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LUCY GRAHAM'S SECRET

The birds had sung so much all the morning, that they had, perhaps, by this time grown tired; the lazy cattle were asleep in the meadows; Sir Michael was still away on his morning's ramble; Miss Alicia had scampered off an hour before on her chestnut mare; the servants were all at dinner in the back part of the house; and my lady had strolled, book in hand, into the shadowy lime-walk; so the gray old building had never worn a more peaceful aspect than on that bright afternoon when George Talboys walked across the lawn to ring a sonorous peal at the sturdy, iron-bound oak door.

The servant who answered his summons told him that Sir Michael was out, and my lady walking in the lime tree avenue.

He looked a little disappointed at this intelligence, and muttered something about wishing to see my lady; or going to look or my lady (the servant did not clearly distinguish his words), strode away from the door without leaving either card or message for the family.

It was full an hour and a half after this when Lady Audley returned to the house, not coming from the lime-walk but from exactly the opposite direction, carrying her open book in her hand and singing as she came. Alicia had just dismounted from her mare, and stood in the low-arched doorway, with her great Newfoundland dog by her side.

The dog, which had never licked my lady, showed his teeth with a suppressed growl.

"Send that horrible animal away, Alicia," Lady Audley said, impatiently. "The brute knows that I am frightened of him and takes advantage of my terror. And yet they call the creature generous and noble-hearted! Bah, Cease! I hate you, and you hate me; and if you meet me in the dark in some narrow passage you would fly at my throat and strangle me, wouldn't you?"

My lady, safely sheltered behind her step-daughter, shook her yellow curls at the angry animal and defied him maliciously.

"Do you know, Lady Audley, that Mr. Talboys, the young widower, has been here asking for Sir Michael and you?"

Lucy Aldley lifted her pencilled eyebrows. "I thought they were coming to dinner," she said. "Surely we shall have enough of them then."

She had a heap of wild autumn flowers in the skirt of her muslin dress. She had come through the fields at the back of the Court, gathering the hedge-row blossoms in her way. She ran lightly up the broad staircase to her own rooms. George's glove lay on her boudoir table. Lady Audley rung the bell violently, and it was answered by Phoebe Marks. "Take that litter away," she said, sharply. The girl collected the glove and a few withered flowers and torn papers lying on the table into her apron.

"What have you been doing all this morning?" asked my lady. "Not wasting your time, I hope?"

"No, my lady, I have been altering the blue dress. It is rather dark on this side of the house, so I took it up to my own room, and worked at the window."

The girl was leaving the room as

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THE GUARDIAN OFFICE

she spoke, but she turned around and looked at Lady Audley as if waiting for further orders.

Lucy looked up at the same moment, and the eyes of the two women met.

"Phoebe Marks," said my lady, throwing herself into an easy-chair, and trifling with the wild flowers in her lap, "you are a good, industrious girl, and while I live and am prosperous, you shall never want a firm friend or a twenty-pound note."

CHAPTER X. MISSING

When Robert Audley awoke he was surprised to see the fishing-rod lying on the bank, the line trailing idly in the water, and the float bobbing harmlessly up and down in the afternoon sunshine. The young barister was a long time stretching his arms and legs in various directions to convince himself, by means of such exercise, that he still retained the proper use of those members.

Then, with a mighty effort, he contrived to rise from the grass, and having deliberately folded his railway rug into a convenient shape for carrying over his shoulder, he strolled away to look for George Talboys.

Once or twice he gave a sleepy shout, scarcely loud enough to scare the birds in the branches above his head, or the trout in the stream at his feet; but receiving no answer, grew tired of the exertion, and dawdled on, yawning as he went, and still looking for George Talboys.

By-and-by he took out his watch, and was surprised to find that it was a quarter past four.

"Why, the selfish beggar must have gone home to his dinner!" he muttered, reflectively; "and yet that isn't much like him, for he seldom remembers even his meals unless I jog his memory."

Even a good appetite and the knowledge that his dinner would very likely suffer by this delay, could not quicken Mr. Robert Audley's constitutional dawdle, and by the time he strolled in at the front door of the Sun, the clocks were striking five. He so fully expected to find George Talboys waiting for him in the little sitting-room, that the absence of that gentleman seemed to give the apartment a dreary look, and Robert groaned aloud.

"This is lively!" he said. "A cold dinner, and nobody to eat it with!"

The landlord of the Sun came him self to apologize for his ruined dishes.

"As fine a pair of ducks, Mr. Audley, as ever you clapped eyes on, but burnt up to a cinder, along of being kept hot."

"Never mind the ducks," Robert said impatiently; "where's Mr. Talboys?"

"He ain't been in, sir, since you went out together this morning."

"What!" cried Robert. "Why, in heaven's name, what has the man done with himself?"

He walked to the window and looked out upon the broad, white high road. There was a wagon laden with trusses of hay crawling slowly past, the lazy horses and the lazy waggoner drooping their heads with a weary stoop under the afternoon's sunshine. There was a flock of sheep straggling about the road, with a dog running himself into a fever in the endeavor to keep them decently together. There were some bricklayers just released from work—a tinker mending some kettles by the roadside; there was a dog-cart dashing down the road, carrying the master of the Audley hounds to his seven o'clock dinner; there were a dozen common village sights and sounds that mixed themselves up into a cheerful bustle and confusion; but there was no George Talboys.

"Of all the extraordinary things that ever happened to me in the whole course of my life," said Mr. Robert Audley, "this is the most marvellous!"

The landlord still in attendance, opened his eyes as Robert made this remark. What could there be extraordinary in the simple fact of a gentleman being late for his dinner?

"I shall go and look for him," said Robert, snatching up his hat and walked straight out of the house.

(To be continued.)

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JOURNAL OF REV.

HENRY GORDON

CARTWRIGHT, LABRADOR

(Continued.)

Sunday, Feb. 2nd.

The problem solved, no one did sleep! The crowd lay about the floor someone keeping a big fire going all night. After breakfast, I left the wedding party to get all preparations made for the evening, while I went off up the bay to visit a lonely family. My host, Jim Russel, kindly offered to take me up. On returning to Barnes' Cove, we found the crowd considerably swelled by the arrival of reinforcements from Georges' Cove. I was very pleased with the reverence displayed at the service. It was very late in the night before everybody was fed and the things cleared away. Bigger heaps than ever were now strewn about the floor, and in consequence, a bigger heat.

Monday, Feb. 3rd.

Turned out early, feeling very weary and sleepy. Snowing and blowing outside, but as my good host was putting his team at my disposal, I decided to make a start. I rode with Will Russel. The going was worse than ever, but we managed to crawl along. Reached Gilberts Neck about 11.30. Mrs. Burden had saved a duck for us, which was a valuable gift indeed. One of the boys had caught a silver fox in our absence. Tommy was due to leave me here, but he and Will offered to come on with me as far as Caplin Bay, for which I was very grateful. It was very dirty and wetting as we left the neck about noon. Crossing St. Michael's Bay, there were times when you could not see the leading dogs in the komatik. Neither of the boys were pilots but they had all the pluck in the world, and as things turned out later, I realised that we had crossed the bay on faith and slob! Fortunately we made a good landfall on the farther side, and thus were able to reach the New York tilt about dusk. Had a good feed, and turned in early. All hands wet through.

Tuesday, Feb. 4th.

Left tilt about 8.0, still blowing and drifting. The going was as bad as it could be, especially on Cape Bluff Pond. Soaked through soon after starting. Reached Otter Bay at 3.0, where we found Billy Murphy the mail-man, hung up through bad weather, ever since Sunday. Even-song, 7.30.

Wednesday, Feb. 5th.

Blowing and snowing as hard as ever. My two boys were as game as ever, so we made a start after breakfast. Old Turk was limping a good deal, as a result of a bad bite during the night. Soon after leaving Otter Bay, the weather grew sudden by much worse, and we soon found that we were all astray. After a good deal of wandering about, we struck out on to Squasho Run, above American Point. From here we steered blindly across the run until we found open water ahead. Sheering away from this we managed to make the shores of Hawkes' Island. A long and weary muddle across the island brought us at last to Tom Turnbull's house. Wet through once again. Even-song, 7.30.

Thursday, Feb. 6th.

Left Hawkes' Harbour about 10.30, and drove rather slowly to Caplin Bay. Here my companions left me and set off on their return journey home. In the settlement everything was going ahead for the wedding, which was the cause of my visit. Oh! how I hate these affairs. The usual tea-drinking and dancing ensued.

Friday, Feb. 7th.

Almost entire population of Caplin Bay were crawling wearily home from the dancing as I started North

(Continued on page 3.)

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The attention of Owners and Masters of British Ships is called to the 74th Section of the "Merchant Shipping Act, 1894."

75.—(1) A Ship belonging to a British Subject shall hoist the proper national colors—

(a) on a signal made to her by one of His Majesty's ships, including any vessel under the command of an officer of His Majesty's navy or full pay, and

(b) on entering or leaving any foreign port and

(c) if of fifty tons gross tonnage or upwards, on entering or leaving any British Port.

(2) If default is made on board any ship in complying with this section the master of the ship shall for each offence be liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds.

At time of war it is necessary for every British Ship to hoist the colours and heave to if signalled by a British Warship; if a vessel hoists no colours and runs away, it is liable to be fired upon.

H. W. LeMESSURIER,
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