.

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