

CAESAR'S COLUMN.

A STORY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

CHAPTER II

My Dear Hercules, I little expected when I wrote you yesterday that twenty-four lines could so completely change my circumstances. Then I was a destitute in the palatial Darwin Hotel, luxuriating in all its magnificence. Now I am hiding in a staid house and trembling for my liberty. But I will tell you all.

Yesterday morning, after I had departed by sample of my wool, and had called upon the assayer of ore, but without finding him, to show him the specimens of our mineral deposits, I returned to the hotel, and there, after obtaining permission from one of the clerks at the "Bureau of Information," I took the elevator train to the great hall. I shall not pause to describe at length the splendor of this wonderful place; it will indeed remain almost among the trees, apparently at great height, but really inclosed by fine steel wire fences, almost invisible to the eye, the great trees fall of the great steel walls. The air thick with birds distinguished by the brightness of their song or the beauty of their plumage. The children, apparently at great height, but really inclosed by fine steel wire fences, almost invisible to the eye, the great trees fall of the great steel walls. The air thick with birds distinguished by the brightness of their song or the beauty of their plumage.

After feasting my eyes for some time upon this charming picture of rural beauty I left the park and entered the city through the outer gate, guarded by sentinels to exclude the ragged and wretched multitude, but who at the same time gave courteous attention to the stream of splendid carriages. I was started by loud cries of "Look out there!" I turned and saw a sight which made my blood run cold. A gray haired, hump backed beggar, clothed in rags, was crossing the street in front of a pair of handsome horses, attached to a magnificent open carriage. The driver, ill looking, slunkily who clad in gorgeous liveries, was holding the lines, and uttered the cry warning but at the same time made no effort to check the rapid speed of his powerful horses. In an instant the beggar was hurled under the hoof of one of the steeds. The slunkily laughed; I was but a few feet distant on the sidewalk and

quick as thought, I had the horses and their heads and pushed them back upon their haunches. At this moment the beggar, who had been under the feet of the horses, crawled out close to the front wheels of the carriage, and the driver, judgment as anything, at once concluded that he should arrest the progress of his magnificent equipage, struck him a savage blow with his whip, as he was struggling to his feet. The whip snapped and he fell, and I, lifting up the horse's head, who were now brought to a standstill, I sprang forward, and as they hesitated, I stepped from the hand of the mercant, and with all my power laid it over him where it touched, the flash brought the blood, and two long, red gashes appeared instantaneously upon his face. He dropped his head and shrieked in terror. Fortunately a crowd had assembled, and these people dressed men had seized the horse heads, or there would have been a runaway. As I raised my hand to lash the brute again, a feminine shriek reached my ears, and I perceived that the crowd were in the open baroque. My sense of justice overcame in an instant my rage, and I stepped back, and taking my hat, began to apologize and explain the cause of the difficulty. As I did so I observed that the occupants of the carriage were two young ladies, both strikingly handsome, but otherwise very unlikable in appearance. The one nearest me had entered the street, was about twenty years of age, I should think, with aquiline features and black eyes and hair, every detail of the face was perfect, but there was a bold, commanding look about the brows of the young man. Her companion instantly attracted all my attention. It seemed to me I had never beheld a more beautiful and striking countenance. She was younger by two or three years than her companion, her complexion was fairer, her long, golden hair neatly braided, and she had a magnificent chin strap. Her eyes were blue and large and set far apart, and there was in them, and in the whole contour of her face, a look of honesty and dignity, and calm intelligence, rarely witnessed in the countenance of woman. She had not appeared to be at all alarmed, and when I told my story of the driver lashing the aged beggar, her face lighted up, and she said, with a look that thrilled me, and in a soft and gentle tone, "We are much obliged to you, sir, you did perfectly right."

It was so touching when I felt someone was taking freely at my coat, and turning round, I was surprised to find that the largest was drawing me away from the carriage by main force. I was astonished also at the change in his appearance. The green patch that I had noticed covering one of his eyes had fallen off, and his black eyes shone with a look of command and power that was in marked contrast to his gray hair, his crumpled back and his

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"I will tell you how it happened," he said, in a hoarse whisper, "I was in a hurry, and you will be arrested and sent to prison." The policeman seized me by the collar. I perceived that at that instant the beggar who lay motionless in his arms, the others had released me, I did open my eyes. The first man I met was the beggar who lay motionless in his arms. He cried me a companion, "There is no time to lose. Hurry, hurry!" He explained for the name of the beggar who lay motionless in his arms. He explained for the name of the beggar who lay motionless in his arms. He explained for the name of the beggar who lay motionless in his arms.

"I followed the direction of his eyes and saw that I still held in my hand the gold mounted whip which I had mistaken for the handle of the driver. In my excitement I had altogether forgotten its existence, but had instinctively held on to it, and I will send it back to the owner," I said.

"No, no, throw it away that is enough to convict you of highway robbery," I started and exclaimed, "Nonsense, highway robbery to whip a horse?" "Yes, you stop the carriage of an aristocrat, you drag a valuable whip out of the hand of the driver, and then you carry it off. That is not highway robbery, what is it? Throw it away!"

"The man was temperate," I dropped the whip and the driver fell into a brown study. I occasionally stole a glance at my strange companion, who with the dress of extreme poverty and the gray hair of old age, had such a manner of authority and such an air of prescience and decision. After about a half hour's ride we stopped at the corner of two streets in front of a plain but respectable looking house. It seemed to be in the older part of the town. My companion paid the driver and dismissed him, and, opening the door, we entered. The man was something more than a beggar. But why this disguise? And who was he?

CHAPTER III THE BEGGAR'S STORY.

The house we entered was furnished with a degree of splendor which furnished an external appearance gave no prophetic promise of the state and into a handsome room, hung round with pictures, and adorned with bookcases. The beggar left me for some time looking at my surroundings, and wondering over the strange course of events which marked my progress. Still more at the actions of my mysterious companion. I felt astonished to find that his eyes were simply a disguise, for he entered the house with all the grace and ease of a gentleman, and in a courteous and pleasant manner, and possessed those subtle tones and intonations which mark those matters when the door opened and a handsome young gentleman, arrayed in the latest fashions, entered the room. I rose to my feet and began to apologize for my intrusion and to explain that I had been brought there by a

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THE SCENE IN THE PARK.

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