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Maddolena's Story

AND The Cameo Bracelet.

CHAPTER XVII

"You did not talk quite so freely, nor were you in such haste, at Madam Y—'s other night," he reminded her.

"That was in the carnival, when I put off my duties with my livery," and she glanced at the sober costume dictated by the baroness. "Now, that I have once more dropped back into my proper place, I must behave accordingly. Will you please give me a message, sir, for my lady?"

Trixie's serious air and respectful tone were contradicted by the mocking smile that played around her mouth, and Sir Charles was in no hurry to let her go.

"First tell me by which of your many names I am to address you."

"By which?" and she seemed to meditate. "Well, a young Englishman who lunched here yesterday, addressed me in this style: 'Will you pass me a glass of water?' He did not add, 'Young woman,' but he implied it, so you adopt his mode of address, if you like. It is curt and expressive, and very well adapted for a nobody."

As she finished speaking the door opened, and Bessie, who had been sent by the baroness to know why her companion stayed so long, came into the room.

The arch fun died out of Trixie's face, and she looked shame-stricken and confused as those mild yet reproving eyes rested upon her; and even the haughty, careless baroness, who bared his head to no one, and was fond of defying opinion, felt somewhat embarrassed when this young girl appeared. Her presence reminded him that it was not a trifle with the pretty incognito that he came here, but to ask an interview with Lady Camilla Severn ere he started for England, where he had important business.

"The veiled woman of the Colosseum! At last I have found you!"

Trixie and Bessie exchanged uneasy glances. Hitherto they had concealed from every one the little they knew, led to this partly by Maddolena's assurances that Antonio would be ruined if the marchese ever discovered that he had betrayed him, and partly by more selfish considerations. To be forced to appear in an Italian court of justice, and there, in the face of a curious throng, to tell a story that would involve so much that was discreditable to Lady Camilla, would be an ordeal they were too womanly not to shrink from with a feeling akin to horror.

"I am right am I not?" Sir Charles demanded, when he found that neither of them answered him. "It is to one or both of you that I owe a warning."



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kindly meant, I dare say, but not as effectual as it might have been. It is true that my life was spared, but that of a better, braver man was sacrificed, although you, it appears, knew his danger. Was this well done?"

Trixie shivered slightly at the sternness with which he spoke. This was a countercharge for which she was not prepared; but warned by Bessie in a whisper that Madam Caspares was asking for her, she was forced to go and leave her defense in the hands of her friend. Yet she went reluctantly, for the nature of Bessie's interest in Sir Charles was a riddle she had no means of solving.

"Your friend," he said, as Trixie disappeared, "confesses herself in the wrong by running away."

"She leaves us because Madam Caspares asks for her," was all Bessie said in reply.

"Will you, then, tell me how it is that you neither made an effort to save Colonel Severn nor have denounced his murderer?"

"We are not the avengers of blood, Sir Charles Ormsby, nor were we to blame for what happened that night. By the merest chance we learned the danger that menaced you, and hurried to the Colosseum to endeavor to avert it. How far we succeeded you know. We had scarcely found you when the shot was fired."

"Thanks for this explanation, but it only proves that you knew it would be fired. Will you now tell me by whom?"

"I cannot," she said, promptly.

"Or will not? Pardon me if I seem to press my questions rudely, but a good and unoffending man has been cruelly assassinated, and his murderer is still at large."

Bessie bowed assent.

"You know his name?"

"Indeed, I do not," was the reply.

"And yet you had learned that the crime was committed. You were even aware of the place, and time fixed upon for committing it. Is it possible that you knew this much and no more? Why were you considered in at all?"

"I have already told you, sir, that it was by the merest accident we learned what was occurring," Bessie reminded him.

"But the name of him who did the deed—the name? You keep that back!"

"Because I am ignorant of it. I only know by whom it was—perhaps unwittingly—instigated."

"Go on!" said Sir Charles, laying his hand on her arm. A vision of the dying colonel was floating before him, and his blood burned to take vengeance on the coward who shot him down unaware. "If it is as I suspect—and he thought of the darkly distorted face he had seen in the bric-a-brac shop—the rank of the offender shall not save him!"

But Bessie drew away the arm he had grasped, saying, coldly:

"You mistake me, sir. I spoke of no man, for I have a fancy—I may say a conviction—that this crime was really and truly caused by a woman, whose vanity led her to madden a weak-headed mortal until he was blind to everything but the promptings of his revenge."

"No man can be blind to the foul sin of murder, and the weakness of his head does not excuse him for it. Be he prince or peasant, he shall not escape me. Once again, young lady, I conjure you not to let any false notions of compassion induce you to conceal what you know. If you will not speak, I shall consider it my duty to inform Lady Camilla that there are two young persons residing in this house who are privy to the affair,

and in the confidence of her husband's assassins."

But Bessie heard this unmoved, merely bowing her head in silence; and Sir Charles, chafing at her obstinacy, asked if she thought Madam Caspares would approve of the course she was taking.

"I do not suppose, sir, that you will mention it to her—at all events, until you have consulted Lady Camilla."

Sir Charles bit his lip.

"How dare she be so confident that Camilla would shrink from any further exposure of the events that led to her husband's death?"

"Of course, I shall not do anything without her ladyship's sanction," he said, haughtily. "I only hope that her generous anxiety not to injure you will not induce her to hesitate to follow the advice I shall give her. By what name shall I mention you?"

Bessie's soft eyes suddenly began to gleam with an angry light.

"I call myself Bessie Mordaunt. The name may be quite a strange one in your ears, Sir Charles Ormsby, and yet—"

She checked herself; but the baronet, with chilling courtesy, bade her proceed.

"The name of Mordaunt is, as you observe, strange to me; neither do I remember to have seen you before. If I have, perhaps, you will kindly refresh my memory."

"And remind you of events that neither redound to your credit nor Sir George Ormsby's?"

The young baronet flushed, and drew himself up, steadily searching the while the pale face of his accuser.

"What was there in her features that stirred some vague recollection of their having at some time or other met his gaze before?"

"I have not the least idea of what you are alluding to," he answered, at last. "I shall be glad of an explanation; but I must beg you to spare me any further remarks respecting the father whom I loved and respected."

Bessie's access of angry feeling was already passing away; and when he said this, she hastened to apologize.

"I beg your pardon, Sir Charles; my reference to the past was as ill-timed as it was cruel. We have met once or twice," and his accents grew hurried and tremulous as she made the avowal, "but it was long—long ago. And how could I expect you to remember one whom everybody else has forgotten?"

Although she hurried toward the door as she spoke, he could see that tears were now streaming down her cheeks; and, in pity for her agitation, he made no further effort to detain her, though what she had just been saying was very perplexing.

Telling Maddolena to apprise the baroness that her nephew was waiting to see her, Bessie ran upstairs to bathe her face and compose herself ere she made her own appearance in the salon; but in the corridor she found Trixie.

"Well," she queried, throwing her arms around Bessie, and looking eagerly into her tearful eyes, "what has passed since I left you? You have seen him—talked to him, but what did he say? Did he speak of me, or did you renew old associations, and talk only of yourselves?"

Bessie unwound the clinging arms, and thrust them away.

"In every one wrapped in self!" she asked, half wearily. "Could I think of your foolish penchant for this man, whose good looks and gift tongue fascinate you, when my heart was sore with his saddest memories? I have vexed—offended, when I ought to have conciliated him. And now you know all."

(To be continued.)

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PAYING FOR NOTHING.

I had a letter from Old Doc Tetter, in which he said, 'I cured your glanders and your yaller jaunders, and you're still owing me. The only I'm needing, my wife is pleading for things we've not in stock; get busy, sonny, and send the money, and pay the good old doc.' Much pain enduring, in hope of curing, I called Doc Tetter in; he gave me notions in bitter roots, and pills which were a human critter could drink and still be sane; and oh, my masters, his mustard plasters increased my dole and pain. He filled my body with boneset, fody and all the drugs in town; his noxious mixtures! Their tastes are fixtures I never shall live down. He filled my tummy with nostrum rummy, soft soap and liquid yeast; and when he finished no pain diminished, but all my grief increased. It was when he held his bill when he can banish the flu that, Spanish, or other beastly bilious. The doc who fizzes, where amputees should ask no punk or wheel; what good is healing that bits the ceiling and roundly falls to heel? If Old Doc Tetter had made me better, I'd greet with smiles his bill, and pay it gayly, and bless him daily, and take another pill.

Home Remedies of Our Ancestors

Almost every man and woman in America can remember the botanical recipes of our mothers and grandmothers for the treatment of disease, and they were wonderfully dependable too. Every fall there were stored away in the attic, thoroughwort, pennyroyal, catnip, sage, wormwood, rue, etc., for treating the flu of the family during the winter months that followed. In 1878, Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound was first prepared from one of these botanical recipes, and the demand for it has increased to such an extent that hundreds of tons of roots and herbs are now used annually in its preparation. It has recently been proved that 98 out of every 100 women who try it, have been benefited by its use, which is a marvelous record for any medicine to hold.

Just Folks.

By EDGAR A GUEST

FRIENDSHIP

Friendship is never cheap! Time cannot buy it. Pure gold, it wears! The changing seasons, the public fancy and the fashion's treasuries, Nations and boundaries and banners Dim not its lustre. Men and manners, Nations and boundaries and banners May alter, but true friendship, never! Its firm foundation stands forever.

Progress may wreck the palace guard- ed, Customs once fair may be discarded; Change in the monarch's opinions, The old pass out of Thought's dominions, But friendship stays. Though Time be cruel, Friendship is still life's brightest jewel.

Hate cannot kill nor caution frown it; Men cannot live their lives without it.

Time may destroy what now we cherish, Even the truths we teach may perish As men the will of God read clearer; And to his purposes draw nearer; But though our thoughts and manners vary, Friendship shall still be necessary. Men's true devotion to each other.

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SIDE TALKS.

By Ruth Cameron.

I'M GOING TO STRIKE.

I have made a New Year's resolution. I am going to be in fashion. Strikes of every kind are the rage nowadays and I am not going to be left behind. I am going to strike.

And the thing I am going to strike for is this. I demand of life the chance to see more of the people I really like. I am tired of having so much of my intercourse with people determined by chance circumstances, who are on this committee, who goes to that party, who lives next door, who goes to my church.

One of the Few Things Worth While.

Friendship is one of the biggest joys in life and I am somehow going to find more time to devote to friends. Don't you want to strike with me? Surely you too have found yourself kindling and alive and eager in some group of real friends, the kind of folks to stimulate you to be your best self, the kind of folks to whom you have a hundred things to say and of whom you want to ask a hundred questions. Surely you too have found the happy time together all too short and have wondered why, when it means so much more than most of the things you spend your time on, you don't somehow manage to have more of these contacts.

Just Snatches.

I spent a scant couple of hours with a group of old friends the other day. It was a happy time but I came away rebellious. I hadn't asked about half the things I wanted to. We had talked 200 words to the minute (sometimes all four of us at once) but it had all been just snatches. There were so many things we couldn't even touch on. I wanted to ask Thomas if she

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Same style in Button; good quality1.30 pair
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