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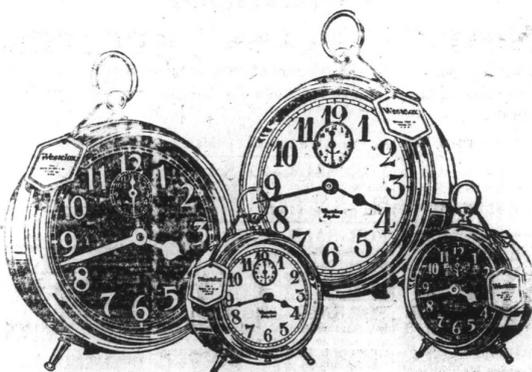
A QUEEN UNCROWNED

—OR—
THE STORY IN THE LONE INN.

CHAPTER XIII.

There is but one step—a very short one—between love and hatred. In all these years of crime, and daring and darkest guilt, the memory of his lost child—his little bright-eyed, sunny-faced Lella—had ever lain warm and fair near his heart; the only fair spot, perhaps, in all that dark nature. He had thought, all along, that her mother had taken her with her in her guilty flight, but he knew little of the revenge Grizzle Howlet was capable of. He never dreamed of doubting her story for a moment—he felt it to be true, every word; and in that instant all his love for the little bright-faced child was swept away, like a whiff of down in the blast; and hatred of the darling, imperious young girl, who had conquered him, took its place. He felt that she despised and looked down upon him, her father, although she knew it not; and a savage, demoniacal longing to drag her down to his own level, filled all his thoughts.

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"You believe me?" she said.
"Yes; I think you are telling me the truth. I feel that that girl is my daughter!"

"She is. Word for word what I have said is true—true as Gospel. Jacquetta De Vere is your child!"

"The gods be praised for that! The day of retribution is at hand!"

"What are you going to do?" said Grizzle, half-anxiously.

He sat down, resumed his former attitude before the fire, with that evil smile still on his face.

"You will see! But first have you accomplished your revenge?"

"No!" cried Grizzle, fiercely dashing her hand on the mantel—"no; that I have not! Until Jack De Vere lies despised and trodden on in the dust under my feet, my revenge will never be satisfied!"

"What has she done to you, to make you hate her so?" said the captain, serenely.

"Done what I will never forgive, if I were dying!" almost screamed the woman, her lion passions slipping their leashes for a moment. "I hated her, first, for her mother's sake—for her father's sake. I hated her as a child; for she never could endure me, even when I was kindest to her. I hated her as a girl, for her jibes and taunts. I hate her as a woman, for her scornful pride and haughty disdain; and hate her I will, to my dying day. What are you going to do, now that you have found out she is your daughter?"

"Claim her, to be sure! Think of a father's love, and all the rest of it, and you will perceive it is the only course," said the captain, with a laugh.

"Exactly. But how will you prove your claim?"

"You will come with me, my dear. When you and I lay our heads together, we can work wonders."

"We will, in this case. But have you no curiosity to hear how she ever came to live in Fontelle at all, or to assume their name?"

"A great deal. But you have a disagreeable way of only answering questions when you like; so I did not care for getting a rebuttal."

"Then listen to the sequel. I hope you will find it quite as interesting as the first volume, and it will show you what a woman can do when she seeks revenge, and it will clear up a certain little mystery that has puzzled more than one resident in Fontelle Hall. Have you ever been told that strange sounds were sometimes heard in the old north wing of that building?"

"Of course. Push ahead."

"I rather fancy they have startled a certain young gentleman resident there at present. And that reminds

me, you have no particular love for him either. Have you?"

"No, by Heaven!" said the captain, with an oath. "He struck me once; and that is an insult that only his heart's blood can wipe out!"

"I think you can pierce his heart in an easier and safer way, and in fact kill half a dozen birds with one stone. If he is not in love with Miss Jacquetta De Vere, then I know nothing of the tender passion; and, being as proud as Lucifer, he will be in a sweet frame of mind when he finds out who she is. Besides, he is engaged to another young lady. Guess who?"

"How the fool dead can I guess or what do I care?"

"A great deal, if you knew but all. The lady's name is Miss Norma Macdonald."

"Macdonald!"

"Yes," said Grizzle, with a smile, "her mother's name, I believe, was Mrs. Lella Tempest, if you feel any interest in knowing it."

The captain gave a long, wailing whistle, and fell back in his seat.

"He is engaged to marry her, and is in love with your daughter; and our pretty Jacquetta is in love with him. Oh! It is the sweetest kettle of fish, all through, that ever you heard of."

"And it will be a deathblow to Don Monsieur Signor Moustache Whiskers and to find out he is in love with old Nick Tempest's daughter. I see," said the blind man. "Toi de roi, de roi, de roi!" sang the captain, delighted.

"Preserve your transports, my dear friend," said Grizzle, dryly. "Time enough for them when you stand face to face with the future lord of Gullford and Earncliffe. Remember, too, that, though the old spaw-wife of Worcestershire prophesied that 'a life would be lost betwixt ye,' she did not say which was to lose it. So Captain Nick Tempest had better take a fool's advice, and not halloo before he is out of the woods!"

"I don't fear him. Let him do his worst. Oh, this is revenge indeed! The bullet will put them all to death—this come-by-chance of Lella's as well as the rest."

"Don't be too sure—he will marry her."

"But, you say, he loves Jacquetta."

"So he does, but loving does not always imply marriage. I had hoped for a different end to the story, but this daughter of yours is made of more sterling stuff than her, and is not to be had for the asking. No; the Honourable Alfred De Vere Disbrow will never marry her! He wouldn't if he could, and couldn't if he would."

"Two very good reasons. I should like to see this daughter of Lella's."

A queer laugh broke from Grizzle's lips. Captain Tempest looked at her in surprise.

"Eh?"

"Do you really think you have never seen Miss Norma Macdonald?"

"Well, I can't say. I may have done so without knowing it, while knocking about this jolly old world."

"Ah, just so!" said Grizzle, carelessly, poking the fire. "By the way, Captain Tempest, where is that little Spaniard you brought over with you the other day?"

"Now you are off on another tack. What the demon makes you ask after him?"

"Oh, nothing! I felt curious to know—that's all."

"Well, he's at Fontelle, if I don't mistake. I winged him that evening I met my dutiful daughter, in mistake for our young English friend—poor little devil! I felt sorry for it, too, for I really liked the little coddler."

"And so they took him to Fontelle—hem!" said Grizzle, with a musing smile.

"There!—never mind him!—push along! I want to hear about Jacquetta!" said Captain Nick, impatiently.

"Well, all these things are so merged into one another, that it is difficult to separate them. I will try, however. I need not remind you that Jacquetta was six years old when her mother made her moonlight flitting."

"I am not likely to forget it. Go on."

"Well, she lived with me until she was thirteen years of age; and I took good care to impress on her memory the fact of her mother's disgrace, and—if you will believe it—child as she was, she felt it keenly. Of her father, I never told her anything. I left that for the gentleman himself."

(To be continued.)

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THE SHOE MEN.

SIDE TALKS.

By Ruth Cameron.

ON DISTRUSTING APPEARANCES.

"I've just had a lesson to my daughter that I hope she will never forget," said my neighbor's son. "I accepted my neighbor's offer willingly. My neighbor really has something to say when she asks for the floor. 'What was it?' I tried to make her realize that should be and she and Evelyn got it

into their heads that Francis took it.

"Would She Steal?"

"As soon as I found out, of course I put it up to Jane that she has known Francis for years and that she knows she is a square, nice, little girl, and that her people are nice people, and that she wouldn't be any more likely to take the money than she would herself."

"Jane admitted all that but she said Francis had the box and no one else could have taken it and she knew Francis must have done it, and wasn't really a nice little girl like she seemed."

Someone Got Too Much Change.

"Well, this morning they found out what had happened. Someone had made the wrong change and fortunately the customer who got the extra change discovered it and let them know. And that explained the whole

thing. Jane was awfully ashamed. But except for poor Francis, I'm not at all sorry it happened. I think it's made a big impression on Jane at a plastic age. I think it will make her quicker to trust character and distrust appearances all her life. And I think that's a good thing to learn young, don't you?"

I admitted that I most certainly did. Or perhaps I should say asserted rather than admitted. That has always been one of my hobbies, for I've seen so much injustice done the other way.

Of course character does sometimes fail us. We find we didn't really know the person after all, or that he has changed (if people ever really do change). But ten times as often, I think it is appearances that were deceitful and not our reading of character.

And all this applies to things people say as well as to what they do.

Distrust Your Ears if Necessary.
Someone said something to me the other day which seemed very unkind and uncalled for and unlike the person who said it. Later, by sheer chance, I realized that she had been referring to something quite different from what I supposed and that her meaning was totally different. And then I reproached myself for not knowing at once that there must have been some misunderstanding.

Misunderstandings of all sorts can happen so easily that it is worthwhile to be always ready to give character the benefit of the doubt. Of course if offenses continue you might have to reverse your decision. But isn't that a good place to apply the principle of the suspended sentence?

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