

Why, in his experience as a New York reporter he had once stood face to face with a murderer—a little blue-eyed, soft-faced woman—and had sworn in his heart never to trust one of her kind again. And this is how he has kept that vow. She has led him on and laughed at him, and from first to last was Durand's wife. She has looked up with those truthful eyes, and lied in his face. In the first hours of his passion he could understand how men killed such women; but that is all past now. He has learned his lesson, and learned it well. He will think the worse of all women for the sake of this one: Intense, pitiless anger fills him. He would not lift a finger, it seems to him, to save her from death.

The Hindoos, who leave the female children to perish in the Ganges, have something to say on this side of the question, after all. If a few thousand of the surplus female children born into the world every year were made into one grand suttee, mankind and morality would profit.

The editor of the *Phoenix* goes to business in a temper eminently suited to tackle his enemy of the *Herald*, and rout him with immense slaughter.

Mr. O'Sullivan looks up from work to greet his chief with the office news of the last few days. He also adds an item not office news.

"Here's a queer caper of Durand's," he says. "May I never, if he hasn't eloped!"

"Eloped?"

"With himself, faith," says O'Sullivan, with a grin. "Peters was at the station this morning at six—he expected a parcel from the conductor—and who does he see jumping aboard but our friend Robert the Devil. He was out all night—gambling, you may take your oath. Faith, it's one of the honourable professions of blacklegs he is, or I'm mistaken in him. That's the end of the captivating Leonce, and its many's the dry eye he leaves behind him!"

Longworth passes on, seats himself at his desk, and peruses with lowering brow yesterday's leader in the *Herald*. Then he draws a sheet of paper before him, dips his pen viciously in the inkstand, and is fairly immersed in his congenial task, when a tap at the door interrupts him.

"Oh, come in, and he hanged to you!"

"Sure, it's not me, chief," says the deprecating tones of his second; "it's one of Mrs. Windsor's women. She's below, and she wants ye."

"What does she want? Send her here."

Catherine enters, her face pale, her eyes excited.

"Oh, Mr. Longworth, please, sir, such a dreadful thing! Missus is almost murdered, and we don't none of us know what to do. Miss Reine don't seem like herself, and she sent me here."

"Miss Reine sent you here?"

"No, sir; Mrs. Windsor. Robbers broke in last night and took away all her money—hundreds and hundreds of pounds—and gave her chloroform, and nearly killed her? The doctor's there, and he says her nerves are dreadful. She sent me here for you at once. And please do come, sir, for we don't none of us know what to do."

Longworth listens in silent concern. He has often warned Mrs. Windsor against her habit of keeping large sums of money in the house; but Baymouth is honestly disposed, burglaries are rare, and she has not heeded. That she has been robbed at last does not greatly astonish him. It has only been a question of time.

"I will go immediately," he answers; "run in and tell Mrs. Windsor so. But I am afraid there is nothing I can do."

Still, he knows, with the usual inconsequence of women, his very presence will be a relief and reassurance. Robbed! Who can be the robber? Someone who knows her habit and knows the house. No stranger has done the deed.

He reaches the house, and is conducted to Mrs. Windsor's room. He expects to find Reine in attendance; but the invalid is alone. She lies among her pillows as white as they, a terrified look in her usually calm cold eyes. Evidently the shock has been very great.

"My dear Mrs Windsor," Longworth says, taking a seat by the bedside and the hand she gives him, "I am very sorry for this. You are looking dreadful. Why, you are in a fever! How has all this happened?"

"Laurence," Mrs. Windsor says, in a