

The Yellow Holly

By FERGUS HUME.

Author of "The Mystery of a Hansom Cab," Etc.

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SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—George Brendon, a young Londoner, visits his friend, Leonard Train, who has lodgings in the boarding house kept by Mrs. Jersey. Among the boarders is an elderly woman, Lola, who is wearing a yellow holly brooch. II.—George, whose real name is Vane, tells Train the story of his life. He is an orphan and the grandson of Lord Derrington, but the latter refuses to recognize the marriage of George's father (Lord Derrington's son). In his youth, Brendon desires to establish his position as Lord Derrington's heir in order to marry Dorothy Ward. The place of marriage of George's parents is known only to Mrs. Jersey, formerly maid to George's mother. III.—George, after his birth, and his father had been murdered in San Remo, Italy, years before. III.—In the night Mrs. Jersey is killed with a stiletto by an unknown person. IV.—Miss Bull takes charge of the house in behalf of Margery, niece of the murdered Mrs. Jersey. V.—Mrs. Ward, a heartless society woman, mother of Dorothy, is opposed to Dorothy's marriage to Brendon. The yellow holly had been given to Dorothy by her mother and by the girl to George. VI.—George, before he left, tells him of his mother's marriage and death and his father's murder. The latter was killed after leaving a masked ball in company with a woman—a blue domino—who wore a sprig of yellow holly. VII.—Doris, a sweet, affectionate girl known to have been left by Mrs. Jersey, visits Miss Bull and learns that the dead woman received an annuity from Lord Derrington. George saves a Mr. Bawdsey from death and learns that the latter lives in the Jersey house.

She sat down, or rather flung herself into the chair, with a whirl of scarlet draperies. "Decidedly I am a Christian. I go to mass, I confess—yes, I confess to the priest how I love you."

"Do you really love me, Lola? I was told that you wished me harm."

She started from her chair with a passionate gesture.

"Who says it is liars of the worst! Tell me who speak, that I may tear and scratch."

"No, no! I don't want a scandal."

"For her sakes, oh, yes!" She subsided sulkily. "I am nothing."

"For whose sake?" asked Brendon, rather alarmed, for he did not wish this tigress to know about Dorothy.

"The other woman's. Oh, yes, there is some one else. I know. You are mine all, and would be—but for the other woman. Imbecile that I am to think of you who kick me hard—hard. And I can learn nothing—noting. If I did—if I knew, I—" She stopped and breathed hard.

"I wonder you don't have me watched," said George, thoroughly angry at her unreasonable attitude. Lola tossed her head and her expression changed to one of alarm. Brendon saw the change and guessed its meaning. "You did have me watched."

"And what if I did?" she demanded defiantly. "You are mine."

"I am not yours," he retorted angrily. "I have given you no cause to think that you would marry you."

Lola burst into tears. "You took me from the stones and snows," she wept with extravagant grief. "Why did I not die? You fed me with foods and made me shine in this London. You won my heart and then—then—pschutt!" she snapped her fingers—"you toss it aside."

"Why did you have me watched?" asked George sternly.

"I want to know of the other woman," she replied sullenly.

"There is no—" He broke off. "It has nothing to do with you."

Lola sprang to her feet with fierce eyes. "Then there is another—another—oh, you cruel! Name of names, but I shall find her. I shall tell her!"

"You shall tell her nothing—you shall not see her."

"But I will. Eh, yes. You do not know me." This with a stamp.

"I know you cannot behave decently, Lola. If you have me watched again, if you dare to—to—bah!" George stamped in his turn. "I have had enough of this. Behave, or I go and will not return."

She flung herself at his feet with a wail. "Ah, but no," she sobbed. "I do love you so dearly—I will die if you love me not."

George drew himself roughly away, and taking her by the hands placed her in a chair, where she hid her face and sobbed. "Who was it you got to watch me—you hired to watch me?" George advisedly used the word "hired," as he thought she might have engaged one of her friends to do the dirty work instead of engaging a professional. Yet he knew she was quite capable of going to a private detective office.

"I shall not tell you," said Lola, sitting up with a hard expression on her mouth and in her eyes.

"Did you pay him much?" asked Brendon dexterously.

"I paid him what I chose," retorted Lola, falling into the trap.

"Ah! Then it was a professional detective you engaged. You have been to one of those inquiry offices."

"That is my business," said Lola, who, seeing she had made a slip, became more obstinate than ever.

George shrugged his shoulders. He was not going to argue with her. Remembering that Bawdsey had mentioned her name, and that Bawdsey appeared to know all about himself, he began to put two and two together. Certainly he might be wrong, and Bawdsey might have nothing to do with the matter. Still it was worth while trying to startle Lola into a confession by the use of his name. His rescue of Bawdsey hinted that the long arm of coincidence might be at work.

"I should have thought that the red

was murdered at San Remo was my father?"

"Yes, and that it was difficult about the marriage."

"That also. He appears to know the whole story. And he mentioned Lord Derrington. That is how he comes to be acquainted with these facts. A spy—Derrington is employing him. And the man is boarding in Amelia square." George struck his hands together. "By Jove, it's a conspiracy, and I never knew anything."

"I do not wish you to have the marriage right, George," said Lola, with a pout. "If you are as what you are, then you will marry me. She will not be madame."

"Did Bawdsey tell you the name of the lady?"

"No. But he will tell. But she is a well born one, and I am of the gutter. But I love you—ah, yes, I love you!" She threw her arms round him. "Be still Brendon, and not moril, and I am yours."

"No, no!" George took her arms from his neck and spoke more soberly. "Lola, hold your tongue about what you have told me, and I'll see you again. If you speak, I see you no more."

"I will be silent," she said as Brendon put on his coat. "But you are cruel, wicked. You shall never be moril, never!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WASHINGTON LETTER.

Political and General Gossip of the National Capital.

The House Committee on Merchant Marine has about completed a bill on ship subsidies which it says stands some show of getting a hearing after Congress re-assembles.

"I'll believe nothing if you will not tell me the truth," said Brendon, a little cruelly. "Come, Lola, admit that you paid Bawdsey to watch me."

"I did not pay—no, not one sou. He paid for it, love."

"Oh, indeed!" So Bawdsey is in love with you?"

Lola threw back her head defiantly. "Yes, he is, and I care not one, two, three little trifles for him. Chup! He is old—he is red—he is one big fool, that I can twist and twist!"

"And you apparently have done so. Well, then, Lola, did you get him from a private inquiry office?"

"No, I did not so. He loved me, and sent me flowers—oh, many, many flowers—those roses." She pointed to a silver dish-filled with roses. He has flowers from a friend in San Remo."

Brendon sat up with an eager look in his eyes. So Bawdsey knew some one in San Remo. Brendon began to think that there was some meaning in all these things and paled Lola with questions. She was sulky at first and would not answer. But Brendon knew how to manage her, and before the conclusion of the conversation he got the whole truth out of her.

"So Bawdsey knows San Remo, and he is fifty or over fifty years of age. H'm! He knows all the history of the place, I suppose."

"I know not—nothing do I know."

"Ah, that's a pity! Bawdsey could tell you some nice tales." He fixed a keen glance on her. "About some yellow holly, for instance."

Lola winced, for the shot had gone home. But she still held to her declaration of ignorance. "I know nothing—absolutely."

"But apparently this man knows a great deal. He is in love with you and must have told you much. Did he inform you of a certain murder which took place at San Remo?"

"Ah, bah! Why should he? I knew of all already."

"You! How did you know?"

"My father and my mothers, they lived in San Remo when—oh, they did tell me all of that Englishman."

"Did they know who murdered him?" asked George, marveling at this unexpected discovery.

"No. No one know anything."

"Was there no suspicion?"

"Not one suspicions. I know nothing," she repeated doggedly.

"It strikes me that you do. How did you and Bawdsey come to be talking of this matter?"

"We did not talk." Lola looked down at her foot as she told the lie and moved it restlessly.

George rose and took up his hat. Throwing his coat over his arm, he moved toward the door. "Good night, mademoiselle."

She sprang to her feet and flew after him. "No, no!" she cried in lively alarm. "You must not go, my dearest dear!"

"What is the use of my stopping when you will not show your gratitude toward me by telling the truth?"

"I will tell! I will tell! Sit down. The coat—you shall not go. I will say all. Ask what you will. Sit, my little cabbage—a wine in the glass—ah, yes—and a cigarette. Come, good. Am I mademoiselle?"

"No," said George, smiling on her pleading face. "You are my friend Lola now that you are sensible."

"Ah, only friend!" she said sadly.

"But I speak. Yes?"

George began at once to question her lest the yielding mood should pass away. "You made the acquaintance of Bawdsey at the hall?"

Lola nodded. "He loved me; he sent me flowers. I learn that he looks after people, and I made him watch you. I told him your name."

"Did he know my name?" asked Brendon quickly.

"He knew everything—oh, yes—all!"

Brendon was taken aback. "All—all?" he asked, amazed.

"Why?" Lola twirled her fingers—all what you would not tell to me, my dear. That your name is Vane, and moril!"

"Derrington! Did Bawdsey mention Lord Derrington?"

"Yes, Oh, many times he speaks of moril. I speak of San Remo. This Bawdsey ask me of the blue domino—or the holly!"

"Of the murder, in fact."

"It is quite so, my friend. Of the murder of your father."

"What?" George started from his seat. "Did he know that the man who

Domingo, and that the Monroe Doctrine is woefully distorted when it not only excludes European powers from a territorial foothold in this hemisphere but makes the United States the policeman to keep the little South American states in order. Senator Morgan's position in that this country should stop where the Monroe Doctrine has been supposed to stop since it was first enunciated, and leave the European powers to deal with their subjects' financial interests in South America and the West Indies by process of international law. The little states are prone enough to borrow at any rate of interest the lenders choose to demand. Under ordinary circumstances their borrowing power would be limited by their own credit. The people who loaned them money would know the risk they ran and charge a commensurate rate of interest. But if the United States undertakes to act as bill collector, the small republics will have practically the credit of this government behind them and foreigners will be much more ready to lend their money, knowing that this government will see it repaid. Senator Morgan and his colleagues do not believe that this is a good position for the government to place itself in, and there will be a lot of very bitter criticism of the whole of the government's Santo Domingo policy as soon as the treaty is sent to the Senate.

†††

Gen. Davis, chairman of the board of consulting engineers of the Panama Canal, has just left Washington for Brussels where he will meet the other consulting engineers and sign the report of the board on the sea level canal project to which the engineers committed themselves while in session in this country. There is little question that the report will be signed just as prepared in Washington and its contents will be officially announced some time in January.

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This won't last always, and "the early bird," etc. Parties going to Cuba every month. If you want to know more, see me, or write.

Rensselaer, Ind. E. J. WILCOX.

†††

The Philippine Federal Party has come out with a manifesto. Just where the party got its authority to speak for the islands is not only home rule of a sort that would almost satisfy even Ireland, but it would like five representatives in Congress. There are a lot of other provisions in the manifesto, all of more or less academic interest. But the only one that looks like a concession to the United States at all is that the President of the United States shall retain the veto power over measures passed by the Philippine House of Representatives. The manifesto doubtless will be presented to Congress. There is always someone found who is willing to introduce anything in Congress up to a subsidy bill for flying machines. But it is doubtful if the manifesto will have any material effect on the government beyond swelling the revenues to the extent of the postage that was necessary to bring it here.

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