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CHAPTER XXXVI.
 "For God's sake! don't don't take it so coolly, Lord Gaunt!" he said.
 Gaunt was silent for a moment; then he asked, as if his thoughts had taken quite another direction:
 "Did you attend to that matter of Mr. Dean's—discharge his debts?"
 "Yes—yes!" said Mr. Belford, almost impatiently. "We carried out your instructions, my lord, Mr. Dean's liabilities are discharged; provided for, at any rate."
 "Thank you," said Gaunt. "And now, gentlemen, I am at your disposal. I am rather tired—I have not slept much of late."
 The partners conferred in whispers, then Mr. Belford said:
 "Is there any place you could spend the night in—undisturbed, Lord Gaunt? Will you come home with one of us?"
 Gaunt thought for a moment.
 "Thank you very much; but I don't think that would be wise of you. Wouldn't it be rather unprofessional, harboring a criminal? I don't know anything of the law regarding such matters, but I've an idea that you would run the risk of an unpleasantness. No, thanks, I'll go to Morlet's. They know me, and"—he smiled—"will give me shelter for to-night. Tomorrow I will give myself up, after breakfast, if I'm permitted to get through that meal in liberty."
 The partners assented to this.
 "We have got Sir James, Lord Gaunt," said Mr. Belford, "and I need scarcely say that he will do all he can. He is the very best man. By the way, Mr. Borkett appeared against us at the inquest. He was retained by Mr. Mershon."
 Gaunt had heard of the famous Old Bailey barrister. He smiled grimly.
 "I understand," he said.
 "But do you?" demanded Mr. Belford, desperately. "Do you realize the awful position in which you stand, Lord Gaunt?"
 Gaunt got up from the chair and lighted a fresh cigarette.
 "I think so," he said. "At any rate, I know that you will do your best for me, Mr. Belford; and I am grateful. I will go now. You said that Miss Deane was better?"
 "Yes—yes," replied Mr. Belford, impatiently. "We will go with you to the hotel."
 "No; do not," said Gaunt. "You are

better known than I am, and might attract attention; and, candidly, I should like to spend to-night in a comfortable bed, even if I do not sleep. Good-night. Come to me in the morning. If I am arrested before you come, I will send for you."
 He shook hands with them and went, with his light, firm step, down the stairs.
 The two lawyers gaped at each other in blank dismay.
 "I always said that there was madness in the family!" exclaimed Mr. Belford. "He takes it as coolly as if— if it were a case of a month or forty shillings."
 "I don't believe he did it," remarked Mr. Lang.
 "Then who did?" retorted Mr. Belford; and Lang could not answer.
 Gaunt went down into the street. His coolness and soap-froid had been quite free from affectation. Now that Decima was better, it did not in the very least degree matter what became of him. The lamps had been lighted, and the streets of the largest and wealthiest city in the world were wrapped in their usual gloom. That gloom is one of the things which fill the intelligent foreigner, visiting our land for the first time, with amazement and dismay.
 It was rather a long walk from Belford & Lang's office to Morlet's, but Gaunt welcomed it. It gave him time to think. Mr. Dobson, notwithstanding the evidence against Gaunt, had been so assured of his innocence, that he had tried, with flattering eagerness, to dissuade Gaunt from returning to England and giving himself up, but Gaunt had refused to be dissuaded. The Gaunts, whatever their sins, and as a family they were peculiarly rich in this respect, had never lacked courage; and Gaunt had resolved to "face the music."
 He insisted upon Mr. Dobson making for Southampton, and Mr. Dobson had at last, driven to it by entreaties and arguments, consented.
 As to the result of his surrender, Gaunt was perfectly indifferent. He was weary of the game which he label "Life," and though he would have preferred to finish it at some other place than the scaffold, he did not care very much, so that it was finished. He had lost Decima forever, and for him, life with all its possibilities was over.
 Leaving Belford & Lang's office, he walked slowly and thoughtfully toward Morlet's Hotel.
 As he turned the corner by Berry Street, he almost ran against a man who was slouching along the pavement. The man was walking with a peculiar, dragging gait, and had his coat-collar turned up, and his hands thrust in his pockets. For an instant it struck Gaunt that there was something familiar to him in the manner

of the man, and as he Gaunt, muttered "Pardon!" he looked after him. The man made no response, and Gaunt walked on. Presently he heard footsteps behind him.
 "A detective," he said to himself. "I shall not sleep in a comfortable bed to-night, after all," and he walked on. The footsteps behind him grew closer, and Gaunt, almost at the entrance to Morlet's, pulled up short and glanced round. The man who had been following him pulled up as shortly, and the two looked at each other in the light of the street-lamp.
 Gaunt recognized the "shadow," and was the first to speak.
 "Jackson!" he said.
 The man started, hung his head, then raised it, and looked at Gaunt with a dull, vacant intensity.
 "Why, it is you, Jackson!" said Gaunt. "How did you come here? I'm glad to see you."
 Mr. Jackson's lips moved as if he found it difficult to articulate.
 "—I thought it was you, and so— so I followed," he said. "I landed at Portsmouth this morning. I only reached London this afternoon."
 Now, there is no one for whom you feel a keener interest than the man whose life you have saved at the risk of your own; and Gaunt, notwithstanding his natural reserve, felt drawn toward this wait and stray; so he regarded Jackson with a frank smile of welcome.
 "I read of your safe landing at Mogador," he said.
 Jackson nodded, and looked from side to side in an abstracted fashion.
 "Yes; they took us to the Canaries, and the mail brought us back to England."
 "But you wanted to go to Africa," remarked Gaunt.
 Jackson gazed at the leaden London sky, and then at the nearest lamp.
 "Yes, I did; but it didn't matter."
 "Not matter?" said Gaunt.
 He looked at the man more attentively. Jackson seemed thinner, and more attenuated than he had been on board the "Pevensey Castle." His face was white, his eyelids red and swollen, and his bearing and manner those of a man who has been drinking heavily, or is very ill.
 "No," said Jackson, dully; "it didn't matter."
 "Where are you going?" asked Gaunt.
 It seemed to him, that, having saved the man's life, he was in a sense responsible for his future welfare.
 "I don't know," said Jackson, indifferently.
 "You'd better come with me," said Gaunt. "I am going to Morlet's Hotel. They'll be able to find a room for you. I dare say. You look—you look tired."
 "I am wet, and I am tired," said Jackson.
 They went up the highly respectable steps of Morlet's, and the highly respectable Wilkins met them at the door; it is scarcely necessary to say that the highly respectable Wilkins sustained a severe shock at the sight of Lord Gaunt.
 "My—my lord!" he gasped.
 "All right, Wilkins," he said, easily. "I want a room, a couple of rooms, one for my friend here—for to-night only. You're looking well; Wilkins. Can I have my old room?"
 If Lord Gaunt had been ten times the criminal the world believed him to be, Wilkins could not have resisted that smile or the tone which accompanied it. He led the way in a solemn and impressive silence.
 "You'll give us some dinner—anything, Wilkins," said Lord Gaunt as easily as before, and Wilkins, all in a flutter, could only bow, and respond with "Certainly, my lord."
 Gaunt waited until the man, Jackson, had been conducted to his room, then went to his own and washed.
 When he came down, Jackson was standing before the fire, and Gaunt saw, more plainly than he had seen in the street, the wasted and woe-begone countenance of the man he had saved from a watery grave.
 The dinner was served—an admirable dinner considering the shortness of the notice—but neither of the two men could do it justice. Gaunt was thinking of Decima, and the charge that hung over his head, and Jackson also appeared to be overweighted by trouble.
 "A good dinner wasted," said Gaunt, with an attempt at cheerfulness. "There is a reason for my want of appetite, but I don't know of any for yours, Mr. Jackson. Will you have some soume?"
 "No, thanks," said Jackson. "I— I should like some brandy."
 Gaunt signed to Wilkins, and he brought the desired spirit. Jackson drank half a tumbler off.
 "What's the reason you can't enjoy your dinner?" he asked, regarding Gaunt with lack-luster eyes round which were rims as red as if they had been painted.
 Gaunt smiled grimly.
 "Well, I suppose, because it is the last I shall eat in liberty—freedom—for some time," he replied.
 "What do you mean?" demanded Jackson.
 "You know my name?" he asked.
 Jackson nodded.
 "And have you read the papers?"
 "No."
 "Ah," said Gaunt, reluctantly. "If you had, it would have saved me an explanation. I am Edward Bernard Gaunt, and I am charged with the murder of—of my wife at Prince's Mansions."
 (To be continued.)



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