



CHAPTER XVI.

MISsing!

When Edna Deane glanced into the room at the Hopedale Hotel where the marriage ceremony between the man she loved and the woman who had so cruelly deceived her was taking place, one member only of the coterie there had caught sight of her white, stricken face.

Lured on by the deit manipulation of Dr. Simms and Beatrice Mercer, Raymond Marshall had agreed to solace the dying moments of the girl who had saved his father from financial ruin and disgrace by weding her.

The bridegroom of a few brief hours, desirous to remember her fortune, whether he so elected or not, too crushed over his grief to care what became of her, went through the form of a mere mockery of marriage, and spoke the words that signalized the culmination of the scheming siren's deit plot.

It was just at the commencement of the ceremony that he chanced to glance at the half-open door connecting with the adjoining apartment.

The others did not see, the others did not mark, the vivid start, the quick pallor, the gasping breath, as he stared before him as if he had seen a writh.

"Edna!" he panted; and then, feeling that it was a delusion of the senses, reproachful, haunting visitation from the woman the memory of whose love could never sanctify even a marriage of necessity and pity, he tottered through the doorway into the next room.

"Edna!"

His voice rang out less vaguely now. It was no writh—not trick of the senses. She was at the threshold of that hall door now. Her face flashed plainly, unmistakably, across his vision.

"It is she—alive!" he gasped. "Oh, can it be true?"

Madly he rushed for the corridor. The shock of the perfect recognition, however, had blinded, confused him. She had disappeared, and in his excitement he ran the wrong way, lost not in inex- tricable side passages of the hotel, and reached its street exit two minutes behind the flying fugitive.

A lunge at the door told an excited story of the fleeting form, and indicated the direction in which it had dis- appeared.

Not stopping to analyze his vivid emotions nor the strange situation in which his acquiescence to the pleadings of Beatrice had placed him, Raymond Marshall thought only of the dead come back to life with a great, feverish joy and wonder.

Vainly, however, he scoured the vi- cinity. Edna Deane had come like a phantom and had disappeared like a flash.

Jaded, perplexed, an hour later Raymond Marshall started back for the hotel.

His brow was black with suspicion, his keenest sensibilities aroused to the fever-pitch of anxiety and suspense.

Edna was alive—he was satisfied on that point. As he looked back over the events of the past hour, and realized how he had allowed his despair and sympathy to lead him into a net, he realized, too, that it might all be part of a plot. The newspaper item was a falsehood! The siren had again deluded him, and now—he was chained to her. Her illusory simulation or reality, she was his legally wedded wife. The thought that Edna knew and understood all that drove him frantic. Hot with hate and excitement, he regained the room at the hotel. He would have an understanding with Beatrice! She should, at least, tell him the truth about Edna and the mystery of her absence and re-appearance.

He paused as he reached the parlor of the suite. A glance into the next apartment rooted him to the spot. His father, the false nurse, the strange minister had departed, but there yet lingered Doctor Simms, and there, too, no longer the incubant, white-faced dying bride, but in all her usual regal boldness of beauty, sat Beatrice, con- versing animatedly with her tool and colleague in plotting, her cousin, the doctor.

"Marshall has probably gone home," the latter was saying, "but I cannot account for his strange abrupt departure. We will not think of that, however, Beatrice. Your scheme has succeeded, you are his wife."

"Yes," cried Beatrice, triumphantly, "my fondest hopes have succeeded."

"We had better, therefore, hasten our arrangements at once. As I understand it, you are to be removed to my home."

"Still posing as the dying invalid, yes," asserted the crafty Beatrice. "However little Raymond Marshall may care for me, he will call daily to inquire for me. His sympathy will cause him to do that. He will see me gradually recover. When he finds he has married a well woman instead of a dying one he will accept the situation, and my love will win him to forget Edna, and he will never know the plot we have played against him."

"He knows it now!"

The two schemers started back in dismay. A towering monument of wrath, their victim suddenly sprang into view, fierce denunciation he thrust the abashed doctor aside. In righteous indignation he told the appalled Be- atrice that she was unmasks, the full measure of her iniquity known.

He almost cursed her in the bitterness of his rage. He told her that if he had to the uttermost parts of the world her claim upon him as a husband should be the merest mockery of formality, and then unheeding her frantic appeals of love, he dashed from the room, not even deigning to reveal to her that he had seen Edna Deane, that he knew her to be alive, realizing that any appeal to her to tell him truly what she knew of the poor persecuted child of destiny would not bring a truthful response from her false lips.

That night, bated, distracted, crushed, she lay, soft and lonely for the man she loved—in his home, in the village. She could not forget him. So near to suc- cess, and careless babbling had lost her the precious prize.

"I shall return home," she told him with anxious, haggard face, finally. "At the first trace you secure of him write or telegraph me. You got the marriage certificate from the clergy- man?"

he learned that Edna was alive, if old Mr. Ralston asserted that she was an impostor, what then?

Darker and fiercer glowed the basilisk eyes; more somber and tragic grew the sinister face. She dared not let Edna go free; it meant ultimate disaster to all her hopes and plans.

She proceeded finally, to another room. In one corner of it was a large cabinet. Unlocking and opening its doors, she revealed row after row of phials and bottles, evidently the medicine use by the invalid Ralston.

A large bottle, bearing the label "chloroform," attracted her attention, and she took it up, thoughtfully.

"Not yet," he stammered, "but I will. You see, the village clergyman was away, and I had to arrange with a strange minister who lives in another town. I will attend to it. Oh, you will win Raymond Marshall to your side yet."

"Life is torture else," sighed the disappointed Beatrice. And that night she started back for the home where luxury and wealth were a hollow mockery, with her scheme for Raymond Marshall's love a failure.

Had she remained one day longer at Hopedale she would have seen Raymond Marshall, for he returned twenty-four hours after her departure.

If he was pale, worn, jaded before, he was a mere shadow of his former handsome self now. He had sought vainly everywhere for a trace of Edna Deane.

Back at the starting-point of his investigation, ere he went to his home, he visited the hotel. He questioned the landlord about "Miss Leslie," and inquired particularly about a mysterious visitor on the day of the marriage.

"I remember now," spoke the landlord, after listening to Marshall's story. "There was a strange woman here. She sat in the ladies' parlor, but she disappeared mysteriously. However, we found a mere shadow of the sachet there the next morning."

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Judged by Their Hair.

A hotel maid claims to be able to read the sex of a person by the hair as anybody else can by her eyes, nose, mouth or other features.

I start out in my reading of a woman by her hair, with the quite generally known and accepted principle that the finer the hair the gentler the birth, or the better, higher grade the family stock from which she came, and having thus determined whether she is of gentle or rude birth, I rely upon the amount of care which her hair shows to have had in order to obtain the key to her mode of life. The closer the ends of her hair cling together when unaffected by an artificial force, the more intellectually does the owner possess. When the ends, and particularly the body of the hair show a tendency to curl it is an inherent grace and poetic ease of the body.

The straighter and less yielding, though not necessarily harsh, the hair, the firmer and more positive is the woman's nature. Treachery and jealousy hide beneath lusterless or dead-black hair nine times out of ten. Feminine hair that may appear of the finest texture and be glossy almost to brilliancy when viewed at a little distance, but that on close examination is found to have a broken or split appearance—something quite common in ladies' hair—may be depended on to a certainty as indicating a badly unbalanced character, a woman with an excess of especially queer notions.

The lighter colored the hair the more sensitive and "touchy" the owner, except in rare cases, where her ladyship enjoys perfect health. Brown hair, whatever the shade is, is always the most pleasant and satisfactory shade of hair to have to do with across the hotel counter, and that's the place to find out a woman's nature.

Serving a Writ.

Fifty years ago a bailiff who ventured to serve a writ on an Irish gentleman was pretty sure of a warm reception. Many unfortunates were forced to eat the document, others were beaten almost to a jelly.

Mr. W., a "Sunday man"—one who could take his walks abroad only on Sunday, for fear of the too pressing attentions of bailiffs during the week—was "served" by one of those ingenuous individuals in the following manner:

On morning, standing at his study window, he beheld two policemen dragging a drunken man up the avenue. Mr. W. was a magistrate, and he supposed the "peelers" were bringing the man to him, so that he should sign the warrant. Accordingly he despatched the prisoner to be brought in, which was done.

"Did this man do any harm?" he asked.

"He broke a publican's window, sir, and was offering to fight every man into the bargain."

"Bad!" muttered the magistrate, preparing to sign the warrant; "I will go hard with him, I fear."

"Ah, then your honor," he broke in the prisoner in a whining voice, "I'm a poor man lookin' for a place, an' I've a fine character here from my old master. Read it, sir; it will show I'm an honest man."

And as the innocent J. P. took the paper offered, the bailiff who, it is almost needless to state was as sober as the Judge, exclaimed in quite a different tone, "Now you're served, sir. And—"turning to the astonished policeman—"I demand protection from you."

A Reliable Superstition.

Several men were talking of superstitions so common among all classes of people. As a matter of course, one of the things touched upon was the supposedly fatal number thirteen. An old colored man who happened to be within hearing distance felt moved to remark:

"I wants to tell you men not to make fun o' dat thirteen bus'ness. I ain't superstitious, but I tell you don't eat at no table whar dar's thirteen. I done do dat, and I hope to die if pretty near every one of dem ain't dead and buried."

His hearers expressed surprise at his remarkable statement and asked for particulars.

"Well, some of dem got killed and one thing an' another, and some jest natchly died. But they is pretty near all gone to-day."

"How long ago did this thirteen at table incident occur?"

"Now, lemme see. Been about thirty years since the war, ain't it? Well, I spees it must a happened fifteen or twenty years before the war broke out. But it makes me feel about as uneasy as though it was only yesterday. I spees I'll be the next most any day."

Days of Dueling.

To another gentleman one day the same individual said:

"Sir, you smell like a goat."

A challenge to fight was the inevitable consequence, but said Sam'l Foix asked: "To what purpose? If you kill you won't smel any better, and if I kill you, you'll smell a great deal worse."

The argument did not appeal to the insulted gentleman, and he insisted upon the duel, out of which, how ver, he only came second best—Gripsack.

A BLOOD-BEET measuring fifteen feet in length, fourteen inches in circumference and weighing four pounds, is a curiosity of St. Tammany, La.

FAVORS AN OPEN FAIR.

DR. H. W. THOMAS DISCUSSES THE SUBJECT.

The Eminent Chicago Preacher Gives Reasons Why the World's Fair Should Not Be Closed on the First Day of the Week.

Saves It's Not Sinful.

There is to be a combined effort on the part of those who favor an open Fair to have the Sunday-closing clause of the law repealed.

The appropriation repealed. Strong influences are to be brought to bear, and, according to Washington advises, it seems altogether probable that a majority of Congress will yield to the pressure of the anti-closing people.

Some of the churches have now declared in favor of opening the gates seven days in the week. Among the most prominent clergymen who have thus expressed themselves is Dr. H. W. Thomas, of Chicago. In a recent sermon touching on this subject he said:

Imperfection as may be present the social order, the church, the family, the nation, and the world are far in advance of the first century. But almost every step of the progress has been made at a sacrifice, and dogged conservatism, Royalty and ecclesiasticism have resisted liberty and democracy; the new truths of education and of science have been resisted at every step; and in the fierce battles radicalism has sometimes been destructive.

In our most intelligent and liberal age there is no greater sin than to be conservative, and the church and state are separated, ultra-conservatism has lost the power to enforce its demands. It can only ugly the world, and alienate the people.

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It is a school of the Sabbath Union.

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The chief interest in the session of the North Dakota Legislature centers in the contest for a successor to United States Senator Casy. The Republicans have a clear majority, and the result hinges on the decision of the party caucus.

Lively Session at Lincoln.

An attempt to organize the Nebraska Senate began with a ballot for temporary secretary and resulted in a strict party vote: Republicans, 14; Populists, 14; and Democrats, 5. The Senate then adjourned till 3 p. m. When Secretary of State Allen reached Knox County in the roll-call he called "Ches' Norton," the Republican. There was at once a protest from the Populists and Democrats, but the protest was overridden and the roll-call proceeded, although the Populists refused to answer to their names. At the afternoon session the House organized permanently, elected James N. Gaffin (Ind.) Speaker and Eric Johnson (Ind.) Clerk, the Democrats voting with the Republicans.

Gov. McKinley's Message.

Gov. McKinley, in his annual message to the Legislature, reviews the financial condition of the State, which shows a deficiency in the funds amounting to \$69,888.32. He says the revenues of the present year will not justify the sum of the appropriations made for the preceding year.

He advises that economy be practiced, and that appropriations be kept within the estimated amount of revenue. He recommends that the voice of the people be heeded in the demands made for reform in municipal government.

Critics Chosen Speaker.

The Thirty-eighth General Assembly of the State of Illinois completed its permanent organization and is now in session. Some preliminary motions were made, and then, on motion of Free P. Morris, Clayton E. Crafts, of Cook County, was placed in nomination for permanent Speaker on behalf of the Democrats. Edgar C. Hawley, of Kane, was named for the Republicans. Mr. Crafts was elected.

Stockbridge Is Leading.

According to a dispatch the Senatorial question absorbed all the interest in the Michigan Legislature, which was called to order at Lansing. The Stockbridge and the Luce factions are hard

to distinguish, but the former is the more numerous, and thus the Stockbridge class could not do better than to go and mingle freely and kindly with the people, as guides and teachers to explain the great works of the Sabbath Union.

It is a school of the Sabbath Union, but the Sabbath is to be used for the service of God, and not for the service of man. It is to be used for the command to rest on the Sabbath day, not for the command to work.

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