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# THROUGH THE DARK SHADOWS

Or The Sunlight of Love

CHAPTER XXV.

Lord Barminster conducted Mr. Harker to the Octagon room, so-named from its peculiar shape. "If you will wait here," he said courteously, "I will have some refreshment sent up to you and the ladies, when they arrive."

"Thank you, my lord," returned Mr. Harker gratefully.

Seating himself, he waited patiently for the arrival of Miss Lester and Jessica, secretly congratulating himself on the success of his interview. The time passed quickly; and, while waiting, Lord Barminster and Mortimer Shelton held a hurried consultation with him as to the best method of exposing Vermont. Long before they had finished, Miss Lester and her niece had arrived, the former flushed with excitement and triumph at the prospect of at last, as she expressed it, "getting her own back," with Jasper.

Lord Barminster and Shelton descended to the terrace, where they found Lady Constance; and almost immediately after, came Adrien, with his inevitable companion, Jasper Vermont.

Lord Barminster had already arranged for his three visitors to be in the morning-room, which opened on to the terrace, as they would there be within call, and, also within earshot.

"A word with you, Mr. Vermont," began Shelton sternly.

Jasper smiled, as usual, and turned towards him.

"As many as you like, Mr. Shelton," he said smoothly.

Mortimer looked at him steadily; then he said in a voice which was hard as steel:

"Mr. Vermont, Lord Barminster has kindly allowed me to speak first. We have every reason to believe that you have had some connection with this affair of Harker's, notwithstanding your profession of friendship for Adrien."

Mr. Vermont drew himself up proudly.

"?" he said indignantly. "What should I have to do with money-lending?"

"Be careful, said Shelton sternly, "there are not people wanting who will fight for Leroy's honor, even as it were their own."

Vermont smiled cynically.

"Indeed, Shelton," he said, "it is hardly for you to speak. After all, it was you who nearly ruined Adrien by your denial of the bill, not I."

Lord Barminster strode forward.

"You cowardly rascal," he exclaimed furiously; but Mortimer placed himself between them.

"My lord," he said, "leave him to me. If force is necessary, I will punish him."

Jasper smiled.

"You wrong me, Shelton," he said gently; "and not only me, but Adrien,



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Note: Another prominent Physician to whom the above article was submitted, said: "Bon-Opto is a very remarkable remedy. Its constituent ingredients are well known to eminent eye specialists and widely prescribed by them. The manufacturer guarantees it to strengthen eyesight 50 per cent in one week's time in many instances or refund the money. It can be obtained from any good druggist and is one of the very few preparations I feel should be kept on hand for regular use in almost every family." The Valmar Drug Co. Store 4, Toronto, will fill your orders if your druggist cannot.

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"One minute," he said, "before you sneak away."

"Keep your hands off me, you monied fool," cried Vermont, wrenching himself free from the other's grasp. "I know nothing about this City business, you must apply to Harker himself. It is your name that is forged, not mine—though I suppose you want to screen the real criminal and fix on me as a scape-goat."

Shelton was about to retort, but Adrien intervened.

"Tell me one thing," he said quietly. "What has been your motive for all this? I cannot believe that gain was your sole object. What harm have I ever wrought you, Jasper? Something else must have inspired your conduct. I ask you to give me the reason."

There was a dead silence as the gentle words were spoken. Jasper raised his eyes to the pale face of the man he had so basely betrayed, and bit his bloodless lips in dogged silence.

At this moment a commotion was heard at the lower end of the terrace. Some of the servants were trying to prevent the approach of a man, who was striving to get nearer to the little group. But he was too strong for them; with a bound he had freed himself from their restraining arms, and sprang forward, as if about to strike at Adrien. But Shelton thrust himself forward and bore him back.

"Who is this? Are we to have all the scum of the earth in here? Do you know this man, Leroy?" he asked hotly.

"Yes, I do," answered his friend in the low, restraining tones so habitual to him.

"Yes, I should just think you do!" exclaimed the man, struggling to push past Mortimer's outstretched arm. "It isn't likely as you'll forget Johann Wilfer, Adrien Leroy, nor me you either."

"This is too much!" cried Shelton, now thoroughly enraged at this fresh interruption, and again he made as if to thrust the man away.

"Stop," said Adrien, glancing almost sadly at Constance, who smiled lovingly back. "Let him speak, since he is here. Come, sir, why have you forced your way in like this? What do you want of me?"

(To be continued).

There will no doubt be a good demand for rhubarb this Spring, after the Winter's shortage of fruit; it should pay to force a portion of the stalk by setting an old nail keg or crate over the roots.