

A·WATCHER
of the
SKIES



GUSTAVE·F·MERTINS

A WATCHER OF THE SKIES



“He began to play softly.”

A WATCHER OF THE SKIES

BY

GUSTAVE FREDERICK MERTINS

Author of "The Storm Signal," "The Dregs and the Froth," etc.



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TO
MY WIFE

A WATCHER OF THE SKIES

CHAPTER ONE

A WELL-FILLED pocket-book lay upon the pavement close to the injured man's side. It was also temptingly near to Policeman Tierney's knee as he made a superficial examination of the man's injuries. Quickly, and as though by inadvertence, the officer covered it with his knee and continued his examination.

"How's the chauffeur?" he asked of Policeman Flinn.

"I've rung an ambulance," replied that official. "The chauffeur's got a busted leg."

Policeman Tierney rose slowly, concealing the pocket-book in his hand. He stood a moment looking down at the quiet, crumpled figure of the young man dressed in evening clothes, lying beside a pillar of the elevated road on Sixth Avenue.

"These here swells always lights on their curls," he remarked to his brother officer and

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to the gathered crowd. Then waving his night-stick as the sound of an ambulance gong reached his ears, he called loudly: "Clear out of there! Here she comes! Open up for the ding-dong!"

The crowd parted and, as he advanced to meet the vehicle, he transferred the pocket-book to the tail of his coat.

In a few minutes, the injured man had been taken away, the broken machine had been pushed closer to the pillar from which it had swerved after striking, and the crowd had begun to dwindle. A quarter of an hour passed and then half an hour. Many of the shops had closed, and the pedestrians were fewer. Above, the elevated trains rattled and clanged northward with their heavy loads, and southward again with cars that were almost empty. Policemen Flinn and Tierney met at the end of the beat.

"It's a quiet night," said Flinn.

"Sure!" replied the other. "There's not much doin'."

"We might drop around to Steinberg's," suggested Flinn.

"I'm thinkin' the same," said Tierney.

"And see how prosp'rous was the gent what had the recent misfortune," continued

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Flinn, gazing squarely into his partner's eye.

Tierney hesitated for a moment and then smiled. As his features relaxed, Flinn also smiled in return.

“ ’Twas but a bit of a souvenir to remind me that speeders must invariably be pulled and fined,” laughed Tierney. “ ’Tis a dangerous business in more ways than one.”

Together they made their way around the corner and, after proceeding some distance, turned up an alley-way. They paused for Tierney to push a button concealed in a wall and then continued onward, coming at last to a door.

When they entered the room, they found it vacant, but the wet rings on the tables and the presence of much tobacco-smoke indicated that it had but a few moments before been occupied by a number of men. A bartender entered and fastened the outer door.

“Chase in the suds and make ’em tall!” ordered Flinn. “An’ then you can wall us out from the joint! We want to whisper!”

For some minutes they sat drinking, and then Tierney drew out the pocket-book and placed it on the table before them. The bills amounted to four hundred dollars, and

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there was a little silver. They divided it, each placing his portion in his pocket. Then Tierney drew some papers from the pocket-book. Most of them were receipts, and he consigned them to the fire. They were all made out in the same name. Then he drew out some cards.

"Mr. Arthur Travers Henley," he read in a low tone. He also tossed these into the fire and then carefully burned the pocket-book, turning it with a poker until it was entirely consumed. Returning to the table, he lifted his glass.

"Here's hopin' he cracked his nut," he said in a low, but earnest voice.

Officer Flinn did not raise his glass. He bowed his head and his face was thoughtful.

"Do you know," he said at last, "I seen that name in a paper to-night. I think he run away with some millionaire's daughter or something."

"Wall, I'm thinkin' she's a bit of a widder this night," replied Tierney. And rising to his feet, "An' I'm thinkin' too that Flinn and Tierney are due to be marchin'."

They opened the door and walked slowly along through the dark alley-way until they reached the spot where the button was con-

cealed in the wall. Tierney pressed it but once, holding his finger against it for some moments.

Back in the rear of the saloon men arose to again enter the little room there to make more rings upon the tables with wet steins and to fill the air with more tobacco-smoke, but up on Sixth Avenue Officer Tierney from one side of the street, and Officer Flinn from the other, noticed that men from the garage where the automobile was owned had come with another machine and were hauling the injured one away.

CHAPTER TWO

MORNING had broken upon New York gray and cold, with an easterly wind so full of moisture that the streets were wet as though from rain. Policeman Tierney stood on a street-corner waiting for a north-bound car. He was stiff and tired from his night's work, and consequently in a very bad humor. There had been a blockade somewhere down town and his car was late. This added to his ill-humor. Far up the street he heard the clack of a horse's feet upon the rough pavement, and saw that a cab was approaching rapidly.

"I'll just shoot that," was his thought. And then he remembered that he was not in uniform and, besides this, he would have to go back to the station. The cab whirled by and he saw that its occupant was a young man with a bandaged head. Suddenly the man looked out of the window and then leaned forward and tapped on the glass. The cab halted, turned slowly, and approached the

sidewalk where Tierney was standing. The man with the bandaged head motioned to him and he came up to the window and looked in.

"You are an officer on lower Sixth Avenue, are you not?" asked the young man. Tierney started, and then recovered his composure.

"Wall! What of it?" he growled.

The young man took a fifty cent piece from his vest pocket.

"I was looking directly at your face when the machine skidded and struck," he said. "You are the last person I saw and I remember you distinctly. I fell almost at your feet, and I was holding my pocket-book in my hand preparatory to paying the chauffeur, for I was in a great hurry. Here is my last cent on earth," he said, and he dropped the money into the officer's hand. The cab started off.

"You missed that," called back the young man, "and I don't want to be handicapped with it. I want to start out clean."

Tierney hurled the coin after the cab with an oath. A news-boy saw the movement and heard the coin strike the pavement. He ran out and picking it up, fled, turning now and then to yell tauntingly at the officer.

Henley leaned wearily back in the cab. His head was throbbing with pain and his left

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hand, which was also bandaged and resting in a cloth suspended from his neck, pained him greatly.

The cab finally halted at the door of his hotel. He entered and approached the desk. The clerk looked up and hastily arose.

"Mr. Henley!" he exclaimed. "We have been——"

"Pay my cabman, please," said Henley abruptly as he turned away and started toward the elevator.

"But Mrs. Henley is not here," called the clerk. "She left about two o'clock this morning." He handed Henley a key. "There is a letter," he said. "It is addressed to Mrs. Henley at her home address. She instructed that it be delivered to you if you should come in this morning, otherwise it was to be posted at ten o'clock. They have been very much worried."

Henley paused irresolutely, his heart beating rapidly. A flush had overspread his haggard face.

"I was injured last night in an automobile smash," he said. "I have been in a hospital all night, unconscious from the injuries I received and from some drug administered to me. I had no papers in my pockets by which

I might be identified and I regained consciousness less than an hour ago. I will go to my rooms and—" pausing a moment—"I do not care to be disturbed."

Reaching his apartment, he let himself in, and closing the door, leaned weakly against it. It was the parlor. The door of the bedroom was half opened and he stood looking through it. It was all silent, but through the closed windows he could hear the faint sounds of the car-gongs from a neighboring street. Slowly he walked into the bedroom. The bed had not been disturbed. Her trunk was gone; the flowers were gone. There was nothing. And then, suddenly, he remembered the letter in his hand, and raising it, tore the edge with his teeth. He shook the envelope from it and spread it out before him on a table. There was but one line written, and there was no signature. It was all that she had left. A few words meaning a thousand things.

"I thank you for the shelter of your name," he read.

Henley had met with but little adversity in life. The ways had been smoothed for him by the efforts of others and, in a modest way, he had had only to choose what he would, and

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it had come to him. The last two weeks—the last night—had held more than all the rest of his life, and a tangle of fortune and misfortune had suddenly bound and fairly crushed him. He crossed the room falteringly and sat down in an arm-chair, facing the window. His thoughts flew rapidly. A night in Paris came back to him in memory; a night when he stood before a great crowd in a public hall playing his violin as few but he could play. He was playing at a charity benefit given for those of his less fortunate compatriots who had wandered there with high hopes and had stranded. Painters, musicians, girls who had fancied that they could sing—failures all, and penniless.

He remembered a face, a strong, friendly hand-clasp, and a compliment to his playing, smilingly given. His swift thoughts flew to another and fresher scene. He closed his eyes, and it was as though he lived it all again. He could see her hands clinging tightly to the edge of the boat as they rose to great heights on the crests of waves and then sank as deeply into the troughs, strangling, choking, and gasping, but clinging desperately through the storm. He remembered how afraid he had been, how hopeless the clinging and fighting

had seemed, and then, in memory, he heard her voice. She shook back her hair and, though her lips were pale from the cold, her eyes were brave and smiling.

"My foot touched a rock," she said. "We are blowing in somewhere, and if it were not for this heavy rain, we might be able to see."

They had landed on a small and uninhabited island, living there for four days and subsisting on berries and such small fish as they could capture. Then they had been found by fishermen and rescued. Quickly there had followed the return to New York, the exaggerated story in the papers, cruelly head-lined and flippantly told, with references to "Robinson Crusoe" and the adventures of "The Swiss Family Robinson."

After this had come the summons to the Van Ness home. He thought now of Mrs. Catherine Van Ness, prim, proud, and haughty, sitting stiffly, as she recounted to him the virtues of that ancient and honorable family.

"I think," she had said at last, "that it would be quite the proper thing for you to arrange an elopement with Miss Van Ness. It is all very unfortunate. The newspapers are entirely to blame, but the situation is before us and, being a gentleman, as my daugh-

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ter informs me, you can have no hesitancy in taking up the matter without delay. My daughter, needless to say, is bitterly opposed to this, but she has a great deal of common sense, and she must accede to my demand. I shall forbid my house to you both for awhile, and shall do and say such things as may be necessary in order to carry out the plan successfully. I will leave you here now for half an hour. It is but just that you should have an opportunity to weigh the matter and decide for yourself."

Two days later had followed the so-called elopement. Afterward there had been the dinner at their hotel with half a dozen friends, and then had come the telegram from Cleveland, the delayed message, notifying him that he was to be called at his club by telephone from Cleveland at nine o'clock, and telling him also that the manager of the business in which he was largely interested, and in which, in fact, his entire fortune was invested, had absconded, and that attachments were being levied by local banks and other creditors. He had gone hurriedly, leaving her at the hotel with the promise of a quick return. Then, as he was speeding back to her, after receiving the message and learning that every-

thing was lost, had come the crash on Sixth Avenue, followed by the night that was to him a blank. And then had come the morning and the cynical message.

By her he had done what he had considered a gentleman's part, and now all this had gone for naught. It would be known; the papers would publish it with fiendish cleverness, and his face grew hot with the thought. A sudden throb in his injured hand drew his attention to the injury there. Two fingers had been broken, and the heat of his feelings slipped away as a new fear grew upon him. How badly injured were they? Would the old touch come back? Would he finger the strings again as in the olden days? Something seemed to tell him that this power was gone from him forever, and he started from his seat in a rage of despair. His fortune gone, his wife gone, and his means of livelihood taken from him, all in a few hours. He took up the receiver and telephoned the office for writing materials and, awaiting their coming, paced the floor.

What cared he for her now? he demanded. Nothing. And even if he had cared, what mattered that now? What matter if on that island the resolution had come to him to take up some business or profession, to make him-

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self worth while in the city and state, and then go to her and tell her that he loved her? But what right had her mother to make such a demand upon him? And what right, he asked himself bitterly, had this door-step bride to stab him with her cynical line, thanking him for the shelter of his name?

When the writing materials came to him, he stood beside the table until a feeling of quietness came over him. He had no plans; he had no money, not even enough to go to Cleveland, to which place his lawyer had summoned him. He had wired there to the manager of the business two days before. Upon receipt of this, the manager, deeply involved through speculation, had gathered together all available funds and fled. The message from Henley, asking for a remittance had been found, and the telegram from his attorney was the answer, and this had been followed by the telephone message explaining that the situation was hopeless, but asking that he come at once to assist in getting at the facts.

Now this was entirely out of the question. And besides, he had no desire to go to Cleveland. Let them have their attachments or their proceedings in bankruptcy, there was

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nothing in the matter for him. He sat and thought awhile, and then took up the pen. To her he wrote but two lines. Then he unlocked his trunk; changed his dress and, descending to the office, posted his letter. The manager of the hotel, who had known him for a long time, came up with outstretched hand and a look of concern upon his face. Henley cut everything short with a wave of his hand.

“I will ask that you hold my baggage for the charges,” he said. He mentioned the name of his club. “You will please mail my bill there and I will attend to it as soon as I can.”

He turned abruptly and walking to the outer door, paused for a moment on the step. A slight drizzle was falling, and he looked up and down the street and then up at the sky. And drawing his coat closer about him, he stepped down and passed into the busy street.

CHAPTER THREE

AS Henley walked along, he became aware that passers-by were regarding him curiously, and he thought for the first time of the unusual appearance he must make with his bandaged head, and wearing a sling for his arm. He directed his steps toward his club. It would be warm there, he was thinking; perhaps there would be letters for him, and then, too, he could plan. But it came to him suddenly that there would be curious eyes—eyes that questioned, and he turned away. He was weak and faint from pain and lack of food. Involuntarily he fingered his vest-pocket, and then remembered that he had no money; he had given his last coin to the policeman. He considered the situation as he walked along, and it suddenly occurred to him that a friend was owing him a sum of money loaned but a short while before. He resolved to go to him and request payment, but after thinking continually of the matter, he suddenly halted. That friend would ask ques-

tions; that friend would be surprised at his plight, and would want to know. An unreasoning anger began to grow upon him against them all. How often he had heard them discuss the fall in fortune of others, and how little of kindness there had been in their remarks. He remembered the brutal remark of Aiken, a prominent member of his club, referring to a fellow-member who had been left penniless through a crash in Wall Street: "It's a duty every man owes his fellows. When you are out and not coming back, shut the door behind! You let in too much howl."

So he stood in the drizzle with a feeling of self-pity growing upon him. His coat had become wet, he was dizzy from pain, and he wondered if any one in all the world was more miserable than he.

At last, noticing that a policeman was regarding him, he moved along, drifting with the hurrying crowd. He turned corners aimlessly until he found himself upon a side street and then, as he looked up at the sky, the meaning of a certain sign before a place of business impressed itself upon him. It was a pawn-shop. He entered, and drawing out his watch, placed it upon the counter. A

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loan was made, and the man gave him a ticket and eighteen dollars, and then smilingly said:

“My friendt! You better keep out of de vet, or putty soon dey put you to bet mit a spade. You look putty bad!”

Henley thanked him for his well-meant suggestion and turning, hesitated at the door. What if some friend should see him here? What if he should be seen coming from a pawn-shop? He drew his damp collar closer about his neck and hurried out, turning farther from Broadway and going lower toward the East Side. A dread of seeing those he had known, almost a fear of them, came over him, and he hastened along in what was now a steadily falling rain. Then it began to fall more heavily, and he stopped for shelter under an awning and stood listening to the dreary patter upon the sidewalk. Heavier and heavier it grew until at last he had crept back from its patterings, and was leaning against the show-window. He turned and looked at this. There were bottles there on display. The place, though rough, looked warm inside, and he felt that he was needing a stimulant. He entered the door, and walking up to the bar, ordered a brandy. The

place, for the moment, held no other customer. He was glad of this for, by the time the bartender had set the drink before him, he was shaking so that he could with difficulty raise the glass without spilling its contents. The drink did not seem to do him any good, so he ordered a second, and after awhile, a third. The bartender took his change from the money which Henley placed on the bar, and then leaning over said, in a kindly voice:

“I wouldn’t drink no more of them things if I was you, friend. Take it from me straight! If I was as bad busted up as you, I’d get in a bed and stay there. I’m goin’ to shake you up an egg-flip, and that’s on the house. Get it down your neck, and hunt a bed and some dry clothes!”

“I want to get a room,” said Henley. “Something decent but cheap, and where I can have a fire. I feel very bad. Can you tell me of a place?”

The bartender stood shaking the egg-flip and thinking. The rattle of the ice from cup to glass and from glass to cup, to Henley, grew fainter and fainter. There seemed to be a contracting and tightening of his brain, as in the case of a severe headache. A buzzing

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sound grew in his ears, and then a roaring. He caught the rail with his hand.

“I think,” he said in a mumbling voice, “that I am going to be very ill.”

As though from afar off, he heard the thump of the glass as the bartender hurriedly placed it on the bar, and then he seemed to float in space for a moment, and darkness came to him with a roar as of a heavy explosion.

CHAPTER FOUR

IN an adjoining room, Henley heard the sound of voices. One was heavy but musical, and he did not recognize the tones. He had been asleep, had fallen asleep at his work, and had been awakened by a strange dream and a peculiar sensation of dizziness and uncertainty. A letter lay before him, and, as he glanced over it, an utter horror seized him, and his heart began to pound heavily. The letter bore the signature, *Rufus Baker, M.D.* The month was January, and the year 1908. How or when the letter had been written, he could not understand. It was his handwriting. He looked about him and saw nothing familiar. The desk, the room, the pictures on the walls, the books in the cases—he had seen none of them before. Involuntarily, as he rose to his feet from the chair, he placed his hand against his face, and found that he was wearing a beard and mustache. He rushed into the adjoining room where he had heard the sound of voices.

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"In the name of God!" he cried, wildly, to the two men whom he saw sitting there, "What does all this mean?"

They both arose quickly and stared at him. He stood trembling in every nerve, and with the sweat gathering on his face.

"Why, nothing at all," said the slighter man at last. "Doctor O'Brien and I were talking; that is all. He is a very noted man, and I want you to meet him."

The slight man turned to a large man with massive face, high, broad forehead, with shaggy hair, iron-gray beard, and deep-set, slate-gray eyes.

"Doctor Baker," he said, addressing himself to Henley, "I want you to meet Doctor O'Brien, the noted Portuguese specialist."

And then, by way of explanation:

"Doctor Baker is associated with me here."

Henley stared.

"Your associate," he cried. "Why I never before saw you in all my life. You must be a couple of lunatics."

The younger and slighter man turned to him quickly.

"You don't mean!" he exclaimed. "Why, you don't mean to say that it has come back to you."

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He came nearer to Henley, who drew away from him.

"Do you mean that you do not even know me?" he asked.

Henley glanced at the face of the man to whom he had been introduced. The slighter man was visibly agitated.

"Let him sit down," said Doctor O'Brien. "Sit down, man! Calm yourself!"

Henley seated himself at last, looking at the faces of the two men, and then he looked about the room. It was entirely strange. The last thing his eyes had seen, so far as he could remember, was the face of the bartender, who was shaking him an egg-flip in a dingy little bar down on the East Side, in September, 1902. Then came darkness, and he had fallen.

Suddenly he burst forth.

"Have I been crazy?" he cried. "What does it all mean?"

"It means," said the slighter man, "that you have come back mentally. That you are what you used to be, and not what you have been for some years. You had been very ill when I found you in a hospital. Your old self had passed away, and you remembered nothing. I became interested in your case,

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and kept you to study you. You worked with me, and expressed a desire to study medicine. My brother held the management of a very lucrative business. I had him give you a position with a good salary. You worked there and studied under me, and then you studied at the Harvard Medical School."

"Do you mean," cried Henley, springing again to his feet, "that I have been dead for more than five years?"

"No," replied the other. "You have been very much alive during all that time. You have lived and worked as diligently and successfully as I ever saw a man work. You have been a practicing physician here with me for a year."

Henley fell back in his chair with a groan.

"Great God in Heaven!" he exclaimed. "Dead for more than five years!"

The men respected his agony and remained quiet. At last he raised his head.

"It was raining heavily," he said. "I was wet and cold, and was feeling very ill. A bartender was shaking an egg-flip for me, when I began to grow dizzy and fell. It was in September, 1902."

"Who were you then?" asked the slighter man in a kindly voice.

But the swift thoughts came to Henley of those last days, that last night. What had happened since, he could not know. This man who had befriended him had not learned, and so it must be that the others had not learned. And, with quick resolution, he closed his lips.

"I am Eaton, Doctor Eaton, and have been with you a great deal during the past five years," said the slighter man. "I want you to understand that I am your friend, and that you have many friends. If all that has occurred during these years has passed from your mind, then you will possibly want to take up the threads of your old life. I tried in every way to find out who you were, but it amounted to nothing. I traced you back to that bar on the East Side, but the people there had only heard about your having been there. The bartender had inherited some money, and gone to live in New Orleans, and I could not reach him to learn what you had told him, if anything. A pawn-ticket was in your pocket, so I was informed at the hospital, and I took that and secured your watch. I found that you had there given your name as Rufus Baker."

And now Henley remembered. That name

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had occurred to him because of a haberdasher's sign he had seen in Cleveland many years before. He had desired to give some name other than his own. He was thinking of Cleveland at the moment, and this was the first name that suggested itself, and so he had given it. And he remembered, too, the words he had written in reply to Elsie's bitter message:

"I ask your pardon for coming into your life. I shall live as though we had never met."

How truly, at least for his part, he had written. He arose, with a feeling as though he would stifle.

"Can't you suggest something?" he cried. "Do you want me to sit here and stare at you both? I am as a man who has just come through the door from the street. I have slept; I have been dead."

And then suddenly he broke down and, leaning against the wall, sobbed like a child.

Doctor O'Brien arose.

"Let him go with me to my place up the river," he said. "The house is about completed, and a stay in the country will benefit him. It will be easier for him, and will give him time and an opportunity to adjust himself to the new conditions."

This suggestion immediately met with Doctor Eaton's hearty approval. He placed his hand on Henley's shoulder.

"That will be the very thing," he said, soothingly. "Don't take things to heart so. You have come back to your real self, and you ought to be glad. You seem lost and out of place now, and that is only natural, but it will all come out right. You need not bother about anything. I will attend to the packing of your things, such as you will want. We will go and have lunch, we three, and if you want me to do so, I will run up the country with you. Doctor O'Brien has a sort of castle up the Hudson that he has been fashioning from a half-completed church. A town was to be built there, but the scheme fell through, and it was all abandoned. He has been telling me about it, and I understand it is a very beautiful place."

But Henley pleaded with them to be left with his own thoughts. He felt that these hours of despair should be his alone. He wanted time to think, time to adjust himself to this awakening and to bridge, if possible, the chasm that lay behind him. After awhile they arose and went down into the street, he walking between them. He looked

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about him as he went along, recognizing nothing for the moment, but gathering his impressions from the life and atmosphere of movement and business about him.

"It is New York," he said.

"Yes," replied Doctor Eaton. "It is New York."

He hesitated a moment and then added.

"If there had been any one who was anxiously searching for you, you would certainly have been found."

Henley walked along quietly without replying, and then at last he spoke.

"There was no one," he said in a dull voice. "I was not a New Yorker, and all of my people were long since dead."

They asked for no further information, and he offered nothing further. At a corner they took a car. Henley looked out of the windows; and from time to time they observed that something had attracted his eye, some familiar object or scene had arrested his attention.

When at last they alighted from the car, Doctor Eaton took his arm as they walked along.

"For the present," he said, "I understand that you wish to be known as Doctor Rufus

Baker. You rent your apartments from a Mrs. McCann. She is a middle-aged woman, is quite a friend of yours, and is very fond of you. The girl who answers your bell and attends to your rooms is named Agnes. You are supposed to be a native of Louisville, Kentucky. You see I went through all this with you before, when you were——”

“Yes,” said Henley, hastily. “Don’t let’s speak of it now.”

It was necessary, when they reached the apartment, for Henley to try several keys that he found in his pocket, before he could open the door. A girl came and paused in the hallway. Doctor Eaton spoke, addressing her as Agnes, and Henley bowed clumsily, saying something under his breath. Doctor Eaton walked with him about the apartments, explaining things that it seemed necessary he should know, and then they left him, agreeing to return in an hour’s time. When the door closed, Henley stood listening to their departing footsteps. Then he sank into a heavy revolving chair that stood before an open desk, and looked about him with mingled feelings of wonder and distress.

So these things were his; he had lived here for more than six months. Except while

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pursuing his studies in Boston, he had lived somewhere in this city for more than five years, and now he was a physician. An open book lay upon the desk; it bore evidences of much study. There were marginal notes and references to other works, and these were in his own handwriting. He took up the volume and looked at the title: "The Dissociation of a Personality." It was a book of some five hundred and sixty pages. He laid it aside and, rising, went to the book-case. There were many volumes whose names suggested but little to him now, and there were others, translated from the French and German, whose titles and well-worn covers gave evidence of the fact that some one, doubtless himself, had been deeply interested in the study of abnormal psychology. He drew out a volume, and on the fly-leaf was written the name he was said to have used.

He closed the case and walked about the room. A copy of a daily paper was lying on a table where he had placed it that morning. He took it up, and glancing at the date, dropped it with a groan. And then suddenly he walked over to the desk, and taking out the keys he had found in his pocket, fitted them into various compartments. There was noth-

ing that he recognized or remembered. He felt as one feels while searching through a dead man's private papers. He found several photographs, but they were of faces that he did not know. There were notes and letters in the handwriting of women. There was a check-book, and in it were a number of stubs showing payments to various persons. It had been carefully kept and an entry had been made only the day before, after which a balance had been struck, showing that there remained in bank about eight hundred and fifty dollars. After this, he felt through his pockets and found a bill-book in which were four tens, one twenty, and a five dollar bill. There was also some silver in his trouser pocket.

And then a resolution came to Henley. He left the apartment hurriedly and, after noting the number of the house, walked quickly down to the corner where the name of the street was posted. He also made a note of this on an envelope, and walked along until he found a policeman. The man directed him, when he had stated his wishes, and, after a few minute's walk, he found himself in the office of a private detective agency.

"My name," he said, "is Doctor Rufus Baker. Here are fifty dollars. I want you

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to secure and bring me, within twenty-four hours, a detailed statement of the history of Miss Elsie Van Ness, who, in September, 1902, was married to Arthur Travers Henley. I do not care for an account concerning the man. Bring me this by noon to-morrow at my residence and, if it is full enough, I will pay you two hundred dollars more. I want this done quietly; and, for the fee that I am paying, you can afford to spend some money, if necessary, to get the information. I must have it by that time, for I am going out of town."

He gave such facts as the detective desired and, leaving the office, hurried back to his apartments. As he walked along, the old fear came to him again, the fear that had possessed him on that last day, that some one would recognize him. But now the fear was doubled, for he faced, in addition, the lack of knowledge of this later life that he had lived.

At his apartment he awaited the return of the two doctors. They would be coming soon. He glanced at his watch and found that it was half past one. He glanced at it again and recognized it as the timepiece he had pawned so long ago.

"He has been good to me," was his thought. And somehow the picture of Doctor Eaton

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came back to him. It was a kindly face, and he felt that in that other life this man had been his all. Again he searched the apartments, finding everywhere evidences of the fact that the occupant had been a man of studious habits. A volume stood upon the top of a case, and his hand drew near to it. Why it was selected, he did not know. Possibly he had reached for it through habit. It fell open in his hand and there, heavily marked, he read the words from "The Ballad of Reading Gaol":—

"For he who lives more lives than one,
More deaths than one must die."

His eyes slowly filled with tears as he thought of the other, the man whom he had been. How that one must have struggled and fought for knowledge of the other days, the days of Henley! And how deeply earnest must have been the study of these questions as evidenced by the worn volumes bearing upon them! And how deeply those two lines from the poem must have struck into his heart!

Some one knocked at the door. He called, and the two men entered. Doctor Eaton took the volume from his hands.

"How did you find it?" he asked.

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"I do not know," he replied. "I walked to the case, reached up, and took it down."

Doctor O'Brien took the book from his hands, and read the lines. Then he placed it back on the top of the case.

"It is certainly true in your case," he said.

"No!" said Doctor Eaton, gently. "This is simply an awakening. I shall miss the old association, but you have come into your own again, and the whole world is before you. I will help you in any way possible. It is all before you."

"Yes," said Henley, "but I must learn the past."

"And, as for your present self," said Doctor Eaton, "you have plenty of time. You can decide what you wish to do."

"I am burying my present self to-day," replied Henley.

"You mean?"

"That I am to be known to all men as Doctor Rufus Baker."

"But your future," suggested Doctor Eaton.

"I shall shape my future from the light of my past."

CHAPTER FIVE

IT was a drive of about three miles from the little station of Greenway, in New Jersey, to the home which Doctor O'Brien had just completed. And, upon arriving there, Henley was surprised and greatly pleased at the sight of the spacious grounds and the wonderful grove of old oaks, in the midst of which the building had been erected. And the building itself was an even greater surprise to him. During the drive from the village, Doctor O'Brien had explained to Henley that some years before, an eccentric millionaire named Greenway had attempted to found a town near there, and had also begun the erection of what was to have been a very fine church, locating it in the midst of the grove of oaks in memory of a brother who had escaped from a sanatorium and committed suicide upon that spot many years before. Something had gone wrong with the old man's plans; his money had slipped through his fingers, and relatives who failed to sympathize with his visionary

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schemes had sought the aid of the New York courts to have him restrained from further dissipating his fortune. He had doddered about in some retreat for a few months and then, after his death, the property had been sold. Doctor O'Brien had seen the place while on an automobile trip up the State and, finding that it was for sale at a very reasonable price, had purchased it. He had seemed to have definite plans from the very first, for it had been with but little hesitation that he had adopted designs for the remodelling and completion of the building.

To Henley, the house, from the exterior, had little the appearance of a dwelling; and he found upon entering that, although it evidenced the expenditure of a large amount of money, it could not be held to have been successfully remodelled to suit the tastes of any one who was building for a home.

The room assigned to him was on the second floor, and he found it to be furnished in simple taste, though evidently with but little regard for expense. Doctor O'Brien must then be a very wealthy man, he was thinking, and a man of very peculiar whims.

The partitions were of heavy oak, and this very impression of heaviness and strength had

increased with Henley, as well from an examination of the interior of the building as from his general survey of it upon nearing it for the first time.

Soon a servant came—the man was evidently a foreigner—and told him that Doctor O'Brien was waiting for him below. He descended the broad stairway, and his host met him in the hall.

"If you are not too tired," said the latter, "I want to show you about the grounds. I am very proud of this place. I own something more than one hundred acres here, and am improving the place continually."

They stood for a moment upon the steps and looked out through the trees.

"Yes," continued Doctor O'Brien. "The place just suits me, and I could hardly have wished anything better. I have planned to spend most of my time here, carrying on some experiments and pursuing some studies in which I am deeply interested. It is quite close to New York, and I can run down there at any time I may desire and return in a few hour's time." He rubbed his hands together with satisfaction.

"Yes," he said, looking about him, "it is just what I want, and I am pleased with it."

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They walked out through the trees, directing their steps at last toward the rear of the property and toward the west. In that direction lay the little village of Greenway.

Henley now noted more closely than before the great heavy shoulders and powerful frame of his companion. There was an atmosphere of strength about him—strength in his face, in his body, in the glance of his eye; and this, too, was maintained in the deep, yet pleasant tones of his voice. He had but a slight foreign accent in speaking, and Henley wondered now, as he had wondered from the first, why this man should be here and who he might be. He seemed, in a measure, properly placed here in that massive house and among these great trees, but there was something indefinable about him that impressed one as too deep, too earnest, and too restless for the quiet surroundings of a wooded New Jersey hillside. They paused upon the brow of a gentle slope, and Doctor O'Brien, with his head thrown back, glanced full into the face of the setting sun. Henley regarded him curiously. He seemed to notice this at last, and, pointing to the sun, said earnestly: "That is the most wonderful thing in all our world."

They stood awhile thus, but Henley did

not question him, and then they began to wander about in the growing haze, watching the cattle returning from the pasture to the barn. Doctor O'Brien directed their way to that building and by his explanations of what he had done and what he proposed to do, indicated his deep interest in his cows and horses.

"There are none finer in the State," he said, proudly. "And none that are better housed or better kept."

Henley spoke to one of the employees, asking a question concerning a certain animal, but the man shrugged his shoulders, lifted his eyebrows, and glanced at Doctor O'Brien. The latter laughed.

"They are all Mexicans," he said. "There is but one servant on the place who can speak English. That is the man who called you from your room. He has been with me for several years, and I keep him only because I need some one here who can attend to business in the village and deal with outsiders."

"But why do you have only foreigners?" asked Henley in surprise.

"For several reasons," replied Doctor O'Brien. "In the first place, they will stay better. Then, again, they will attend to the duties given into their hands without attempt-

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ing to attend to matters with which they have nothing to do. When you speak of foreigners, you generalize. You should have asked why I keep only Mexicans here. If I had Americans, or Germans, or Irish, or, in fact, men from any of those races, New York City would draw them away from me, or New York City would send them relatives or friends whose visits would be most unwelcome to me. Most of these men have their wives; they have good homes on my land, and this little colony gives them companionship. They did not drift here. I picked the lot in Mexico, and I know every man jack of them from his hopes to his recollections."

They had left the barn and were walking slowly up to the house.

"We shall be rather late for dinner, I am afraid," said Doctor O'Brien. And then, suddenly, he paused and laughed in a slightly embarrassed way.

"You did not know, of course," he said, placing his great hand on Henley's shoulder, "I have other visitors here just now—my sister, my brother's widow, and my sister's daughter. They have been in Mexico, came up through the States; and, after touring Canada, have come down to visit me for awhile.

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An American lady, who lives in Mexico, has been their travelling companion, but she remained in New York. It will be quite dull for you unless you can speak French, or Portuguese, or Spanish, as their knowledge of English is very limited." He laughed again. "You must, indeed, think this a queer household."

Henley truly thought as his host suggested, but he laughed lightly in return. A sudden resolution had come to him. He felt that it would be unfair, but it seemed to him that Doctor O'Brien should have told him in New York of these other guests. He had come to get away from people and from questioning. He did not know what explanations, if any, had been made or would be made to these ladies concerning his presence or his history, and so he quickly decided to profess ignorance of other languages than English. This would render conversation, beyond formalities, impossible.

"I shall be very pleased to meet the ladies," he said, "but my knowledge of languages is limited to English. I shall trouble them but little."

Doctor O'Brien seemed not at all displeased at his reply. And then they entered the house.

CHAPTER SIX

WHEN the ladies entered the drawing-room, there flashed across Henley's mind, in an instant, the belief that Doctor O'Brien had told them of his misfortune; and he felt an irritation that approached almost to open anger.

"My sister, Madame Doubrovecs," said Doctor O'Brien, in making the introduction. And Henley bowed to an elderly woman of a type very different from her brother. Her hair was entirely white, her eyes were dark, and, in the expression of her face, there was a wistful sadness.

He turned at the slight movement of Doctor O'Brien's hand. "Madame O'Brien," said the doctor, and the use of the good old Irish name seemed indeed strange to Henley as applied to the dark, stout Portuguese woman who faced him.

"And Mademoiselle Doubrovecs, my niece," continued Doctor O'Brien; and Henley turned again to face a type of girl such as he had

dreamed sprang only from the blood of Roman.

"A Bulgar maid, is my niece," said Doctor O'Brien, smiling. "She comes from the city of Philippopolis, the city of the attar of roses; but for the rest, she is from all the capitals of Europe. Her father was an eminent Bulgarian."

And, as the others were silent, the girl smiled cordially, holding out her hand.

"It is good of Monsieur le Docteur Baker to come into our loneliness," she said, using the French language. But, remembering his profession of ignorance of other languages than English, Henley smiled in return, shaking his head to indicate that he could not understand. Doctor O'Brien translated her speech, and, after a few moments, they entered the dining-room.

Here, again, Henley met with many surprises. The dining-room was panelled entirely in dark oak; the electric chandeliers were heavy, but of elegant design; there were expensive paintings on the walls, besides two pieces of tapestry; and the furnishings of the room, and indeed of the table itself, evidenced the expenditure of a large amount of money.

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These things had met him everywhere—the seemingly utter disregard for expense; and now, finding himself here seated at table with people who, but a short while before, were to him entire strangers—people so completely and visibly foreign—he felt as though he were living in another land. The change to this place from the open and familiar New Jersey fields was almost as great and as rapid as his own change had been from one personality to another.

The conversation was, perforce, limited, and consisted for the most part in the translation of platitudes on the part of Doctor O'Brien, the latter excusing himself continually for the necessary use of a language which Henley, supposedly, could not understand.

Some letters were brought to Doctor O'Brien, and he frowned as he took them. The servant apologized, because one of them being registered, a receipt was necessary, and the messenger was waiting. There were two or three large envelopes containing each probably half a dozen letters. They had been sent in this way from New York, and, after taking out the letters, Doctor O'Brien placed them on the table beside him. Many of them bore foreign stamps, and, among these, Henley

recognized the stamp of Mexico, which was on some four or five.

"Your correspondence seems to come from all the world," he said.

Doctor O'Brien moved them about, and looked them over.

"Yes," he said. "But most of them come through Mexico and are remailed there, but they do not come direct to me here. I am president of the Harlow Mining Company, in the State of Sonora, and my correspondence is quite heavy sometimes. I visit the mines three or four times a year, but I have not been to Mexico recently."

"Harlow!" exclaimed Henley. "It seems strange." And he spoke before considering his recent and firm resolution to keep his past life hidden.

"I had a cousin, Stephen Harlow," he said. "He was my only close relative. He lost his fortune in stocks, and became a wanderer. I staked him when the gold-fever was on at Nome, in Alaska, and he went out there. He wrote me for awhile and then I heard no more. I wrote out there and tried to locate him, but he had disappeared after going broke, and I could not locate him."

Here he paused, hesitated, and then stopped.

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He saw that the faces of all were turned to him expectantly. They could not understand all he had said, but they had understood something. What was it? Doctor O'Brien had laid down his fork, his hands were resting on the table, and he was staring.

Henley felt that his speech had been very foolish. How could he, in fact, have heard from Stephen Harlow, or from any one else whom he had known; and, if he had heard during those five lost years, how could he have understood?"

"I have heard nothing recently," he said, in an embarrassed manner. "I do not know what ever became of Stephen Harlow."

The girl essayed to speak, but Doctor O'Brien turned his glance quickly upon her. She looked for an instant into his eyes, and an expression of uneasiness came into her face.

Doctor O'Brien spoke rapidly, and in a language which Henley could not understand. He said:

"This man says he never heard the name Harlow but once; he says there was a man by that name who obtained some renown as a player of this silly American game known as football."

The girl looked across at Henley, and

murmured something in reply, though there was a look of disappointment on her face.

When the meal had ended, Henley remained but a few minutes in the drawing-room, and then, pleading fatigue, retired to his own room, there to examine at leisure a document that he carried in his pocket and which had been delivered to him just before leaving his apartments in New York—the report of the detective. He had felt that he wanted to be entirely alone, with no danger of interruption, before he should read it. He wanted to think, to plan; and now he had added a resolution.

“I want to get away from this strange place.”

The atmosphere had seemed too alien and, though the people were kind, the situation did not give promise of such solitude and quiet planning as he had apprehended. He had not dreamed that others were there. He had pictured for himself lonely walks through quiet woods, a few books, if he should care for them, and much time for an earnest consideration of the entire situation from every point.

Mounting the stairs slowly, he resolved:

“I will go away from here to-morrow. I

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will go somewhere where I am not known to any one—perhaps to Florida.”

But the night was to bring for him strange events; and his future, and the shaping of that future, lay in the brain of another.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ENTERING his room, Henley threw open a window, and stood looking out at the trees which surrounded the great house. The night was dark and quiet, with only a faint light from some cloud-dimmed stars, and the occasional rustle of the wind in the dead leaves that had piled upon the ground.

At last, as he stood thus, there came from somewhere deep in the house the low rumbling of a pipe-organ. It seemed that wandering fingers were touching the keys here and there as though seeking a certain chord, and finding it at last, builded therefrom until the sounds came stronger and surer in the sequence of a melody. And then there came a song, faint and clear, and as it rose, Henley knew that it was from Tannhauser—"The Evening Star."

What a wonderful and mysterious place this was! he was thinking. And what a man of mystery was Doctor O'Brien! And what strange people were here gathered together! He saw again, as in a painting, the group

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gathered in the drawing-room. There was this man, broad-domed of head, with deep-set eyes and masterful face—a figure that impressed one with its strength rather than its bigness. And there was the white-haired sister with the sweet face and the strangely appealing eyes—eyes that seemed to hold in them the pictured memory of a tragedy! What had it been? he wondered. When and in what land had some great grief come into her heart to fill her eyes with sadness, and to render her so quiet and self-effacing. And the sister-in-law, the fat little Portuguese woman, who smiled simply because she could not understand. And there, too, was the dark brilliancy of the Bulgar girl, with flashing teeth and soft, Eastern eyes—girl's eyes, in truth.

He closed the window and, taking off his coat, made himself comfortable, and then lighted a cigar. The report of the detective was in his hand, but he had not yet broken the seal. At this he had hesitated, and he now still hesitated. He had told himself that he did not care; that nothing from the past mattered any more; and yet, as he held the envelope in his hands and thought long and deeply, pictures of his early days came back to him—memories of his early hopes seemed

doubly fair because they now might never be. His heart began to beat rapidly, and a feeling of self-pity, such as he had felt on that last day, swept over him.

She came back to him in memory as they had lived on the island. He saw her again, standing beside him at the parsonage. He felt her hand tremble in his own as they clasped hands at the minister's request; and, from his heart, and back across the years that had passed, the years that had not been his own, he called to her brokenly:

"Elsie! I never failed you through fault of mine!"

He sat for awhile, and then, with sudden resolution, he broke the seal, and with trembling fingers, spread the paper before him. He read the report rapidly, his mind seeming to grasp what was written upon the line below that which his eyes were following. It was rather briefer than he had expected.

"Report on Miss Elsie Van Ness, daughter of William T. and Catherine Van Ness, from September, 1902.

"September 14, 1902, party eloped with one Arthur Travers Henley, a native of Cleveland, Ohio, then living in New York. On same evening, Mr. Henley left his hotel to

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receive a telephone message from Cleveland at his club. On return from club, was thrown from automobile, and injured. During the night, Mrs. Henley quitted the hotel, and returned to her mother's home. Mr. Henley reported at hotel on following morning. He was bandaged about the head, and his left arm was in a sling. He stated that he had remained all night unconscious at hospital. Posted letter at hotel, walked out of door, and disappeared. Afterward reported seen at various places, but investigation failed to confirm truth of reports. Mrs. Henley and her mother closed their house in latter part of September, 1902, and went to Europe. They returned in 1905. In January, 1906, Mrs. Henley filed a bill for divorce on ground of abandonment and other grounds. Proof alleged she had met Mr. Henley in Boston, had spoken to him, and that he had denied his identity. Divorce granted in June, 1906, with right to resume maiden name. In June, 1906, Mrs. Henley again left America, and has been journeying in various parts of the world. Reported in Spain and Portugal during part of that time. Mrs. Catherine Van Ness died in Paris, in 1906, and buried there. Mrs. Henley does not correspond with her former

friends. No request ever made of police to investigate disappearance of Mr. Henley. Investigation at hotel shows no inquiry ever made there as to cause of disappearance. Mr. Henley said to have owned large business interests at Cleveland, Ohio, which were wiped out just before his disappearance in the failure of the Henley-Drummond Manufacturing Company, caused by defalcation of Treasurer Drummond. Latter injured in street-car accident in 1904, in San Francisco. Was working there as a paper-hanger. Died in hospital, after making statement confessing identity. Mr. Henley never again heard of. Believed went to Alaska, where he had a relative. Is now believed to be dead."

How brutally worded it all seemed to him, disposing thus, in a few words, of the lives of so many. He drew a long, deep breath.

So Elsie had secured a divorce! She claimed to have met him in Boston, and that he had repudiated her! And perhaps she had indeed seen him in Boston, and talked with him! He had no means of knowing. And perhaps he had been seen by others at various times, and had denied his identity. But he felt that this was hardly probable. He knew, from the books he had seen at

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that apartment in New York, how anxious his other self had been for the least ray of light, the least word that would aid him in finding himself. And Doctor Eaton, too, had told him that this was a fact.

And Elsie had not sought for him; had made no inquiry. No one had asked at the hotel, and the police had not even been informed of his sudden disappearance. They had hushed the whole matter, for the sake of pride, and had fled to Europe to escape it all. And while he lay in some hospital, broken in fortune, broken in body, and wrecked in mind, they had branded him and abandoned him, and later had even thrown off his very name. Did they know of his injury? Had they learned of the blank night at the hospital? Had she received his message, and falsely understood from it that he meant to act a coward's part, and to voluntarily lose himself somewhere in the world, leaving them to bear disgrace? The report was entirely silent as to their knowledge or ignorance of any of these things, and he flung it from him with a bitter laugh.

"What do I care?" he muttered, in desperation. "Facing a desert, I look back upon a wall."

“And yet! And yet!” he was thinking—and there came the leaven of hope in the memory—“she had not seemed to regard the marriage with aversion.” There had been times, now that he thought of it deeply, when they were together and alone on the island, that her eyes had held in them something more than the comradeship of the mutually unfortunate.

He wondered now whether he had indeed met her in that other life, that other personality. He wondered, too, what that other life had been—the mind, the heart—away from Doctor Eaton. Whom had he met of woman-kind? And had there been some one out of them all who had cared or who had quickened his heart? He did not and could not know, and the mystery held him as he clung to it. He closed his eyes at last, and sat dreamily thinking. Here were two personalities in one man. Here was a brain that knew two lives, each of which was unconnected with and apart from the other. He strove mentally to draw them together—to draw from mind to mind a knowledge of the days that had passed. He pictured himself as the other, the Doctor Rufus Baker working in his office. He pictured himself in the apartments which he had

but that day quitted. He saw himself closing the door. The maid, Agnes, was standing near, and he saw her, too. She smiled, and he spoke to her. He asked her concerning Mrs. McCann, from whom he rented. He saw himself go down the steps and down the street. There were cars that he caught, and hospitals that he visited, and patients for whom he prescribed. Harder and harder, he strove to force himself back into that life and its thoughts and knowledge, that he might draw from it for his true self, the self of to-day.

And behind Henley, as he sat thus, and all unseen by him, a panel in the woodwork slowly and noiselessly moved, and presently a face peered into the room. Eyes that were deepset and intent were fixed upon him, and gently and gradually in his dream, the influence of another mind began to draw his thoughts along. For a moment, in the vision, he had lost sight of himself as Doctor Baker, but now the impression grew stronger and stronger. He was walking along the streets of New York, directing his steps toward his office. Now he was mounting the stairs, and had entered his office. The desk was there, the pictures on the walls, the books in their cases, and near the door stood a tall case with

instruments. And now some one was crossing the other office, and turning, he saw that it was Doctor O'Brien who smiled to him, and spoke to him concerning something that was very pleasing. They would go together. Yes, he was ready. He would go. And together they walked along, their feet making no sound. They did not descend to the street, but were walking through long passages. And Doctor O'Brien was telling Doctor Baker something in a low tone. It was that Doctor Baker was very tired, and that he must rest, and that he must sleep. He had not thought of it before, but now he realized it; he was indeed very tired and he must sleep. And they walked along together, Doctor O'Brien holding and supporting him, for he was very tired, and there were whispers down twilight corridors, and Doctor O'Brien was now before him, retreating and retreating, and beckoning him forward to rest and to sleep. Dreamily, dreamily, he entered a great chamber whose walls were as shadowy as eventide, and before him was a couch, wide and long and soft, and silkenly inviting. And as he laid himself gratefully upon it, there still came the murmuring as of distant and musical voices that soothed him as he lay.

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Deeper and deeper he sank, away and away, until the dim murmurs ceased, and he dreamed no more.

Doctor O'Brien, his feet clad in felt-soled slippers, moved from behind the slumberer's chair where he had crept, after opening a secret door in the wall. For some moments he gazed intently at Henley, and with a look of satisfaction. It had been easier than he had expected, and it was through Henley's efforts at self-hypnosis while engaged in the pursuit of the personality of Doctor Rufus Baker, that Doctor O'Brien had been so successful in his own efforts which were directed to almost the same end. But he had not yet completed his work, so as to leave him without a single doubt, and he continued until he felt that the hypnotic sleep was complete. Then he stood away from Henley.

"Arise and take up that paper from the table, and hand it to me!" he commanded.

Henley arose, and taking up the report, placed it in Doctor O'Brien's hand.

"Now be seated! Do not move until I bid you! You are to do my will! Do you understand? You are to do my will, and nothing but my will! You will sleep now until I call you!"

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Henley lay back in the chair. The hypnotic condition was perfect, and Doctor O'Brien laughed sneeringly.

"A brain like a butterfly's," he grunted.

And then he took up the paper and read it through.

"So," he muttered. "You are indeed the man. I thought as much, and only meant to have you tell me all you know, but I have it better here. You are the cousin of Stephen Harlow, the man who grub-staked him, and to whom he left his shares in the Harlow Mining Company! You are the sweet thing who is half-owner outright, and who inherits his shares besides! Well, you will not put your hands upon them if I have to keep you asleep here until the day when I am through, and have completed my work."

And then suddenly a thought came to him and he started, standing silent a moment. Was it not possible? Doctor Eaton had informed him that a number of examinations had been made of the head of the man Rufus Baker, and that no injury to the skull had been found. There was no pressure of the bone upon the brain; that much was certain. There had been the change from Henley to Baker, caused perhaps by illness or by shock

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or by some thing that no man could know or understand. And again and suddenly, and seemingly without cause, there had been the change from Baker to Henley. What did it mean? Was it simple amnesia, or were there dual personalities in the man? He had known none of the peculiarities of either personality, if there were two, and so he could not know. But was it not possible, out of that tangle and mystery, to bring order? Was it not possible that he who had been placed in this hypnotic sleep, might, by a greater effort be, in part, robbed of himself and given his other and second self? Had there not been cases? And had there not been the case of the girl with four distinct personalities? These had been summoned and dismissed at the will of another mind, until the truer personality had been selected and the others dismissed forever. And, in that case, strangest of all things, each had known of the other. They had written spiteful notes mocking each other for personal peculiarities. And one, when she had finally known that she was to be sacrificed and dismissed, had gone out sorrowfully and buried her treasures and keepsakes that the others cared nothing for or even despised, and had written a letter of farewell. And then, at the

will of the hypnotist, that personality had died the death, forever and forever.

He knew that this thing had been done, and done by one of the most eminent physicians in Boston, and he knew that it had been done elsewhere, in practically the same form, many, many times. Necessity, from his point of view, pressed him. What mattered a Henley, or what mattered a Baker? A Henley was dangerous. A Henley was fatal. But a Rufus Baker knew nothing, and so Henley must pass away.

And, suddenly, he stooped over the sleeper, his face showing the effort of concentrated will-power. Involuntarily he adopted the useless passes and movements of the olden days, and then his hands sought the sleeper's brow.

"You are Doctor Rufus Baker!" he said, sharply. "You are Doctor Rufus Baker! I will that you be Doctor Rufus Baker! You have been changing, and you are changing, and you are Doctor Rufus Baker, and you are his mind, and you are his body!"

For a long time he worked until the perspiration stood upon his forehead, and every power of his will was strained to the utmost.

"And you have changed, and you are changing, and you are Doctor Rufus Baker,

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and you are to sleep, and you are to s-l-e-e-p !” And, suddenly, he struck Henley across the face with his open hand a sharp, quick blow. The writhing and groaning ceased.

Why he struck this blow, he did not know. He had seen it done, and he remembered that in some of the cases of which he had read, persons possessed of two personalities had been changed from the one to the other by a sudden shock, or by an acute pain. In the strange case of Miss Beauchamp, of Boston, one of the four personalities had learned to make herself disappear when desirous of disappearing, so that another personality might take her place, by burning her arm smartly with a cigarette.

He stepped back and viewed the sleeper.

“Who are you?” he asked. And the answer came quickly:

“I am Doctor Rufus Baker, a practising physician of New York City.”

He asked many other questions—questions requiring information that he knew that Henley could not possibly possess, but which Doctor Rufus Baker ought to have, and the answers were full and complete. He was entirely satisfied.

“And now,” he said, taking up the report

of the detective and placing it in his own pocket, "you, Doctor Baker, are the servant of my will. You have forgotten Henley! You remember nothing of Henley! You are to awake at eight o'clock in the morning, and you are to be very ill. You are to remember nothing of to-night! You are to press the button which is near the head of your bed! And now you are to undress and go to bed, and go to sleep, and you are to awake at eight o'clock!"

Henley arose and, in the hypnotic sleep, began to prepare for retiring. Doctor O'Brien watched him for a few moments, and then, opening the door in the wall, closed it carefully behind him, and descended a secret flight of steps.

As one walking in his sleep, Henley moved in the room, looking about him with unseeing eyes. At last he turned off the light and the room was left in darkness.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DETECTIVE KENNEDY sat in his office puffing at a black cigar and staring at the dead wall across the air-shaft. His brow was puckered, and his big mustache was drooping in a scowl. At last he pushed a button and, when the door was opened, he asked of the clerk:

“Was that Scanlon come in then?”

To the other's affirmative reply, he merely nodded.

“Tell him to come to the well,” he directed. “I want to whisper awhile.”

He arose and, leaving his small, private office, entered a room with heavy doors, known in the office as “the well”; and, closing the door behind him, locked it. Soon another door opened and his partner entered. Kennedy motioned him to a seat.

“Just got in off that Linthicum job,” explained Scanlon. “Positively nothin' doin'. I have made up my mind that it's a frame in the family, as I find the stuff was mortgaged.

I am goin' down to the old man's office this evenin' by appointment, and I am goin' to throw that into him strong. I think it'll bring a squall."

"It's about this report I made the other day for this Doctor Rufus Baker," interrupted Kennedy. "I got in on that and found I was wakin' up big things. I got to thinkin' about the matter, so I gives him enough for his price, but I holds back the cream." Here he drew a copy of the report from his pocket and read it aloud.

"Two hundred and fifty is all we got on the job," he said, winking at Scanlon; "but the hold-back is pure cream. You see, I asks myself what does this guy want with a report on Miss Elsie Van Ness, who was one of the blue-bloods straight—people been here ever since the Indians and all that. When the information come in and I was whippin' it in shape, a thought strikes me. I puts in the report that Miss Van Ness don't write to none of her old friends, and that it is not known where she now is. The fact of the business is that a letter came from her Saturday to a real-estate agent here who handles some of her business, and the envelope showed that it was from the Hôtel Nationale at Paris. I find she

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is stoppin' there at this time. I figures out that the hold-back will bring this doctor for another investigation, givin' us more time; and for that reason I holds it out. But another idea has come to me since, and I follows it up."

"And what did you find?" asked Scanlon.

"I find," said Kennedy, impressively, "that this Doctor Rufus Baker and this man Arthur Travers Henley, who disappeared in September, 1902, are exactly the same type and style of men. I am satisfied that they are the same. I believe he thought he was doin' a mighty gallant act when he made his high dive to obscurity in 1902, and that he was makin' a martyr out of himself for the girl's sake. I find that there was a lot of talk back in those days, and I believe, from what I learn from the other side, that the girl in the case did not want him to disappear by a whole big lot. What happened in this case was enough to rattle her, but it wasn't his fault. And what she did she couldn't be blamed for, but it was enough to drive any man to the woods. Now there is nothin' to the man. He has been practising medicine about a year, and has been makin' about a livin', and not much more, but the girl has got money—large

chunks and bunches of it. I put Jim on the man's trail, and he reports this mornin' that this Doctor Baker has gone up in New Jersey to a place about three miles from a little station called Greenway, and the chances are he will be there some time. They give out the report at his office that he's gone away for his health."

Here Kennedy leaned forward and slapped his fat hand heavily on the table that stood between the two men.

"Now business is business, Ed!" he exclaimed. "You are crazy about money, and I think we can pull in a good bunch by playin' the girl. I have got the deal rigged up. At the last we may have to ring in an outside man to handle part of it, because it would look bad for us, after we have been employed by this doctor, to work up the other side of the case for the girl."

He then explained his plans to Scanlon, and the two remained for some time talking it over and preparing an advertisement. At last Kennedy read aloud what had been written:

"E. V. N. Hôtel Nationale, Paris. Party, A. T. H. living. Knows nothing divorce. Believed sacrifice necessary your happiness. Acceptance sacrifice your part, knowing would be criminal. Party knows noth-

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ing this notice. Up to you. Answer Rambo, Herald, New York.”

“And it will cost like all smoke to get that in the Paris edition of the *Herald*,” said Scanlon, shaking his head. “We have got two hundred and fifty out of the matter, and you have already blown twelve or fifteen havin’ Jim follow this man Baker, not countin’ the cost of Jim’s time. It looks doubtful to me.”

“Yes,” said Kennedy, “that’s true.” And now there was the finality of decision in his voice. “But if you want to make money, you have got to spend money. You are mighty tickled when I pull in a big wad, but you kick about expense-money every month. Besides this, if you want to make extra big money in this business, trail the petticoats. There is more money tied up in women’s smiles and frowns than all the wealth in all the banks in the world could pay interest on.”

Scanlon gave in at last; and, after the advertisement was placed, the men began to watch the “agony” column of the New York *Herald*. At last an item appeared.

Rambo. Stop personal. Not interested. E. V. N.

Kennedy chuckled when he read it.

“Just give it time to soak in,” he said. “Women have got sentiment, and have got a great way of lyin’ awake at night thinkin’. She’ll be wonderin’ and wonderin’ an’ thinkin’ back over those days, and then it’ll come. It’ll come, though in some roundabout way, but it’ll come, as sure as guns.”

He took the clipping and pasted it together with the other records in the case, entered a date beside it, and filed it carefully away.

“We got to keep an occasional eye out for that fellow up at Greenway,” he said. “I’ll arrange that with the station agent there. Jim made friends with him, and I’ll just run him up Sunday. We made our notice in the *Paris Herald* pretty rough, but we had to make it that way to jolt things up. Just wait a little while and we’ll get a reply.”

But they watched the *Herald* in vain for another notice to Rambo, for it did not appear.

CHAPTER NINE

HENLEY awoke from a deep sleep with a sudden start. He sat up in bed with a feeling of dread and uneasiness rather than of illness. Something was wrong, he knew, for his hands trembled and his heart fluttered strangely, while there was a sense of oppression in his chest. He looked about the room and wondered where he could be. Then rising, he staggered to the window and looked out. A beautiful girl was standing on a lawn feeding a pair of peacocks. She turned, and lifting her hand, shaded her eyes from the sun that was slanting through the trees, and spoke in a strange language to some one whom he could not see. There came in reply a woman's voice, and then the girl laughed merrily.

Henley made his way to the bed with an increasing sense of illness and bewilderment. The last thing that he remembered was writing a letter in his office in New York, and then had come a dizziness, since which time he knew nothing.

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He pushed the button at the head of the bed, and covering himself groaned hopelessly.

“Where on the top of God’s footstool have I landed this time?” he questioned. “Where have I been, who have I been, and how many years have passed?”

After a few minutes there came a knock at his door, and he rose and released the fastenings. Doctor O’Brien entered, smiling. Henley looked about him.

“Will you please tell me where I am? How did I arrive here, and what year and day and month is it?” he asked.

Doctor O’Brien drew up a chair, and leaning over felt Henley’s pulse. It was rapid and irregular. He secured a glass of water, and after placing a few colorless drops in it, gave it to Henley.

“Drink that!” he commanded. “I think you will then feel much better, and I will explain everything.”

The draft was hardly swallowed before there came an immediate sense of relief. The feeling of uneasiness and oppression passed, and he was, in a few minutes, entirely at ease.

Doctor O’Brien had thought long the previous night over the whole situation, and had settled upon a definite course, to be changed

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only should occasion require. He had made an explanation to his sister, his sister-in-law, and his niece, which had satisfied them, and had, as he believed, freed him from any chance of interference on their part. The young man was supposed to be a noted physician, who through overwork had brought on a nervous attack, affecting him with amnesia and delusions. He was to remain here for treatment at Doctor O'Brien's hands; and, under no circumstances, should reference be made or conversation indulged in concerning his personality. He was to be taken for what he appeared to be as a matter of course and without question.

But this morning he busied himself only with Henley's comfort, and quieted the latter's alarm with assurances as to his whereabouts.

"You shall hear nothing more until you have breakfasted!" he said at last. And rising, he pressed a button three times, this having been the agreed signal.

Henley arose and dressed himself; and, when a servant came, bringing a tray, they had coffee together. But the strange illness still troubled Henley's mind.

"I suppose," he said, "it must be the effects

of the—the change. I was feeling very ill but a little while ago, and now I feel perfectly well.”

The servant removed the tray. Doctor O'Brien drew chairs near a window, offered Henley a cigar, and lighted one for himself. He sat quietly puffing and looking out of the window. Henley grew anxious at his silence.

“You were to tell me,” he suggested. “Tell me everything! I went through it all once before, and I suppose I can stand it again. I had a long siege in a hospital then.”

Still Doctor O'Brien was silent. His deep eyes were narrowed, and he looked out to where one of the Mexicans was bringing up a horse, ready saddled, for the girl whom Henley had observed on the lawn some time ago. He watched her mount and ride off through the trees.

“What is the matter? Why don't you tell me?” he asked.

Doctor O'Brien's face hardened, and he thrust out his lower lip.

“Young man,” he said, slowly, “you have played the devil.”

In an instant Henley sat tensely erect. A look of terror came into his face. What could

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have happened? And to his mind there came the answer: "Anything. Everything."

"About three days ago," said Doctor O'Brien, coldly, "I went into Doctor Eaton's office to have a talk with him. I had met him at the office of some other physicians that morning, and I may tell you frankly that I came to talk to him about you and about your case, for I am deeply interested in such phenomena. You were in the back office writing a letter and we were conversing in a low tone. Suddenly you left the back office and came up front with a pistol in your hand. You looked at him strangely and then stared at me. 'Why do you remain seated in the presence of the Sultan of Turkey?' you cried, and we both sprang to our feet. Then you dashed out of the office and bumped into a stranger in the hall. 'So!' you shouted. 'You will violate my sacred personage? Take that, and that!' And before we could reach you, you had shot him twice. We seized you, but while we were struggling with you, your weapon was fired again, and Doctor Eaton was hit in the shoulder. It was rather a nasty hurt, but not serious. We hustled you out the back way and into a cab, and by furious driving got you out of New York. In

fact, I brought you out at Doctor Eaton's request, while he remained to be treated and to face the music."

Henley sank back with a groan, and covered his face with his hands.

"Doctor Eaton says he is very sorry for you, but he thinks, if you get all right, you had better not come back. He asked me to hide you up here for awhile until things blow over."

Out of the heel of his eye he studied Henley's despair, and a feeling of security and satisfaction came over him. It was working easier than he had expected.

"I think," he said, and his voice was kinder, "that Doctor Eaton would be greatly relieved if he thought you had come back to your proper self, and had gone away somewhere. He is very fond of you, but says the trouble has taken too dangerous a turn. As for me, I have made a special study of cases like yours, and I do not propose to desert you. I believe that I can cure you, and I intend to do so. I have ability, I have wealth; and since you are a physician, you can be of considerable assistance to me here in some studies I am pursuing and some experiments I am making. No one can reach you here, and no

one knows you are here, except Doctor Eaton. You will have the best of attention without being at any expense; and, in addition to this, when you begin working with me, you will receive a salary that should be entirely satisfactory to you. To be very frank, I will state that you should, for some time to come, be under the care of a specialist such as I am; and, to be franker still, you should not be willing to go abroad in the world either among friends or strangers while still subject to attacks that would render you a menace to any community in which you might live. You would have no right to do this. You are young. You have ability, so I understand; and when you have been under my care for some time, you may look forward to a future of health and happiness entirely free from a return of your trouble, and you will have been able to put some money aside. The first time the attack came, you seemed to suffer only from an aggravated form of amnesia, but this last attack was accompanied by delusions of grandiloquence. This indicates, as you of course know, a progress in the disease and for the worse."

He leaned forward, and caught Henley just as the latter seemed about to collapse.

"Now!" he muttered under his breath. "I believe I have overdone the thing. I wonder if it has all slipped back to the Henley business again."

But he was soon reassured, for, when Henley had somewhat recovered, he rolled on his face on the bed and groaned.

"Don't tell me any more about it!" he pleaded. "And don't leave me here alone! Talk to me for a little while of other things! I want to get my mind away from myself."

Doctor O'Brien ordered brandy, gave his patient a stiff drink, and then, in a spirit of bravado, began to talk of himself; to talk of things, too, that Henley would have known, but of which Doctor Rufus Baker was entirely ignorant. He described the house, the grounds, the people, and told of how he came to make the purchase.

"Three years ago," he explained, "I was rotting in a prison in Portugal, wrongfully charged with a felony. I had conceived some theories which, if correct, were entirely at war with the church of the country and with the experience and dogmas of the medical profession. I delivered a lecture before a college of physicians, and was promptly expelled from the association. I pamphleted my theories

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and was then, on trumped-up charges, thrown into prison, and held without trial and without opportunity for or hope of trial. One of my pamphlets fell into the hands of an American woman, a Miss Van Ness, who chanced to be travelling in the country at that time. Either she believed in my theories, or else she believed me innocent of the charges against me. In any event, she succeeded in having my jailors bribed. I escaped to Spain, and thence to Mexico.”

He had watched Henley closely at the mention of the name “Van Ness,” but the latter had given no sign that it meant more to him than any other name. With increased security he continued:

“In Mexico, I travelled for some weeks, intending possibly to settle there. While going through a mountainous part of the country, the party with which I was journeying was attacked by Yaqui Indians, and most of the members were killed. There was a young American with us who chanced to have a splendid rifle, plenty of ammunition, and an abundance of courage. We darted off through the brush together; and, as the Indians followed us, riding recklessly up, he dropped behind a rock, and I saw him turn five of

them out of their saddles as calmly as though he were shooting partridges. The running fight kept up for some time, I being armed with a good revolver and he with the rifle, and then he stumbled, rolled from a cliff, and broke his leg. I carried him on my back for nearly two days, but at last he could no longer stand the journey. I saw in the distance a small village and, after hiding him and making him as comfortable as possible, I left the rifle with him and went down for aid. I secured some stimulants, returned with a number of men, and we made a litter for him and carried him down. He was almost entirely without funds, but I stayed there and treated him and nursed him, paying the expenses myself. I had something like twelve thousand dollars at that time, most of which was in bank, in the City of Mexico. At last, one day, when he was much better, he called me to him, had me close the door, and began to question me.

“ ‘Have you got any money?’ he asked. I thought the question rather strange, but nevertheless answered him truly. He told me then that when I had left him to go to the village he had chanced to look down at the soil, and also scratched some moss from a

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rock. Then he had taken out his knife and made further investigations.

“ ‘The whole mountain-side is full of gold,’ he whispered. ‘Full of it. Millions of it.’ ”

“He explained to me that he was a prospector, who had gone rather late to Alaska and who had failed there, but said that he was under contract with another party on half shares, and that the contract still held good. I was doubtful; but, when he had entirely recovered from his hurt, we investigated again, carefully and fully, even to the extent of secretly drilling, and found that he was correct. I furnished the money, we bought the land, and opened the mine. There is nothing like it in Mexico.”

Here Doctor O’Brien slapped his leg with satisfaction, and drew long and heavily upon his cigar.

“I owned one-fourth,” he continued, “Harlow owned one-fourth, and the other shares were for a man whom no one could find. Harlow died of fever, and left a will which stated that he was without relatives, except this man who grub-staked him. Until I find that man, or rather until that man is found, I am receiving the entire output of the mine. It is worth millions, for we bought up the en-

tire mountain-side. I don't care so much for the money itself, but I do need it just at this time, but only for what it will bring me. I have fitted and am fitting this place up for my experiments; and when I am done, the world will ring with my name, and Stephen Harlow will be glad that it came into my hands. Then I may look for the other man."

Henley had listened to the story with an air of abstraction and almost indifference. His mind was on other things.

"Do you suppose," he now asked, "that Doctor Eaton is badly hurt? Are you sure that it is not serious?"

"No!" said Doctor O'Brien, curtly and rather angrily; and, turning, he pushed a button. A servant came and he gave certain orders.

"Bring writing materials!" he commanded.

When these had been placed upon the table, he motioned to Henley.

"Write a letter to Doctor Eaton!" he directed. "I will see that it reaches him." And, after some argument, Henley took up the pen and wrote accordingly, as Doctor O'Brien suggested.

"After what has happened, I think best to go away. I am entirely myself again. I

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thank you for all you have done for me, but know that words are too weak to express anything of what I feel. I shall never return to New York, and I hope you will bury the past. I cannot take the chance, and you cannot afford to have me take it. Good-by! God bless you!"

Doctor O'Brien now wrote, but did not show Henley what he was writing.

"Your friend has been strong in the resolution to go away. Probably there are ties somewhere that, since coming to himself, he remembers. Of course, you are deeply attached to him, but in his present self you are as much a stranger to him as I. He left a note for you this morning and then disappeared. He left one for me, stating that he wished to be entirely alone in every way, as his plans were definite and satisfactory."

Doctor O'Brien placed both of these notes in his pocket.

"This is best," he said, and then turning directly to Henley he concentrated his mental powers to the last degree.

"And you will remain with me here?" he asked. "You will stay and help me under the terms I proposed?"

"Yes," answered Henley, without hesita-

tion, and all other thoughts seemed to slip from him. And then he continued, almost mechanically:

“I will stay here and help you and will not go back to New York. I will not write to Doctor Eaton again.”

After a few minutes' further conversation Doctor O'Brien shook his hand in confirmation of the bargain, and arose to leave.

“I will be back shortly,” he said, “and then we will go for a walk, and I will show you the place and introduce you to the people.”

He closed the door; and, as he walked down the hall, he smiled and struck his hands together sharply.

“It is all running smoothly, and the game is mine,” was his thought.

CHAPTER TEN

IT was necessary for Henley again to make the acquaintance of the members of the household; and, to Mademoiselle Doubrovec's astonishment, he spoke to her in a French which, while halting, was yet quite capable of being understood.

Even now, Doctor O'Brien gave him but little time apart from work and instruction. He was conducted into parts of the building he had not believed to exist. There were basements, cellars, and underground passages; and in them he found curious machinery, of which he knew nothing. There were great wires that led into the house, trailing away across the Jersey hills to various electrical power-houses. There were masts at the rear for wireless telegraphy, and, in a library that was kept apart, and for Doctor O'Brien's own use, were works in different languages on astronomy, electricity, and electrical machinery, and a dozen kindred topics.

For some days Henley was interested. He

studied the books given him for that purpose, and he studied such machinery as was explained to him. But thoughts of his position and of his past were continually with him; he began to grow more and more silent, and his interest weakened to the point of utter indifference. Doctor O'Brien noticed this and expressed concern as to his health. And then one day he laughingly said to his niece.

"You, Vassilka, are to ride with Doctor Baker! It is the custom of this country, and you are to show him the highways wherefrom you daily return with glowing cheeks and unmatched eyes."

Henley had known only of her coming and going. He had frequently heard a clatter of hoofs, and turned to see her bend under a low-hanging branch as her mount sped toward the outer roadways, which he felt were forbidden him. "Were they not searching for him for that horrible crime committed down in New York?" he told himself. "Was it not necessary that he keep entirely in-doors?"

One evening she had sung for him. Quaint, queer things they had seemed. And there had been that weird, barbaric song—"My Grandfather's Knives"—the knives that went wandering out into the night to bury them-

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selves in a human heart for vengeance' sake and returned at early morn, tapping against the window-pane.

But Doctor O'Brien quieted his fears, and one afternoon he and Vassilka went out through the trees, riding along the wide road toward the north, until they reached a spot where it ran through miles of woodland belonging to some great estate.

Here, in the bright light of day, her beauty seemed more complete and more brilliant than ever. Henley, as they talked, wondered at her gentle eyes. Beneath his breath, he toyed with her name—"Vassilka!" Looking into her eyes, and whispering her name, it seemed to him that it must have been fashioned for her, and for her alone.

There were few memories of other women, in the five years of his life as Doctor Baker, that afforded him more than passing regrets. Behind the blackness of that other life lay—he knew not what.

Many times during those five years he had pictured his past. Sometimes he had been a country boy; sometimes he dreamed of city streets, and awoke to wonder. Visions of brothers and sisters, a father and mother, confronted him, but the faces were fleeting and

changeable, and he knew that these were but dreams.

And then, too, he dreamed of sweethearts; fair girls that met him on village streets. There were orchards with hammocks and swings, and blue eyes looked out to him with such a message, such a story. And there were the parlors of the city dwellers, rich with their carpets and furnishings. There were white figures that came and went with smiling faces and laughing eyes. And there were great staircases down which they came—the happy couples from the dance—and he watched them wander through palms and evergreens; and there, too, was he, and there, too, was she. And who was she?—sometimes tall, sometimes petite; but, dark or fair, she fitted only with the dream of the day.

To Henley, these pictures had at times been well-nigh maddening; for, mingled with them, came other dreams as well—dreams that he feared were recollections and not fancies. He pictured a quiet fireside, a woman who came with glad face, holding out her arms—a child with his eyes, his features, and his coloring, that toddled in with wonderful stories of the day just passing away.

Who might know? Who, what, and where

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had he been?—he, the fatherless, the motherless, flung into the busy world full armed to fight his battles, even as Minerva had sprung from the brow of Jove.

For this reason he had, in a great measure, avoided women, and had buried himself with his books and his work.

How he had acquired his knowledge of things he did not know, for he had no recollection of any book. He had heard two waiters in a restaurant one day speaking French. He understood what they said, and knew that the language was French, but where he had learned this, and how, he did not know.

But this afternoon, he put all this behind him. He was heartsick of worry, heartsick of sorrow; and he would throw it from him and be with this Bulgarian girl, with never a thought of yesterday, and never a fear of tomorrow. She darted away and he clattered behind, admiring her splendid horsemanship, but admiring still more the picture that she made dashing along the road.

They paused at last at a stream where their horses drank.

“Ah, Monsieur,” she said. “But I would that there were mountains in every land! It is not that I would be shut in as one who

dwells in a tiny valley, but there is always the something beyond, the ultramontane of the world. And then, too," she continued, looking about, "there is the majesty of nature and the changing scenes for the eye. They never grow old, the mountains, but are as young as the generations that come and go at their feet."

Henley smiled a little sadly.

"Yes," he said, "but I have dreamed that it would be fairer still to view a land from sea to sea as one might look on life and say: Yonder, at the east, the light began, and there, at the west, some day it will again depart."

The girl looked at him quickly. There came to her the memory of what her uncle had told her, and she felt a pity for this man so young and yet so broken and wrung with the very mystery of life itself. And thinking again, there came, as opposed, the picture of her uncle—strong, brilliant, and strange, who chose to take of the open gifts of nature, and make of them a dread and a menace.

She began to speak of her uncle.

"We have always wondered, mother and I," she said. "We could never understand his mind or disposition, but ours is a strange blood, the blood of mingled races."

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And, riding along, she told of a gallant Irishman, one Felix O'Brien, who had distinguished himself in the English service in the battles of the Peninsula against Napoleon. He had been a student of medicine, had this Felix O'Brien, until the stories that came from the Continent had driven him from his studies. He had quitted his country and flung himself into the service with as light a heart and as fair promises of return as ever came from an Irishman bound for the wars.

But there, in Portugal, an Irishman's fate had befallen him to make his home where his heart had found a mate. And then had been the second generation, the eldest son, who had taken as a bride the blue-eyed daughter of a German Count, a great, shaggy-maned giant, who had believed strongly above everything else in brains, broadswords, and Bavarian beer.

And even here, with this dark beauty by his side, riding across the Jersey hills, Henley was thinking of Doctor Sebastien O'Brien. He felt that there was a purpose in the building of that strange house beyond the simple whim of an exiled student and philosopher. There had come to him, out of the books that had been given into his hands, the feeling

that there was a steady purpose underlying the gathering together of such expensive machinery and its installation with such fixed and ready judgment.

And there, too, was the chemical laboratory wherein Doctor O'Brien worked so frequently — studying, experimenting, and proving.

Only that day, in proving some experiments of Sir William Ramsey, who had arrived at the startling result of changing copper into lithium, he had turned, saying: "Lithium, sodium, potassium, copper, rubidium, silver, cæsium—gold!" He had paused a moment for his words to sink deeply. "Such, Baker, is their dream! They have learned that alchemy was not a folly, but they have not learned to ascend. They have learned only to descend. And what if they should succeed? What if, after all, they should arrive at what is believed to be the impossible? What will be the result? Nothing other than that man has done what man dreamed he might do."

He had come and was standing before Henley, his great frame bowed forward, and his face intense with earnestness.

"Let them play their child's game, Baker,"

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he said. "Let them revolve in their little successes. I have a dream, and enough of proven facts on which to base it, that, if they but knew, would turn the hearts of the greatest scientists cold with the terrible wonder of it." He drew back with a sneer. "I have paid the penalty once," he said. "I will give no theories to the world again. I will bring down on my head no war of chemists and medical men to thwart and rob me, but when I go out and tell the world, it will be of a thing that is done."

They rode silently along now with the memory of this in Henley's mind. The girl must have weighed his thoughts.

"My uncle is a very sane man," she said, lightly. And then smilingly added: "At least in the selection of a pony," patting her horse's neck as she spoke.

"Do you know what it is all about?" he asked, pointing across the open fields to the oaks that were clustered about the great building. And there came the quick rebuke.

"I have not been asked to learn," she said. And then, repenting at his downcast look, she added, "but the hour for your studies will have passed when we return. We will dine; and then, because you are pensive and just a

wee bit sad, the Mexican girl, Angelica, who came yesterday, shall play and sing for you."

But he raised his eyes pleadingly.

"Let me rather hear," he asked, "the Eastern songs, the mountain ballads, and sing for me again 'My Grandfather's Knives.' "

She laughingly shook her head.

"You must win to the first oak," she cried, and dashed away, while he followed in swift pursuit. "Alas!" he exclaimed, as they drew rein at the gate. "The picture continually ahead of me tempted me to lose. How could I dream of winning, knowing that then I would have before me only the bare, bald road."

"Monsieur is better for his ride," she laughed. "He is even affecting the little talk of the boulevardier."

And he himself wondered at the lightness of his mood.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

HENLEY walked down from his room one evening, tired from the day's study and work. The whir and hum of machinery had been in his ears all through the afternoon, while, in a great chamber, to which his presence was forbidden, Doctor O'Brien had labored at some secret and unexplained thing, the solution of which seemed to be the end of all his endeavors. It was to that room that everything tended—machinery producing certain results delivered these results through connection with that room. Glancing through the swinging door, Henley had seen great retorts and electrical furnaces, and there, too, were pneumatic tubes connecting with the room from which was to be sent and received the wireless telegraphy. In it he knew that Doctor O'Brien often labored alone until far into the night, and following these nights came days when he did not see his employer at all. A note would be left for him that he was not needed, and frequently there would

be no message of any kind. During these periods he sometimes heard the booming of the organ, and there would come, too, the faint sound of the deep baritone voice singing some strange sad thing, the words of which did not reach him.

He had recently seldom been with Vassilka, on the horseback rides and the growing melancholy of Doctor O'Brien affected him strangely.

But to-night he sought to throw it off. A spirit of carelessness came over him. "What was yesterday?" he asked himself. "And what will come to-morrow?" And he told himself that there was none to care, and that even he cared but little. "But to-night—" And he paused on the landing of the stairs and looked out at the stars. "To-night is a thing that I hold in my hand. To-night is mine in the house of this mad chemist, this madder astrologer, and I will go down and bask in the light of a Bulgar maiden's eyes."

Henley laughed softly to himself as he made the turn and descended the flight to the hall.

"Mexicans, Bulgars, Portuguese, wireless telegraphy, chemistry, astrology, big whirring electrical machines, and, amid it all, I—walk-

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ing about with a winking mental light—yesterday a Turk, to-day a physician and student, and to-morrow—oh, well, to-morrow the earth will be spinning on her way toward the great sun Arcturus; to-morrow, at the stroke of twelve, midnight, perhaps will come three long calls on the wireless, the calls from men for attention—the calls that have in the past come to all the stations of the world, and which the men of every station disclaimed having sent—the calls from Mars, perhaps, the calls from only God knows where, the calls that have made a receiver start as he heard them and a cold feeling of awe creep over him. Ah! This will be perhaps to-morrow. But to-night is the hour and the time for the fool and the wise man, to-night——”

And a change, too, appeared to have come over the girl. In the music-room she was kinder, her eyes were softer than he had before seen them, and there was a something, an indefinable atmosphere that seemed to include him in her thoughts and feelings. And Doctor O'Brien was also kinder until the feeling of the unnaturalness of it all passed from him, and he felt fully and intimately a part of a thing that was and should be. He became gay with the gayety of the others, and,

when Doctor O'Brien seated himself at the piano and played, he found himself looking into the girl's eyes with an unspoken understanding between them. He moved back the chairs and danced with her; and, in his heart, he felt the gladness of youth and almost of happiness. He did not remember having danced or having learned, but there was not the least hesitation on his part. All that he knew was that her eyes had seemed to call, and he responded. And then there were songs, and he stood by the piano listening to her and turning the leaves. A violin in its box lay upon the piano, and, unthinkingly, he took it down, removed it from the case, and touched the strings with his fingers. A strange feeling crept over him as his fingers grasped the instrument tighter. Still, with that growing feeling and without realization of his act, he tried the strings with the bow, tightening here and loosening there. The room was quiet, the girl was turning the leaves without attention, but Doctor O'Brien was watching him, for there had come from the touch of the bow a certainness indicating the musician that had caught his quick ear. And then, as in a dream, Henley raised the violin to his shoulder. His lips moved slowly,

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and he spoke in a low tone, as one who sees a picture and calls the name. "Marguerite am Spinnradd," he said, speaking the German words clearly. And then he began to play softly, staring across at the wall:

Mir hat er es oft gesagt, wann ich ihm hab geplagt:
"Du wirst noch manchmal um mich weinen."

And there came to him the vision of a fair face, of eyes that were soft and blue, and that looked tenderly into his own, somewhere, somewhere, a face that he knew, a girl's face that he knew, trustingly, pleadingly, ah! so pleadingly, almost he could fix it, almost——

Nun kommt er nimmer mehr, dass macht mein herz
so schwer;

Nun muss ich weinen, binn so alleine.

Doctor O'Brien had risen, and was approaching him quickly.

"Baker!" he called. "Baker!" And the bow slurred on the strings, and the melancholy and hopeless little song of "Marguerite at the Spinning Wheel" was jarred and drowned in discords. Henley looked about him in a startled manner.

"What is it?" he asked with a rather foolish smile on his lips. "Did I play? I was

thinking— Do you know, I was thinking that perhaps, somehow— The violin felt in my hands as though I used to play on one a little—” His tones were apologetic as Doctor O’Brien took the instrument from him. There was a hard look on the latter’s face, and he frowned heavily.

“I don’t like it!” he said, abruptly. “I will not hear any one torture the air with a violin.”

Vassilka arose, and was staring at her uncle. Her breast was rising and falling rapidly.

“It is my violin!” she said. “And if I choose for him to play——”

But Doctor O’Brien turned upon her quickly, with a smile that was smoothly threatening.

“But you do not choose, *ma chérie*,” he said. And Henley saw the heat die from her face. He sat down without resentment and began to speak, addressing her.

“It wasn’t so much the playing,” he said. “I seemed to see things differently, and I had a grasp and a feeling of something that I ought to remember.”

But Doctor O’Brien broke in.

“We will go down to the chapel,” he said. “I will play on the organ. It is the greatest of all instruments; it is *the* instrument.”

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And it seemed that all were pleased at the suggestion. They arose and, with the arising, the incident of a few moments before began, in a measure, to pass from their minds. They walked down a long-arched gallery and, turning to the left, came to a flight of stairs. The girl lingered behind, and, at the steps, Henley took her arm to assist her to descend. She leaned a little toward him, pressing downward, and he stooped to catch her whisper:

“I am sorry! I will slip the violin from the house and, sometimes, when we ride, you shall play for me.”

Henley felt his hand tremble. Something warm stirred his heart; and, lifting her fingers, he kissed them reverently.

“You are very good to God’s derelict,” he murmured.

“God has no derelict,” she replied, in a gentle tone. “The good, the ill, it all works true, and we are all just children — His children.” And they went down with the others into the chapel, where Doctor O’Brien switched on the lights. The electrical connection was made with the organ pump and he began to play.

But, beautiful as the music was, and strange

as it seemed to see those strong brown fingers passing so softly over the keys, Henley felt out of touch with it all. The chapel, too, seemed out of place, set here in this great house that was once to have been a church. But Vassilka had been here often before. Services had been held from time to time, a priest coming up from New York who spoke Spanish and who preached for the Mexicans.

The feeling which had possessed Henley, in the music-room above, of fitting into and being part of a congenial whole, had left him. Doctor O'Brien, through his music, seemed to be carried by his thoughts far away. Henley sat and studied him; and, though the man's strong personality and mind still bound and held him, a feeling was growing in his heart that was near to resentment. The incident of the violin had not touched him with anger at the moment. He had hardly felt what a child might feel at being justly chided by a parent. But now it was creeping upon him, and he wondered why he had permitted the act to pass unquestioned.

"He had no right," he argued with himself, "to treat me in such a manner." He remembered that, when he had been practising in

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New York, he had been rather quick to resent the slightest insult. He remembered striking a cabman one night in an argument concerning an overcharge for the fare. He reasoned that he must have been a man then of at least ordinary physical courage, because his memory told of things that he had done and places he had visited that required it.

The music from the great organ filled the room; and, as Henley listened, half indifferently, he turned his eyes to the girl. She was looking at him with the deep sympathy that a woman might feel in her heart toward an afflicted child. It was pity purely, and only pity that touched her, and he felt surging to his heart a sense of shame. Was it pity for that he, a man, had been so weak? Was it pity for that he was here in this household, a nothing? Was it pity for that he was what he was? Or was it pity for that he was not what he once had been?

The music ceased and, with sudden resolve, he sprang to his feet and walked over to Doctor O'Brien.

"Things are not as they should be with me here," he said loudly. "Whatever I did in New York I will pay the penalty for. If my mind was such that I thought myself the

grand Turk or the Czar of Russia, or any one else, and committed a crime, let the laws of New York State be applied to my case. I leave you in the morning.”

Doctor O'Brien listened to his fiery speech with a cold sneer. His anger arose and his face purpled. He stepped down to where Henley was standing. The women stared breathlessly as he reached out and caught Henley by the shoulders with his great hands and shook him viciously. Not a word escaped his lips, but suddenly he threw Henley from him with a sarcastic laugh. He clapped his hands together loudly.

“Dance!” he commanded. “Dance, you dim-witted fool!”

A groan escaped Henley's lips, and he stretched out his arms and shuddered.

“Dance!” cried the Doctor, advancing nearer. And, slowly, Henley began to dance. “Dance! Dance faster, and faster!” shouted Doctor O'Brien, clapping his hands together.

Madame Doubrovecs, her face deadly white, arose and went faltering down the aisle toward the doorway leading to the stairs. The little fat sister-in-law sat and smiled with a foolish smile of one seeing an unusual thing, but

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hardly understanding. But Vassilka Doubrovecs stood trembling, her hand at her heart, and her whole face quivering.

"Now then," called Doctor O'Brien, "you will cease dancing! You are a soldier bold, and you will march!" And he called the commands with a snarling "hep! hep!" as Henley, with head erect and staring eyes, footed it about the room.

Suddenly, a cry broke from the girl, and she launched herself forward as a mad thing, striking her uncle with her hand.

"It's murder!" she shrieked. "It's murder of a man's soul and his manhood!"

Doctor O'Brien caught her, and held her from him. He seemed, by an effort, to overcome a great anger. And then he spoke, his voice being husky in the attempt to be gentle.

"Ah, ma chérie," he said, "your uncle forgot himself, and he has loosed on this man the gift of the god of the million suns, the great thing known as mind."

"Gift of God!" she exclaimed, seeking to break from him. "It is the gift of hell!" He released her, and she stood watching Henley, still marching about the room. She went to him and caught him by the arm, but

he brushed past her, still holding his head erect and calling the steps, "hep! hep!" She turned and, sinking down on one of the benches near her, covered her face with her hands and sobbed. Doctor O'Brien laughed until she arose and walked toward him with faltering steps, stretching out her arms.

"Oh, if he is yours, my uncle!" she cried. "If you have that great power, spare him, spare him for my sake!" She sought to take his hands, but he laughed at her.

"Oh, he is mine!" he cried. "Body and soul and shifting brain."

And then he sought to tease her.

"And what do you want me to do with him, dear child?" he asked. "What disposition would you make of such a gallant army man? See his noble carriage! Watch his manly stride! Methinks I see the vanquished foe fall back and cry 'Enough!'"

"You are a brute!" cried the girl. "A great big brute, and a coward, too."

But Doctor O'Brien laughed again.

"What do you want me to do with him, then?" he cried. "What would you have for this marionette? I might get another, but I like this one because he has no past. Ah! I know why you pray for him now. He is that

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wonderful thing—a man without a past. He has kissed no girls, he has drunk no wine, he is a cherub sweet from the nursery. this soldier bold.”

“Give him to me to do as I will!” she pleaded. “Give him to me and give him back to himself, and let me lead him to the door and let him go out into the world free—free from you to make his own way.”

Doctor O’Brien pulled loose from her clinging hands.

“Halt!” he cried, and Henley stopped in front of them.

“Great soldier!” said he, in a mocking voice. “It is the will of this fair maid that you be no longer a man of war. Be a gallant man! Kneel and kiss her hand, and then—” he waited until the command had been performed—“forget!”

Henley arose, still holding the girl’s hand, and looked about him in a dreamy way.

“I thought,” he faltered, “that you were playing and—” here he looked about him—“the others are gone.”

“Yes,” said Doctor O’Brien in a low voice. “The others have gone.” A revulsion of feeling seemed to have come over him, and he spoke kindly to Henley.

"You are not feeling very well," he said. "But now," and he touched his forehead, "you are feeling much better."

"Yes," repeated Henley, "I am feeling much better."

Vassilka came and caught him by the arm, drawing him with her toward the door.

"Come!" she said, and she seemed to shiver. "Let us go!" And they left the chapel, Doctor O'Brien shutting off the lights and closing the door. His step seemed heavy as he mounted behind them, and he stumbled more than once. Vassilka turned when they reached the upper floor, and found his face heavy with gloom. He called her to him and whispered:

"I am very sorry, my child, that I have acted so," he said. "It was my mood, and I have strange moods, for I am very lonely. Not lonely physically or in spirit, but lonely in thoughts, lonely because I am treading the loneliest mental paths that man ever trod. I get a little desperate over it and rather reckless, and I want you to kiss me forgiveness. I will be better to him; and, when I have finished my work, with his help, I will let you lead him to the door and so let him go into

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the world, and I will fill his hands with gold. I need him now as he is; but, then I will help him, and maybe cure him. Now, kiss me good night!"

"Not to-night," she said. "To-morrow, perhaps. I don't know. It is such a terrible thing."

She turned from him, and he stood looking sadly after her, his big shoulders sunken, and his arms hanging at his sides.

Vassilka paused and looked back, and then, as they stood thus, the one asking and the other wavering, there came a call from without, a dog barked, and this was followed by the sound of a shot. A second and then a third came rapidly. Doctor O'Brien rushed to a room on the eastern side of the building, and throwing open a door, turned on the lights. A great lever was hanging on the wall. He raised it, making an electrical connection; and Henley and Vassilka, who had followed him, saw a great flare of light from without as hundreds of globes strung through the trees about the place were suddenly illuminated. They saw, too, the fleeting forms of three men and a woman, and heard the calls of a Mexican ordering them to halt. Doctor O'Brien moved another lever, and,

glancing out of the window, moved a needle on a dial. They saw then that a searchlight was playing from somewhere on top of the building, and the four people were plainly shown in the great sheet of light. Suddenly one of them turned. He was a tall, heavy-set man with a heavy mustache. He drew from his pocket a revolver and began firing rapidly. There was a sound of falling glass, and the great light above the building was dashed out as though some one had thrown a covering before it. There were faint red flashes as the current sputtered, and then Doctor O'Brien broke the connection, leaving only the incandescent lamps in the trees. Another shot came from the distance, striking the window-glass with a sharp sound, and burying the ball in the wall behind them. Doctor O'Brien sprang to the switch in the room, turned it, and they stood, except for the lights from without, in darkness.

A heavy voice called from the distance: "Come out! Come on out!" And then there was mocking laughter.

After a few minutes they heard the sound of galloping horses. The party was following the road to the north.

Henley turned on the light.

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“They have gone now,” he said. “And I wonder who they are?”

He looked at Doctor O’Brien’s face and saw that he was trembling, and that his face was almost ghastly.

“I don’t know,” he muttered, tremulously. “They are Americans, for they spoke English. I thought it was Ramon Silva come up from Mexico. I have been expecting him.”

Henley stood looking steadily at Doctor O’Brien. He placed his hands in his pockets, and his lip curled with contempt.

“Do you know!” he exclaimed, “you are a damned coward!”

Doctor O’Brien started, but did not turn to him. He drew a handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped his face with trembling hands.

“Did you hear what I said?” called Henley.

“I did,” replied Doctor O’Brien, “and you are partly right in your statement.”

Henley walked from the room, the girl at his side. He had been speaking English, and she had not understood.

“What did you say to him?” she asked as they walked down the hall. Henley told her, but she shook her head.

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“I think you are wrong,” she said. “He is a very brave man, but—” And she looked up at him. “I am glad that you told him that. I am glad it was you who could tell him.”

CHAPTER TWELVE

HENLEY had been studying half the morning, studying with interest, but with a growing wonder as to the purpose of it all. In connection with the wireless telegraphy, he had learned the uses of the electromagnetic receiver, the tuner, the induction coil, and all of the mechanical and electrical devices which the latest inventions had made more nearly perfect. Leaving these studies, he had come to the deeper study of the electrical waves, and from that to the study of ether. It was all very well to know that an electrical wireless wave has a speed of one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles per second; that it is carried through the medium of the ether instead of the atmosphere; that the sending by wireless is at its best on a dark, still night, and that sunshine and fair weather reduce its radius in great measure. But why all this? What had he or Doctor O'Brien to do with it all? He tossed the papers he had been studying aside, and sat

with his hands folded, thinking. Doctor O'Brien came, after a few minutes, and looking at him smiled.

"It is a wonderful study," he said. "Now take the case of the steamship *Minneapolis*, which sent a message to the steamship *Etruria*, which was at the time something like seventy-five or eighty miles away. The message was received by the steamship *Carpathia*, over one thousand miles away. That was a freakish occurrence. It is not the matter of the wireless telegraphy which I care so much about. It is the deeper and greater study of the ether. Now that is one of the larger and deeper studies which I am pursuing."

Henley shrugged his shoulders.

"It is too much," he said. But Doctor O'Brien laughed.

"You do not care to learn," he answered. "These things are the greatest studies of all, for they are the studies of life itself. You do not know, perhaps, that humanity owes its very existence to gravitation. It does. The sun derives its energy through shrinkage, and this shrinkage is entirely due to the action of gravitation between the innumerable atoms of which it is composed. We have the heat, and therefore life."

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"I presume you would make of me, then, a sun-worshipper?" sneered Henley.

"It is as reasonable," said Doctor O'Brien with spirit, "as any worship you may offer me in return. But I have found a truth deeper and greater than any living man—so great that I can only understand that it is a truth. Take Herbert Spencer, or Lord Kelvin, take them all; and, reason as they might, not one could prove that the ether is a solid, is a liquid, is a gas, or is an utter void. It has been said to be heavier than steel, and, again, that it is lighter than utter nothingness. This is one of the things that I have studied, and am studying; and I have found the beginning of the end of human knowledge."

His eyes lighted, and he drew himself up straight and filled his deep chest.

"Doctor Baker," he said, "I am, to-day, the greatest man in the world."

Henley arose with a laugh.

"And to what end?" he asked.

"To hold converse with the beginning and the end. To talk with death, to learn the deepest secret of life, and, even as Moses was said to have done, to hold thought with the great *I AM*, and unriddle the great riddle of even thought itself."

Henley paced for some minutes up and down the floor, smiling as one smiles who hears the boastings of a madman. At last there grew into the smile a touch of sadness, and even of sympathy. He sought to change the drift of the conversation.

"And this Ramon Silva," he said at last, "this man whom you seemed last night to so greatly fear, is it because of the fear of him that you have men to guard this place with dogs and guns?"

Doctor O'Brien nodded.

"Yes," he replied. "I must complete my work. I cannot afford to die. I do not know that I greatly fear death, except for this thing. I must live to work, and to complete my work, and then he may come if he will."

He spread out his hands as though he were making a statement of a simple and natural thing. "I have even thought of having him assassinated," he said. "He is too closely guarded, and I have been unable to bring my mind to the action. He drove me out of Mexico, and I fear that he will follow me here. I have been receiving messages every day by wire as to his whereabouts, but I have heard nothing for ten days."

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“And why should you fear him?”

“Because of a girl.”

Henley turned in astonishment. The thought of an entanglement with a woman on the part of such a man as Doctor O'Brien seemed so utterly absurd that he remarked upon it.

Doctor O'Brien shook his head, and sat down. “It was not that,” he said. And then he folded his hands reminiscently.

“I went one day into a dirty little cabaret in Mexico for a glass of wine. It was a small, poorly kept place, with an earthen floor and heavy tables. Flies buzzed at the windows, and there were tangles of spider-webs in the corners, but they had to serve with their drinks the one thing that I wanted that day, ice, brought from the mountains. The girl who served the drinks was pretty. She seemed to fancy me, and talked to me about herself and about the people of the locality. I spent half an hour quite pleasantly, and then, from time to time, I returned to the place. She told me on one occasion of a certain young woman of high family, *Señorita Rosalia Silva*, who was strangely affected with trances and visions which came upon her at varying intervals, and quite suddenly. The stories

which she told me served to stir my curiosity. I found that the girl was looked upon by the people and the priests as an almost supernatural being, for in these trances she had visions of things to come, and had foretold natural events that did, in fact, afterward, come to pass. I went to her people with my credentials as a specialist, told them that she might possibly be cured, and undertook the treatment. I became enthused in the case, and my work came to be a study of the phenomenon rather than of the patient; and, unfortunately, the local physicians could not agree that my efforts had been entirely in her physical and mental behalf. She died, and Ramon Silva, her brother, has sworn to kill me. I learned some very interesting things, but I made some mistakes, and these are now, and have been, following me in the form of attempted vengeance."

He suddenly arose, and began to pace up and down the floor, working himself into a mighty rage.

"Do you suppose," he cried, "that I propose to allow myself to be cut off before my work is completed, to satisfy the blood-lust of a Mexican ranchero?" He laughed snarlingly. "No!" And his eyes glittered as he raised

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his fist. "I have prepared for him. Those who came last night I attempted to follow, but could not. I sent men along the north road who examined the highway until the hoof-prints were lost on the hard ground. I learned that three men and a woman had passed on horseback, and that they were conversing in English. It was probably some party impelled by curiosity to enter these grounds, or else it was a band of thieves; and, meeting with the reception they did, they will hardly come again."

"But Ramon Silva," he cried. "That is the man whom I fear. Once I have been knifed, and three times I have been fired at by men whom I am satisfied were his hirelings."

He pushed a bell.

"I will send to Mexico. I must send!" he exclaimed. "What is five thousand dollars? What is ten? It is nothing." And he snapped his fingers. "If Ramon Silva can be found, he must be quieted." He laughed harshly.

"It seems a little strong, eh, Baker?" he questioned. Then he sobered suddenly, and spoke as though to himself.

"When man deals with Deity itself, what

matters the breath of a simple man?" And, turning, he walked from the room.

"You may ride to-day, Baker!" he said, as he paused at the door. "I have a matter that must be disposed of. It is pressing."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE afternoon was clear and sunshiny, and the road to the north lay white and alluring before them. They rode along at a slow pace, and there was, for awhile, but little conversation. There was much in Henley's heart that he wished to tell her, but she seemed so quiet and little desirous of speech that he remained silent. Once or twice he saw her glance quickly toward him and then look away across the fields and toward the distant woodland that closed at last about the road.

"What is it?" he asked, gently, reining his horse nearer.

She sighed, but made no reply at first. The horror of the previous night's scene in the chapel was upon her like some dream of a dreadful thing done in a gloomy cavern by a monster to a man. "Yes, a man," she was thinking. His calm blue eyes looked out at her with such a friendly frankness. He seemed such a real living being whose voice

was gentle and kind, and that he should be what she had seen, that he should be what she had been told, through no fault of his own! Her eyes filled with tears, and she bit her lip and turned her face away. There was a little sob that broke from her, and, in desperation, she urged her horse forward, calling to him.

"Come! Let us bury the thought of what lies behind!" And he followed quickly, galloping until her mood seemed to change and she slackened speed.

"I have a treat ahead for me," she said at last. "I slipped out this morning while you were deep in your studies, and brought the violin. I have left it at the house of an old man who lives near this road on a great estate. He looks after the woodland and keeps people from cutting down the trees. We will get the violin, and you shall play."

"But I do not know that I can," he said.

"We shall find out; and if you can, then we shall leave the violin there, and you must come and play when you will, and what you will, and it will not disturb my uncle."

Henley's face seemed troubled.

"He does not like it," he said in a low voice. "He does not want to hear a violin."

"Yes," she coaxed, "but here we are far

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away, and it will not disturb him. I brought it for that purpose, and you will do that much for me. Think how often I sing for you!”

He consented at last, but with no belief in his ability to play. The thought haunted him, lying somewhere just beyond the reaches of his mind, that he had once played. “But that was last night,” he decided. And then remembering the discord as he stood with the instrument in his hand——

“You will make me spoil the day for you,” he laughed, “for I cannot play.”

Suddenly, in the woods near them, they heard a loud whistle, and a man in hunter’s garb came strolling along, a cap pulled over his eyes, and a big cigar in his mouth. He stopped and removed the cigar.

“See anything of my dog down the road?” he asked.

Henley stared, and then explained, speaking French to the girl.

“We have not,” he replied. “We saw no dog.” And they rode on.

“I have seen that man before,” Henley said, quietly. “His name is Kennedy. He lives in New York, and is a detective.”

“And you think?” she questioned.

"He wants me. I shot some people down there, so they tell me."

"And what are you going to do?"

"Go back whenever they come for me."

They walked their horses quietly along. Vassilka's face was flushed and her eyes were bright and hard.

"I think," she said at last, "that civilization is a crime. It is made for women and children and weak men. I would not want to be driven in a corner by a man like that when I was guiltless before God. I wouldn't want civilization to take me by the throat when the hands of my soul were clean, and tell me, 'Such is the law that is written in red for the helpless.'"

"What would you do?" he asked.

"I would fight," she cried, bitterly. "I would go down with my teeth set."

Henley smiled, sadly.

"Yes," he said, and quietly flicked at his boot with his riding-whip, "but suppose the God of mystery had laid His hand upon your brain, and, as a madman, you had shed the blood of your fellow-man. Would you not go back? Should you not go back? I was reading the other day of the changes in the brain-cells of a human being, and do you know that

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when a man commits a crime in this country, and is duly tried after the delays of the law, that man does not go to the chair, nor is that man hanged. It is another man. The brain-cells from which sprang, or upon which played the thought that drove him to crime are gone; they have been replaced. It is the mind that they convict in this country, and not the heart. It is always written in the laws 'with intent,' but the lawmakers have not reached this point as yet. They have covered my case to a certain degree, for any physician in New York would go upon the stand and swear positively that I am entirely guiltless of that crime."

"They would free you, then?" she asked, quickly.

"No," he said, shaking his head, "they would not do that. They have another system in New York State. They would come to me, whose brain is as calm and as unclouded as your own, and to whom life and freedom are both sweet, and they would place me in the asylum for the criminal insane." He hesitated, and then smiled again. "And there I would stay," he said, softly, "for I have no money, and it takes much wealth to attract attention there. It is very deep that men are

buried there; so deep that, in thinking, others think of hell quicker. It is nearer, and not quite so hopeless."

"You must not go," she said, quickly. "My uncle brought you here, and he must protect you." She paused. "You can go to Mexico. You can go to some other land. It is suicide. It is doing no one any good. You can change your name. You can be physician at the mines."

"But you must remember," he smiled at her, "that I have not escaped."

"But you can escape," she said. "You can ride forward, and I will ride with you, and we can circle to the house and not return by this road. To-night, in the darkness, ten men can ride or walk from the house, and no one can tell who they are. You must not let them take you and—" She ceased speaking, and looked quickly up the road. A woman was coming on horseback, and alone.

"She is pretty," said Vassilka. "I have seen her twice, and I think she lives or is visiting at the home of the people who own all this woodland. She spoke to me this morning, and before I thought I said '*Bonjour, Mademoiselle!*' just so. It seemed to surprise her, but she replied, quickly, in

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French, '*Bonjour, Mademoiselle. Il fait du beau temps aujourd'hui!*' It surprised me, too."

In a few seconds they met the girl, and she was, as Vassilka had said, a most attractive figure; but, as she reached them, her eyes seemed only for Henley, and her face paled visibly.

As Vassilka spoke, Henley raised his hat, and they rode on. He said nothing.

"She does not look so well this afternoon," remarked the girl.

"I hardly noticed," he replied. "I was thinking of other things, and besides——"

"And besides?" she queried.

He laughed.

"There can never be two beautiful women on one road."

After a few minutes' riding the young woman who had passed them reined in her horse toward a man at the side of the road. She nodded her head.

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"Yes," she said. "And I met him in Boston once."

"Then," replied the man, "you might just as well give up, for I have decided that you are wrong and I am wrong, for I can't make

the story fit together. There's too big a gap in it. A man might be as gallant as you please for a woman's sake, but he would not meet her twice like that and not know her, when he had lived on an island with her for three days, had been shipwrecked with her, and married to her, and then pass her like that. We might just as well give up; and, besides, I don't feel like bein' shot at by them dagoes and Mexicans any more. When you come from Paris, after somebody had put in them 'Rambo' advertisements, I felt sure I could work it out, and I did; but now that we have found the man, I can't help but believe that it's all a mistake. You can see through a mustache and a set of French whiskers, back to a face you used to know, but a man can't suddenly meet his own wife, after five years have passed, without jumpin'. It's the third degree of third degrees wives is, and I am stumped."

"It is he without a doubt," she replied, stubbornly. "You are not a quitter, Mr. Kennedy, and you must stay until we figure it out."

"But what are we to do about it?" he questioned. "We can't arrest him, and we can't get at him for all them dagoes. If there was

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white servants on the place I could reach him; but you poke your head in that monkey-house and some of them people will blow the top off of it." He paused meditatively. "Ain't there some way you can sting him?" he asked. "Ain't he got some peculiarity you can reach, or ain't he got some mark, or scar? If he's got some scar or something I'll take it on myself to attack him and throw him down and look at it."

The young woman's face reddened.

"I don't know," she said. "He never told me."

"Oh!" exclaimed Kennedy. "I forgot. I beg your pardon."

They were quiet for some moments.

"I tell you what is the only thing to do," said Kennedy at last. "We might just as well throw off the mask and come right down to brass tacks with this man. He ain't seen me with you, and I will just go and brace him. I'll call him off from that young lady, and just have a few minutes' talk with him straight. You believe there's something wrong the reason he went away and disappeared. There ain't no use in humiliatin' yourself about it if you are wrong. I'll just follow him up and tell him that I've got a

warrant for him for wife abandonment, and he'll do all the talkin' that's necessary. You'll get the whole story."

She agreed at last, and they hurried back up the road, he walking beside her horse.

"I tell you what you do," he suggested, finally. "You gallop back to the house, have a man to change the saddle on this horse, and send him back to me, and I'll wait near the fork of the road."

"No," she replied. "I'll send another. They have seen me on this one, and I don't want them to know just yet. You need not tell them anything about me. He may not have recognized me, for I know that something is wrong."

She galloped quickly away, and when Kennedy reached the fork of the road in the thick woods, he found a man waiting with the other horse.

"Says for you to hurry back. She's waitin' for a report," said the man, as Kennedy climbed heavily up.

"Tell her I'll come right back, and with some showin'," said Kennedy, straightening himself in the saddle. "This was my suggestion, and I'm goin' to get results."

After some time Kennedy returned; and,

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as he entered the side road, he looked back. His face was heavy, and he seemed very angry. The young woman was waiting for him at the edge of the lawn, and her face fell as she saw his expression.

"You didn't see him," she said, quickly.

"Oh, yes, I did," he replied. "I seen him and I see them, but I more particularly seen her."

"What do you mean?" she asked, as he dismounted.

"Well," he explained, slowly, "I rode up, and they see I was followin' them. I got tired joltin' along on this horse, and, since they see I was followin' them, I says to myself, 'What's the use foolin' away time since it's got to come to the pinch.' So I just called to him, 'Hold on there, stranger!' and they both stops, 'I want a little talk with you,' I says to him. And before you could wink your eye, that young woman went down into somewhere in her ridin' skirt and outs with a gun. She didn't ask no questions, and she cuts down at me as slick as you please. I pulls a halt. I just backs out as fast as I could come; and, lookin' back, I see them two gallopin' up the road like a thousand witches was after 'em."

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"I wonder," said the young woman, "if that girl—" And she broke off the sentence.

"You needn't wonder about that girl," said Kennedy, with a rough laugh. "I don't know nothin' about her, and I don't know nothin' about him, but I do know that she's takin' care of him, same as England takes care of Gibraltar. She's seen fit to declare war and throw her lead at me; and whenever they chunk lead at Bill Kennedy, they mighty near quit having such a thing as the gentle sex, so far as he is concerned. I'm goin' to drag that gentleman up here if I have to blow up that big fort to get him."

"Perhaps," said the young woman, thoughtfully, "she would not have shot at me. Perhaps we made a mistake. I should have gone."

"There's where you are dead wrong," said Kennedy. "I think you are the very one she would take pleasure in shootin' at. I think he's locoed, and she is fast gettin' in the same fix."

"I will try some way," she said. "I must find out positively."

But Kennedy shook his head.

"We got to trick 'em now," he said. "They are on to me."

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“I will await the cablegram,” she replied. “If it comes as I expect, then the matter will be ended.”

“I think,” answered Kennedy, “that if you get the right information, things would be easy, except for one thing.”

“And what is that?” she asked.

“It has got black eyes and hair, and rides a sidesaddle, and has a sort of independent way,” he answered. “It’s her.”

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

AT about twelve o'clock on the day following the meeting between Henley and Kennedy, Doctor O'Brien came from the secret chamber where he had been working, and dropped into a chair near Henley. His face was pale, and he looked haggard and worn. He leaned back and closed his eyes, something he had not done during the previous night. Henley laid aside his work and watched his teacher. The big dark hands were lying listless, and he seemed utterly weary and broken. He lay thus for some time, and at last opened his eyes and sat looking at Henley in a dreamy way.

"You did not play on the violin yesterday," he said at last, and very slowly.

Henley started.

"No," he replied, "but I do not think that is your affair if I do not disturb you." And then he added. "Did you read my mind that you should know of the violin?"

A slow, tired smile of indulgence crept to Doctor O'Brien's lips.

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"No," he answered. "My niece took the violin from the house, I was informed, and I guessed the rest." He paused. "And you feel safer to-day than you did yesterday afternoon when you were so panic-stricken, do you not?"

"No. But I do not know what I can do. I was minded to go to New York and give myself up; and, since that was my intention, I cannot see why I should be afraid to be taken there, but I nevertheless am. You have promised, if they should come, to protect me in some of the secret chambers that you say are built in this house. I would feel safer in Mexico."

"And I," replied Doctor O'Brien, "feel much safer out of Mexico. I have worked all night, and I have a great deal of work to do yet. The work is of such a character that my mind must be absolutely free from thought of other things. I cannot afford to worry, and yet I am worried."

"What troubles you?"

"Ramon Silva was in New York yesterday. He found that he was watched, and my men lost him." He sighed deeply.

"I do wish," he said, "that he would let me alone for a few months, and then I would be willing to meet him, give him a knife, and

take my bare hands and break his back. I am getting along with my work, getting along slowly but surely, and I want to be entirely care free. This place cost me much more than a hundred thousand dollars, and he is partly the cause of it. I don't care for that part so much. I would have wanted a place like this with Mexicans, who are faithful to keep others from interfering with my work and prying into my secrets, but I don't want them to have to kill any one and get me in trouble with the New Jersey authorities. If any one is killed on these premises at night, he will be put away that same night." He waved his hands.

"Oh, well," he sighed, "I must dismiss it. Let us have something more cheerful to-day. What have you learned?"

"Nothing," replied Henley.

"Your answer is entirely correct. You have learned nothing." He looked moodily at the floor. "And perhaps I have succeeded but little better." He raised his eyes suddenly, and looked at Henley intently. The latter stirred, shifted, then arose; and, walking over, picked up a piece of paper, rolled it in a ball, tossed this in a corner, and returned to his chair.

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"Why did you do that?" asked Doctor O'Brien.

"I don't know," was the reply.

"Because I willed that you should do that very thing, and communicated the thought to you. What do you call that?"

"Telepathy?" questioned Henley, in reply.

"What do you call it when one vessel communicates with another across hundreds of miles?"

"Wireless telegraphy."

"What do you call it when the machinery of a wireless plant records letters and words that have sprung through no human agency?"

"It is the action of what is called atmospheric electricity."

"Whence arising?"

"I do not know."

"And why does the sun and why does the earth and why do the planets each revolve from the west toward the east?"

"I do not know and neither do you," replied Henley.

Doctor O'Brien laughed softly and good-naturedly.

"My boy," he said, arising and beginning, as was his custom when engaged in deep thought, to walk up and down the floor, "I

sometimes wonder whether, after all, my studies will not be in vain. I wonder whether, if I succeed as I hope, men will take my announcements and my proofs as being more than a day's sensation. I believe that most men consider themselves wise, but down in their secret hearts they want to be fools. I believe that truth frightens them. I believe that they are afraid to understand. Given a dark cathedral, a little incense, a testament of terrors and threats, a mouthing priest, and from these things they build a god and want no more. The priest tells us that Faith is the greatest of all things, and I tell you that Faith is the very least. Each being that walks the earth has Faith. It may be the Faith of the Christian, the Mohammedan, the Jew, or the man who cries *agnosco*; there is no infidel when the word is brought down to its last meaning. Take the lowest being in the lowest dive in your worst city, and he has Faith in the established order of things. He knows that his body must die. Beyond this he cries *agnosco*, or he cries not at all. Tell him of the Christian hell, and he shudders, or he laughs. Tell him of the transmigration of souls, tell him of any creed as written of men; and, though he may laugh, this is no

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sign that he has not Faith—such Faith as I tell of in its wider meaning.”

“And to what does all your speech tend?” interrupted Henley.

Doctor O’Brien turned on him fiercely.

“To give men their God; to give them the God that is with you and with me; that is here and there and through farthest space beyond the wandering sweep of the faintest stardust; to unbind their feet, and clear the cells of their brains; to face them with the awful simplicity of it all, and cleanse them with knowledge.”

He turned and looked into Henley’s face.

The latter was staring in wonder.

Doctor O’Brien’s demeanor suddenly changed.

“And what do you think of me?” he asked.

“I think you are crazy,” said Henley. “If you believe what you say, then I judge you to be an insane man.”

Doctor O’Brien stepped forward and sneeringly hissed.

“And what is insanity?”

Henley began to give him the stock definitions as laid down by the authorities, when Doctor O’Brien laughed.

“Listen!” he said. “I heard in New York

the trial of a murder case. I heard great physicians testify to fit the law books about a lesion of the brain. I heard the lawyers shout it at the jury. I heard the judge's charge, and not a blithering man-jack of them knew what he was talking about."

"And do you know?" queried Henley.

Doctor O'Brien seemed taken back for a moment. He started to speak, hesitated, and was silent.

"I am learning," he said, at last. "But I know enough to know that they do not know. It is coming to be recognized now that in most cases of insanity there is absolutely no lesion of the brain, the matter and formation remaining the same. This is not the case where there are delusions of grandiloquence. Most cases of insanity are caused by the presence of some toxin affecting the action of the brain. Men know hardly more now than they did a hundred years ago on this subject. They are kinder to those affected, and that is all."

"Which brings us back to my case," said Henley. "I have not been able to work today. I can do nothing. I must leave here."

"And I say," said Doctor O'Brien, "that you will stay here. I have promised you

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protection. I need you, and you must give up this idea. When I have completed my work, I will reimburse you handsomely for your help; and with this money you can go where you please and start anew."

An electric bell buzzed and Doctor O'Brien pressed a button in return.

"I hope it is news of Ramon Silva," he said. "I have been trying to get him into trouble down in New York, and it is possible that my men have found him and have wired me."

A servant came and knocked on the door. Doctor O'Brien opened it and received an unstamped envelope.

"The messenger who brought it has gone," said the servant.

Doctor O'Brien resumed his seat.

"Humph!" he exclaimed. "A woman's writing." He tore open the envelope and began to read. Henley saw an expression of astonishment grow upon his face, succeeded at last by a look of impatience, and then he became thoughtful and remained silent. At last he looked squarely at Henley.

"Baker," he said, and then he paused. "Baker," sounding the name heavily, "you remember the morning you were ill and

we sat in your room, and I told you of my troubles in Portugal?"

Henley nodded.

"I had believed at that time that I had discovered a cure for leprosy. I announced, from prison, the discovery of this cure in the hope that it would procure for me a release, or at least a trial. I told you that I escaped from the prison and fled to Mexico, and that my escape was brought about through the assistance of a Mrs. Van Ness. This Mrs. Van Ness, who was an American, had become enthused over some of my writings, but the story of my discovery was what touched her particularly. She and her daughter contrived my release through the bribery of an official, and, by his aid, the bribery of my prison guards. They did this for the sake of humanity, they said. I had accumulated a very valuable library, and owned a small piece of property. This was sold, and my attorney forwarded the money to me in Mexico. It has all cleared up in Portugal now, but I do not want to go back. I intend never to return, for I am as much Irish as Portuguese, and as much German as either. But now I have a note, and it is a note that I must answer. I will read it to you. It is from the daughter.

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GREENLAWN IN THE PINES, GREENWAY, N. J.

My dear Doctor O'Brien:

Through the strange decrees of fortune, I find myself your neighbor, at least for a short while. I am stopping with my friends, Colonel and Mrs. John Hollister, at the above address. I believe that you will remember me. I know that you would remember my mother, who was taken from me in Paris two years ago. I have found out by very chance that you are living near me, and I hope that you will find it convenient to come to see me. I have often wondered how you have fared in your new life, away from Portugal, and hope that you will be able to tell me that the world has learned to know and understand you better.

Sincerely yours,

[Signed] ELSIE VAN NESS.

He looked up after reading and regarded Henley intently, but the latter's expression had not changed. Evidently the old days were to him still as an utter blank.

"And what became of your discovery for the cure of leprosy?" asked Henley, seizing upon the previous conversation rather than upon the letter.

"Did you ever hear of Koch's great discovery for the cure of consumption? Do you remember the announcements? Have you not read of the great sensation caused at the

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time?" He paused. "What became of it all?" he continued. And then he spread his hands. "So it was with my discovery. It came to nothing, or almost nothing." The letter slipped to his knees.

"How much we scientists are like Poe's poems," he said, thoughtfully. "How musically sweet and full of life and hope they begin, and how they die away into ashes and grief. You remember the one—

Gayly bedight,
A gallant knight
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed along,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

"And then there comes the story of disappointments, of fears that gather and remain—of despair and defeat—

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado. "

He laughed softly and wearily, and again made the little motion with his hands that

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had now become so familiar to Henley. He sighed gently, but there was a sneer upon his lip as he quoted again:

“Over the Mountains
of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow—”

He sighed once more. “That is the way,” he said. “To-day I am in spirit over the Mountains of the Moon, but the Shadow is always at hand.”

Was it acceptance of defeat, this waving of the hands? Or was it the thrusting away of foreboding? Henley did not know. He only knew that a strange and powerful being sat before him, whose wonderful brain wrestled and strove with mighty and measureless thoughts, and to be in close relationship with whom impressed one with the judgment that he must be classed as either a maniac or a demi-god. And Henley had come to the point of doubting. To be with him did not mean that there should be two personalities in a room. There was a radiation from him that enveloped his companion. He had found that he could not study while in the same room with Doctor O'Brien. His thoughts wandered from the subject before him, and certainly and unerringly they centred upon the man,

and there frequently they seemed to cease. He did not analyze, he did not weigh. His thoughts seemed to gather upon the other and to hold themselves upon him, wavering and wavering; and at last he would come to the realization that he was thinking of nothing at all. His mind was simply at rest.

Doctor O'Brien took up the letter and read it again. Then he pressed a button and called for pen and paper suitable for the dispatch of a reply. He wrote rapidly; and, when he had finished, he read aloud what he had written:

My dear Miss Van Ness:

Your note was indeed somewhat of a surprise to me. I greatly regret that just at the present moment I am engaged in experimental studies of great importance, and my work is in such shape that I cannot possibly leave it without undoing the work of months. For this reason, it is entirely impossible for me to leave the house. I am indeed sorry that when you did me the honor of paying me a visit some nights ago, you did not announce yourself, as I fear that one of my employees treated you and your companions rather rudely. As soon as it is possible for me to leave my work, I will hasten to meet you and greet you.

Sincerely,

SEBASTIEN O'BRIEN.

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Henley sat thoughtful, and then he started.

“Do you know,” he said, “we met that girl on the road yesterday. Do you think, do you believe she was with the men who came here, and one of whom fired at and broke the searchlight?”

“No,” replied Doctor O’Brien, and his tone was very positive. “I have taken advantage of that occurrence, and I wrote the note to mystify her. I would be most glad to see her at any other time, but I have no time to waste just now on social calls or calls of appreciation. I have my work, and besides—and this is my true reason—I don’t dare venture ten steps away from this place until I know just where Ramon Silva is. If you look out of the windows you will always find men occupied about the grounds, picking up fallen twigs, raking leaves, killing time, and—watching, watching for Don Ramon Silva y Ybarra, the damndest, most quiet-mouthed, and relentless man that ever disturbed a worker’s dreams.”

“And why do you not send your niece?” suggested Henley. “You surely will not send that note after what this girl and her mother did for you.”

“Pardon me,” said Doctor O’Brien, shaking his head. “I know more about this thing

than you do. I have all the troubles I want, and more. I shall send the note."

He arose and, leaving the room, said, "I will get some rest now. I will send the note and end it."

Henley continued his studies. After about an hour's time, he arose and looked out of the window and saw a Mexican riding easily up the roadway to the house. It was the returning messenger. After but a minute's waiting, he saw the man ride around the side of the house and disappear in the rear, where the houses for the employees were located.

"It was pretty rough," he was thinking.

But upstairs Doctor O'Brien, lying upon his bed, was reading a short note in a woman's hand, and which was as follows: "We misjudged you in Portugal. I understand you now. I make no appeal. What is mine, I take. If you understand at all, you will understand fully. If you do not understand, then come to see me within twenty-four hours, and I will explain. If you do not, then it is war, and you will understand later."

Doctor O'Brien sat up and puzzled over the note for some minutes.

"Does she want Henley?" he pondered. "Does she dream that I am holding him?"

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Does she think that others can change him from Baker to Henley and give him back to her? Oh, well!" he concluded, "I have bothered with him, and I need him; and, furthermore, that damned Ramon Silva wants to find him to get me in trouble about the interest in the mine. My work is worth more than forty Henleys, or Silvas either for that matter, and it's Baker he is, and Baker he stays. I am the first man who understood his case, and the only man who understands it now."

He summoned his special servant, and, when the man came, directed him in his duties.

"Tell Gallagos that the order I gave concerning foreigners is changed. It includes both foreigners and Americans. No one is to enter my grounds without permission, except members of my household, and the word for to-night is *Coahuila*."

He lay back and thrust the note under his pillow. Suddenly he laughed.

"War!" he exclaimed, contemptuously. And he laughed again. "War!"

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

ON a log in the woods near Greenlawn in the Pines sat Kennedy and his partner, Scanlon. The morning was bright, and the air was crisp, yet warm enough out of doors for comfort.

Scanlon was not known at Greenlawn, and had notified his partner of his presence through a messenger sent from the village. Kennedy had directed the place of meeting, and, after a few minutes' conversation, they had sat down to talk the matter over at length. Scanlon was holding something back, and Kennedy knew it.

"Come, clean!" he suggested. "You tell me you have picked up a bunch of money and tied us up with a contract, and now believe you have got us in a mess. What is it?"

Scanlon frowned, and gnawed at the end of his cigar.

"Do you know," he said, bitterly, "if it wasn't for this cussed business of money I believe I could be honest."

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Kennedy snorted.

“Aw, hell!” he exclaimed, in disgust. “You remind me of a Captain of Industry at prayers. What’s eatin’ on you? Spill it out!”

Scanlon sighed.

“Well, Bill,” he said, slowly, “you’ve been knockin’ around up in this country for some days, and you know you are the head of the business. I am all right on an assignment, but you beat me on the business line. When a party comes in with a roll, I take the cash first and do the thinkin’ afterward.”

He let this explanation sink in while Kennedy waited.

“Well, two days ago, a tall, straight foreigner come in the office and calls for you. You are not there, so I answers the call. He wants to whisper, so I takes him to the well. I makes up my mind that he is the real thing, and fairly lined with greenbacks. He says to me like this: ‘Will you take a job that is straight?’ I says to him, ‘Sure I will.’ He says: ‘I have got two jobs.’ And then he goes on and tells me. It seems he is lookin’ for a man by the name of Arthur Travers Henley. I almost jumps when he says that, but I keeps my face tight. He says this Henley is wanted as an heir to property in

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Mexico worth millions. I asks him where our look-in comes on, and he reaches for his roll and peels off five hundred. He says to me just like this, 'Bill,' he says, 'Take that for expenses. Go to work and find me that man, and I will give you five thousand dollars. I will put the money in any bank you choose.' Before you could say your name I receipts him for the five hundred, calls in the lawyer, who writes the contract, the money is put in the hands of a bank president, and this foreign guy is back in the well for another whisper. When he begins to talk, Bill, I comes near shakin' to death with my heart beatin' at the thought of the easy money. He says: 'I want you to find me one Doctor Sebastien O'Brien. Here is five hundred for expenses, and, if you find him, I will give you one thousand.' And then he explains that he is not so particularly anxious about the Doctor O'Brien, because, if he can find this Arthur Travers Henley and take him down to Mexico, he will be able to chisel this Doctor O'Brien out of a gold mine, and this will come mighty near bringin' him from cover. I figures the thing out. I been gettin' your reports mentionin' Henley and mentionin' Doctor O'Brien, and I says to myself, this is seven

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thousand dollars comin' easier than somebody handin' you the mornin' paper."

Kennedy wheeled, and grasped his partner's hand.

"You don't mean to tell me!" he exclaimed, "that the stuff is salted down and them's the two jobs? Why doggone your hide, you're a peach."

But Scanlon shook his head.

"I got to thinkin' about it later," he said. "Now here's where we stand. We took Henley's money to find out about that Miss Van Ness. Then we rigged up that 'Rambo' business, in the Paris *Herald*, which we works through Morgan and Kelley, who steers her into us. Then we takes her money to find this man Henley. Now we take the money of this Ramon Silva to find Henley and find that Doctor O'Brien. We have represented every side of this whole blamed thing, and now I find that Jim McAllister, who was in charge while I was out, accepted a retainer from a party representin' this Doctor O'Brien to shadow this man Ramon Silva; and, if we ain't sold our clients out every way my mind turns, then I'm the biggest liar that was ever in the detective business, and that is sure lyin' some."

Kennedy gasped, sat with his mouth open

for a moment, and then awkwardly found that aperture by feeling for it with his cigar.

"What we goin' to do?" he asked at last.

"Oh, I'm goin' to keep the money," replied Scanlon, stubbornly. "We ain't seen that much flow in in a bunch for ten years. I start out with that proposition decided, but I come to you for the balance. I don't know what to do unless we fool 'em all to some place, lock 'em in together, where they can talk it out or fight it out, and we can skip."

But Kennedy shook his head.

"Each one of 'em wants to stay under cover and find out about somebody else," he said. "Why didn't you make Jim give the man his money back and cut that out?"

"Well, I'll tell you about that," replied Scanlon. "When this Ramon Silva got through talkin' he reaches down in his pocket and pulls out the prettiest Mexican opal pin you ever see, and sticks it in my tie. He does that in a real swell way, too, and I says to him whether there is anything more I can do for him, and he says yes. He tells me that some detective's been shadowin' him for weeks, and he wants to lose 'em. I tells him that is dead easy. You know our old passage through Lumley's that we used to use when

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we thought some crook had a lookout? Well, I takes him through there after changin' his rig. I throws him into a cab, takes him around the turn, brings him through Goebel's warehouse on Chambers Street, hits the elevator, crosses five roofs, down through Schultz's bar, into another cab across the bridge, and lands him in a tight little hotel in Brooklyn. I blows in back by way of Jersey City and, the day's work bein' over, I pulls right for home. Yesterday mornin' Jim fails to show up and leaves me word he's out on the job for Doctor O'Brien, tryin' to shadow this Ramon Silva. Now, what we goin' to do?"

"Have you seen Jim?"

"Sure, I seen him yesterday afternoon."

"What did you tell him?"

"I didn't tell him at all. I just told him to loaf on the assignment he had, keep his mouth shut, and wait for instructions from me; and I am here for his instructions. What shall I tell him?"

Kennedy arose, walked up and down for some moments, and then sat down. He was pulling fiercely at his cigar. He arose again, and once more sat down.

Scanlon waited expectantly.

"It's an awful mess, and we'll lose face in

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New York if it ever gets out," groaned Scanlon. "But," he added, stubbornly, "that's a big bunch of money."

Kennedy turned to him and was now smiling.

"I got a friend," he said, "and he's as straight as any man I know. There was a party of about thirty men, clerks and business men and general decent men belonged to an organization, and we had a dinner. This young man is workin' on a big city newspaper, and he has charge of the want column and the column of advertisements for lost and found. The law in New York says that if you find an article that you believe was lost and you have means of findin' the owner, you must do it; and, if you keep it without tryin' to find out, you must be convicted the same as if you had stolen it. Now one night, accordin' to the story this young man tells, he was sittin' alone in his office when two ads. come to him, one in the mail and one over the 'phone. A lady had lost a necklace of matched pearls worth twelve thousand dollars. She offered a reward of two thousand dollars. Somebody else had found this same necklace, and wanted to put in an ad. to that effect. Now, what does this young man do? He tele-

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phones the lady that lost the necklace, tells her about the other ad., and gives her the address of the party findin' it. He feels good about bringin' them two together. He says he thought deep over it for some minutes before he 'phoned and called her up. Do you know what that lot of thirty men said?" he asked, contemptuously. "They wobbled a little bit on the way they would have gone about it, but every single man jack of them told him he was a damned fool. He looked sort of hurt for awhile, but I saw it gradually creep in his face and settle, and I knew just what he would do next time. Public opinion is for money first, and so am I."

"And what must I do?" asked Scanlon.

"We will put everybody on the secrecy list. Keep Jim huntin' for Ramon Silva; go down to Brooklyn and bring Silva up here and hide him out at some farmhouse. Leave the thing to me. This whole country is strung with telephones, and we can talk all right. I am goin' to mix this thing up like a plum pudding, and get an answer. I am tired of draggin' a gun around here and crawlin' through these woods. This thing has got to come to a finish."

"Do you know," remarked Scanlon, "I be-

lieve this Ramon Silva has got it in for that Doctor O'Brien. He carries a big gun, and he looks pretty strong and steady out of the eyes. I am lookin' for him to try to do the doctor up."

"I got a few designs along that line myself," said Kennedy. "I ain't never laid eyes on him, but they do say he is some man to tackle."

"Well," said Scanlon, at last, "I'll bring Silva up and hide him out until you are ready. Now, what's the programme?"

"To tell you the truth," laughed Kennedy, "I ain't got none. I am like a young and pretty widder—I'm just waitin'."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

HENLEY was wandering about the grounds with Vassilka. For two days they had not left the place, and she chafed much under her uncle's restrictive commands.

"I want my violin," she said, "and I want you to play." They had recently come to an understanding about his "case," and the subject frequently came up in their conversations.

"I am afraid to attempt to play," he said, quietly. "It seemed to take me away from myself. I don't know what there was in the other life. I don't know whether it was full of pleasures or of unhappiness." There was a little despairing note in his voice. "I don't know what I want," he said, plaintively. "It is good, in a way, to be here, and it is more than good to be with you."

She found a place under an oak where the leaves had been gathered by the winter winds, and they sat down, facing the sun and the warmth of the south.

"I know," she said, gently. "I understand.

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He is cruel to you. He sacrifices everything to the one thing—his science. I have wanted him to cure you. I have wanted him to bring you back to yourself, but the trouble is that you do not know how many times you have changed. You do not even know how many lives you have lived.”

And there came back to Henley the lines:

For he who lives more lives than one,
More deaths than one must die.

He quoted them to her, and she turned her head away; and he saw that her lip trembled and she pressed it tightly with her teeth, still looking away.

“If I only knew,” he said, despairingly. A great heartache had come to him. He had been so wretchedly lonely, and so fearful and yet so hopeful of the past. Every thought that had come to him of woman he had stifled. There had been faces that appealed to him, he had seen a smile, the poise of a head; he had heard a laugh that rang softly upon his heart. But he had always turned away, hurried away in fear of that unknown past that might at any moment rush upon him with a story written that nothing could blot out.

“You are very brave!” she said at last.

“In the lives that are lived about us, we can only see the commonplace, perhaps, and sometimes in the books we read we say, ‘There is nothing in this or that character. I have seen it in life. It is that miserable little fool down the street who thinks he can paint.’ Or perhaps we see a drunken swaggerer parading the floor of a cabaret, and we speak with contempt, not knowing that the future shall say, ‘It was the immortal Francois Villon.’ There are two men in this world, each of whom is living before me a tragedy, you and my uncle, Sebastien O’Brien. You are brave and steadfast; and as for him, he is the most unhappy man in the world.”

“I had thought,” said Henley, “that he is entirely happy; that he is so deeply engrossed in his work that it is in itself happiness.”

She smiled and shook her head.

“Listen, my friend,” she said, “do you know why you are not working to-day? Do you know why he came, white-faced and red-eyed, to tell you that you were free for the day?”

“He worked last night,” replied Henley. “He is fatigued. He had need of rest.”

“Last night,” she said, in reply, “I was afraid for him; I was afraid he would kill

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himself. I saw it in his face and in his eye. I knew that an hour, a terrible hour of depression was on him, and I knew what he would do. He went to the chapel and played upon the organ and sang those melancholy things you have heard him sing. At last his hands quit the keys, and he buried his face upon his arms. I had followed; and, opening the door slightly, listened, for I was afraid for him. After awhile I heard him sobbing bitterly and brokenly. He arose and, going to the stand, opened a Bible and read from it aloud. He knelt and prayed, the most fervent prayers that could come from a man's lips. After some time he arose and read again from the Bible. I saw him close it at last, and he stood looking about him, his head sunk upon his breast, and his face buried in gloom. And then a horrible sound came from his lips, and I knew that he was laughing. He caught the Bible and hurled it from him across the room. It struck the wall with a crash and fell to the floor, and from his great throat he mocked and blasphemed the what he called 'pen-made God,' the God whom he cried out that man had fashioned after his own image. He reviled the God of wars and threats and petty tribal bickerings. With wild eyes he

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raved until he seemed an utter madman, and then, at last, he paused and lifted his arms above his head, and a great heartrending sob came from his throat."

"He is mad," whispered Henley. "He is utterly mad."

"No," she said. "He is not utterly mad. He has two things that feed upon his heart. His mother was a good woman, and a very religious woman. She taught him, and he believed. He was very religious. Now he has found out things that do not seem to him to fit. He has a great brain—a wonderful brain. His science has seemed to him to shatter all right to a belief in the God of the Book, and yet this God is so deeply set in his heart that he is never free, even though he claims to be, to follow his science to the last sweet or bitter end. In this great agony of soul he strives to free himself from the one or the other."

"Where did you leave him last night?" Henley asked.

"He sank down upon his knees," she said, "and at last he fell forward on his face. I closed the door softly and left him alone, the loneliest man in the world."

For awhile they sat looking out across the

fields, watching the cows browsing upon the thickening grass. A crow flew overhead, loudly cawing, and they watched it flap its wary way over some distant trees.

"I must go," he said. "I must go as that crow flies, somewhere out across counties and states, somewhere toward the south."

"To Mexico," she said, almost in a whisper. "How I loved that land! To Mexico!"

His pulse beat quicker, and he felt a warm glow in his cheeks. "You have been so good to me," he murmured. "If I could only be certain, if I could only know that this is not to change."

He bowed his head forward on his knees.

"It is so terrible not to know even that."

She touched his arm gently.

"Weave me a story!" she said. "Build for me a past such as you would have it. Be as the poet Henley wrote. I have read but few poems in English, but I have read Henley's 'The Soul Captain.'"

"Henley," he repeated, "Henley." He brushed his brow, as though driving away something. "Yes, I remember the poem.

'I am the captain of my soul,
I am the master of my fate.' "

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“Yes,” she said, “be as Henley’s ‘Soul Captain!’ Weave me a story!”

He leaned back against the oak, and half closed his eyes.

“Down in Mexico,” he said, dreamily, “there is a hacienda owned by a man of means. There are palms and orange-groves, and there, to the west, is a forest of tropical tangle through which runs a stream, fresh and clear, from the mountains. The house is built about a court in which are flowers, and a tinkling, musical fountain plays all the whole day long. From the doorway one may look down to the great gates, and beyond them is a white road winding away down to the city, which lies two miles distant. The white roofs are visible over the tops of the roses; and, through the quiet air as the dusk comes on, there float the half-lost tones of the great cathedral bell. He stands there, this man, sure in his knowledge of himself. There is no day beyond which he may not go, even to the memories of his boyhood’s place upon his mother’s knee. There is no future that he may fear. There is the great, sweet, present beauty of the world about him.”

He was silent now until she turned to look at him.

“And is that all?” she asked. “And is that life as your heart would paint it?”

He turned to her, his face quivering.

“And do you not know,” he cried, “that I may not even build a dream?” He caught her hand and kissed it twice.

“There, and there,” he cried.

Her eyes were soft, and a moisture crept to and filled them.

“Why may you not dream?” she whispered.

“It is God who gives us dreams.”

And he kissed her hands again, softly and reverently, shaking his head.

“One may not dream when one’s very self is dead,” he said.

He bowed his head, and softly she placed her hand upon his hair, stroking it gently.

“But there is, above all other things, that one great faith, that one great hope; there is the Resurrection and the Life.”

He raised his face and looked into her eyes; his lips trembled. “Vassilka,” he whispered, “God forgive me! God help me! I love you!”

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

ELSIE VAN NESS sat in her room on the second floor of the Hollister home, looking out of the south window. Above the tops of the trees she could faintly see the steel masts for the wireless telegraphy which Doctor O'Brien had installed. It was definitely known that this was the purpose for which the masts had been erected; but why they had been placed there was a mystery and a puzzle to the people of the whole countryside, as well as to the dwellers in the little village of Greenway. There had been attempts on the part of several people to intrude upon the privacy of the property-owner, but these had been repelled with a brusqueness that had served to deter others whom curiosity had tempted, from putting whatever plans they may have had into execution.

The man, the house, the servants were as much apart from the people round about as though they had been walled in. Purchases were made in the village to some extent by

the head servant, who spoke English, but most of the supplies were shipped from New York, and were hauled to the place in Doctor O'Brien's own wagons. The architect had come from New York, the contractor from the same city, and had brought his own men with him; and, during the time of the building, Doctor O'Brien had been but seldom seen about the place. Even during this building, signs had been set up warning the public against trespassing, and the men who had worked as laborers knew no more about the ultimate uses to which the house was to be put than did the people of the little village.

All these things had been fully detailed to Elsie Van Ness by Colonel Hollister and his wife, who were old friends of her father and mother. William T. Van Ness had been a private banker, who had died when his daughter and only child was but a girl of ten, and had left to his family a considerable fortune, so invested that it had been easily conserved without reinvestment, and she had grown to young womanhood almost entirely free from care.

The meeting between her and Henley in Paris had been but a matter of chance. She had heard, during the evening, of a young

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American, a violinist, of such unusual talent as to attract attention, but who, when not playing, laughed at his own ability, and made use of it only for his own pleasure and that of his friends.

He was to play at a charity entertainment for the benefit of the many American girls who are annually stranded in Paris, and to whom our representatives are unable to give sufficient relief. She had not thought of going, but some friends had driven by in the afternoon and invited both her and her mother; and, having no other plans for the evening, they had accepted the invitation. There she had met him. She had heard him play, and then a Secretary of the Legation had introduced him to her as well as to many others. She had seen him once or twice after that in Paris, but he was not of her "set." And she had judged that he was not of her "set" because he did not seem to care. He went with people whom she knew but did not seem to quite "belong."

"Do you know," remarked a friend of her mother's, one evening, as the party sat at dinner, "this morning I saw that American violinist, Henley, playing tennis with two fat English girls. I was out driving, and stopped

to watch them. The girls galloped about as gracefully as two frolicsome cows."

"Yes," said a young man, "they are the Delraven girls. Their father is a Colonel in the British army. He served in Egypt with Henley's father. You know there were a lot of Americans who came over and received commissions from the Khedive after the war in America. The two men were very fond of each other, and we see but little of Henley, because there are so many doors open for him in England. Given his violin and the gentle pressure from England, and he could walk into Newport easily. Those two fat girls will each be presented at Court, so Mr. Henley, of Fourth Avenue, or Sixth Avenue, or Morningside Heights, or wherever his residence may be, is rather a little wise in his generation."

This had been the last she had heard of Henley, the last until they had chanced to meet on an excursion boat in Canada. She had recognized him, and at once placed him, but their acquaintance had been only a case of meeting in passing; and, not knowing whether he would remember, she had not spoken and he had given no sign that he remembered. In the early hours of the morn-

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ing, and during a storm, she had heard the loud ringing of bells, and the frantic blowing of two whistles. Then had followed a crash, succeeded by the sound of screams and the noise of hurrying feet, mingled with curses. The lights on the boat flared up and then went out, leaving her cabin in utter darkness. She attempted to open her door, but could not; and, after awhile, some one came and called to her and beat upon the door. She stood to one side, while the man drove it in with his shoulder. "It is Arthur Henley," he said. "Get into something, quickly! A steamer has rammed her nose in our side, and we are going to sink. The people are pouring off onto the other boat. You need not be afraid. It is all right, and I will stay with you."

Hurriedly she dressed herself, snatched a small satchel containing her valuables, and, holding his hand, groped through the darkness and fog to find a passageway; and, just as they reached the deck, they were knocked down by the impact of several people who were running toward the part of the boat where the other steamer was fastened in and endeavoring to extricate her bow from the hole into which it had been driven. Over and

over they had rolled. Her satchel slipped from her hand, and she clung to him tightly. Her body went through the railing; and, although Henley himself caught the railing with his free hand, he was unable to support their combined weight; and slowly, while he ground his teeth and strained, his grasp slipped and slipped until his fingers suddenly loosened and they splashed heavily into the water. When they rose to the surface he found that she could swim. The other steamer had, by this time, backed loose, but her own injuries were serious and the movement of her propellers had drawn both boats away from them. They called, and some one cut a small boat loose from its davits, and it splashed into the water near them. "We had better hold to what we have," he said. "We will cling to this boat, and they will come for us."

Soon a heavy rain began to beat upon them, the waves grew higher and higher, and all sight and all sound of the steamers were lost. They judged that many must have perished. At last, came the daylight. They attempted to clamber into the boat, but were unable to do so, as it had been broken at one place, and their efforts had served but to increase the amount of water it contained.

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They abandoned the plan as dangerous, and simply clung to the side, resting upon it as lightly as possible. It had drifted, and sufficed at last to carry them to an island and to safety.

And there the woman in Elsie Van Ness had sprung immediately to the surface, and she was all woman. All her bravery departed; and, as soon as her feet had left the water, she became as helpless and more dependent than a little child. Henley found a bottle, and, breaking it, made a sun-glass. He scraped out a lot of fibre from a hollow log, and made a fire which was soon of considerable size. He cut brush, and made a shelter for her around the fire, and, turning, said: "You must dry your clothing now! You will be ill unless you do. I will go and try to find something for us to eat."

She touched him on the arm. There were tears in her eyes, and her voice was broken. For a moment he listened, and then there was silence between them. They were alone, utterly alone.

"Don't!" he said, gently. "Don't try to thank me! Don't say anything! We were saved together, you and I. You are as my sister, and I am as your brother. I will come

back in an hour's time, and try to bring you something to eat."

He walked away, and, as he went, she could hear the water crunching in his shoes. She stood and watched him until he was out of sight, round a clump of bushes. Then she turned back to sit and stare at the fire.

During the day they went over the small island and found a deserted cabin, half rotted down. Henley repaired this as best he could, and prepared it for her. It was her suggestion that he should not leave the cabin, but that one should watch while the other slept. He did not refuse her request, and they labored together, bringing firewood, for she was afraid to remain at the cabin alone. And the second night, as he slept, she came and touched him on the shoulder. "Mr. Henley," she whispered. Then, "Arthur!" He awoke and arose, and silently she pointed to the doorway. He listened and heard a sniffing and scratching at the door, and saw it shake gently. What animal it was, he did not know. They stood together, and slowly his arm went about her shoulder, and he could feel her heart beat against him. Leaving her for a moment, he went to the fireplace, and drawing out a burning stick, he thrust it sud-

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denly under the door. There came a snort from without, followed by a scuffling sound as the animal withdrew. What it was they did not know, but Henley took some wood from the corner and built a fire upon the earthen floor in front of the weak door, and they watched through the rest of the night. The following day he made for each of them a spear, hardening the points by burning them with fire. That afternoon, as they were fishing along the shore, they saw a boat in the distance; and, by shouting, waving her underskirt upon the end of a spear, and by building a fire and covering it with green brush to make a thick smoke, they finally succeeded in attracting attention, and were rescued.

And when the boat was ready to leave, and the fishermen were waiting, she had asked for but two minute's time.

"I want to go back to the cabin by myself just for a moment," she had said. "I want just two minutes."

When she came out, she thrust something into her bosom. What it was, Henley did not ask. He had never asked, and had never known. He paid the fishermen; he purchased other clothing for them both, and they wired her mother that she was safe. Then it was

that the story reached the papers, distorted, headlined, and illustrated with all the fiendish cleverness that talent could suggest. After this, Mrs. Van Ness wrote her note to Henley.

Through all the years that had passed, Elsie had never understood. Through her mother's influence, the divorce had been obtained, the papers being served upon a young man in Boston, who angrily protested that it was a case of mistaken identity, and quickly disappeared. They had gone to Europe, and had lived and wandered there. Upon receipt of the "Rambo" message, she had returned to America, and made an investigation through Kennedy and Scanlon. She satisfied herself fully about the automobile accident. She had received, long ago, the note that he sent her, but her search since her return had always ended at the door of the hotel, when he stepped out into the drizzle on that morning in September, 1902, and disappeared. She had also learned something of the story of Doctor Rufus Baker. She had seen him, and he had not recognized her. Of that she felt assured. There was the pointed beard now, and a difference in age. Something was wrong; something had happened; and, though she should go away, and never see him again,

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she felt that she must right whatever wrong she had done him, and must tell him what had impelled her in her actions. No matter what humiliations might lie in store for her, she would fight it through, and he should know. She sat, as she had sat a dozen times within the past week, with pen and paper, tempted to write him. But she did not write. A letter would mean nothing; perhaps even he would not read it, and perhaps—but she could not bring herself to voice the doubt—perhaps this was not Arthur Henley. She had succeeded in procuring an old photograph of him, and, taking it from a desk, placed it before her and studied it, comparing it in her mind with the face she had seen but a few days before—the face of the rider who had passed her on the road.

The old days on the island came back to her as she gazed into the pictured eyes. Each scene, each memory rushed upon her. His face across the boat, as they struggled in the water! His walk, the sound of his step outside the cabin door, the glint of the firelight on his face, his quiet breathing as he slept, and clearer than all the night when his arm had slipped about her shoulders, and her heart beat against him!

"Oh!" she cried, as she gazed into the face before her. "You never knew! You never understood, picture-eyes and picture-face that I had to buy to have! And you seemed to look at me sometimes on that island in the lake, so tenderly, and you never knew how I loved you. And you have thought all these years that I have wronged you, and I have. And I want to find you, and tell you. I want you to understand." Her eyes swam with tears, and her face was quivering with emotion.

"You never did kiss me, picture-boy. You never did put your arms about me, and tell me that you loved me. You just cared for me, and comforted me, and, when you believed it was for my sake, you just put all the world aside, and married me because you were one of God's own gentlemen. You never did kiss me, and so I can't kiss you." She placed the photograph on the table, and took out a jewelled casket with clasps of gold. She opened it, and in it lay a soiled bit of linen. She unfolded this, and disclosed a bit of reddish earth. On that day, long ago, she had gone back to the cabin and gathered it, and tied it in a piece torn from her skirt. He had stood upon it when he placed his arm about her.

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And now the young woman whom men had loved and sought, the daughter of an old and proud family, with beauty and brains, and a heart that had been eager for the fulness and sweetness of life, spread before her her one little treasure, a bit of earth gathered from a cabin-floor in Canada, years gone by. She no longer wore his ring. She had put that aside with the retaking of her maiden name, and at her mother's request. But this was hers, hidden and kept through all the years, and she bowed her head over it in anguish, and wept. For of such is the heart of a woman.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

DOCTOR O'BRIEN did not appear at breakfast. He was, for that matter, frequently absent, but on this morning Henley found a note at his plate. The information it contained was very brief. "Will return in a few days. Ramon Silva is in this neighborhood. Keep my absence secret, except from the household. Study, or loaf, but do not leave the grounds."

He looked across at Vassilka, who smiled and nodded to him. No comment was made by any one, and they were more silent than usual. No one knew the cause for Doctor O'Brien's hasty departure, and they only knew that he had left in the night.

Henley was much disturbed at the information concerning Ramon Silva, but there was something that drove even this from his thoughts. "Study, or loaf, but do not leave the grounds." Already he pictured the table at the corner window in the parlor, where he would read the morning papers with Vassilka,

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translating to her and teaching her the correct pronunciation. They had left the tree the previous afternoon, with hardly an understanding between them. His position was such that he could not insist. He could press nothing. He believed that she loved him in return, but who was he that he could ask the great gift of this girl's love until he had come into his own. And still, in his heart, he did ask it. He had told himself, walking up and down in his room the night before, that he of all men needed this love. Was he not clean-minded and clean-hearted? What thing had he, Rufus Baker, born in September, 1902, this present man, what had he done that was not straight and fair and honorable among men? Had he not studied and striven? Had he not worked with his hands, and delved with this present brain to make the best of what his God had given him? Had he not declined to grow sick-hearted, and lie down by the wayside? And so he had questioned, and so the answers had come, and out of his loneliness he had built for himself justification. The fears of the story of the past slipped away from him. He felt that it would not come back, and that he did not want it to come back. He was young and strong, and ambi-

tious to work; and, looking down the slope toward the south, over the tree-tops, over the hills, the mountains, the States, there, far to the south, lay the land of dreams. Far, far to the south through half-closed eyes, his sight had seemed to reach; and there, even there, where sunlight and moonlight and God's gifts and man's handiwork made of earth a paradise, he pictured a future; and so he had sat, with the smoke from his cigar rising slowly to the ceiling, and, having no memories, he lived stronger in hope.

This morning he made his way to the parlor, but she did not follow; and there he sat, running through the columns of the papers, until they were piled about him on the floor. At last he folded his hands and gazed out of the window. A slow melancholy was creeping upon him, but soon he heard her footsteps, and she came. He arose, and turned to her with a glad face.

"You have been long," he said.

And then he saw her costume, and his countenance fell.

"Riding?" he questioned. "You would go riding? It is not safe. You know that Ramon Silva is somewhere in this neighborhood. He has found us."

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She snapped her fingers.

‘Bah!’ she exclaimed. “That, for Señor Ramon Silva!” And she again snapped her fingers, with a laugh. “He does not know me. He has never seen me, nor have I seen him. This is an affair of men, and besides”—and she laughed—“my new horse has come. They brought her over this morning from the village, and she must be exercised. She has been confined in a car.” Here she tripped across the room, laughingly. “Should I see Señor Silva,” she said, “I would wave my hand to him and wager him that he has nothing on his hacienda that can equal the speed of my good mare, Constanca. You see, I have already named her. She has eaten sugar from my hand, and put her head against my face, and let me pet her. She belonged to a very rich girl in New York whose father is now in jail eating bread, and drinking from a tin cup, because your law is so bitterly cruel to those who steal without permission from the higher authorities. Poor girl! The thought of her is all that troubles me about it. I have named the mare Constanca, because I have a friend so named in Philippopolis.”

But Henley was hardly listening to her

words. He was regarding her, and never had she seemed so beautiful. Her coloring was rich and soft. Her eyes were black and gentle, and, in the long riding-habit, she appeared more slender and taller than usual. She wore a small black fur hat, with just a touch of some white fur at the front, and its color, though intense, was hardly blacker than the wavy hair upon which it rested. She looked down at herself, and then up at him with a pleased smile.

"I am growing some, I think," she said. "We girls of Bulgaria must make the most of our youth, but it seems so sad to be grown when one has not yet reached eighteen."

Henley was surprised at the statement, but even this passed quickly from him. She stood so beautiful before him. She was so young, and so wholesomely smiling and clear-eyed and fresh, that the memory of his own position rushed swiftly upon him. But even because she stood thus, he put it aside. Outside lay the world, the men, the women, the cities, the hopes and fears and enmities; but here there was no past and no future; there was only this beautiful, smiling girl, and he came and took her hands. He lifted them and held them in his own, and still she smiled

up at him, but there was a little trembling of her lips.

“Pauvre enfant,” she said, soothingly. “God has not been very good to you.”

“But, yes,” he replied. “God has been very good to me. He has brought me through spaces that memory cannot recall. He has given me heartaches, and led me along paths that seemed but to tend to further hopelessness; but, at the end, He has brought me here—He has brought me to you.”

He dropped one of her hands, and, placing his own upon her shoulder, drew her nearer to him—nearer and nearer. A faint color stole into her face, growing deeper.

“Not like that,” she whispered. “It is not like that I feel to you.” And with her free hand she pressed against his breast. He drew her nearer, bending his face over her own. She closed her eyes, and then opened them quickly. There was a startled look in them.

“Have you the right?” she whispered. “Do you know? Do you know?”

Henley raised his head as though some one had struck him. She felt the quick, involuntary movement, and caught him by the lapels of his coat. She knew the depth of the wound

that she had inflicted, and in her youth and the impulsiveness of her nature, she clung to him with a great pity in her heart. He calmed himself after a moment, and drew a long, quivering breath.

"You are right," he said, dully. "In His wisdom God has denied me knowledge. He has denied me you, and so—" He turned from her as one from whose life everything of brightness has been struck out, and walking over gazed out of the window and down at the lawn, seeing nothing.

Vassilka stood for a moment regarding him, and then she took him by the arm and turned him about. Her face had grown pale, and she raised it to him, taking him by the shoulders.

"My life is my own," she said. "I will help you in every way I can. It may be that through me God means for you to find happiness." Her hands were on both of his arms. "You may kiss me," she said.

But Henley silently shook his head, and stooping, kissed her reverently on the forehead.

"You are only seventeen, Vassilka," he murmured. "God has given you your life to make of it all that you may. Perhaps my other life will come back to me. Perhaps I

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shall remember, but as for you," he stretched his hand toward the south—"there beyond, are your youth, your dreams, and Mexico."

She drew back from him, and stood with the slow tears gathering in her eyes.

"I don't know," she said, brokenly. "I am so young, and I don't know, but I want to know. I do want to know what to do. I want life to be good for you, and I want you to be happy, and here," she continued, touching her breast, "there comes such an ache, such a great heartache when I see you, and think, and realize it all."

He drooped forward slightly, but waved his hand as though brushing her words aside.

But suddenly, and with a cry, she came, and, throwing her arms about his neck, kissed him with all the impetuosity of a child, patting his cheek, and placing her head against his breast.

"I have come to you," she said. "You are worth the world, and all beside."

But he unwound her arms from about his neck, and stooping, whispered:

"Of all beings in the world that I would not wrong, you are the highest to me. I shall not put this hope, this dream aside, but I shall ask Doctor O'Brien, who says that he

can cure me, to bring me back to what I was; afterward, if I am worthy, and you should care, we will go, you and I, to that land where you have been, and which you have chosen in your heart from all the lands that you have known; we will go, you and I, to Mexico."

She stood and watched him as he left the room with bowed head. She heard his footsteps as he reached the stairway, and then some one called. Her mount was ready; her new mare, Constancia, was standing outside. She went to the window, and looked out across the lawn to where she saw a Mexican, slowly and lazily raking leaves. She drew a long sigh and clasped her hands tightly together.

"If I could only know," she murmured. "If I could only know what to do."

But, slowly, upon her consciousness, there crept the traitorous thought brought down from the lives and learning of the women who had mothered the children of her blood through all the centuries gone.

"No woman doubts! She knows!"

And when some one called her again, she turned slowly and walked out of the room, deeply thoughtful, and as oblivious of her surroundings as one in a dream.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

WHEN Vassilka reached the outer gateway, she rode slowly toward the north. She had been but seldom along the south road. There were more houses there and less woods, and for that reason she had more often chosen the north road. It was along this that she and Henley had been riding the day they met Kennedy and the strange woman who was stopping at the home of Colonel and Mrs. John Hollister. She hesitated in her choice to-day. Perhaps the big man with the heavy mustache would be there again, but what mattered? She was not afraid. It might chance, too, that she would see the young woman who had spoken so pleasantly to her, and who wore such an air of gentility. And, too, there was the violin—she had forgotten that—she must bring it back. Her uncle was absent now, and Doctor Baker could play. There was no necessity for them to go from the house for that purpose. So she turned into the road leading to

the north, and when she had passed perhaps two hundred yards along that road, a man rose from behind a bush, shook his cramped legs, dusted his trousers, and, taking up a kite from the ground, strode across a field until he reached a point that was shielded from the road by bushes. He let out a string, and ran with the kite until he raised it. The wind took it up and up, and he paid out the string rapidly. At the tip of the kite's tail was a piece of red cloth, about the middle of which was a bow of white. The man stood and watched it.

"Wonder what in hell they'd say down to New York if they could see Ed Scanlon up in Jersey flyin' kites?" he grunted, in disgust. He lighted a cigar, and sat down on the ground, watching the kite high to the eastward. He consulted a memorandum-book to make sure that his signal was right. It was. It meant that Vassilka Doubrovec was riding along the north road, and alone. After awhile, Scanlon heard, in the distance, the sound of a horn. It was repeated, and then he began to draw in the kite.

"I'm gettin' durn sick of this," he growled. "If I knew what 'twas all about, I might stay in or I might quit, but signalin' about

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females is about the limit for a respectable detective agency."

He paused, and another thought came to him.

"Unless, of course, it has good money in it."

He strode away with the kite under his coat, and took his seat behind the bush where he had been all morning. After a few minutes a horseman passed, riding at a slow gallop toward the north.

"There goes my dago," muttered Scanlon, as he peeped around the other side of the bush to admire the beauty and grace of the horse. "Hers was a peach," he was thinking. "But that one would pass a dream on the road." Then he settled back to watch the grounds and the house of Doctor O'Brien.

The horseman rode easily, sitting loosely, and with a deep stirrup, after the manner of Western riders. He was tall and sparely made, and he held his chin a little high, with the air of one who is accustomed to command and to be obeyed. He was about twenty-eight years of age, his hair and eyes were dark, his head was well-shaped, and the look out of his eyes was fearless and aggressive. But with it all there was a smile upon his face. He was about to see her, the niece of

Sebastien O'Brien. He had planned and planned and cast aside one plan after another. To enter upon this man's estate meant, perhaps, to receive a bullet without one chance of replying in kind. He was now formulating plans as he rode along. What should he say to her? What message, if any, should he send to Henley, or to Doctor O'Brien? He had no knowledge of Henley save what Scanlon had chosen to tell him. "He is there in that big house, and so is your Doctor O'Brien. I'll help you get 'em out, and that ends the job. You must deal with 'em yourself, and, if you hurt anybody, they have a mighty bad way in this State of tyin' you down in a chair and puttin' electricity into you until you foam at the mouth. It's a pretty horrible sort of death."

He had kept all this fully in mind. Upon Doctor O'Brien he meant to have revenge, physical revenge, for what he held to be a crime that the law could not reach. He felt that the man had, in effect, negligently and knowingly caused the death of his sister, his only sister, but he could not prove it. In the code under which he had been reared, there was but one thing, and that thing was revenge. He planned no murder, and, on the

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occasions when Doctor O'Brien had been attacked in Mexico, he had had no part in the matter. His purpose was, if his enemy would not return to Mexico, to find Henley, inform him of the large fortune out of which he was being swindled, have charges preferred in Mexico which would result in Doctor O'Brien's extradition, and so get him back in that country. He would have him sent to prison, and then, upon his release, would hound him into a personal difficulty. And even here, in New Jersey, he was thinking he would not be sorry if Doctor O'Brien should attack him. But here was the niece. Was it not just that he should repay Doctor O'Brien in kind? Could he not, perhaps, arrange to seize the girl, and so bring Doctor O'Brien into the open, and likewise bring Henley out? And why was it that Henley chose to live there with this man who was daily robbing him out of thousands, and, monthly, stealing from him a fortune? These were his thoughts, but he could not understand. He only knew that some one near and dear to Doctor O'Brien was riding along the north road, and the god of chance might throw him a solution if he followed. On up the road he went, past the Hollisters' property, and at last he halted.

He wondered whether she had come that far, and leaning over his horse's neck, studied the road. He decided that she had passed this spot, so he rode on. Soon he heard the clattering of hoofs coming toward him. He was near the top of a gentle rise, and now rode to the top and halted. In the distance he could see a horse coming at full speed, its head low, its neck outstretched, and on its back a woman was clinging. He drew a deep breath. It was she; she was coming toward him, and her horse was running away; she had lost control. He knew that it would not do to remain as he was in the road, so he reined to one side, turned his horse, and, looking back, judged the speed of the animal that was carrying her. It was tremendous, and it startled him. He began to ride forward so as to secure momentum. His thought was to grasp the rein and save her, but the speed was greater even than he had calculated; and, as he looked back at the maddened animal she was riding, he felt that his task was indeed severe.

Just ahead of her his horse was running steadily, so that she might gain on him, and when she came nearly abreast of him he swung over to grasp the reins, but suddenly the girl arose in her saddle, and cut him

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across the face with her riding-whip. He swerved to one side, and the hot blood mounted to his face. It was indeed she, and she knew who he was. Of that he felt certain. But he felt, too, that there could be but one end to that mad ride—disaster and, possibly, death. He gritted his teeth, and spurred his horse forward, leaning low, and calling to him. He saw, from the very first, that he was gaining. His horse had great speed, and was fresh. "I wish to save you," he called loudly.

But Vassilka, clinging tightly, understood not a word. Half of what he had said was lost in the thunder of hoof-beats, and the other words she could not understand. She had lost all control of her mount. The mare had taken the bit in her teeth, and the girl knew that it was hopeless. All that she could do was to keep the straight road until the mare should run herself down. But could she do this? She did not know. Perhaps the mare would turn at some point and dash her against a fence, against trees, or perhaps she would meet some vehicle. And there was ever the thought with her that she would be killed and mangled. Already she could see them taking up her crumpled and broken body, with a horribly disfigured face, and she

shuddered and closed her eyes. And there came again the thought of the man who was following her. Why was he here? For evil only. Why was he on this road, and why was he following her? She would rid herself of his pursuit. Death might overtake her, but she resolved that she should not fall into his hands. Clinging now with one hand, she sought with the other under the coat of her riding-habit for the revolver which she had lately been carrying. She found it, but, as she attempted to draw it, it caught in the skirt of the coat, and slipping from her hand, fell to the ground. Silva looked at it as he passed, and smiled.

On and on they raced, he calling to her and gradually gaining upon her, but she did not turn her head. He drew closer and closer. Now he was beginning to lean out. Five feet more, four feet more, and he called to her.

“When I reach you, swing your foot from the stirrup, and hold tightly to me!”

She did not reply, but turned to him a frightened face, and again raised the riding-whip. He ducked under the blow, and reaching out, slipped his arm about her, and swung her from the saddle. Suddenly, through her struggles and the added and uneven weight,

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his horse stumbled and went down. He felt that they were going, and loosed his feet from the stirrups. The speed had been great, and they whirled through the air, falling apart, and striking heavily on the hard road. The horse struggled to its feet, and ran down the road, following the mare. Silva moved, then slowly sat up and looked about him. He was dazed and half stunned; and, after he had gained his feet, he walked about for a few moments, gasping and seeking to recover his breath. When he became able to breathe more freely, he returned and looked at her. She was lying on her back, with an arm crumpled under her. Her face was as white as wax, and she did not move. He looked about him, and saw that they were almost opposite the road leading to the Hollisters. He took her in his arms, and carried her to that road, and began to make his way, under the heavy burden, up the long slope toward the house.

When he had reached the enclosure about the lawn, he met Kennedy, who offered to relieve him, but he would not consent.

"I will get her in first. You run and tell them, and get a doctor!" Kennedy hurried ahead, and when Silva reached the house, the

doors were open, and two women were waiting. He entered a room as they directed, and placed the girl upon a bed.

"I will retire now while you ladies look after her. Her arm is broken, and she has been stunned by the fall."

He explained, in a few words, what he knew of the occurrence, then he went out and sat down on the porch. His arms were throbbing with a dull ache from the great strain that they had undergone. His back had been hurt in the fall, and his head was dizzy with pain. Inside he could hear people busying themselves over the girl. They were attempting to resuscitate her before the arrival of a physician. And, after a while, they seemed to be successful. A young woman came out on the porch, and Silva attempted to rise, and then sank back.

"You will pardon me," he said. "I have strained my back badly, and a great pain grips me when I try to stand."

She entered the house, and returning, brought some whiskey and offered it to him; but he smiled, and shook his head, showing his white teeth.

"Some water with a bit of ice," he said. And smiled again. "I thank you very much

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for the stimulant, but I have pledged myself not to touch it until some important work upon which I am engaged is finished."

"But you must come in and lie down until a doctor comes," she insisted. "If you are hurt, he will treat you, too." But he shook his head.

"I thank you," he said. "I will await the return of the man who has gone for a doctor, and then I will go. I am more weary than injured."

Elsie brought him the water, and after he had drunk it he lay back in a chair, utterly weary. He closed his eyes, and felt that he had not power to move, hardly power to think.

Down on the road, toward the south, Kennedy was pounding along, mentally complaining at the distance to the village where a physician might be found. As he reached the point where Doctor O'Brien's property began, he saw Henley, on horseback, riding rapidly out to the road. In his hand was a satchel, and his face was very pale.

"Where is she?" asked Henley, riding up to Kennedy, for he saw at a glance that the detective knew.

"At the Hollisters'."

"Where are you going?"

"For a physician."

"You need go no farther! I will attend her."

Kennedy turned his horse, and they galloped along together.

"Is she badly hurt?" asked Henley.

"I don't know," replied the detective.
"She was unconscious."

For some minutes, Henley was silent. His mouth was pinched tight, and he was looking straight ahead.

"Mr. Kennedy," he said at last. "I don't want to bribe a man, I am not that sort. If you have the papers for me, I will go back with you when she is safe. I am going now to see that she gets well, after that I will be ready; but neither you nor any other man in New York or New Jersey is going to pull me away from here until that is done. If you want to try it, you can do so, but I will tell you right here and now that, as sure as there is a God in Heaven, I will kill you with no more regret than I would have in treading an ant in the ground. It is all I ask. On your part it will be a deed of mercy and, besides that, a sensible thing. I am going to that house to attend her. That is all."

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Kennedy, floundering along beside him, looked at him in astonishment.

“Arrest you!” he exclaimed. “Sure I ain’t goin’ to arrest you. I got a wife and two big daughters goin’ to school. What de hell you reckon I’d do to a man who was to head off a doctor goin’ to look after one of my daughters who was hurt? You go ahead, and you’ll find some mighty good people up at that house lookin’ after her.”

They turned into the side road, and galloped up the long rise to the house. Henley sprang from his horse, hurried across the lawn, and ran up the steps. Elsie had seen him from the hallway, and her heart began to beat so rapidly that a sensation of smothering came upon her. All her strength, and resolutions for strength, slipped from her, and she walked into the room where Vassilka, now conscious, was lying, and said to Mrs. Hollister:

“Aunt Jane, I think that a man with— with something that looks like a physician’s case is coming.” After which she hurried back into the hallway, and went to the rear of the house.

It was only after several minutes that she found courage to return. She came to the

door, and saw that he was leaning over the girl, speaking. She was answering him in tones that were wrung with pain, and they were speaking French. The examination had been made, and the extent of the injuries determined. Henley left the bed, and came toward Elsie. She felt, again, the rapid beating of her heart, and the sensation of smothering. He looked at her and bowed, and she realized that he was telling her something. There were the same old tones, the same trick of the mouth, and he was looking fully and fairly into her eyes. She had not realized the meaning of anything that he had said. It rushed upon her fully, and with a shock, that he did not recognize her, that he did not know her, and she could not understand. It had all come, thought after thought, in but a moment's time. Why had she come here? Why had she sought to find him, to hear from his own lips such a story as he might have to tell? For he had nothing to tell. The eyes that looked upon her now, looked upon the face of a stranger.

"I want them to make some splints," he was saying. "The arm is swollen, and I wish only to set it now, and keep the bone in position."

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She realized, from what she now heard, that his previous question must have related to the making of splints from boards.

“I will see what I can find,” she said, and turned from him, leaving him wondering at the pallor of her face. On second thought, he followed her. She obtained some light, strong pieces of wood, and, standing on the back porch, he took out his knife and began to shape them to his needs. She watched him without speaking. The previous desire to see him, to be near him, to learn from him about himself, was now being succeeded by a desire to leave him, to get away by herself where she might think over this terrible thing that had come to her—that the man she had married, the man she had loved, and for whom she would have made any sacrifice, could stand before her with the light of intelligence in his eyes and not even know her face nor recognize the sound of her voice! So she stood and watched him, steadying herself, by an effort, until every nerve was drawn tense, and she felt that she could scream. When he had completed his work, he gave her a casual glance. His glance quickly returned, and settled on her face.

“Miss Van Ness,” he said—for he had

heard her name mentioned in the room—"you appear to be unstrung. The young lady is not seriously injured. It has been too much for you. You should go and lie down."

Elsie turned from him and walked slowly and with faltering steps through the hall. It was true that this other, this dark-eyed woman had been injured, and she might be of assistance under other circumstances, but how could she now? Her knees were weak and trembling, her hands were cold, and she felt dizzy and faint. He caught her arm as she reached the stairway.

"Go to your room and lie down," he directed. And seeing the glass of whiskey she had offered to Ramon Silva on a table in the hall, he took it up and held it out to her. For a moment she faltered, as though she would accept it; then she turned from him with a sob and made her way upstairs to her room, where she locked the door, and flung herself upon her bed.

Henley returned to the room where Vassilka lay, and completed his work. He administered an opiate, and sat beside her until she had fallen asleep. Mrs. Hollister busied herself in and out of the room for the girl's comfort.

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"I will take her away to-night," he said to her. "I will send for the carriage, and I must also write a note to her mother immediately." Mrs. Hollister secured paper, and he wrote rapidly. A servant was called and despatched with the note. "It is not necessary that any one should come," he had written. "It is better and much safer if no one comes. As soon as she awakes, I will bring her."

Mrs. Hollister protested that the girl should not be moved, that she should remain where she was until recovered from the shock, and able to make the journey without pain. She asked that the girl's mother be sent for to come and remain with her as long as might be necessary, but Henley, thanking her, shook his head.

She stood beside the bed, looking down at the now flushed face, the dark luxuriant hair that was massed against the pillow, the black, heavy lashes resting against the cheek. She looked so young and so girlish that the face was almost childlike.

"Isn't she beautiful?" whispered Mrs. Hollister.

"Yes," he answered. "She is very beautiful." And he, too, came and stood looking down. With gentle, caressing hand, he

moved one silken wisp of hair that was straying across her forehead. He offered no explanations, and Mrs. Hollister could not find it in her heart to question him. A hundred questions came to her mind, and almost to her lips, but, with an effort, she checked them, and only watched, and only heard.

Henley turned to her at last.

"Your friend, Miss Van Ness," he said, "seemed quite ill a little while ago. This accident has doubtless unstrung her, and she was almost hysterical. Can I not do something for her? I will see her if it is her wish, and perhaps I can help her."

Mrs. Hollister left the room and, mounting the stairs, knocked on Elsie's door and made herself known. Elsie opened the door. In her hand was a photograph, and she sobbingly thrust it into Mrs. Hollister's hands.

"Oh, Aunt Jane," she cried, "look at this! Don't you know that there is no mistake? Don't you know that I would know him at the ends of the earth? He called me Miss Van Ness. He looked at me. He talked to me, and he does not know me."

Mrs. Hollister sought to calm her as best she could, and taking the picture, studied it carefully.

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"If I were a man," she said at last, "and sat on a jury, I would hang a prisoner on that photograph." She paused for a moment: "And if I were governor," she continued, "and should see what I have seen to-day, I would pardon the man because the jury had made a mistake."

Elsie threw out her arms.

"Then what shall I do? What would you have me do?"

Mrs. Hollister looked up from the photograph.

"Elsie, my child," she said, gently. "It is all a mistake—it must be all a mistake. Such a thing could not be under the sun."

But Elsie turned and pointed over the tops of the trees, to where the masts of the wireless apparatus were outlined against the sky.

"And that is impossible," she said, bitterly. "That whole thing is impossible. Those people that guard it are impossible. And that man on the porch with his foreign accent and his curious vowels, and that girl lying on the bed—but, as sure as there is a God in Heaven, Arthur Travers Henley is in this house."

"But Doctor Rufus Baker is the physician in charge of the case, and he wishes to know

if he may not come to you, having seen that you are in a very nervous state."

Elsie turned from the window, and stood for a moment almost breathless. Then she straightened herself with a visible effort.

"Tell him to come," she said.

CHAPTER TWENTY

DETEKTIVE KENNEDY was in an excellent frame of mind. Things were, according to his judgment, and also his manner of speech, decidedly "coming his way." Here was Miss Van Ness with the man she wished to find and see, and here, too, was Ramon Silva, sitting on the porch, while inside was Henley, the man whom he desired to find, above all things, and to have a talk with. An accident had brought them together; and, while it was not entirely his doing, yet, through his firm and himself, they had come.

"Let 'em get together," he grunted, with deep satisfaction. "I have earned my money, and if they won't talk and mix and settle their muddle, it is none of my affair." He drew from his pocket a big cigar, turned it in his fingers slowly, admiring the perfection of its color and manufacture. He was thinking that smoking was his one great solace and comfort away from New York. He bit off the end, lighted it, and leaving the lawn, strolled

down the hillside into the woods. He searched until he found a convenient log from which, while seated, he could still have a clear view of the front steps of the Hollister home. Then he crossed his legs and began to dream. He wondered what they were doing "back there on Broadway." How the office was going; and he thought also of Jim McAllister, who had taken, for the firm, Doctor O'Brien's contract. Jim was a cute one, but Ed Scanlon had been too much for him. Ed had waltzed that Ramon Silva around, leaving no trail at all. Doctor O'Brien's contract was going to be a hard one for Jim to fill. He wondered if Jim would make him pay the right kind of fee for the work. But Ed Scanlon had made trades with Silva.

"My, but they were dandies!" and he pulled on his cigar, tightening the corners of his eyes, and figuring out Scanlon's deals in dollars and cents. And suddenly he heard a sound.

"Psst!" it came to him. He wondered, but did not turn his head.

"Psst!" again it came.

He turned now and looked squarely into the muzzles of two repeating rifles, each in the hands of a Mexican, and each aimed at him.

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He arose slowly, lifting his hands above his head. His cigar had fallen from his lips, and he stared in open-mouthed astonishment. Then he collected his wits.

“Well!” he exclaimed. “What de hell!”

A third Mexican stepped from behind a tree, and, with revolver in hand, came forward and searched Kennedy, taking from him a large pistol, which he was carrying in a holster under his left arm. Before Kennedy knew what had happened, a pair of handcuffs, taken from his own pocket, were on his wrists, and his keys were in the Mexican’s hands.

Kennedy was now in a rage, and began to swear vigorously until this same Mexican shoved a revolver under his nose, and even, by way of emphasis, punched his nose sharply with it, exclaiming again, “Psst.” Kennedy growled for a moment, and was then silent.

Other Mexicans now came up, and with them came Doctor O’Brien, and with them, too, was Jim McAllister, grinning sheepishly.

“I hated to be mixed up in it, Cap.,” he said, “but we got the contract, and I got to see it through.”

“You are fired,” yelled Kennedy. “The contract’s refused. He gets his money back,

and I'll put you to the bad when I get you back in New York."

But McAllister came and shoved his chin close against his chief's, and looked him square in the eye.

"No, you won't," he said, in low tones. "You try to cut into me, and you'll have hauled more wood than you can saw and split. I never put this deal on you. I simply found Ramon Silva as per contract, and am keeping up with him. Doctor O'Brien is handling this job, but if you hold it against me, I'll sure spread it on you back in town. You just had tough luck, and now let's cut it! Does it go?"

"No," replied Kennedy, "it don't."

"Then," said McAllister, "I am working on my own hook for Doctor O'Brien. I'll make enough reputation out of this, and enough money to set me up swell. If it don't put the frost on you and your reputation, then I'm the biggest fool in the business."

He turned to look at the others, and found that Doctor O'Brien was directing them. They were twelve in number, each armed with a rifle. Quick, wiry, and catlike, they began to spread out through the woods, some of them crossing the road; and Kennedy, for

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the first time, realized that they were seeking Ramon Silva. He straightened up, and shouted aloud at the top of his voice.

“Look out, Mr. Silva! The woods are full of Mexicans, and they are after you.”

He saw the Mexican who had taken the revolver from him, suddenly whirl, and a bullet whizzed past his head, so close that he gasped. Then he dropped flat on the ground.

“Shut up, you fool!” cried McAllister. “Them Mexicans will kill you. They ain’t got no better sense. They’re used to it.”

The Mexican in question paused for a moment, but thinking better of the matter, started with the others on a run for the house.

And it was just then that Mrs. Hollister was descending the stairs to deliver Elsie’s message. She saw Ramon Silva, a revolver in his hand, dart, stooping low, through the front door into the hall.

“You are all right,” he cried. “They are after me.” He laughed and ran down the hallway toward the back of the house, where he sprang down the steps at one leap. Henley rushed out of the room, and followed down the hall. He, too, had heard Kennedy’s shout, followed by the shot, and understood that the man who was running out through the back

way was Ramon Silva. He had known that he was somewhere in the neighborhood.

So this was the man who had saved Vasilka, this enemy of Doctor O'Brien! Henley was armed, and he now ran out on the back porch, and down the steps. Two Mexicans had caught sight of Silva, and were following him. Henley drew his revolver, and aimed it directly at them.

"Halt!" he cried. He knew that this command would be known by any speaker of a Latin tongue. The men turned quickly, and seeing him, paused in the pursuit. They could not understand. They knew him to be an inmate of Doctor O'Brien's house. They knew him to be Doctor O'Brien's associate and assistant; and, not understanding, they reluctantly obeyed. In a few moments, Doctor O'Brien came running through the house. He seemed to realize, in an instant, what had occurred, and his face grew white with rage. He advanced toward Henley, his hands clenched, and his face quivering.

"How dared you? You damned pinhead," he cried. "That man was Ramon Silva, and I have been hiding in the woods for three days and nights, keeping track of him."

At this moment Mrs. Hollister and Elsie

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came out on the back porch. The servants were peeping from behind windows and doors, frightened at what they had seen and heard. Not seeing them, Doctor O'Brien continued:

"He is here simply for the purpose of murdering me, and I wanted to capture him and lock him up until I get through with my work."

Henley walked toward him without looking into his eyes.

"That man saved your niece's life," he said, "and you cannot harm him to-day." But, in spite of his efforts, his eyes would rise to meet those of Doctor O'Brien. The latter came, and, taking the revolver from him, slapped him full in the face.

"March," he cried, in a terrible voice. And, as Henley staggered away from him, his will slipped and went. He walked slowly into the house, passing two women, one of whom was leaning upon the other, and sobbing. He realized this only in a hazy sort of way

Doctor O'Brien called the Mexicans to him, and gave them orders. They left him, and went again to the front of the house, while he mounted the steps and paused near the two women, lifting his hat.

"I greatly regret that what has happened has been necessary," he said. "The man I sought to capture is a Mexican who has, on a number of occasions, tried to assassinate me. He is here for that purpose now. All I wished to do was to lock him up so as to render him harmless. He followed me up from Mexico. Doctor Baker has allowed him to escape. I am very sorry that all this had to happen on your premises." Here he turned to Mrs. Hollister.

"I wish to thank you for your great kindness in caring for my niece," he said. "I am very sorry that we have had to intrude upon you. I will examine and learn the extent of her injuries, and, if she may be moved, I will do this at once, as I have a carriage which should be somewhere on the road through the woods."

He turned again, and bowing, walked into the hall, and so made his way to the room where the girl lay. Mrs. Hollister and Elsie had been far too frightened to reply to him, but now they followed, and, standing in the hall near the door to the room, appeared to be bereft of purpose. At last Mrs. Hollister entered the room, where she saw Doctor O'Brien stooping over the girl. He was injecting

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something into her arm. She realized that they meant to take her away.

"I protest against your doing this," she cried. "You have come here like a desperado, have overrun my property, and terrified me and my household. This young lady is your niece, but she is human, and, in humanity's name, I insist that you shall not move her while in that condition."

Doctor O'Brien smiled, but sarcastically.

"My dear madam," he said, "I have this little girl's interests very much at heart. It is better for her to go now than to wait until her fever is higher. She will be right with me, and under the care of her own mother and two physicians, who will be able to give her the best of attention. I can only hope you will, in the goodness of your heart, find yourself able to forgive me for having so imposed upon you to-day. We will be gone in a little while."

Elsie came and looked into the room. Henley was standing with his back toward her, looking out of the window. He spoke in a low tone, and without turning.

"As a physician," he said, "I advise against moving her. I will attend her here."

"You will do just exactly what I say," an-

swered Doctor O'Brien, sharply. And then they heard the girl, who was weeping brokenly.

"I want to go," she said. Elsie understood what she was saying, but Mrs. Hollister did not. She walked over to the bedside.

"You shall do just as you wish," she said.

But Vassilka motioned that she wished to whisper, and Elsie stooped low.

"If you see the man who saved me," she whispered, "tell him that I apologize to him. Tell him that I thank him, and am sorry for what I did. Tell him, please, not to try to hurt my uncle, and I will implore my uncle to let him alone."

Elsie nodded, and then whispered in return:

"Come to see me when you are well. Let us be friends. We may help each other." Vassilka spoke quickly.

"Certainly," she said. "I wish to, very much." And then she spoke to Doctor O'Brien.

"I am ready now," she said.

And it was a strange procession that left the Hollister house. Vassilka and Doctor O'Brien were seated in a carriage, he holding a pillow on which rested her arm. Henley was on the front seat with the driver, and before them, in charge of a Mexican, marched

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Kennedy, still wearing the handcuffs. He was cursing to himself in a low tone, deeply and bitterly. McAllister had disappeared. On each side, and to the rear and at the front, were Mexicans with their rifles. At fifty feet on each side of the carriage, a man kept pace, and beyond him, and deeper in the woods, was another. Doctor O'Brien had made sure that Ramon Silva could not approach closer than one hundred yards without immediately being seen. And so they continued along the road, until they had reached the main thoroughfare. And even then the formation was kept up until they were completely free of the woods. As it chanced, they met no other person. At the entrance to his property, Doctor O'Brien halted the carriage, and stepping from it, directed that Henley take his place, and that the carriage proceed to the house. He walked up to Kennedy, and, looking into the detective's face, laughed roughly and sneeringly.

"I am going to turn you loose, my friend, but leave you handcuffed," he said. "You have been hanging around here for some time now, 'detecting', as you call it. Your brains move about as quickly as a cow in a bog, and I would suggest, for your own safety, that you

go back to New York, and let me severely alone." Kennedy did not reply. Doctor O'Brien called one of the Mexicans, who had Kennedy's revolver in his possession. The man broke the weapon, removed the cartridges, and, at Doctor O'Brien's order, replaced it in Kennedy's holster. He also dropped the detective's keys in their owner's hip pocket, where they could not be reached.

"Now," laughed Doctor O'Brien, "go back to your mistress, and tell her to gaze upon New York's greatest detective."

Kennedy's face grew fairly purple with rage.

"You grizzle-faced old devil!" he shouted. "You wait till I get done with you! You think you're locked up tight in that fortified house. When I get ready to get you, I'll go through that thing like a woodpecker through a toy-balloon, and I'll drag you out where I can get to you, man for man, and mash your face in the dirt."

Doctor O'Brien again laughed mockingly. But, suddenly, a thought came to him, and he took out a piece of paper, scribbled a note, and stuffed it in Kennedy's pocket.

"It is for Miss Van Ness," he said.

And, even in his humiliation, Kennedy de-

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livered it; and, when she had taken it from his pocket, she read what Doctor O'Brien had sarcastically written.

"You invited me to come, and, when I did come, you were not at all cordial. What can you have against me, I wonder?"

She tossed it aside.

"You will learn," she said, between her teeth, "and I hope that your learning will be very bitter."

And she resolved under no circumstances to become discouraged, but to stay until the mystery of it all had cleared away.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

AT Greenlawn in the Pines, there were both gloom and wrath. Colonel John Hollister had returned from New York, and had learned of the accident and the "outrage." He was sixty-five years of age, long since retired from business, and a great believer in the strictest practice of the proprieties as laid down by the law. But now he was for vengeance, until Detective Kennedy, by argument, cooled his wrath.

"You see, colonel," he said, "we are kinder the aggressors in this business. That Doctor O'Brien has been stayin' over to his place attendin' to his own affairs, and we been buttin' in. We feel we got a perfect right to butt in, or any way, we have felt that we were goin' to butt in to see if we had a right to butt in. Then, too, he has got the law on Ramon Silva. He ain't botherin' nobody at all of our set, and if we go away, it's dollars to doughnuts we won't ever hear of him again. What we want to do is to let the

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law and the courts alone, and work our own plans."

But with the women there was gloom. Kennedy had been so far a failure; they had become afraid of Doctor O'Brien, and, while Elsie was now even more positive, if possible, than before, as to the identity of the man known as Doctor Baker, the mystery with her had deepened, and she would sit thinking and thinking, until her brain was in a whirl.

But Kennedy was thinking, too. He was thinking of Jim McAllister, and wondering what had become of him. He had thought deeply over the latter's threats, and had convinced himself that peace must be made. He mounted a horse, and, riding to Greenway, sent his office a telegram. "If Jim McAllister comes to town, get hold of him and make peace. We had a row. Give it to him straight I was wrong, and acknowledge the corn." Then he rode slowly back, thinking and thinking. And at last an idea came to him. "There is Ramon Silva, and there is Ed Scanlon. I can get together with them, and it's our only hope. We are scattering too much."

When he reached the fork of the road, he turned to the south, and rode for some dis-

tance. To the left of the road, as he was travelling, lay a neat farmhouse. He rode up the lane; and, dismounting, rang the doorbell. An old man came to the door and Kennedy questioned him.

"Is Mr. Scanlon here?" he asked.

"No," was the reply. "No such man lives here."

"Well, is a big fellow stoppin' here, with close-cropped, reddish mustache, reddish-brown hair, blue eyes, a scar on his right cheek, his front teeth set a little apart, talks with a marked Irish accent, and don't talk very much?"

The man smiled.

"There was such a person here a day or two ago, but he has gone," said the man.

Kennedy drew a card from his pocket, scribbled a couple of lines on it, and handed it to the man, winking and smiling at the same time.

"I'm his partner," he said. "Just hand him that."

The man looked at the card doubtfully.

"He's asleep now," he said.

"Show him the card and he'll wake up," replied Kennedy. "This is important."

The man took the card and left him, and

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soon returned with the information that Scanlon would see him. He found his partner in bed and, closing the door, asked:

“How about this place, Ed? I’ve come here to whisper. We are up against it.”

Scanlon assured him that everything was entirely safe so far as conversation was concerned, and then Kennedy related to him in detail the events of the past few days, sparing himself in nothing. They were both greatly disturbed over the threats of McAllister.

“We got to trick him,” said Kennedy. “We got to whitewash and we got to get together. Miss Van Ness and your man Silva are on exactly the same trail. Now, what we got to do is to bring ’em together, and I can handle the entire job by myself while you run back to New York, get the office shaped up, and head Jim off. Just put it to him strong how any man would lose his head while he had the darbies on his wrists put there by one of his own men. Throw that into him strong, and get him to laugh about how I jumped around like a crazy man, and he’ll grab the bait, and we can pull him back in. Jim knows too much, and we got to hold him or run him out of town.”

But Scanlon, who let Kennedy do the plan-

ning, was often the man who selected from the plans, and he sat now on the edge of the bed, listening.

“What’s the spiel?” he asked at last.

“Get them together, Miss Van Ness and the dago. Consolidate. A woman don’t look on crooked work like a man does. You can’t fool a woman about some things when you could fool a man, but you can lie to a woman about details. What she wants is results.

“I have given Miss Van Ness this man Henley’s history up to the time he stepped out of the hotel door, in 1902. I have given her Doctor Baker’s history part of the way back. Now I’m goin’ to get Doctor Baker’s history all the way back, if I can. I am goin’ to do the same thing for Ramon Silva, your man. I am goin’ to introduce the two, and let things rock along until you can get back from New York. Then I am goin’ to go down there myself and come back with Doctor Baker’s history as far back as she’ll go. Then I’m goin’ to sit steady in the boat; and if things don’t pull off right, I’m goin’ back to New York, happen to be lookin’ over the records in our office, and happen to find where a strange man who wouldn’t give his name had called for an investigation of the history

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of Miss Van Ness. I am goin' to be able by chance to prove that this same man was the Henley-Baker gentleman."

Scanlon looked out of the window and squinted with his eyes at some far-away object. At last he heaved a sigh.

"Bill, gi' me one of your cigars and tell me how I'm goin' to lie to that Mexican. He's as smart as a whip, and you're goin' to get us tangled on that money he's deposited."

Kennedy handed him the cigar and, scratching a match, lighted it for him.

"Just tell him that our business is so damned big that Ed Scanlon don't know half the time what Bill Kennedy's workin' at unless specially called in. Tell him we keep everything so dead in our office that we don't turn in reports to each other until the work is done, unless we need help; and that in this matter it was only by accident and because of what Doctor O'Brien said that we found we had crossed wires on two assignments. Tell him we can now work together for both parties with the same interests at stake. Do that and I know it's a cinch." He paused. "And where do you keep the man hid out, anyway?"

"Oh, he's stoppin' back farther down the

road at a gentleman's house. Him and that fellow went to Yale College together. He sets down back there, livin' high, and they've got a fellow settin' at a top window, with a field-glass, watchin' my kite flyin'."

"And how do you keep up with him?"

Scanlon arose and took up a pair of field-glasses and stepped to the side window.

"See that barn way across yonder on the hill, whitewashed?" Kennedy nodded.

"Look at it through these glasses! What do you see?"

Kennedy took the glasses, which were already properly focussed.

"I see a big black piece of something with a hole in the centre that shows white. What does that mean?"

"That means I can lay off. When that white centre is covered that means 'Attention,' and I got to go back to that bush and watch the O'Brien place. There's about a dozen signals."

"How do you do at night?"

"We use lanterns, hangin' them in different formations."

"And who framed it up?"

"That Silva done it."

Kennedy sat down.

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"He's a pretty sharp guy, ain't he, Ed?" he finally asked.

"They don't make 'em no smarter."

"Then put the tale to him straight and convincin'. There ain't nobody in the world you can fool like you can a smart man. Just keep facts away from one of 'em and you got 'em. They got so much on their brain tryin' to help you do what you ought to do yourself, and they look on you as more or less of a dern fool, anyhow, that they've done jumped beyond your tale while a 'bone-head' is tryin' to follow the argument."

"Then what you goin' to do?" asked Scanlon.

"If Mrs. Hollister knows that young man down where your Mexican is stoppin', I'm goin' to get her to rig up a card-party, or some sort of feed, and get the bunch together; but, anyhow, you put the spiel to your man and I'll fix Miss Van Ness, and we will frame up something that'll bring this thing to a head."

"And how is Miss Van Ness gettin' along?" asked Scanlon.

"Fine as split silk, only a little shook up. When I went down to Greenway this morning, she gave me a telegram to send to a flor-

ist in New York, to send flowers every day to that Miss Vassilka Doubrovec, what got her arm broke. They are to come without no card on 'em."

Scanlon arose, and looked at Kennedy curiously.

"I rode down to Greenway early this morning for Ramon Silva, and sent the same telegram for the same concern to do the very same thing."

Kennedy stared in turn, and then laughed.

"Shake, Ed," he said, holding out his hand. "We had got together before we knew it. Bring the boss up, and have a feed at our house. I can already see the settin' of the table."

Scanlon smiled, for he was now staring through the field-glasses at the distant white-washed house set on a hill.

"We don't need a bid to your house," he said. "A green stripe crossin' a yellow stripe is the sign on that barn."

"And what does it mean?"

"Mr. Ramon Silva, the Mexican, is now ridin' the back way, and he is bound for Greenlawn in the Pines."

"That's good," said Kennedy.

"And," continued Scanlon, "Bill Kennedy

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and Ed Scanlon will take the front road and go to exactly the same place."

"We've come together, then," said Kennedy.

"We have," replied Scanlon.

"And how about your leavin' that bush with nobody to watch the O'Brien house?"

"There is one of two things," replied Scanlon. "If they have combined to work together, then I can go back to New York. If they have simply caught up with us, I have lost my job."

"In which event?" suggested Kennedy.

"I exchanges a kneelin' position behind the bush for a settin' position in O'Halloran's beer garden."

Kennedy sighed.

"You make me get to dreamin'," he said.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

RAMON SILVA tied his horse in the woods back of the Hollister home, made a long detour, and came up the road leading to the lawn. A servant, who was working in the yard, saw him, dropped his hoe, and ran around the corner of the house. Silva smiled. He was sorry to see this, but, thinking over the matter, decided that it was to be expected. He mounted the steps and rang the bell. Another servant came, and, seeing him, was visibly much agitated; so much so in fact that she could scarcely speak. He gave his card, and asked for Miss Van Ness. The servant left him standing at the door, and hurriedly mounted the stairs. After two or three minutes she returned, and tremblingly directed him to the parlor, and hurriedly left him. He seated himself, and glanced around the room. He had come to make an apology for his part in the disturbance of the previous day, and yet he was wondering if Doctor O'Brien should know of his presence here whether the same thing might not again happen to-day.

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And then Elsie came, entering the room, and standing cool and formal. He arose and bowed.

"My name is Ramon Silva," he said. "I am stopping with an old schoolmate, Fred Howard, down the road. I chanced, yesterday, to be the cause of a very unpleasant occurrence here. Mr. Howard is not at home this morning, or I would have secured from him a letter of introduction to Colonel Hollister."

"Perhaps," suggested Elsie, "you wish to see Mrs. Hollister. Colonel Hollister is not very well to-day. He has been very much disturbed over the matter. I am only a guest, and I will call Mrs. Hollister if you wish."

Silva smiled, and then laughed softly.

"No," he said. "I do wish to apologize, and my apology is for Colonel and Mrs. Hollister as well, but there is something else."

He paused, and she waited.

"Be seated, please!" she said. And she herself chose a straight-backed chair, seating herself without taking her glance from him. Her calm blue eyes and coldly polite look disconcerted him.

"It is concerning an employee that I have come," he said. "There is a man named

Scanlon whom I have employed to do some work. I found that he was hobnobbing with an employee of yours named Kennedy, and I have also found that the two men are partners, and I have come to believe that you and I are vitally interested in the same thing."

"If you think, Mr. Silva," replied Elsie, haughtily, "that your employee is not serving you faithfully, it would suggest itself as a proper thing to dispense with his services. I am quite sure that I am not interested in your Mr. Scanlon, or his affairs, and never before heard of him. I cannot see just why you should complain to me because of his shortcoming."

Silva leaned a little forward. The smile slowly faded, and his face became serious.

"I will ask that you bear with me but a few minutes," he said. "I have no right to impose upon your time or your patience. I ask you simply to listen to me and to pardon me if what I have to say is without interest to you." He paused, and looked steadily at her, while she inclined her head, signifying that he might proceed.

"I am a Mexican," he said. "I have come here from Mexico in search of a certain man, and that man is Doctor Sebastien O'Brien. I

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have a particular reason for finding him, and I have found him, but have been unable to reach him. His mail is sent from Mexico to a prominent legal office in Chicago, from which a large quantity of mail daily goes out. With difficulty I found that his letters are remailed under new cover to New York. From that city, after a second change of cover, they are forwarded to him here. I have succeeded in having these letters traced, and have now found Doctor O'Brien; but, having found him, the matter is hardly begun. I am at present searching for another man, the finding of whom is very important to me. That man is Arthur Travers Henley." His eyes were upon her, and he saw her start, and a slow color crept to her cheeks. An artery in her throat was beating and pounding, and he settled back in his chair, silent.

Elsie waited, but he said nothing more. And she knew that he was waiting for her to speak. She wished again to speak to him coldly, formally, but felt that she could not. She knew that if she should try to speak, she would only betray her great agitation.

"And I do not wish to find him to harm him," he said at last, guessing her thoughts. "He had a cousin, a young man named

Stephen Harlow, who came from the States down into Mexico, prospecting. He found, and together with Doctor Sebastien O'Brien, became the owner of one of the most valuable gold-mines in the world. He died more than three years ago, after vainly trying to find his cousin, Arthur Travers Henley, and left a most peculiar will. One-half of that great property belongs to Henley outright, if he may be found, and he also, under the will, inherits the fourth that belonged to Stephen Harlow. Doctor O'Brien is drawing the entire revenue of that property, and has been drawing it for three years. Being unable to find Henley, Harlow had to arrange matters so that the management of the business would not be interfered with, and thus Doctor O'Brien is able to enjoy the entire property, cover up and falsify the reports as to the output, and is, to all intents and purposes, in the position of sole owner."

Elsie had by this time somewhat recovered her composure. She cleared her throat.

"It is quite a romance," she said, "this story of a great fortune in foreign lands." She hesitated. "And you wish—" Again she hesitated. Silva's dark face flushed.

"No money reward is sought," he said,

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slowly. And, gazing directly into her eyes, he continued: "For the man Henley I care nothing. I wish to find him so that criminal proceedings may be instituted in Mexico against Doctor O'Brien, and he may be taken to that country, a prisoner."

Elsie arose.

"And why have you come to me with this wonderful story?" she asked. Silva also arose, and stood looking calmly into her eyes.

"Because," he said at last, "in my various searches in this matter, I found that the records of New York show that in September, 1902, you were married to Arthur Travers Henley. I now find that you are not interested. I ask your pardon, and thank you for your patience."

Elsie sat down.

"Wait!" she said.

He stood near the door, but she lifted a detaining hand.

"I do not know what to say," she said.

Silva smiled.

"Then speak from your heart!" he suggested.

She looked up.

"I do not believe your story," she said.

Silva flushed once more.

"It is entirely true," he answered

"Then I am sorry."

"Why?"

"Only a woman's reason, which means without reason at all."

"Then, if you are sorry, you must be interested."

She looked out of the window for some moments, folding her hands.

"You will please pardon me for doubting your story," she said at last. "You came, bringing your name and your story. I want to ask you to again be seated, and tell me really and truly why you came."

But Silva shook his head.

"If you will allow me," he said, "I will say that you are not entirely fair. You have guessed why I came."

"And do you think? Have you traced Doctor Rufus Baker here?" she asked, leaning forward, and waiting almost breathlessly. "Do you think that he is Arthur Travers Henley?"

Silva had again seated himself.

"I do not know," he replied. "I must take the word of others who cannot be certain."

"But I do know," she said. "I had a note from Doctor O'Brien yesterday; and after I

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received it, I knew there could not be any doubt. There was a veiled hint that to me was very plain."

"Then you are entirely satisfied as to the identity?" he inquired. But she would not say.

"I am and I am not," she replied. "Doctor O'Brien, having learned of me, may have been mocking me."

"And you do not know the man you married?" asked Silva, in some surprise. "Doctor Baker was here yesterday; you saw him and talked to him, and you do not know?"

She arose.

"Excuse me for a few moments," she said. "I wish to show you something."

She left the room, and soon returned with the photograph of Henley, which she had secured in New York. She showed it to Silva. "Is it the same?" she asked.

"It is the same," he said. "I would swear it."

And then Elsie arose and closed the door so that they might not be overheard.

"I will tell you a story, Mr. Silva," she said. "The learning of this fortune almost tempts me to abandon my efforts. I do not know, to-day, whether I am the wife of Arthur

Travers Henley or not. I received a decree of divorce, but I am now uncertain whether papers in the suit were in fact served on him or on some other man. I need not go into details, but I did him a great wrong once, and the wrong consisted in doubting him. I heard recently of things that caused me to investigate, and that investigation led me here. I wish to find Mr. Henley, and I know in my heart that I have found him, but my mind tells me that I have not. I cannot in any way connect Doctor Rufus Baker and Arthur Travers Henley. I would leave here to-day and go back to New York, and sail for Europe except for this one thing, that I know that I would return by the next steamer. I would leave here, knowing positively that he is not the man. I would dismiss it all as a thing settled and decided, and then to-morrow it would be settled and decided again, but it would be just the other way."

"Why does he not make himself known?" asked Silva. "Why should he conceal his identity?"

She shook her head.

"He does not," she said. "That is the maddening part of it all. I looked in his eyes and talked with him, and he did not conceal

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anything. He does not know it. The man I talked with yesterday never before heard of me."

"Have you changed?" asked Silva.

"But suppose I have? My name! Think of that!"

Silva was silent, pondering deeply.

"Have you a photograph of yourself taken in those days?" he asked.

"Yes," she replied.

"Then send it to him."

But she would not agree.

"It might all be a mistake," she said, doubtfully, "and, besides, he ought to know me. That whole house—Doctor O'Brien as well as the rest—I cannot understand them."

"And the niece?" he asked. "Have you heard to-day?"

"No!" she replied, and then suddenly she remembered and told him of Vassilka's message of apology. She told also of what had been said by her concerning himself and Doctor O'Brien. His eyes softened, and then, at the thought of Doctor O'Brien, they hardened again.

"I tried to save the girl," he said. "She was a brave little thing; but while she caused the accident, I do not blame her, for she did

not understand. I could easily have lifted her from her saddle to mine, but she struggled and fought, and my horse stumbled and we fell heavily."

He arose and held out his hand.

"I want to plan with you," he said. "I want to know the facts, and so do you. We may be able to help each other. Have you any plans?"

"Yes," she said, "I have been thinking. I will go down to New York and have copies made of this photograph, and of an old one of mine. I will take a copy of his to Doctor Eaton, who was associated with Doctor Baker, show it to him, and tell him my story. I will also send a copy of each to the man known as Doctor Rufus Baker. Even if I should be mistaken—" she waved her hand. "There is always Europe where I can bury my humiliation."

She accompanied him to the door where they stood talking, and then Silva looked up. Below them, and seated beneath a tree at the edge of the lawn, were Kennedy and Scanlon.

"Let us go down," he said. "There are our working forces—our armies, as it were. We have been allies unawares."

She hesitated, and then walked down with

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him to where the two men, who had now arisen, were standing.

“Mr. Scanlon and Mr. Kennedy,” she said, and there was a note of irony in her voice, “I will ask that you two gentlemen give me what you consider the proper definition of ‘a square deal.’ ”

Kennedy scowled, but Scanlon smiled graciously.

“It’s two Irishmen,” he said, “engaged in doin’ their full duty and receivin’ proper pay for the same.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

DOCTOR O'BRIEN had again disappeared from his mysterious house. Before leaving he had come to Henley, and told him that he would be gone for some days, but he had explained nothing about his purposes, nor told where he might be found. Elsie Van Ness had gone to New York, Ramon Silva following on a later train. Doctor O'Brien was aware of this within a short time after their departure. He also knew that Scanlon had left, and that Detective Kennedy was doing duty behind the small cedar across the road. He wrote a note and pressed a button, and when a servant appeared, gave him some instruction. After this he went to a window and watched. In a little while two Mexicans appeared, going in the direction of the cedar, and then one of them circled round. Doctor O'Brien smiled as he pictured the big detective sitting there and wondering. The Mexican approached the astonished man, gave him the note, and left. Kennedy knew that as a hid-

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ing-place the cedar was now useless. He wondered what threat the note contained. He opened it and read: "You might as well go home and sleep. I am going down to New York for a few days."

Kennedy sat down and thought long over the matter, and then ended by staring at the house. He did not know what to believe. After a while he withdrew and sent a telegram to his detective agency, where Silva was to receive his mail. He added at the end: "Let Ed Scanlon come back! Nothing doing here. Can do better work down there." And he hoped, as strongly as he had ever hoped for anything in his life, that Elsie and Ramon Silva would agree to his plans. That night Doctor O'Brien went down to Greenway and purchased a ticket to Jersey City. He entered the train and, a few stations beyond, managed to drop from the rear sleeper unnoticed. He slipped through the darkness to where a big touring car was throbbing, and, stepping in, closed the door. As the car shot rapidly forward, its two great lights showing the highway far ahead, he leaned back in the cushions, bit off the end of a cigar, and, placing this in the corner of his mouth, composed himself to his dreams, in which neither Ra-

mon Silva nor Elsie Van Ness had part. They had slipped almost completely from his mind.

But Vassilka had been left in good hands. Henley's time was now entirely his own, and, consequently, at her service. She suffered much from the broken arm, but the fracture was simple, and every care and attention that medicine or science could command, were given; and, above all, there was heart interest.

But down in New York the mind of Ramon Silva was at work. After Elsie had decided that she would send photographs, copies had quickly been made. And then had come Kennedy's wire concerning Doctor O'Brien's note.

"He knows that we are here," said Elsie. "He wants to get rid of Kennedy, and so adopts this ruse." But Silva shook his head.

"No!" he said. "He will come. No doubt he has come. If you send the photographs to Doctor Baker, it is possible that he will pay no attention to them. I have a better plan."

And, with her consent, he took the two pictures to a second photographer, who was a man of considerable ability, but without character, and explained his desires. The man took the two pictures and studied them.

"It can be done, but I will have to do a lot

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of work, and take a number of other pictures besides having to have people to sit for them."

"Fifty dollars?" asked Silva.

The photographer considered the matter for a moment.

"It is worth it," he said. "One hundred dollars and my name does not go on the card."

"One hundred," said Silva, and it was settled.

In twenty-four hours' time he was in possession of four copies of a picture containing both the faces of Henley and Elsie Van Ness. The pictures showed them seated on a lawn, and the faces were those that had appeared in the original photographs.

"Let me send one to him," suggested Silva. "It should not come in your handwriting, and no one will know." She consented at last, although she had now become doubtful as to the wisdom of the plan.

Silva took the picture to his hotel, wrapped it securely, and addressed it and mailed it, but the addressee as written was "Miss Vassilka Doubrovec, Greenway, New Jersey." And on the following morning it reached her.

Vassilka had been anxiously awaiting a letter from her far-away friend, Constancia, who was now at St. Petersburg, where her father

was stationed. Henley came and talked with her; her mother was zealous in her attentions until at last, feigning drowsiness, she asked to be left alone.

"Please cut the cords on the package and place it by me," she said to Henley. "I will look at it after a while."

There had come for her, too, that morning, a great bunch of violets, and also, in another box, some carnations. She wondered who could be sending them. She had asked and they had denied, but she felt that Henley and her uncle must have sent them. There was no one else.

There had come into her mind the thought that this other flat package might have something to do with the flowers, so she waited until she was alone before opening it. With her left hand she pulled the wrapper aside; the paper board slipped, and she lifted the picture and held it before her. Then her heart began to beat rapidly. She recognized the girl's face in an instant, and almost as quickly the clean-shaven face of the young man was unerringly determined as to identity. She laid the picture down and leaned back against the pillows.

"What did it mean? Who was she that

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her picture should be with his, and who was he?" She took up the picture again and studied it carefully. It had evidently been taken long before. The card—a trick of the photographer's—showed signs of handling and evidences of age. She turned it quickly, but there was nothing written on the back. She turned it again, and studied the man's face. It was he. Beyond the chance of a doubt, she told herself, it was he, and no other.

And now slowly something began to creep from her heart to her brain, something that had not been there before, and her dark eyes hardened. She took up the wrapper and studied the address. It was clearly not a woman's writing, but the mind of a woman fixed without hesitation upon the thought that a woman's mind had planned the sending.

"And what was behind it all?" she asked herself. "Had he and she been friends, or even more? Must it not have been in the other days when he was the other self? And had she a claim, this Miss Van Ness, who had offered to be her friend? If so, what was that claim? If strong, why not enforce it? If weak, then a woman's weak claim was no claim at all."

And so she thought and thought.

“And what is the motive?” came the question, repeated. “Is it an appeal to my pity? Is it a warning to me, suggesting, yet not speaking, the warning? Is it meant to hurt him? Is it meant that it should hurt him with me? Or is it only to wound me?”

She hid the picture beneath the cover and pressed a button. Her maid, Angelica, came, and she gave instructions.

“I wish to be as pretty as I may, being ill,” she said.

And the Mexican girl smiled her admiration.

“Ah! Señorita,” she said, “to be as you, gladly would I suffer both of my arms to be broken. You are to me as a fair garden in my own Mexico.”

Later, and at her bidding, Henley came once more.

“I wish,” she said, “that you again read to me this ‘Monsieur Beaucaire,’ translating it in French. I wish to hear again the story of the lady who was so very proud. I wish to have you read the last part, the part wherein this lady finds it true that the great man may be hidden in the man who seems very humble and not at all great.”

And Henley read to her as she desired; at

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last he laid the book aside, and she closed her eyes. Her left hand reached out and caught his own, but still she did not uncloset her eyes. He leaned forward.

She spoke in a low tone. "Back from the past," she questioned, "does there come to you no picture? Have you recently seen no face that has seemed to you to come from back there?"

"No," he said, gently. "No."

"And if some one should come," she continued. "If some one should come and say to you, 'You loved me once in the other days, and we were betrothed, you and I.' Would you be glad? Would you go to her if you had promised?"

He arose and stood over her, troubled at her words.

"Would you?" she asked.

He was silent for a moment. He could hear her watch ticking merrily away upon the mantel; and, except for this the room was silent. He watched the quick rise and fall of her breath.

"I don't know," he faltered. "I don't know what that other life was."

She slowly opened her eyes and looked up at him, still holding his hand. It seemed to

him that all of the appeal of her beauty, her youth, and her womanhood arose to envelop him. Her eyes were velvety dark; a blood-red carnation was in her hair, but it was no redder than her full, soft lips. Her chin was lifted slightly, and her eyes looked deeply into his own.

"Would you?" she whispered. "Would you go back?"

Again and again the answering question flashed to his mind, the coward question:

"And would you have me go?"

But he repelled it, and, leaning down over her, said:

"Vassilka, God is making this world, not I."

And, to his surprise, a pleased look came upon her face. He felt that she was not expecting such an answer, and that it should please her somehow hurt him.

But through the cover Vassilka could feel the form and the weight of the picture, and she smiled again—a smile that he could not understand.

He questioned her, but she would not explain.

"I wished only to know," she said.

"And do you approve of my answer?" he asked.

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“Yes,” she said.

“Why?”

“Because I am a woman, and wished to know the depth of your manliness.”

“And you think that I should do this?”

“I give you your own answer: ‘God is making this world, not I.’” And she smiled up in his eyes.

Henley stood leaning over, studying her every feature.

“Vassilka!” he said.

She did not reply, but continued to look up at him. In spite of her effort there was a certain eagerness in her eyes.

She saw the slow blood mount to his cheeks, and his eyes glowed warm as they looked into her own.

“Vassilka,” he whispered now, “there is no god but To-day, and Yesterday is his Prophet.”

She withdrew her hand from his, took the blood-red carnation from her hair, kissed it, and handed it to him.

“And what does it mean?” he whispered.

“The beauty of To-day,” she answered, and smiled again the smile that he could not understand.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

EACH day was to Henley made up of pleasure and torture freely mingled. He had been strong enough since that morning in the parlor, to compose himself against his desires, and to fight back much that he held in his heart for Vassilka. But every look, every touch of his hand, every tone of his voice, conveyed to her a meaning as clear as speech. She had kept the photograph hidden, and had told no one of its receipt. After pondering deeply over the matter, she had come to the firm conclusion that Elsie had sent it; but as to the purpose of the sending she had not yet decided. There were many reasons that a woman might have. Had Vassilka known more of Elsie's history, she could more readily have fixed upon a motive; but, knowing nothing, she kept her mind actively engaged in selecting first this, and then that, and finally ended by being as much in doubt as ever.

There was, however, one central thought about which the others gathered.

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“She is in love with him, otherwise it would not have been sent at all.” What had been the wish or the hope could not now be decided, but this one thing was final: “She is in love with him.”

Deciding this she felt her heart grow cold toward Elsie. He stood at her bedside. He ministered to her, he was good and kind and agreeable, he was good to look upon, and he was in love with her. Then, too, he was her friend and her companion. She had an interest in him and a certain right. She had never before been in love, but she was in love with him—almost. She was glad when he was with her; she missed him when away, and longed for him. She knew his story, and so was an intimate of his very heart and life.

And thus she thought and thus she pondered, and there was always the memory of the other, the outsider, the blonde girl who had in some way in the past managed to occupy a seat with him somewhere, and so they chanced to be photographed together; and now she was trying to make use of this. And how did that other girl know but that he and she, Vassilka, were madly in love with each other? How did she know? And if she did suspect it, then the sending of the picture had

been meant to hurt her, Vassilka. And it had accordingly been meant to hurt him by making her, Vassilka, doubt him. And so the act had been one of spite. And she could never have loved him, this blonde girl, if she had had the heart to wound him after all he had suffered. She could believe she had, but even then if she would hurt him, she could not be worthy of his love, and so—she should not have him.

But she told herself also that in spite of the memory of his pleadings, she, Vassilka, could not accept him now. She wished him to be cured. She wished him to be what he had been, to come back to himself and into his own again. She wished him to fully regain that lost personality with a memory behind him as clear as anybody's. Then—then the war would be fair. Then he could come to her, then she would pit her youth, her wit, her dark rich beauty against this blue-eyed girl. Then—and she looked up into his eyes and read and read; she listened to his voice; she heard the quick footsteps of his coming, and she marked their slow departure; and a peace filled her heart as she planned his recovery, and planned, too, the story that he would tell at his awakening.

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The days passed, and she had grown rapidly better. She was now able to sit in a great armchair, with her arm resting upon a low table that Henley had placed for her. Messages from Doctor O'Brien had been few and indefinite. He told, in one letter, that he would bring a new man, an operator for the wireless, and that possibly another man would also accompany him.

Of these things Henley had told Vassilka; and, with woman's mind, she connected the return of Doctor O'Brien with her own plans—the thoughts that had of late been with her so often.

Doctor O'Brien had said that he could effect a cure. He had even said that the other personality was the stronger one, that it was working and working, and that at some day in the future it would no doubt return without the aid of science or medicine. But who could wait for that? Why should any one wait? Why should not Doctor O'Brien forego his selfish and inhuman desire to use Doctor Baker in his own work, and so postpone the cure? But he had refused her. He had said that he would do nothing until he should be ready. He had denied all her prayers and pleadings in that regard. But there was one

thing that she would not stand: She would not again allow him to be hypnotized, made to play the soldier, made to act the buffoon. The hot blood rushed to her cheeks at the thought. No! This should not be done; and, if he again attempted it, she would fly with Doctor Baker, even in the doubt of his past. She would go with him and marry him, and they would seek a home very far away.

But she built no castles and dreamed no dreams in these far lands, the thoughts of which came to her. It was only that she would take him away that he should not suffer that horrible degradation. At the memory of the scene a bitterness began to arise in her heart against her uncle. There were many good things he had done, but he had done this thing, and he might do it again. He would not help when he could, and his promises were indefinite. Could she not help? Could no one help? And there came the memory of the night in the music-room, when Henley had attempted to play, and had, for a few moments in fact, played upon the violin. That had affected him. That had seemed to bring back to him a strange picture. Perhaps the playing of the violin would do it. And where was the violin? At the house of the forester who super-

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intended the Hollister estate. She would send for it. But whom could she send? Those Mexicans would never understand. And, besides, the Mexicans had raided the Hollister estate, and some one might shoot at them if they went there, and there would be trouble while her uncle was absent, so this would not do. She asked her maid to ring for Henley. When he came she told him.

"Yes," he said, "I will go, and go at once."

He left her, and ordered that a horse be saddled, but before leaving the house, he armed himself. He was thinking of Kennedy as he rode slowly away, and of the promise that he had made. He would keep that promise. He would deliver himself up, but not now. She was not well yet, the arm still pained her some. If Doctor O'Brien were here, he might safely go; but Doctor O'Brien had not returned, and so he could not, and would not, go. He did not want to shoot the detective, but would most certainly do so if necessary. He would tell Kennedy that he remembered the promise, and that it still held good, but he was not yet ready.

He turned into the road leading up the slope toward the Hollister home, and rode

slowly along until he saw a stranger, a man of Irish type, with reddish mustache. It was Scanlon. The latter accosted him.

"Where you headed, neighbor?" he asked.

Henley drew rein, and regarded Scanlon for a moment without reply.

"I want to find the forester's house," he said, at last. "I will thank you to direct me there if you know where he lives."

"Sure!" said Scanlon. "We go right up toward the house, and then turn to the left. What you want of the forester?"

"A violin has been left there," replied Henley, "and I have come for it."

"You ought to have rode on a little farther," said Scanlon. "There is a road goes direct to his house without havin' to come up here so near the Hollisters."

"I can go back and take that road."

"You needn't do that," said Scanlon. "If it's your fiddle, you'll get it all right."

As Henley rode along, Scanlon walked beside the horse, but a little to the rear. He could see the bulk of Henley's revolver shaping itself against his coat.

"Looks like you're pretty well armed for a fiddlin' expedition," he suggested.

"Yes," replied Henley, "but I do not mean

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even to fiddle upon this armed expedition. I desire only to secure the violin, and to return to the pursuit of my own affairs."

"I wish," said Scanlon, "that you had brought your medicine-kit along with you. Miss Van Ness up at the house is pretty sick, and the doctor down at the village is sick himself, and they ain't got anybody. Been thinkin' of telegraphin' New York if she don't get no better."

"What's the trouble?"

"Horse threwed her same as happened to the young lady down your way. She ain't broke up none, but she got a powerful jar."

Again they continued in silence for some minutes.

"When I get the violin," said Henley, at last, "I will wait at the forester's house, and you can tell them I am there. If they wish me to come, I will do so."

"All right," replied Scanlon. "And I'm certain they'll be glad."

The forester was found to be absent, but his wife, at Henley's request, brought the violin and gave it to him. Scanlon explained the matter of Elsie's illness to the woman, and left, while Henley waited. He sat on the doorstep with the bridle-rein in his hand,

“Was it a ruse on the man’s part?” he wondered. “Was the man, Kennedy, somewhere about, and had they conspired to capture him?” Well, he would show them that it was no easy matter. And had she conspired with them, that Miss Van Ness, who had seemed in such a nervous state on the day Vassilka was hurt? He remembered her face, and remembered her eyes. They were good, clear, honest eyes, he decided, and he felt that she could have no part in such a plot. But a doctor must take his chances. He must go. There had been occasions in New York when he had been called at night, feeling that it was a plot to rob, and, perhaps, assassinate him, but he had gone and taken the chance. And even back in Boston, when he was that miserable thing known to the student fraternity as a *pup*, he had been sent out from the hospital on dismal errands into dens of crime, and on half-lighted streets in the middle of the night, and alone.

So his thoughts ran, playing at last among memories of his student days at the Harvard Medical School, when, suddenly, he heard a footstep, and saw Scanlon approaching.

“They want you,” said the latter. And Henley asked him no further questions. He walked along with the man, leading his horse.

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At the edge of the lawn he gave the reins to Scanlon, and continued on his way, with the violin case in his hand. Mrs. Hollister met him at the door.

“I will ask you to wait just a moment, doctor,” she said. And she left him seated in the parlor. After a few minutes she returned.

“Miss Van Ness is upstairs, and you will please come with me,” she directed.

And Henley arose and followed her.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

WHEN Henley entered the room, preceded by Mrs. Hollister, he found Elsie lying upon a couch. She did not attempt to arise, but smiled, and lifted her hand.

"It is good of you to come," she said. "We learned that you were near the house, and Aunt Jane insists that I need attention. Doctor Ainslie, of the village, is himself ill."

Henley stood for a moment looking down at her.

"It is her left shoulder, doctor," said Mrs. Hollister. "She had a bad fall, and has been suffering a good deal."

Henley made an examination of the shoulder, and asked the questions usual under such circumstances, and then seated himself beside the couch; and, taking Elsie's wrist to time her pulse, drew out his watch and looked quietly down at it. Elsie, with her head buried in pillows, was studying his every feature, and soon her glance fell upon his watch. She recognized it at once. It was the same watch

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he had had upon the island; and, in their close intimacy of those three days, she had noticed it carefully many times. It was the watch he had pawned, and that Doctor Eaton had taken out of pawn. It was the connecting link.

And yet, as she studied it, there came to her again the question, "Of what value is a proof like this? What matters any one particular thing if he can look at me like this and not recognize me?"

But there came also the other question, answered doubtfully:

"Is it, in fact, the watch? Do they not make dozens, hundreds, and, perhaps, thousands of cases of one pattern?"

Henley returned the watch to his pocket, with a puzzled look on his face. He leaned over, and placed his hand on her forehead. She could feel his light breath against her cheek.

"I will wait a few minutes," he said, "and take your pulse again. It is too rapid, and is very irregular. You do not seem to have fever, but you appear to be excited."

He leaned back, withdrawing his hand from her face, and began to look about the room with the indifferent interest of the physician. Out across the tops of the trees, he could see

the masts of the wireless plant at the house of Doctor O'Brien. He arose and, walking to the window, looked out over the lawn, and toward the distant masts.

"It is quite a pretty view from here," he remarked, without turning his head.

"Yes," said Elsie. "I sit by that window often and look out over the trees toward Dr. O'Brien's place."

Henley made no reply. He glanced at his watch again and turned toward her. Then his glance, in passing over a table and its contents, rested for a moment on a photograph. It returned and settled upon the picture. He replaced the watch in his pocket, and, taking up the picture, began to examine it. Elsie half raised her head from the pillows. Her eyes were intent upon his face, and her heart was beating rapidly.

"This is strange," he said, at last. And, as he looked toward her, her head sank back upon the pillows. "This man looks something like me."

"Yes," she said, faintly, then added, rather lamely, "I have thought there was a resemblance."

He resumed his seat, holding the picture in his hand.

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“He was, of course, much younger,” he continued, “and rather slighter; and furthermore, I have a beard.”

Mrs. Hollister had been busying herself about the room in a quiet way; but when she saw Henley take up the picture, it was more than she could bear. There had been a silence as he glanced at it, and, to her, the air had suddenly grown tense. She felt that it was to come now. There was no escape. And the moment must be theirs—and theirs alone. Elsie should not be embarrassed by having her present to share it. And so she tiptoed from the room and went softly down the hall, her hands trembling, her heart beating rapidly, and a moisture in her eyes.

“Yes,” continued Henley, “it is, perhaps, hard for a man to tell about himself, but the resemblance is, to my mind, quite marked. It is possible that if I had no beard, my lower face would appear different from that of the picture.”

Elsie could not reply. Her throat ached with quick throbbings, and her lips had grown dry. She tried to force speech, but it would not come.

It was only when he arose and replaced the picture upon the table that she could speak.

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"Have you always worn a beard?" she asked, and there was a pitiful attempt to repress the eagerness in her voice.

"Yes," he said, "I have always worn it."

His mind flew back to the memory of his first meeting with Dr. Eaton, when the latter had found him in a hospital. He had been there for many weeks. His beard had grown long, and, when leaving, he had feared a throat trouble, and Doctor Eaton had advised that he simply have the beard trimmed, and continue to wear it for some time. He realized now that he had no recollection of his face without a beard. He had always worn it.

But, still, as he again took his chair, the thought of the picture continued with him.

"He was a friend?" he asked, as he took out his watch to time her pulse once more.

But she drew back her arm.

"I am afraid," she said, "that you cannot take it now. I have been very nervous to-day."

He sat looking at her.

"I will try again in a few minutes," he suggested. "Just lie quiet."

"You were speaking of the picture,"—this from her—"and were asking if it is the pic-

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ture of a friend. It is the picture of a friend, a very dear friend." And, nerving herself to the point, she clenched her hands and forced the words from her lips, looking eagerly into his eyes.

"Arthur Travers Henley was his name," she said. "He was my sweetheart! I loved him!"

"Arthur Travers Henley," he repeated, slowly, and his eyes contracted slightly, and he turned his head, looking out toward the sky, but seeing nothing. "Arthur Travers Henley," and he repeated it again, almost in a whisper.

Elsie's whole form relaxed, and she sank back upon the couch, and covered her face with her hand. She had looked into his eyes; she had studied his face; she had called his name, and he had given no sign. He looked, and saw that she was sobbing. It had been too much. It had been more than she could bear. He regarded her wonderingly for a moment when, misunderstanding, a feeling of great pity crept over him.

"And he is dead?" he half whispered.

"Yes," she said, brokenly, and there was the note of despairing truth in her tone. "He is dead."

He did not seek to comfort her. He arose and, glancing once more at the picture, half murmured the words, directing them to the face that so resembled his own. "He is dead." And a sigh escaped him.

"I will write some prescriptions, and leave them with Mrs. Hollister," he said. "Your shoulder is bruised and strained. I will give directions about that, and I will prescribe a sedative, also. If Doctor Ainslie cannot come, I will return this afternoon."

Elsie did not reply. She sought and found her handkerchief, and covered her eyes, pressing against it with her hand.

"It was very good of you to come," she said.

He bade her good morning, and walked lightly from the room. Meeting Mrs. Hollister near the door, he wrote his prescriptions, tearing them from a pad, and gave them to her, together with instructions as to the manner of application and the proper method of caring for the patient. He bowed, and began to descend the stairs.

But Elsie had been lying with quick whirling brain and rapidly beating heart until she had grown beside herself.

"It is he! It is he! It is he!" The words

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pounded and beat upon her faster and faster. No matter that he did not know. No matter the years, the profession, no matter anything under God's sun. There were only the words, "It is he!" And her very soul told her that the words were true.

As he descended the stairway, she sprang quickly from the couch, her left arm hanging useless by her side, and a thousand agonizing pains darting through her shoulder. With strength of will, her face drawn and white, she hurried to the door, and down the hall to the top of the stairs.

She stretched out her arm and looked down toward him.

"Arthur!" she called, and in the tones there was all the despairing appeal of her heart.

He sought quickly to pause upon the stairs, stumbled and turned, looking up at her with a startled face.

"Arthur!" she called again, looking down at him. "Do you not know me? Can it be that you do not know me?"

In his face was now depicted astonishment, wonder. Somewhere, deep down in his consciousness, a chord had been touched as it ever so lightly. Somewhere within him a

something had been stirred, as there comes to the mind the bar of a song long forgotten, and not now remembered, save that it has touched again where once it rang.

His lips parted, and he took a step nearer to her.

"Did you call—Arthur?" he murmured, rather than asked.

But, suddenly, from the lower hall there rang a voice loud and commanding:

"Baker!" it called. "Baker!" And, as he turned his head, he looked down into the fierce eyes of Doctor O'Brien. The eyes fixed him and, though no other word was spoken, he began slowly to descend the stairs. In the hall-way above, he heard a moan and the sound of shuffling feet, but he did not turn his head. Elsie had slipped back, fainting, into the arms of Mrs. Hollister, and the prescriptions that he had written had fallen, and lay scattered upon the floor.

It seemed, as he hesitated for a moment after taking up his hat, that a question was being asked him. The two men walked out on the porch, and saw awaiting them a number of Mexicans, standing about the lawn.

"The younger woman," said Henley, dully, "has been hurt."

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“Yes,” replied Doctor O’Brien, “she is suffering from one of the ills that flesh is heir to.”

And they descended the steps together.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

DOCTOR O'BRIEN had again taken up his work, after his return from New York, and with renewed enthusiasm. In that city he had, in a measure, kept trace of Ramon Silva; and, finding that the latter was again about to leave for New Jersey, he had made a hurried trip by automobile, bringing with him a strange, silent man, an operator for the wireless telegraphy.

Complete arrangements had been made in New York for messages to be sent from various observatories in America and in Europe, and these were to be repeated to him as, under his contract with the wireless people, he was not permitted to use his plant in sending messages, because the splashes might tend to interrupt messages sent to and from vessels at sea.

He had flown into a rage when he learned of Henley's absence from the house, and found that he had gone for the violin. He called several Mexicans, armed them, and they gal-

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loped after his machine as it sped along the road toward the Hollister place.

When they returned to the house, he went with Henley to the latter's room; and, while Henley fought manfully for the maintenance of his right to do as he pleased, the powerful hypnotic influence which Doctor O'Brien possessed crushed and smothered his free will, and he came to admit at last, and fully, that he had done wrong, and became even alarmed at measuring the risks to which he had subjected himself.

The days passed. Vassilka had recovered to the extent that she was going about the house and grounds, and in the laboratory Doctor O'Brien was deeply engaged. One day he suddenly walked out of this room and closed the door hurriedly. He was greatly agitated, and was holding one of his hands behind him. The two men stared at each other in silence for some moments, until Doctor O'Brien spoke.

"I have found it," he said in a low tone.

He held out his hand, and Henley leaned forward to examine closer. He saw lying upon Doctor O'Brien's palm a ball of the size of a marble, slightly luminous. It was almost colorless, and yet he could not see

through it. There was a quality of opaqueness that he could not understand. It was as though one looked into an eye, seeing only the pupil.

"What is it?" asked Henley, quietly.

"Watch!" commanded Doctor O'Brien.

And Henley saw the ball rise slowly and ascend almost to the ceiling. There it paused.

"Watch!" again commanded Doctor O'Brien. And the ball began to move about the room. It sank, it rose; and, circling about, came again to Doctor O'Brien, and settled gently into the palm of his hand.

Something was slowly creeping over Henley, something strange and uncanny; and he felt a great fear rising up—a fear of the unreal—of a thing that was and should not be under God's sun. But suddenly his reason came in an endeavor to sweep it all away, and he smiled with a smile that was almost pleading.

"It is a vision suggested by hypnotism," he said. "It is a trick such as the East Indians perform."

But Doctor O'Brien only sneered as he spoke.

"Watch!" he commanded once more. And Henley saw a flash and the ball was gone. It

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seemed to him that it had passed through the open window. Henley still continued to smile.

"And what is it, then?" he asked.

Doctor O'Brien gazed at him intently for a moment.

"It is Thought," he said. "Thought captured and caged as men capture and cage electricity. Thought is not born of the brain, which is at best but an imperfect machine. That can only give expression to Thought, which comes from without, and which exists everywhere. I have found it to be atomic, and I have captured it, and you have seen it to-day."

Henley was astounded for a moment, and then laughed.

"You are a fool," he said.

For a moment it seemed that Doctor O'Brien would fly into a rage, but by an effort he controlled himself.

"You do not understand, Baker," he said, and his tone grew almost sad. "I have worked and studied deeply on this question, and, at the beginning, there were men who had travelled before me and had blazed a way, but now I find myself alone. I have passed beyond the limits where they paused in fear, and before me is a trackless land or a virgin sea.

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I was reading only last night from the poet Keats, and there I found my feelings expressed, my position written clear:

‘Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.’ ”

He slowly repeated the words, “A Watcher of the Skies,” and then said: “And when I give my message to you, Baker—when I give it to the world—when I tell you what is written by the Eternal God Himself, you will call me mad, and in your folly again name me ‘Fool.’ ”

Doctor O’Brien turned away and, entering the laboratory, closed the door softly behind him, leaving Henley standing with his hands resting upon the back of a chair. He felt that Doctor O’Brien had not chosen to exert his great will upon him, or he must have believed. But gradually he felt a feeling of oppression coming over him. He wanted to get out into the sunlight and away from the thought of this terrible man who did such strange things and held him in such servitude

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of mind and body. And so he moved softly from the room, closed the door, and crept up the stairs, feeling increasing freedom of mind at every step.

And when Doctor O'Brien did not appear that night, Vassilka came and whispered to him.

"He has been having a terrible evening. He has been lying upon the pavement in the chapel."

"He is mad," Henley whispered in reply. "Utterly mad. He helps God Almighty make the world over every day."

And then, suddenly, he was silent, for faintly, coming from the chapel, they heard the sound of the organ and the words of a hymn in the familiar baritone voice:

Lead, kindly Light, amid th' encircling gloom!

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

IT was Saturday morning, and Doctor O'Brien and Henley were buried in their work in the basement of the house. Vassilka had been playing over some new music she had received, and had also been watching men stringing wires for a telephone connection in the house. Since he was not permitted to make use of the wireless for sending purposes, Doctor O'Brien had decided that he must have quick connection with New York, and so had given orders for the installation of two telephones—one for communicating with the village of Greenway, and the other he was having placed in the basement, where he could use it without interruption.

Vassilka sighed, and turned from the piano. The music had not pleased her. She looked out upon the beautiful May morning and, deciding that the house was dull, arose and ordered her horse. She would go for a ride. And she thought of the violin. It was now at the Hollisters', where Henley had left

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it when he had called to visit Elsie. She thought of Elsie. She had not seen her since the day of her own accident. And Elsie, too, had been hurt, but not seriously. So she decided that she would go for the violin, would call for Elsie, and would express her sympathies. Likewise she would study the girl carefully, and learn, if possible, why the photograph had been sent.

She ordered a horse and dressed. There was no longer a tiny revolver to fit into the pocket in her riding skirt. And, as for the mare Constancia, that uncertain animal had been shipped back to the city and sold, and Vassilka had again taken the horse she had first ridden since coming here, a light sorrel, without great style, but gentle and possessed of fair speed.

"I wonder," she was thinking, as she rode out through the trees, "whether I shall again meet that villainous Ramon Silva? I wonder why he does not go back to Mexico? If he harms my uncle, I shall follow him back to Mexico, and find a means to punish him."

But the beauty of the fields and the woods soon swept the memory of Ramon Silva from her mind. She rode on and on, and reaching the road that ran up to the Hollister house,

decided that she would continue on her way, and stop for the violin on her return. She would go to the point where she had lost control of Constancia. She would ride over the road again, the road where she had ridden with Henley on the day she had fired at Kennedy. There was a bit of excitement in the thought, and she rode on and on, enjoying every moment.

“Poor Doctor Baker!” she was thinking. “My uncle has promised me, and he says the time is short. He has promised me also that he will not again be cruel to him. I want to see him as he really is. His real self is now a subconscious self. I want to know him with the heart and soul as God gave them to him;—then if the blue-eyed Miss Van Ness wishes to exert the powers of her blonde beauty—it will be fair. I will see him and know him as he really is.”

She drew rein, and her mind slipped to other thoughts. There had been a slow rise along the road, and now she had come to the end of the rise, and was looking down into a long valley. There were fields and farm-houses, and across the fields to the left were woods such as she had passed through. It was here that they had encountered Kennedy, and

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it was here, too, that Constancia had taken fright at the whirring sound of a covey of quail that had risen beside the road.

It was pretty here, she decided, warm and green and bright, but there came to her mind the memory of the beautiful places she had seen in Mexico, the hazy, sunlit valleys, the broken and mighty mountains. They had reminded her of her own land, only they were more rugged and wild and beautiful. She turned her horse, and began to ride slowly back; and then, suddenly, she caught her breath; for, riding toward her and mounted upon a handsome horse, was Ramon Silva, the Mexican. Her heart beat rapidly, for she saw that he meant to address her. It was true that she had left a message of thanks to him for his effort in having attempted to save her on that day. But she reasoned quickly that he had now followed her, that he had meant to meet her and accost her. Did he mean to harm her? She thought of her revolver she had lost, and wished herself at home, anywhere rather than here. But, perhaps this Miss Van Ness had delivered the message concerning her uncle. Perhaps Ramon Silva believed that she would plead with him for her uncle's life. Well, she would not.

She would defy him! She would tell him that if he should so much as disturb one hair of her uncle's head, ten men had sworn to kill him, and that they would carry this out without fail. So she thought and planned, hardening her eyes and tightening her lips.

But Ramon Silva lifted his hat and smiled, speaking French with some hesitation. He drew from his pocket the little revolver that she had lost and, taking it by the barrel, handed it to her.

"A little boy found it in the road," he said. "He gave it to the forester on the Hollister estate, who spoke of it, and I remembered that I had seen it fall."

Her face flushed as she took the weapon, and she placed it hastily in the pocket of her skirt. She remembered how she had struck him with her riding-whip, and how she had sought to draw the revolver to shoot him, and now he was bringing it back to her.

"I want to ask you to forgive my gaucherie on that day," he pleaded. "I felt that I could easily lift you from the saddle and save you. I should, instead, have simply caught your mare's bridle, and I might have stopped her. But you struggled from me and slipped."

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Vassilka sat looking down. She spoke without raising her eyes.

"I thank you for your effort," she said. "It was my fault."

And then she looked up quickly.

"But how could I know?" she questioned. "You are my uncle's enemy. You are not here for any good purpose. You had followed me on the road that day as you have to-day. You are his enemy, and so you are my enemy. I had no cause on that day to believe that you meant other than to harm me. My uncle has been very good to you. You have followed him here, and have tried on several occasions to have him assassinated down in Mexico. He does not wish to fight that way. He does not wish trouble with you at all. He is working quietly in his own home. He could have had you shot down on this road on any one of a hundred occasions, and that would have ended the matter, for it could not have been brought back to him."

She had been speaking rapidly, and there was, in spite of her effort to avoid this very thing, a note of appeal in her voice. Realizing it, she hesitated, and then continued:

"I am not ungrateful for your attempted service to me. It was misunderstood at the

time, but that was your own fault. I thank you, too, for the return of my property, and I bid you good morning."

But Silva held out a detaining hand. His cheek had darkened at her words, and his eyes were bright.

"You are mistaken," he said. "I wish to tell you that. I do not seek to harm your uncle here, and I have never sought to assassinate him, nor to have him assassinated. The matter of settlement is between him and me, and he must face it, and face it like a man. I do not wish to speak to a woman of these things, but you have accused me of attempted assassination; and, in reply, I tell you that you are mistaken. I have followed him, it is true, and I have found him here, and he must come back to Mexico."

She turned upon him fiercely.

"Why?" she asked.

"And have you not heard the story?" he questioned in return.

"Yes!" she replied. "And it is false, false as the statement that you do not mean to harm him. You wish him to return to Mexico, where you have power, and then he would be murdered."

Silva's face flushed again. His hand fell to

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his side, and he smiled sadly, bowing his head.

“It is all for a girl, my dead sister,” he said. “It is for her murder that I ask what I must have, but it shall be as man to man. I have found him here, and he must go back. You may tell him this, and give him this message.”

Vassilka thought of her uncle, of his goodness to her, of his days and nights of labor upon the great mysterious thing that seemed to be his whole life. She thought of his melancholy and unhappiness, and of how the presence of Ramon Silva tormented him, and troubled and hindered him in his work. She knew that he was brave, and that his only fear of this young man was that he might be cut off in the midst of his work without being able to complete it. She still believed the stories of attempted assassination. And why should she not appeal to him? Why should she not, for her uncle’s sake, bend her own pride? He had spoken of his sister. He had evidently loved her, and there must be some chord in his heart that she could reach. And so she hesitated, reining in her horse.

“I am sure,” she said, “that if there are any charges against my uncle in Mexico, he

will return to meet them. He is at present engaged in work that cannot be now abandoned. I cannot understand, anyway, why the proper authorities do not come and demand his extradition if there are charges that can be sustained."

Silva shook his head.

"There are no charges in the courts," he said.

"Why have charges not been preferred? Mexico is a country of courts and laws and orderly proceedings. Why have you pursued my uncle, and why is the Mexican Government silent? Your sister was ill, and my uncle, as a physician, treated her, and she failed to recover under his treatment. My uncle is a very skilled man, and the medical profession so esteems him everywhere. He was one of the most noted, if not the most noted, men in the profession in his own country. All physicians lose patients. Why should you seek revenge for this? It was certainly not his fault."

Almost without noticing it, the two had begun to ride along together, their horses walking slowly. There was something in the girl's face that touched Silva deeply, and her appeal told him of her own ignorance in the

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matter. Why, he did not know, but there came into his heart the desire to justify himself. He had not discussed the matter with men. He had discussed it, in fact, with no one. He had followed along, seeking to find Doctor O'Brien, and to gather the necessary evidence concerning Henley that would secure the return of his enemy to Mexico. What would come later would have to fit the occasion.

"You have not been informed," he said.
"You have been misinformed."

"I do not wish to hear evil of my uncle," she replied.

They had come to a stile by the roadside. It consisted of steps by which one might mount the fence and descend into a pathway crossing a field. Silva reined up to it.

"Let us dismount here for a while," he said.
"I may not see you again. We cannot go much farther together. You are as safe as though you were my own sister. I wish simply to tell you a little story. I somehow wish you to understand. To-day is truce-day between enemies, since you have called me an enemy." He drew from his pocket a white handkerchief, and hung it upon a thorn-bush growing beside the stile.

“To-day is truce-day, and I ask parley with my enemy. Is it granted?”

She hesitated for a moment.

“I do not know,” she said. “I should not.” And then the thought came that it was for her uncle’s sake. Perhaps some way might be reached to settle it all. She reined in beside the stile and dismounted, and Silva did likewise. He tied up the two horses, and they seated themselves. He took off his hat and, holding it in his hand, stared for a moment across at the woods on the other side of the road, as though seeking a beginning.

“Down in Mexico,” he began, “on the 24th day of June, 1887, a little girl was born, and her mother named her Rosalia. This little girl’s father had died before her birth. He had been in the State of Sonora, looking after some mining interest, and had been killed near Nogales, when his horse fell and tumbled over a cliff.

“And the little girl Rosalia was a strange, nervous child, bright to learn, and of an intensely affectionate nature; but she was beset from time to time with unreasonable and unnatural fears. She had strange dreams, too, did this little girl—strange and vivid dreams—and she would sink sometimes into a

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deep slumber; and in that sleep she seemed to have visions that were prophetic. And so this little girl, this little, delicate, flower-faced child came to be feared and loved about the countryside, for it was agreed that she had the gift of prophecy. This little girl of whom I speak had a big brother who idolized her, and who came to school in the States; and here he heard of many things and of treatments that were given for such troubles as this. And he and his mother brought the little girl, and they stayed for a long time; and here in this country the little girl grew better and better, and at last she and the mother and the brother went back to Mexico. The little girl now grew and grew, and seemed to have in a measure recovered from her strange fears, and from her nervousness and from her dreams.

“And there was, in the State of Sonora, a valuable mining property that had belonged to the father of this little girl. It had been neglected on account of the long warfare which had existed between the Yaqui Indians and the Mexican Government, making it unsafe for a Mexican to remain in that country. But now it had been decided in the family council that the property must

be developed, and the mining operations resumed, and the brother wished to go to the State of Sonora for that purpose. But the little sister would not agree that she and her mother should be left, and so they all journeyed to the West and stopped at a hacienda, near the town of Hermosillo, which is the capital of Sonora. One evening in June, 1902—that was the year—three hundred armed Yaquis descended upon that hacienda, and the young man managed to barely escape with his mother and sister, while some of the others were murdered. And he carried his sister in his arms—for she was unconscious—and they entered the town of Hermosillo, where she lay for days as one dead. All that had been done, all the improvement that had come to her, passed away; and when they took her again to her old home, she was as she had been when a little child, except for this, that her trouble was now greater. But her brother had had some revenge. He had left Hermosillo while she lay unconscious, and had taken part in the battle of Mazatlan Mountain, firing his gun until it became so hot that he could fire it no longer; and where he and his little command fought their way through a ravine, sixty-four dead Yaquis

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were afterward counted. But even such revenge could not repay the ill that had been done. The young man worshipped his sister, and each day was to him a living grief. They came again to the States, but she was older now, and the physicians said that she could not be cured. And so they returned to Mexico—and to hopelessness.”

He sighed deeply.

“And after this there came a physician,” he continued, slowly, “and he was a learned man with great powers. He heard of the case of the girl, and he came, asking that he might see her; and then, after an examination, he stated that he could cure her. He explained it all. He told of his powers, and told what she needed, and so he began the work. At first she improved rapidly, for he was deeply interested in her. And then the manhood slipped from him, the healer went out of his soul, the student entered in and took full possession. It became with him not a human being who was to be treated and to be benefited and made well. It became to him a case to be studied, a psychological phenomenon from which he might learn. And then he began to experiment. Her condition was by him deliberately made worse, that he might

recall her from her trancelike visions, and so pursue his studies. The brother was away, and only the mother was there, and she did not understand. And so he killed her; and then, afterward, the little mother grieved and grieved, and soon she also went."

He had ceased speaking. His hat was between his knees, and he was looking down at the ground.

"That is all," he said.

There was silence for a long time, and they did not look at each other.

"And you mean," she asked at last, and in a faint voice, "that my uncle did this thing?"

"Yes," he said. "It was Doctor Sebastien O'Brien."

"And why did you not procure his arrest?"

"It would have been useless," he replied. "It is something that cannot be proven. My mother is dead, and the law cannot reach it."

In Vassilka's breast there was a feeling of ache and suffering. There had come to her the memory of her uncle standing, his face dark with rage, and Henley marching up and down in the half-light of the chapel, marking time as a soldier. He had done that thing which her own eyes had seen; and, deep within

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her heart, she knew that the story this young man had been telling her was true. She was sick with the horror and misery of it. And now he was there in the great mysterious building she was calling home. He was pursuing the even tenor of his way, and holding this man his enemy.

"And have you tried to kill him?" she asked. "Tell me that!"

"I have not," he said. "That will come later. He shall have his chance."

She arose slowly and stepped down to the ground.

"Mr. Silva," she said, turning to him, "I am glad you have told me what you have to-day. It is a very sad story, and I want you to know that, as a woman, I sympathize with you from the depths of my nature. I feel, though, that a great mistake is being made. I feel that the matter has been misunderstood."

He brought her horse, and she mounted from the steps and turned toward him.

He looked into her eyes incredulously.

"And you do not believe?" he asked.

She was silent for a long time. Her lips trembled, and then she looked fairly into his eyes, and her own were soft and pitying.

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"Yes," she said, in a low voice, "I do believe."

"And now—" he asked.

"And now," she replied, "you may take down your flag of truce, for our truce-day has passed by."

"And you, too, are my enemy?"

"Yes," she answered, and she looked into his eyes strangely, and he could not understand. "I must be your enemy."

She turned her horse and rode slowly for a short distance, and then began to gallop. He stood and watched her as she passed the road leading to the Hollisters. She had forgotten the violin, and was riding toward home. On the stile where she had sat lay a rose. It was one that had been sent her from New York at his own order. He took it up, and turned it in his hand. And then, with the name of the flower, the memory of his sister came to him.

"Rosalia!" he murmured, and his eyes were filled with tears. "Poor little Rosalia!" And he tossed the rose from him because this Bulgarian girl's hand had held it. He watched it fall upon the top of the stile, and then he mounted his horse and rode away.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

IT was Sunday afternoon, and Vassilka and Henley were strolling about the grounds. She had had it in mind to tell him of her meeting with Silva the day previous, but, for some reason, had hesitated and kept it back. She knew that it would not be well to tell her uncle, fearing his anger, yet she felt that he ought to know of the statements that had been made. She had thought long and seriously over what had been told her. She had been deeply touched, too, by the story, but there had been nothing in it that had served to turn her against her uncle. She told herself that it was untrue; and yet, down in her heart, she knew that it was true—every word of it. And there came also the memory of the stile, the white handkerchief on the thorn-bush, the rose she had torn from the lapel of her coat and twisted in her hands, and the earnest, clear-cut face of the young man who sat beside her, gripping his hat between his hands, and telling the story slowly, quietly.

"Let us go for the violin, you and I," she said, suddenly. "My uncle has shut himself in. My mother and my aunt are reading. The big fat detective from New York is not here, and we are free from surveillance."

But Henley's face was troubled, and he shook his head.

"I am afraid," he said, "that it would not be wise to go. I have not told you what Miss Van Ness said to me. It troubles me. She has a picture there that seems to resemble me very much. She said that it is the picture of a young man who was her sweetheart, and who is dead. She told me that his name was Arthur Travers Henley. After this, as I was leaving, she came to the head of the stairs, and stretched out her hand, and called 'Arthur!' loudly. It seemed strange to me. It seemed that I had heard that call before, and yet I know that it is all a mistake. She loved that young man, and his death has doubtless caused her grief; and so, seeing some one who resembled him, she lost control of herself. Doctor O'Brien has directed me not to go there. And, besides this, if seeing me troubles her to the extent that she grows hysterical because of this resemblance, it is better that I should not go."

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Vassilka thought at once of the picture that had been sent to her. "What had been the purpose in sending it?" she asked herself again. "Clearly, if the young man had died, it could not be Doctor Baker. Was it sent, then, in a moment of aberration on the part of Miss Van Ness?" The feeling of animosity and the touch of jealousy were slowly slipping away. The young man had died, so it could not be Doctor Baker. But why had it been sent? Had the girl conceived a fascination for Doctor Baker because of the fancied resemblance to her dead lover, and did she wish to break what ties might exist between her, Vassilka, and him, by causing her to believe that a close friendship had existed in the past when the two had, in fact, never before known each other? She told herself that this would be even more despicable, because untrue. And yet, somehow, a feeling of pity crept into her heart.

"She is pretty," she said to Henley, and watched his face closely.

"Yes," he said, slowly, "she is pretty; but she is really rather handsome than pretty. There is a great deal of what we might call character in her face."

"Come," she said. "We will go to the

house. I have something to show you." And they walked to the front of the building, where she requested him to wait. She entered the house, and soon returned. They seated themselves upon a bench beneath a tree. She unwrapped the picture, and showed it to him. He held it for a long time, looking at it critically. Then he returned it to her.

"Well?" she asked.

"The picture is faked," he said. "It has been worked over. There is a difference in the heads." She studied it carefully, even more carefully than he had done.

"And who are they?"

"One is the picture of the young man who died, and the other is Miss Van Ness."

"And why has the picture been made?"

"It has, in my opinion," he said, "been made up of two photographs, but I cannot imagine why. I have seen some of this work in the making. I had a friend in New York who did such work for newspapers. He would take a picture, we will say of the battleship *Alabama*, and another of the harbor at Havana. From these he would make a picture of the battleship *Alabama* riding at anchor in the harbor of Havana. Such work saves newspapers money, and is frequently resorted to."

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"But why was it done in this case?" she insisted.

"You know more about it than I do," he replied. "Where did you get it?"

"It came to me through the mails. It was posted from New York; and if I know any one in New York, I am not aware of it."

And then another thought came to her.

"And those mysterious flowers," she said. "You did not send them, and my Uncle Sebastien did not send them. From whom did they come?" He shook his head.

"Then," she replied, quietly, "I think I do know."

"Who sent them?" he queried.

But she was silent.

"That," she said at last, "I will tell you some other time. Just now, we will get the horses and ride out. I will go for the violin."

In a little while they were riding northward; but when they reached the road leading up to the Hollister home, Vassilka insisted that they continue their ride, and stop by on their return.

"I always meet with some adventure," she said.

They rode on; and, at last, as they neared the stile, they saw that two horses were teth-

ered just across the road. They approached nearer and discovered that two people were sitting upon the stile as Vassilka had sat with Ramon Silva—a man and a woman. The two raised their heads, and then the man smilingly drew a handkerchief from his pocket and tossed it upon the thorn-bush. It was Elsie and Ramon Silva, and it suddenly came to Vassilka that the two were in league, he against her uncle and she against Henley. She bowed, however, and smiled.

“I think,” she said, reining her horse close in, “that some one has sent me something by mistake. I do not know how it could have happened, but I feel sure that it was not intended for me.”

She handed the picture, all wrapped as it was, to Elsie.

The latter removed the paper; and, when her gaze rested upon the picture, she flushed deeply, and covered it again with the paper. Ramon Silva flushed also and was silent, waiting for woman’s wit to help Elsie, but the latter said nothing.

“It came to me,” continued Vassilka, “and I could not understand, so I put it aside. I thought there was some resemblance in the girl’s face to your own, and Doctor Baker

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saw the picture to-day; and he tells me that the face of the young man is that of a very dear friend of yours, who is dead."

She smiled still more sweetly.

"So, if it is yours, I want you to have it; but I cannot understand how it happened to be sent to me."

Ramon Silva looked up.

"I sent it," he said.

Henley here spoke, looking directly at Silva.

"It is a faked picture," he said. "What was your purpose in sending it?"

"So that Miss Doubrovecs would show it to you, and you would recognize your own picture."

Henley smiled, but his smile was a sneer.

"You are doubtless to be commended for your industry," he observed. "You came here from Mexico. You never saw me until you did come here, and, consequently, if the picture were authentic, you could not know it. As it is, any one can readily detect the fraud that has been attempted; and, furthermore, Miss Van Ness has told me who the young man was." He lifted his hat. "Come, Vassilka," he said, and they rode away together.

Ramon Silva turned to Elsie.

"That man does not seem to want to know anything," he said. "If you had not poked me, I would have told him. Why did you not want me to tell him?"

"Because," she said, "if he knows, then he does not need to be told."

"But he evidently does not know, and we are here to tell him. You should have let me have it out. We will never have another opportunity like this. You should have talked to her, and let me lead him aside and have a talk with him."

"But I don't want you to talk with him. I want to talk with him myself."

"You have had plenty of opportunities. Why have you not taken advantage of them?"

"Because I simply have not, and no woman in the world could. I know that I am right, but I am waiting for Kennedy's report. You know Doctor Eaton has been away from New York, and only returned a few days ago. Kennedy is trying to connect everything. I am waiting for that."

"I sometimes wonder why I am here when I let opportunities like that pass," said Silva. "We have got to be certain of our man, it is true, but you tell me you are certain. For my part, I am beginning to have serious doubts."

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And between Henley and Vassilka, too, the matter was being discussed as they rode slowly along. The pleasure in the ride had been taken from them through deep consideration of what had been said. She drew rein at last.

"I have been thinking earnestly over the matter," she said, "and it is my judgment that you should talk with this girl. You want to know what your past has been. Let her have her dreams. Let her have hallucinations even. But get what you can from her. Learn what she has to say and, if it is worth anything to you, use it."

He shook his head doubtfully.

"I have always been rather afraid to know," he said. "Since I have been here with Doctor O'Brien, the feeling has been growing. And there has come, too, the feeling that I do not want to know. We have life here that is clear and plain. Doctor O'Brien says that his work will soon be finished, and he will make his announcement to the world. Then he will recompense me, and I will go out into the world with a profession and enough money to establish myself somewhere. You are here with me now, and perhaps my feet shall turn southward to Mexico. Doctor O'Brien has

promised to remove my trouble, and to bring back my other life. I believe that he can do this. I know and you know that I submitted myself to him at the beginning, and he now has almost complete control over the actions of my mind. It has been my desire to go back—to be as I was; but for some days this fear has been growing and growing until it has become almost an obsession. I sit here on this horse. I see you and know you and talk with you. I have my yesterdays, my memories of recent things, and I am living a certain life. Do you realize that the change means, in a measure, to die? The walks I have had with you, the talks I have had with you, even the memory of your face, the pressure of your hand, and the sweeter memory of the day you put your arms about my neck, may all be swept from me. What I had in the other life I do not know. I have much here for which to be thankful. If it should be as it was before, there would be nothing left me from all of this life here. The man whom you would see you would not know, and the man who would look into your eyes would be gazing upon you for the first time. Whose fault is it that I am as I am to-day, and not what I was in years gone by? Who

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swept me from my friends, my home, my father, my mother, my sisters, my brothers?"

"It was an American," she said in reply.

"It was your General Lee, who said that the grandest word in language is the word 'duty.'"

"That is true," he answered, "but I have been reading Hamlet's 'Soliloquy,' and I have also reread 'Thanatopsis'; and it has been slowly grinding into my heart that 'it is better to bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of.' I know that it is my duty, but it is a terrible duty to perform."

"But with you it may be different," she said. "If this Miss Van Ness knew you, then she is, indeed, a traveller from that other land which you so dread. Let her be as Brutus's wife in this, and sweeten the bitterness. Perhaps it is all clear back there. Perhaps it is a land of sunshine, a fairer life than this."

But again he shook his head.

"This life," he said, "has its dreams that, coming true, would dull the picture that any fact or fancy of any other life might disclose. But, as you say, it is a duty. If I may learn, I will do so, and then I will decide, but I will go back only to what pleases me; and it would be better, should I not choose to go, that I had never known."

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They turned their horses and rode back in silence. When they came to the stile, they found Elsie and Silva still sitting there. Henley lifted his hat and dismounted.

"I wish to speak with you, Miss Van Ness," he said; and, turning to Silva and Vassilka, he bowed. "We will ask you to kindly pardon us."

Elsie arose almost weakly, and approached him. He gave his bridle-rein over to Silva, and the two stood apart.

"You have something to say to me?" he asked, in a low tone. "I judge this from what this man, Ramon Silva, has said."

Elsie looked into his eyes long and deep. She studied his face, but found no answering glance to give her courage.

"Yes," she said at last.

"Is it much?"

"Very much," she replied.

"Then," he answered, "we will leave the horses here, and walk away from the others for a little while."

He assisted Vassilka to dismount, and then he went with Elsie.

"Up here in the woods," she said, "on the road to the forester's house, there is a seat." And he directed his steps to where she led.

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They seated themselves, and there was silence between them. He looked down at the ground, and was almost without thought. Her fingers trembled, and she laced them together, looking out through the woods, her breath coming and going rapidly.

"You have much to tell," he said at last, gently. "I am listening. I have much to learn. We are alone, and I wish you to tell me what you have to say."

And then she told him the story, haltingly—her story, telling of her wrong and of her endeavors to right the wrong. He listened almost in silence, but with a deeply troubled face; and when she had finished, he turned to her.

"And this man Henley," he said, slowly, "was broken in fortune, broken in reputation. He was looked upon as a wife-abandoner, he was dropped from his clubs, he was reviled, and the memory of his friendship was blotted out."

She hesitated, and then answered him truly.

"That being the case," said he, and his voice was strong with resolution, "if I am that man Henley, I will go back. I, Doctor Rufus Baker, owe Arthur Travers Henley a

debt, I owe society a debt; and, if they do not electrocute me for a crime that I have been told I did commit, then I will live to wipe out all the stains."

She turned to him in wonder, and then he told her his own story, as much as he had been told and as much as he could remember. They sat for a long time; and then, at last, he holding her arm so that she should not stumble on the rough hillside, they went down toward the road where they had left Vassilka and Ramon Silva sitting upon the stile.

A cry suddenly escaped Elsie.

"They have gone," she said. "Their horses are gone, and your horse has been taken. Only my horse remains."

Henley stood for a moment wondering.

"It is some joke," he said at last. "They have hidden in the woods." So they continued to walk along until they had come to the stile. They looked about, and no one was near. They called, and received no answer. And then Henley looked down on the stile and saw a bit of paper with something written upon it. He took it up and read it, and in an instant his whole demeanor changed. His eyes became fixed; and, dropping the paper, he began to run down the road. Elsie called

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to him, but he did not answer nor turn his head. On and on he ran, as though one purpose possessed him, as though all the world were swept aside but one single thing—one thing that drew him on and on as fast as his feet could carry him.

Elsie looked about her in bewilderment, then she took up the paper that had fallen from his hand. It was in Doctor O'Brien's handwriting. And she read the stern command.

“Rufus Baker! Come! Come! Come to me at the house as fast as you can come!” The word “come” appeared four times. She wondered, but still she did not and could not understand. What had become of the others? Where was the girl, and where was Ramon Silva? Perhaps they had left a note. Perhaps something had been left for her. She searched carefully, but could find nothing; and then she mounted the stile and peered over on the ground in the field.

And there, half hidden by weeds, bruised and withered, she found a red rose, such as she had seen the Bulgarian girl wear. She descended and again unfastened her horse from the thorn-bush. She saw a man come out of the road leading to the Hollisters and

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ride toward her. It was Kennedy. He came up smiling.

"I rode in the back way," he said. "I didn't want to take no chances with them dagoes, so I come round that way. I got the record straight from start to finish. I have finished my work, and it's perfect and complete. I just come in from New York, as I didn't want to lose a minute gettin' it to you."

She looked at him calmly for a moment and then turned again to her horse.

"I think," she said, "that you can tear your report up."

His mouth opened in astonishment.

"Whut's the matter?" he asked. "Is he run away? Is anything happened to him?"

"No," she said. "He is still here. I have learned something."

"Whut's that?" he asked, almost breathlessly.

"I am a fool!"

Kennedy's mouth slowly closed. One expression faded away, and another took its place. He laughed.

"Now, if that ain't jest like a woman," he said.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

DOCTOR O'BRIEN was seated in the work-room usually occupied by Henley. The latter was somewhere about the building, reading or smoking. There was a gloom overhanging the entire household, for Vassilka came no more to the parlor, and appeared no longer at her accustomed place at meal-time. She was a prisoner in her room; as much a prisoner, in effect, as the young man who unwillingly occupied a room at the rear of the upper floor on the south side, and whose windows were heavily barred, and whose door was guarded.

During the days since the capture of Ramon Silva by Doctor O'Brien, when he had been brought, a prisoner, to the house, Henley had not seen Vassilka. He had sought in every way to secure her pardon and freedom from Doctor O'Brien, but his efforts had been fruitless.

"She is a little spitfire!" exclaimed Doctor O'Brien. "I care nothing about this man

Silva, except that I will not be bothered and annoyed by him. He has attempted to bribe my servants. Failing in this, he went to New York and saw Father Rafael in an attempt to secure his aid in turning my servants against me. I have only locked him up to keep him from annoying me. When I have finished my work, I will take him down in the basement, give him a good mauling, and kick him out. If he still hangs about, I will have him removed, and be done with it."

Thoughts of the two prisoners were continually in Henley's mind. He had grown desperate, had neglected his work, and on this day had told Doctor O'Brien of his talk with Elsie, and had asked him to at once cure him of his trouble and allow him to go. He had met with an angry refusal.

"Then," he had said, defiantly, "I will go and find some one else. There are others as skilled as you."

"There is perhaps one," replied Doctor O'Brien, "and that is Doctor Winslow, of New York. He is the man I have selected to make public my discoveries when I have completed my work. He is a man of brains and talent, and stands high above the rest."

"I will go to him," said Henley.

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“You will do just what I tell you and nothing more,” said Doctor O’Brien, angrily. “You will not again leave these grounds without my permission. I will cure you when I am ready, and you should be very thankful for even that much.”

And so they had parted; and when Doctor O’Brien descended the stairs to take up his work, he paused in the room usually occupied by Henley, and ended by seating himself in the latter’s accustomed place and staring out of the window. And, as he sat thus, leaning back, his large hands folded listlessly and his great head drooping forward, his face grew deeply melancholy. The old, unexplainable sadness was creeping upon him—the sadness that was as much the result of his temperament as of the experiences of his life and the studies he had pursued. And then, too, there had been the strange problems with which he had wrestled until they had become for him greater than all other things in the world.

The conclusion he had at last reached was that, within and without the human body, here, there, beyond the stars and in the depths, pervading all things, terrible in its utter completeness is Infinite Wisdom. Here

it was that he hesitated; and then, at last, casting aside all doubt, he plunged into his last wild dream that this was Thought, that it is atomic; and, presently, in his dream, he found himself alone.

But with all the boldness of his plunge, Doctor O'Brien had realized to the last degree the fulness of its meaning in his life. With him remained still, for the moment, the freshness and beauty of the days that were and had been his own. A tiny stream making thin music in a hot and thirsty land, the dipping flight of a gaudy bird that passed from thicket to thicket across a burning valley—these were before his eyes when he had risen and lifted his arms to the sky.

“There is no God but Truth!” he said, aloud. “No Truth but Truth will find it out.”

And, somewhere down in the inner chambers of his soul, it seemed that something of good that lived there stirred and rose, and then was gone.

The little stream might tinkle as before through the brakes and mosses; the gaudy bird might return again to wing its dipping flight across the valley, but the ear that heard would not be the same, and the eye that saw

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would not again give to the mind the picture as it once had been.

It had gone from him thus on a day in Mexico. And thereafter, with each landscape that lay outspread before him, with each song that he heard, with each perfumed and painted flower, came always the dream to intrude, to dull, to lessen, and to make of small account.

But now, to-day, with all his work, his hopes and ambitions for the present laid aside, his dreams were creeping backward and backward. He saw a white house near Oporto in his native land. He saw a garden, and he saw a youth—himself in the other days—and he saw a young girl coming down the pathway, his bride. He could hear the soft crunch of her feet upon the earth; the light in her eyes was as living as the sun; and through and beneath her skin he could see the warm blood of youth that rose to tinge her cheeks with the pleasure of his presence. And then the dream spread on through time, as time had built or broken down for him; and his bosom swelled and his throat ached as he saw her borne away over the hillside, the choir boys singing and the white vestments fluttering in the breeze. He rose to his feet with a sob, and

looked about him at the dull walls of the room. Then he raised his arms above his head with a bitter cry.

“Oh, if I might go back! If I might cast it all aside and go back, back to the love and the faith that asked not, back to Louise and youth and the sunny gardens of Oporto, back to all that has been taken from me, back, back to my life and my love and my God.”

He sank down, burying his face against the chair. And a little ball which he had placed in his pocket, almost crystalline and slightly luminous, stirred with the working of his thoughts, crept from the pocket and, stealing out of the window, sped upward and outward, away and away, as swift as light, and did not return to him again.

CHAPTER THIRTY

THE Mexican girl, Angelica, entered Ramon Silva's prison chamber with a tray on which his lunch was borne. The guard closed the door and locked it from without, and again took his seat in a chair in the hall. Silva stretched his arms, smiled, and laid aside a magazine.

"And your young mistress," he asked. "How is she to-day?"

The girl paused as she was spreading the table, and laid her finger to her lips.

"Sh!" she breathed. "I have not told you; but this morning the young Señorita directed that I should say to you that she is very unhappy. She, too, is a prisoner in her apartment."

"What!" he exclaimed. "Has Doctor O'Brien allowed his anger to lead him to that?"

Again the girl made the signal for caution.

"Ah, Señor!" she exclaimed. "It is a very

sad household! The white-haired mother, she weeps very much; and the aunt, she prays very much, and she is sewing and sewing. She is making an altar-cloth for the chapel."

She shrugged her shoulders.

"But what is an altar-cloth? It is nothing! It is whispered among the men that this Doctor O'Brien, he is of the devil. Last night he went into the chapel—and it is Jesus Gallagos who sits outside the door there who has heard—and he called three or four of the men, and they go and they listen; and this terrible Doctor O'Brien he stood in the chapel, and he blasphemed, and then he went out; and in the darkness, as he walked, there was about his head a light like the glowworm, but much brighter, and large like this tray, perhaps, and there is a ball that is luminous that follows him as he walks in the darkness. To-day, Father Rafael will come, and the men will see him and tell him; and then, if it is not right, we will go. Yes, Señor, we will return to Mexico."

Silva hid his smile of amusement at her serious statement and troubled face. Then a look of interest came into his eyes.

"And I am here, his prisoner," he said, "because he wishes to carry out some infamous

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schemes. He is a very bad man. Have the men spoken about me?"

"Yes, Señor. They say you are also a very bad man, but in a different way. They say that Doctor O'Brien pays them well and is good to them, and that you have come here to harm him, and that, if this happens, then they cannot receive big wages."

"Yes, that is what they say, I know," he replied. "But do they uphold Doctor O'Brien in his evil deeds?"

She smiled and shook her head, as he drew a chair up to the table.

"Men do not care so much for that," she said. "Men are not very good, and they do not care; but this other thing is different. If Doctor O'Brien is in league with evil spirits, then they will have nothing more to do with him. They will go away, for they are afraid. They say he has put some of these evil spirits into Doctor Rufus Baker. They think he will put them into all of us."

"And how is Baker to-day?" he asked, as he began his meal.

"He is very well," she replied. Then added, "or at least he is as well as he was yesterday. This is indeed a mysterious house.

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Last night Doctor Baker crept from the house, and was gone three hours. I heard my brother tell my father this morning. You see, Doctor Baker had the password, and could go. My brother wished to tell Doctor O'Brien, but my father told him to hold his tongue until we can have a talk with Father Rafael, who will be here from New York this afternoon."

Silva completed his meal, and leaned back in his chair.

"And the poor young mistress is also a prisoner," he said, thoughtfully.

"Yes," she replied. "I have not dared to tell you before to-day, but, now that the men are talking, what is there that I should not also talk?"

"Would you take her a note?" he asked.

She hesitated.

"I will take out the tray, and, if I may take a note, I will come back. I must ask Jesus Gallagos, who guards the door." Her cheeks reddened suddenly.

"He might allow me," she explained.

She knocked on the door, which was opened for her, and she went out. He heard her talking in a low tone, and then she went away. After a while the door was opened, and pencil

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and paper were given to him. He seated himself and composed the note:

To the Lady in Chillon from The Prisoner of the Bastille:

Could you not give a party and invite me and my manacles to attend? I do not know what my ultimate fate will be, but just now I can hope for nothing, the thought of which would give me more pleasure than to escape from these deadly walls of silence and monotony, and come and chat with you. Perhaps your freedom is greater than mine! Can you not write me a note, lend me a book, or favor me in some way that will bring you nearer to me? You see I write only of myself. I am very lonely and, consequently, very unhappy. Of course you cannot be either of these. How is Baker, and what is the news?

The girl came, and he despatched the note by her. After some time a reply came:

To the Gentleman in Despair, from the Lady in Distress:

My sentence is indeterminate, except for my determination. I will not give in and will not. So, *voilà!* I miss my rides, and I miss the freedom of the house. Since I know you are in the house, I cannot help but think of you, so I miss my enemy. You see I am rather sorry for you, and I do not want to feel that way. I wish to be very, very angry, for I told you

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that you must go away. Doctor Baker is not very well. He comes in to see whether my health is good. He sat with me to-day and prescribed horseback rides, together with sitting on a stile with a dark stranger. I prescribed for him a rustic seat in the woods with a blonde, and we had quite a quarrel. *Cherchez la blonde!* But after all, she was very sweet to me when I broke my arm, and so I forgive her many things.

If a tree were close enough to my window, I would escape. I have asked Doctor Baker to procure a rope-ladder for me, but he will not. He is very mysterious to-day, and appears troubled. I send you two books and some magazines. Also three pieces of fudge. They are all I have left. I must contrive to get out; I must escape and have my horseback rides, for if I remain imprisoned here, taking no exercise and eating fudge — Ah, that should be in woman's Litany! From fat, from semblance of fat, from fear of fat, O Lord, deliver us! I hope you are suffering some very cruel punishment because you have caused me to be here, when I might be riding on the north road. I shall write you no more. It might be found out, and I would have to stay here longer.

At the evening meal Silva despatched another note:

I read one of the novels. A thousand thanks. It was very good, but not nearly so good as the fudge. The book-mark you left, a rose, is the first breath I have had of the outside world. Couldn't you give a

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party, make some fudge, and invite me over? Angelica is in a hurry, and I must make this short. Your note was like a little bird at my prison window. I don't like blondes.

The reply came:

I think blonds are very, very nice.

Angelica thrust the note hurriedly in and rushed away.

The door closed and he was left alone, holding the single line she had sent.

"Yes," he muttered, "they are very, very nice." And then he remembered that Henley was a blond, and somehow felt hurt.

After a few minutes, he saw a sheet of paper being pushed under his door. He took it up and read:

With curly hair and deep blue eyes.

He laughed softly. Then a final note came under the door as the other:

I will think over the suggestion about a party.

But next day the trays were brought in by a man, a silent Mexican, who was surly and would reply to none of his questioning.

"Where is Angelica?" he asked.

"She is about her duties," answered the

man. Silva ate his breakfast in silence. The man took up the tray and left the room. When he had gone, Silva saw a piece of paper on the floor. He took it up and read:

I will see you to-night in your room. The hour is indefinite.

It was from Father Rafael.

All that day he read and amused himself as best he could. He received no further messages and, after sitting up until late, decided that the priest had been unable to come. He was about to retire, when the door opened softly, and Father Rafael entered.

"I could not come until Doctor O'Brien was asleep," he whispered. "I have been making an investigation, and find that very strange things have been taking place here. I warned you against interfering with this man. You have brought this upon yourself, and he is within his rights so far as you are concerned. If you have legal proceedings that you wish to bring against him, you should have brought them. Have you heard of the things that the employees here have been telling me?"

"I have only heard through Angelica," replied Silva. "I told you in New York what

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manner of man he is, but you refused to aid me. What do you propose doing?"

"I do not know just yet. I have told the people not to talk, and to remain just as they are for the present. They spoke to me about the notes to the young lady. I have made no objection to that, but it is not wise and is even foolish. Doctor O'Brien might discover this and treat you harshly. As long as he does not harm you physically, you are better just where you are than you would be remaining free, unless you either abandon your plans or have recourse to law."

"Father," said Silva, "will you do me a great favor?"

"What is the favor, my son?" asked the priest. "I will, if it is proper."

"I want to write a note to-night to Miss Van Ness, and I want to have it delivered in the morning. She does not know what became of me."

"Yes she does," replied Father Rafael. "I have been quite busy to-day. I went to see her, and had a long talk. This Doctor Baker went to see her last night. He has gone again to-night. I know the whole story. There is no doubt now about the matter. He is the man Arthur Henley."

Silva was thoughtful for a few moments.

"Then," he said, "the matter is in good shape. All I want now is to get out of here, get him, go to Mexico and start the proceedings, and that will mean the end of this Doctor O'Brien."

"There is just one trouble about all that," replied Father Rafael. "Baker, or rather Henley, says that, in the first place, conditions are such that his identity could not be established in court because he cannot testify of his own knowledge. He says, in the second place, that he wants nothing done to Doctor O'Brien until the latter cures him. He declines to state whether he will assist even then. I shall remain here for some days, and will investigate this whole matter."

After some minutes he left, and then Silva's door opened again, softly closed, and a Mexican handed him a note. He took it and read:

A breath of fresh air to a prisoner is sweet. I am going for a walk under the trees. If you give your word of honor that you will not try to escape, you may come, too.

He nodded to the man. His light was extinguished, his door closed, and he crept down the hall through the gloom, down the stairs

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and out upon the ground, where a dark figure was waiting. Vassilka joined him, and they hurried through the shadows of the trees down toward the fence along the road to Greenway.

"All of the people have turned against him," she whispered. "I wish he would give up these plans of his and go back to Europe. But perhaps you would follow us even there."

"Yes," he answered, "I would follow you there."

"Why?"

"It would be my duty. I cannot forgive him."

"You are very cruel."

"No," he replied. "I am not cruel. I am just. He should be severely punished."

They were walking slowly up and down, keeping in the shadows of the trees. A row of bushes and shrubbery hid them from the road.

"He is punished enough in his own life," she said. "He is very unhappy. Even this punishment which I am receiving is entirely merited. I am a guest in his house. He is my benefactor. I disobeyed him and jeopardized his interests. I am even now walking here with a man who seeks to hurt him. You know, though, why I am doing this. You know that I have been pleading with you for

him. I have wanted you to go away, to go very far away and not trouble him again."

"Is that all?" he asked.

"And I am very grateful to you for doing what you could to save me from hurt that day."

"And is that, too, all?" he asked.

"And I am sorry for striking you and attempting to shoot you. I am very sorry for those things."

They were near the fence and, hearing the sound of carriage wheels, drew quickly back behind a bush. The carriage drew nearer. It was without lights. It was coming from the direction of the north road and, when it had reached a place almost opposite them, it halted. Through the dim light they could see that three people got out of it—two men and a woman. They were Colonel Hollister, Henley, and Elsie Van Ness. They saw another woman lean out of the carriage, and recognized her as Mrs. Hollister. Colonel Hollister reentered the carriage, and it drove on for perhaps fifty yards, then halted.

Being unable to move without being discovered, Silva and Vassilka remained hidden. The other two stood apart for a moment, and then Henley took Elsie's hand.

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"It is only a little while now," they heard him say in a low tone. "I want to know, I want to come into my own. They look upon me here as a very weak man, but I am biding my time. I am waiting and then, if I do not remember them, I want you to tell me of all the cruelties of which I have told you."

"But the girl," said Elsie, "the Bulgarian girl, she is good to you, and I shall remind you of that."

"Yes," he said, "she is very good to me. You must remind me of that——"

"When you come into your own——" she suggested.

"Yes," he said. "When I come into my own."

There was silence between them for a moment, and Silva felt Vassilka's fingers grasp his sleeve tightly.

"Elsie," said Henley, and he drew her nearer to him, "did you love him very much, that other man who was I?"

They could not hear her answer. The two stood for a moment apart and then, slowly, and as though compelled to each other, their arms opened, and they stood clasped, with his lips against hers.

"Arthur!" she cried, faintly, sobbingly,

"come back to me! Come back to what you were! Come and let us go away from this dreadful place!"

He kissed her again and, turning, with his arm still about her, he pointed to the house.

"There," he said, bitterly, "sleeps the Captain of my Soul!"

The carriage came and departed. Henley vaulted the fence into the enclosure and hurried toward the house, keeping under the deeper shadow of the trees. Silva turned to Vassilka. She was standing, tensely watching the disappearing form of Henley. He touched her on the arm and she started, looking around, and drew a deep breath.

"Do you care so much as that?" he asked. She was silent for a moment.

"I was thinking," she said, slowly, and in a low voice, "that perhaps I am very glad."

Silva spoke to her softly.

"Tell me!" he said. And he would have continued his questioning, but, as she turned to him again, he saw that her eyes were glistening, and knew that there were tears.

"I want him to have anything in the world he wants," she said. And then she hesitated. "But, somehow, I do not believe he loves her. I feel he is doing this for duty's sake. He

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may have loved her in his other life, but he does not love her in this."

Silva was puzzled at her statement, and at the depth of feeling expressed in her tone and words.

"It is sacrifice," she continued, "and that is all. He feels that he owes it to her, and he meets the duty like the honorable man that he is."

"And you?" questioned Silva. "He loves you then?"

But she shook her head and laughed.

"No," she replied. "He does not now, and never has. We were together here, he and I, a man and a girl. My heart was full of sympathy for him and he—well, he was grateful and lonely and desperate. Now—now, because of what he deems his duty, he would go back to her, although I know that he holds in terror the thought of a return to that other life."

Silva laughed cynically.

"One would hardly judge him terrified from the ardent scene of which we were chance witnesses a moment ago."

"That is unkind," she answered. "Doctor Baker is the best man in the world." He turned to her quickly.

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"Do women love men for their worthiness?" he asked.

"No," she replied, without an instant's hesitation. "They do not." And then added, slowly, "Almost never."

"Then what makes the man for the woman?"

She stood back from him and looked up, smiling.

"It is all in spite of things," she said. And then she asked: "And can you say that it is not all in spite of things?"

He bowed his head.

"No," he replied, but his tone was doubtful. "And yet——"

She laughed lightly and drew farther away toward the house.

"You have spoken truly," she said, in a low tone. "There is no law, there is nothing under the sun which man may mark as fixed and fail to add, '*and yet*'——"

Silva drew nearer to her, but she lifted her hand.

"We are discovered," she whispered. "I feel that he knows."

But Silva caught her hand.

"And he will punish you?"

"Yes."

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“How?”

“He will make Doctor Baker suffer.”

Quickly he dropped her hand, and then stood watching until she disappeared. For several moments he stood thus, looking toward the house. At last he sighed.

“Rosalia! Little sister!” he breathed. “Almost had I forgotten you—almost.”

And he strode gloomily forward to return to his prison chamber.

The guards permitted him to pass without question, and he crept silently along. In the darkness, something white showed upon the stairway. He took it up and knew that it was the light silk scarf she had worn about her throat. Holding it tightly, he entered his room. The door was softly locked behind him, and he turned on the light and stood looking at the gossamery thing he held in his hand. In sudden anger he rolled it in a ball and hurled it from him.

“I wish one of those infernal Yaquis had plugged me,” he said, between his teeth. “I’ve lost my grip—I’ve lost.”

And he extinguished the light that his sight might not again fall upon the shimmering silken scarf.

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

THE nightly visits of Henley to Elsie at the Hollisters' continued, and the notes that passed between Ramon Silva and Vassilka became more frequent and more intimate. The defection on the part of the Mexicans toward Doctor O'Brien had become complete, but they were held to their service through the solicitations of Father Rafael, who now comes as often as possible, prolonging some of his visits for two and even three days. Doctor O'Brien remarked to him on this.

"I find," said Father Rafael, "that these people are homesick. They have few amusements, and they have been here quite a long while now. If I come less frequently, I believe that they will grow dissatisfied."

Doctor O'Brien made no reply, except to acquiesce in the truth of these conclusions. It was now past the middle of June, and he had not yet felt prepared to give out his statements or the results of his discoveries. He was not

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yet entirely satisfied. There was something that he waited for, but what it was he would not explain. He was corresponding regularly with Doctor Winslow, of New York. The latter had expressed himself as being free to come at any time when requested. He expressed his doubts concerning certain results which Doctor O'Brien claimed to have obtained in one of his letters by saying: "No man but a fool would say that anything is impossible. I have lived to see too many established laws swept away as so many dreams. I have doubts, but I pooh-pooh nothing. I await your advices and commands."

So it was that Doctor O'Brien worked in his great laboratory or paced its long floor engaged in deep thought, his steps growing faster as the swift thoughts came, until, brain-weary and tired of body, he would sink into a chair and drift away into dreams and memories.

Frequently his questions propounded to Henley would be appealing and argumentative. Even in matters which he had demonstrated to his own satisfaction, this would often be the case.

"What do you think of my work?" he would say. "Is it worth while after all? Can mankind be benefited? Was it meant that

we should reach out into the shadows and grasp these mysterious things? Are they mysteries or mysterious in fact, or do they only seem so because of our own limitations? If these things are so, if they are facts, then why are they any more mysterious than any other one of the myriad things that green and grow about us?"

And thus it was that he came to Henley one morning and, sitting down, folded his hands in a gentle, questioning way.

"And what do you think now of the many things I have told you and of the things that I have shown you?" he asked. "Are you still a doubter?"

"No," said Henley. "I have seen and learned enough to prepare my mind for anything now. I may not be able to understand, but I am prepared to believe. You have but to explain or to show me, and I will follow your discoveries with belief."

Doctor O'Brien frowned slightly.

"I am not a pioneer," he said. "I do not claim to be. The world at large has not learned of many things because the people did not care to inquire and they did not wish to believe. As long ago as 1845, Baron von Reichenbach discovered what he called odic

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fluid, and which is the force or influence which has been held to explain the phenomenon of mesmerism and other phenomena.

“I have demonstrated, to my own satisfaction, that this is nothing more or less than mind. I have been able to condense this, as you have seen, and am able to govern the movements of the sphere so created by my own will. You have seen this, and in this I am a discoverer, and my discovery is worth while. I can do more than this. Let us say that you are at some particular point, and I know that you are there. I can will your return strongly in my own mind, I can condense this, send it whizzing to you, and it will, upon reaching you, so affect your own brain that you will be aware of my will. This is nothing more than the old telepathy brought nearer to perfection.”

Henley smiled and nodded his head.

“I believe,” he said.

“The existence of this phenomenon which I have succeeded in condensing and governing,” continued Doctor O’Brien, “is, as I have told you, not a discovery of my own. It is now known to many scientists in Europe, who are men of the highest standing. It has been named the mental ball, or *boule mentale*. It

has been seen by hundreds as a natural phenomenon, and more than this, by a method of radio-photography, it has been actually photographed. To make the proof stronger, there was a mirror in the room on one occasion, and this mental ball was also shown reflected in the mirror. Doctor Hyppolyte Baraduc, in the Rue Saint Honoré, at Paris, has done these things. It has been as plainly demonstrated hundreds of times as the existence of the x-ray. The ancient masters who provided for biblical characters a halo, painted wiser than they knew. Or did they know? You, I, every man is enveloped in his aura. But all these things are as simple play. I have other and deeper work. If it is possible for me to condense my thought and send it to you at varying distances and invest your brain or mind with my own thought, then why can I not draw from you? Why, when you have knowledge that I do not possess, may I not, by my own will, draw this knowledge from you and invest myself with it? Do you tell me that this is impossible? Then how do you account for the phenomenon of mind-reading? Has that not been proven without doubt to exist to some extent? I do draw from you when you do not know it. I know of things

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taking place in this very house which are believed to be unknown to me, but this is to but a limited extent. Here is my laboratory, and, with my electrical appliances, I can condense thought and send it forth; but there, where the other man is thinking at a distance from me, I cannot readily condense his thoughts and bring them back to me. I need a certain electrical force which must be present there. I know what it is. When this particular locality is under the influence of a rayon from the sun playing upon the earth during the course of a sunspot, I have what I want. I have done it and can do it again, and you may sit in New York and I will condense your thoughts, draw them to me either in a mental ball or by filaments of mental matter extending from you to me, and I will read your every thought. And what is the end of it all? That is a great discovery, it is true, but it does not stop there. It only begins."

He arose, and his manner became excited, and he began to pace the floor.

"About us, here, there, everywhere, beyond the stars and in the blackest pits, this thing exists. About us, from infinity to infinity, is infinite knowledge, infinite mind. It is not

what I might grasp from your puny thoughts, or what some other man might grasp from my own. It is to put myself in rapport with this infinite knowledge as far as my brain-cells will receive it, and then, if that may be, then man will hold converse with his God, the mists will clear away—" He lifted his hands, and there was a strangely appealing look in his face. "Out there, out there," he said, "where Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, 'Holy! Holy! Holy!' Out there, where Israfel is singing while the stars are born, grow old, and die away to wandering dust."

His hands slowly fell, and he turned and gazed into Henley's eyes. What he saw there startled him, and he stepped forward and spoke in a low but vibrant tone.

"Am I mad?" he asked. "Do you believe me mad? Do you think I would have done the things I have if I did not and do not believe in this thing?"

And then he laughed a sneering laugh.

"There is a play upon the boards these days," he said, "and the author builded better than he knew; but even then he should have built with things exactly reversed. I may feed on the thoughts which your brain

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has captured and is holding, but I cannot be a vampire. I cannot destroy by taking from you, for the brain-cells are there, and they can again collect and hold thought as readily as before. I can do this thing, however, and it is more terrible. I can collect a thought, an idea, which is madness, and I can force that upon you as your own thought. I can crowd it in and fix it upon your brain until it has made there a permanent home, and I can inflict you with madness of any type I choose, just as surely as you are sitting in that chair. I could not certainly do this until I had discovered the method of condensing thought, but now it is an easy thing."

Henley arose with a startled look upon his face, and then he grew deathly pale. Thoughts of his own condition almost overcame him, and, with rapidly beating heart, he sank weakly back in his chair.

"Let me go from here!" he pleaded. "Bring me back to what I was. I am of no help to you. I know your force and power and the strength that lies in your will. Cleanse my brain of this blot or blight or shadow which lies over it. Give me back my memory, and, in that, the life that I lived."

But Doctor O'Brien shook his head.

"When Doctor Winslow comes," he said, "I shall be ready for many things. That shall be one of my demonstrations to him. He is a noted professor, and makes claim to great mental powers and great achievements. I shall try with him, and we shall fight the battle out. If I am the master then, with all the dignities of his degrees, with all the standing and renown that he has gained and which now holds America at his feet, he shall go forth simply as a disciple, proclaiming the master that is above him."

Here Doctor O'Brien leaned forward, and his face was terrible to see.

"But there is another," he cried, bitterly. "There is another who has followed me and has disturbed me and has hampered me in every way. He has planned for me a prison-cell, he has tried through assassination to drive the vital force from my body and the light from my brain. He has followed me and hounded me. I have brought him here to this house, where I have been keeping him safe so that he could not harm me. I have been making it as pleasant as I could for him under the circumstances. I know what he is doing. I know of the notes that are passing, and the evening walks under the trees. I

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know of the actions of my servants that he has brought about, and on him my hand shall fall. Into his brain-cells I will crowd demons and things that shriek and die in panting, shuddering deaths. He shall hear the death-rattle at his elbow, and at his feet the agonized scream as of a strong man whose soul is slowly being wrung from him by the rough hand of torture. That shall be his madness as long as a thought plays upon his brain and a heart beats in his accursed body."

He paused and, drawing a handkerchief from his pocket, with trembling fingers wiped the sweat from his white face. He stood at the window and looked out, and when he turned again he found that Henley was gone. He had fled, with eyes that were filled with terror and a heart that held more of horror than he could bear.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

ON May 26, at about three o'clock, the little bell in Doctor O'Brien's laboratory rang, and a few moments later a message shot through the pneumatic tube from the receiving-room of the wireless; and, with a yawn, he turned and took out the case. Dozens of messages had come to him which the operator had believed of interest, if not of importance. There had been messages from vessels far at sea, messages sent out to vessels at sea, and messages flying from station to station on the continent. He was expecting nothing of special importance. His contracts for service had been made in many places and with many concerns. He wanted the best service and the earliest service that could be had. He did not know from what part of the world it would come to him. He opened the case and took out the message which had been sent by wire to New York, and by wireless to him from there. It came from the solar observatory of the Carnegie Institution on Mount

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Wilson, near Pasadena, California. It ran as follows:

At 8.16 this morning, a sunspot reached east limb of the sun.

He stood for a moment looking down at the message with the realization that the time had come. The message would not have been sent had the spot not have been of sufficient size to lead the sender to believe that it would remain for some time.

And so, for him, had come the great hour, the great day when his plans were to ripen and bear fruit. Out of the mysteries of nature he was to grasp one of her closest hidden secrets, and hold it for himself and mankind. With a machine of his own invention he was to test his ability to collect and issue an influence exactly of the same nature as that vibrant in the rayons of a sunspot. And now he knew that there was a solar cyclonic storm, and that its influence would extend to the limits of the solar system. He weighed all things calmly and quietly, and then he left the room and called to Henley.

"I have a message here," he said. "My time has come. I wish to test my instruments, and then we will call Doctor Win-

slow by long-distance and have him come over."

But if Doctor O'Brien did not appear excited, Henley did. At the moment, his thoughts were on everything else but the subject that was of single interest to Doctor O'Brien. The importance of the message to the latter did not impress him. He only knew and realized that the time of his promised delivery was near at hand. There was work to be done, of course. That implacable man must be satisfied in his own efforts, and there must be a round of duty. After this he should be free.

He made no reply for a few moments, and then he gasped:

"From where does it come?"

"Carnegie, in California. I presume others will soon be coming in."

Doctor O'Brien went out into the booth which he had prepared for long-distance telephoning and shortly returned.

"I will probably not be able to get Doctor Winslow until late in the afternoon," he said. "I want him to catch a night train and reach here by morning at the latest. Come now, and set things to going! You may then go and wait to get the 'phone connection."

Henley went with Doctor O'Brien into the great laboratory. He removed cloths and covers from instruments that had not been touched for some time. They were connected, under Doctor O'Brien's instructions; wheels began, slowly, to turn, and then to hum; and Doctor O'Brien went about, here, there, and yonder, testing connections and satisfying himself that everything was in order and repair. Turning, at last, he motioned to Henley, and the latter left the room and closed the door behind him. Doctor O'Brien now connected other machinery; he measured chemicals and placed them in tubes, and set these tubes in place; and soon the chamber was aglow with strange lights of unusual colors.

Near the door of the telephone-booth, Henley took a seat, and lighted a cigar. His fingers trembled, and he smiled at the condition of his nerves. He sat for a long time thus, but, suddenly, he took the cigar from his mouth and spoke the one word:

“Apple!”

Back in the laboratory Doctor O'Brien smiled, and made a second movement with his lips.

And there, near the door of the booth, Henley spoke again:

“Pie!”

He wondered why he had said these things, and turned his cigar in his mouth more nervously than ever.

“That was foolish,” he was thinking. “Why should I say such things. I haven’t seen an apple-pie in months.”

And then, suddenly, Doctor O’Brien changed his methods. Instead of sending out his thoughts or impressing a word upon another’s mind, he began to draw to himself. He pictured Vassilka seated in her room and, borne to him through stone and mortar and wood and iron, uninterrupted as is the ether, which is everywhere, there came these thoughts, her thoughts:

“I will release him from his parole, not to escape, when he takes his walk with me to-night. I will tell him that he may go; that, having been captured through me, he is entitled to release at my hands.”

Again he used his forces, and there came to him from another chamber in the house, another message:

“When I have my talk with Father Rafael to-night, I will persuade him to let me act at once. I have Baker’s full story. He is my man, Henley, and we do not need to cure him

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to prove this. I will get the witnesses, go to Mexico, swear out the warrants, and then he will know what actual prison-walls are; and I will repay him a thousandfold."

Doctor O'Brien's face grew purple with anger; and, standing there in his laboratory, heavy oaths escaped him. He walked out and, closing the door behind him, hurried down the hall. He was met by Henley.

"The bell is ringing," said the latter. "They have got Doctor Winslow for you now."

It was only a message such as this that could have held him. He stopped, and entered the booth. After a few moments, he had made his explanations and had been told that, leaving all other things aside, Doctor Winslow would come by first train. He dropped the receiver and came out, but did not turn back toward his laboratory. Henley saw that something was amiss.

"What is it?" he asked. "There is something that troubles you."

But Doctor O'Brien did not reply. Henley seemed to realize that something terrible was about to happen, and followed.

"What is it?" he cried again. "For God's sake, what are you about to do?"

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Doctor O'Brien turned to him.

"Come!" he said. "You have heard of men being manhandled. You are now to see something new under the sun. You are to see me manhandle a man's soul with my mind. You are to look into the door of hell on a gala day."

Up the stairs they went and down the long hall, turning at last to the right. Henley saw Doctor O'Brien's movement of command to the Mexican, who was seated at the door. He saw the door thrown open, and saw Silva rise from a chair. He saw the latter look and then grow white; and, turning, with quick flying feet, he raced down the hall to Vassilka's prison-chamber. The door was opened at his hurried knock, and he fairly flung himself into the room.

"For the love of God!" he cried, "come and do something. You know what I told you of his threats concerning Silva. He is about to do these things. You have influence with him. Come! Unless you do come, I shall take a gun and kill him."

Vassilka stood but for an instant.

"Hurry!" he cried.

She snatched open a drawer, took something from it, and together they ran down the hall-

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way with all speed. When they reached the turn in the hall, a sound came to them faintly, but more terrible than they had ever heard. It was the shriek of a man, horrible, and yet almost unhuman in its agony. Henley heard a cry break from the girl's throat, but it was in a language that he could not understand. They found the door closed, and the man who had guarded it was groveling on the floor, his face distorted, his teeth chattering, and his eyes wild with terror. The keys lay beside him, and Henley snatched them up and thrust one of them into the lock. It was not necessary, the door was not locked. He flung it open as a succession of strangling cries issued from the room and the scene was bared before them. Doctor O'Brien was standing with his arms folded, his head thrust forward, and his features tense, while Ramon Silva, with eyes almost starting from their sockets, was rolling upon the floor in deadly conflict with some imaginary thing, some monster brought from the realms of madness, and was slowly and surely being overcome.

In an instant, two shots rang out. Doctor O'Brien lurched, staggered, his left arm fell to his side, and he supported himself momentarily upon a table with his right hand.

He stood thus, and Henley saw that his eyes were fixed upon Vassilka, who held her small revolver in her hand. Doctor O'Brien's look was full of pain. Silva had ceased from his struggles and was sitting upon the floor, panting heavily, and his face was chalklike in its whiteness.

The silence was broken by his voice.

"I don't know," he said, hoarsely, looking about him with astonished eyes. "I have been sick, or something. I have had some sort of horrible attack—like a fit."

But Doctor O'Brien hardly noticed the words. His regard was still fixed upon Vassilka, and his face grew sad. Henley even thought that he saw a moisture in the man's eyes.

"Why did you do that, baby?" he asked at last in a gentle voice.

And all the tenseness went from Vassilka. She waved her arms wildly.

"Because," she cried, "you are a monster!"

"And because of that you would have killed me?"

"Yes," she answered, hysterically. "A thousand times, yes!"

He straightened himself as Silva arose from

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the floor, but he did not notice this. He continued to look at the girl.

"And you do not love me?" he asked. "All this has gone?"

Slowly she bowed her head; her face was convulsed with agony. Henley took the revolver from her, and she stumbled forward.

"Oh! My Uncle Sebastien!" she cried, brokenly. "Come away from all this! Come away!"

She fell at his feet and wound her arms about his knees, pleading piteously.

"I would not have hurt you for all the world, but these things I cannot stand. Come away from your terrible studies of the things that God has hidden. It has driven you from your God. It has taken you away from your people. It is breaking my heart and making me do murder. Come back to us, Uncle Sebastien, for God has given us enough in the light of His sunshine. Come back from the shadow of evil things and do not kill me by breaking my heart."

Others had come and were standing in the doorway—the white-haired mother and the fat Portuguese aunt, whose eyes were wide with fright, and who was puffing from exertion.

Then it was that Ramon Silva strode over

and, stooping, unwound the girl's arms from about Doctor O'Brien's knees and lifted her. He took her hand and looked at those about him.

"I know nothing of this thing," he said. "I do not know what has happened. I do not know what she has done nor what she is charged with. I only know that I love her. Leave us alone, as I have something that I wish to say to her."

Doctor O'Brien started, glanced at the two long and earnestly, and then turned to Henley.

"Baker," he said, and his voice shook, "I understand you are a pretty good man in your line. I need your professional services."

Taking Henley's arm, he passed through the door; the others followed, all save Vassilka's mother. The girl crossed the room and kissed her, and then, as the elder woman passed through the door, she turned and faced Silva. They stood for a moment without speaking, looking deep into each other's eyes; slowly he came to her and, folding his arms about her, drew her close to him.

"Vassilka!" he whispered. "Little girl!" And as his head sank, the pallor left her cheeks and a soft color stole into them. Her

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breath came quickly through half-parted lips, and she closed her eyes.

“Vassilka!” he whispered. “The sweetest name in all this world. Vassilka! The fairest, rarest flower from all the Gardens of the East!” And, as his head sank lower and lower, he whispered again: “I love you so that all of everything else has gone out of my heart—all enmity, all hatred, all things save those that make for your happiness and my own.”

He pressed his lips to hers. She trembled for a moment, and then her arms folded about his neck and, slowly, she opened her eyes and looked up into his own, pleadingly, beseechingly.

“And has that all ended?” she asked, with quivering lip.

“‘Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord,’” he quoted. “‘I will repay.’”

She looked long into his eyes again, and then she drew his head nearer and kissed him.

“Let me go now,” she said. “I have hurt him for your sake. He has always been good to me.”

He kissed her again and again, and then she led him to the door and, taking out the key, handed it to him.

"You are free now," she said, looking up at him.

But he shook his head and smiled.

"Only when with you," he answered, softly, "then all the world has lost its locks and chains and bars."

For a moment only, and with radiant eyes, she flew into his outstretched arms; and he was alone once more, and down the hallway he could hear the quick patter of her feet.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

THE wireless messages continued to come rapidly, and it seemed indeed fitting to Doctor O'Brien that, at the moment of the fruiting of all his endeavors, other scientists should be making great discoveries. Great cyclones were taking place upon the sun, and the messages that came gave evidence of the fact that much was being learned that would greatly increase our knowledge of solar action and of the electrical and magnetic influence so strongly apparent at such times, and theretofore but little understood.

Doctor Winslow had arrived; and, although Doctor O'Brien was suffering greatly from the wounds in his shoulder, he, for the moment, almost forgot the pain in the knowledge that the hour was at hand when his work was to be finished and demonstrated, and so made known to the world.

Of Ramon Silva he had hardly a thought. Henley had been unable to control him; and, though he burned at times with fever from

his wounds, which were much aggravated by the excitement, he would not rest.

Doctor Winslow was a low, fat man with a domelike head, and small, deep-set, black eyes. His high forehead was surmounted by short, curly hair just beginning to turn gray, and his lower lip was thick and protruded upward. He had a trick of accentuating this by puckering his chin when engaged in deep thought or when wishing to give emphasis to something he had said. His voice was rasping, unmodulated, and unpleasant. His hands were short and fat, and his body seemed soft and flabby; but the glance of his eye denoted steel-like strength of will-power and great intelligence.

“That lump of lard is truly what might be called ‘A Thinking Machine,’” said Doctor O’Brien to Henley. “He is your greatest scientist because he possesses a brain of a high order, is a close and hard student, and has imagination. This last quality is what gives him his power and rounds him out.”

“He looks like a toad,” suggested Henley.

“And I have not the slightest doubt that to him you look like a fool,” replied Doctor O’Brien, testily.

Henley laughed.

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“Imagination?” he asked.

It was Doctor O’Brien’s turn to laugh.

“Imagination,” he replied.

Much of the morning was spent in the laboratory, where Doctor Winslow took many notes. There were some things that he could not understand, and these were not explained to him.

“I give you the results,” said Doctor O’Brien. “The processes are yet mine, to some extent. I wish to take this up by degrees. I wish to satisfy you and have you tell me that what I say is true. How I arrive at some of these things will be given to the world at the proper time in an article by you after a first article, stating results.”

Doctor O’Brien did not notice, but Henley could see the great look of interest on Doctor Winslow’s face, and also his quick and passing look of disappointment. The mental ball was shown him in its clearest and largest form. People about the house were summoned in this way and, upon coming, repeated messages that Doctor Winslow had written and which Doctor O’Brien had sent. Doctor Winslow was told to go out upon the lawn, and there to take a book and read a page slowly and carefully; and, upon his return, he found a

different set of machinery in motion; and he found, too, that Doctor O'Brien had written down, word for word, the page of the book as he had read it. He stood speechless when he read the paper over, and then Doctor O'Brien had Henley choose some book, sent him out, set certain machinery again in motion, and started to leave the room. He led Doctor Winslow to the window. "He will stand yonder by that oak near the fence," he said. "You will have only to follow him with your mind to where he is, then make the effort to draw from him and write down, without hesitation, what comes to you. It will come as clearly as the words from his mouth."

Doctor Winslow did as he was bid and wrote rapidly. When he had finished, the sweat was on his face and he was trembling. He dropped his pencils and ran quickly to the various machines in an endeavor to grasp the secret. He saw wires that passed through liquids. Here a strangely colored light sputtered through a vacuum, and there was another of a different hue. The air was vibrant with something that he could not fathom. Here, there, and yonder was something that he understood. Why were their influences or offices combined? Quickly he attempted to

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reason it out, arriving, at the end, no nearer the whyfore of matters than before, and seeing only the result. And then he paused before a great tube that glowed softly and with a light that seemed to him now steel-blue, now gray, changing again to rose and to white. It seemed almost that the changing of the coloring was in himself and not in the light that glowed so softly, and whose radiations varied in extent, now being reduced to the limits of the tube and again seeming to fill the wide chamber.

"This," he murmured, "this it is. This is the great secret."

And then he heard the sound of a footstep and, turning, saw Doctor O'Brien standing within the door, a sneer upon his lips.

"So!" exclaimed the latter, "I brought you here to tell you something, and you wish to steal."

Doctor Winslow started, and then retorted angrily.

"What did you expect?" he asked. "Did you think I would stand here like a fool with a thing like that glowing under my nose and not have interest enough even to look? Is this a case where I am to be blindfolded and asked to believe what you might choose to tell me?"

Doctor O'Brien strode forward.

"Out there where I sat I knew just what you were doing. I knew your every thought. I knew the moment you began your investigation, but even then, great scientist that you claim to be, your little tin-pan brain could not grasp the riddle."

"Damn you and your riddles and your insults," cried Doctor Winslow, angrily. "You have chanced upon something, or have stolen it from some one else, and call yourself great. I know your record and your fake claim to the discovery of a cure for leprosy. I do not trust you; and, if you wish me to do anything for you, you must prove things to me."

Doctor O'Brien continued to sneer. He raised his hand and pointed to the light.

"That, my dear sir," he said, "is before you. Understand it, if you can. My processes of creating it are my own. Have it as you will. I have borrowed and stolen and guessed enough to bring that before you, and I call it the N. Ray. It is the same as that which exists in the human being—call it mind, call it thought, call it spirit, call it soul, call it what you will. I have drawn it not from man and not from mind and not from thought, as we know them. I have drawn it

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from Nature, and from Nature's God. While that light plays, I am in touch with what is known as the mind of man. I do not know its strength as yet, but I believe that, if he is at that certain place and at this instant then standing here, I can tell you what is in the mind of the Czar of all the Russias as he sits in his palace at Tsarsko-Seloe."

He strode over, touched some levers, pressed a button here and there. A bell rang faintly outside; another hand touched or moved some levers, and, slowly, the machinery slacked and whirled, and ceased to run. Here, there, and yonder, Doctor O'Brien arranged and replaced various things, and then turned once more to Doctor Winslow.

"I will show you there is no chicanery about me," he said. "I will let you use the strength of your mind, and I will make use of my own. I have a young man studying under me, whose case I explained to you this morning. After lunch, to-day, we will bring him here, and I will set my machinery to work. You may create your ball of influence, your mental ball, and I will create my own. You know how it is done now, but the secret you do not understand. You will endeavor to hold it there and I will remove it. This is

a fair test. If I am your master in this, then I am your master. I do not seek to vaunt myself as your superior or to claim that I am your superior; but we will give to each other what is due and, if I am worth while, then you will ask no more questions. You will give out my discoveries, and so become a party to the greatest discoveries of the age."

It was now Doctor Winslow's time to sneer, but he only laughed.

"That treatment is my specialty," he said. "You have made a bad bargain. I accept the challenge, and it shall be at four o'clock."

They left the room, and Doctor O'Brien called Henley aside.

"It will be at four o'clock," he said. "You will probably want Miss Van Ness present. I understand everything. I want her to know what I am doing for you."

Henley gasped.

"And I may bring her?" he asked.

"Certainly."

"Here?"

"She is as free to come as any one else. I wish her to come. My work is done. I know what I can do, and I need no more the influence of sunstorms. I have keyed my radiations so that I shall not lose the secret again.

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There is no limit now to which I may not be able to go."

"And it shall be to-day?" asked Henley again, hardly able to believe that the hour was now at hand.

"To-day," said Doctor O'Brien, "you will come into your own. I believe that you will remember everything; and, if you hold anything against me, remember this, that I can blot all from you again."

At four o'clock they had gathered. Doctor O'Brien sent Henley to call Doctor Winslow, and found the latter asleep. He arose, washed his face, and drank a glass of water. Then he walked briskly up and down for a few moments, clapping his hands together.

"Now," he exclaimed. "If he can overcome me, he is a good one."

In the laboratory they were arranged, Elsie, Vassilka, Silva, and Mrs. Doubrovec; and with Elsie, at Doctor O'Brien's request, had come Colonel and Mrs. Hollister. Doctor Winslow and Doctor O'Brien had each created his mental ball, each taking exactly five minutes. And now Henley stood almost between them, and facing the others. He was chatting with them nervously, and laughing a little.

"It seems uncanny," he said. "It does not seem that this could really be done."

"I will now set the machinery to work," said Doctor O'Brien, "and let the influence increase. It will be of as much benefit to one of us as to the other. I will call, or some one else may call."

Silva stepped forward.

"One, two, three!" he cried.

Like a flash the two balls leaped forward to Henley's head.

"Baker!" called Doctor O'Brien, loudly.

But no word escaped Doctor Winslow's lips. He was creeping forward, his fat face almost convulsed, and his small eyes set. And then he began to slap his hands.

"Henley!" he called loudly and in his rasping voice. "Arthur Travers Henley!"

Henley's face was terrible to see. He writhed and groaned and placed his hands to his head. A softly glowing light as of a halo was about his face and head, so that the sight of him became dim to those who looked, and then suddenly he staggered forward. The two men stood back. Slowly he looked about from face to face, and then suddenly he stretched out his hands.

"Elsie!" he cried. "My God, Elsie, it has

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come back. The ride in the automobile, the accident, the night at the hospital, leaving the hotel in the drizzling rain, the fall in some down-town saloon, and then again the hospital and the face of Doctor Eaton."

Elsie sprang to him and threw her arms about him with a glad cry. Then, slowly, Henley turned, and pointed his finger at Doctor O'Brien.

"You lied when you said I had murdered people in New York. My whole life is as clear as a bell."

And then Doctor Winslow laughed, a chuckling, sneering laugh.

"I handled the great master like a little child," he said.

Doctor O'Brien's face was convulsed with sudden fury. He looked full in the face of Doctor Winslow.

"I will give my own story to the world," he said. "You will give nothing. I will send you away as blank as the wastes of a desert. I invited you here as a scientist, and the moment my back was turned you tried to steal. But you will carry nothing back; not even what you brought."

And then Henley remembered the terrible powers that Doctor O'Brien held. He thought

of the horrible picture of Silva grovelling upon the floor of his prison-room, and thought, too, of how narrowly he had escaped.

"Look out!" he called, warningly, to Doctor Winslow. "The machinery is running, the white light is glowing. He can will you death or madness. There is a hell on earth while that influence is alive."

But Doctor Winslow only sneered and thrust out his lower lip, gripping his hands tightly.

"He threatens," he said, harshly. "I reply to him by reminding him of the truism: 'Let not him that girdeth on his armor boast himself as he that putteth it off.' I am ready."

And so they stood facing each other, while all the room was silent with the horror of it all. And neither sought to fight the other's will, but each willed against his antagonist.

But Doctor O'Brien had not counted his forces, nor had he estimated them. The wounds in his shoulder had pained him much during the day, and he had neglected them. This had weakened him greatly.

Each man stood with a soft light playing about his head. And what Doctor O'Brien willed was a destruction of the brain-cells of thought and reason in his enemy's brain, and

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what Doctor Winslow willed, in the desperation of his fight, was death. And perhaps the minds of the others there gathered had their effect. They only knew that Doctor O'Brien was striving to harm Doctor Winslow, and they believed that the latter meant only to protect and defend himself by resistance. They did not dream that he would attack. And, therefore, with their strongest wills, they engaged in his defence.

The mental battle went quietly on. Other mental battles, but of lesser intensity, have taken place thousands of times. But here the weapons were all-powerful, and here the results were to be terrible indeed.

A sweat at last broke out on Doctor O'Brien's forehead, and it seemed in Henley's sight that the heavy features suddenly crumpled, the expression of intensity and even of intelligence was swept from his face, his legs collapsed under him, and he fell in a heap on the floor. He did not fall as does one who is shot or is struck a heavy blow. It seemed that, in an instant, all life and force were snatched from him, leaving him standing a dead man. And then he collapsed without one spasmodic movement.

A cry broke from Vassilka's lips, and she

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sprang forward and threw herself upon him, lifting his head; and then she raised her terrified face and stared at Doctor Winslow. They heard a strange, croaking sound, and, with one accord, they looked toward him in horror. He was moving his hands rhythmically, and advancing toward the door. A foolish laugh broke from his lips, and he began to sing in a harsh and cracked voice:

“Oh, the big man said to the little man:

‘What made you grow so small?’

And the little man said to the big man:

‘I am not small at all.

For it is not brawn that makes the moon,

Nor fat that makes the sun,

And the good God judges each gossoon

By the deeds that he has done.’ ”

He paused and winked slowly at Elsie.

“How’s that for high?” he asked. And then he turned and went mincing through the doorway, humming to himself—the great light of his brain gone forever.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

HENLEY was standing near the piano playing his violin, the gift of Silva, with the old mastery of years gone by. Elsie was playing the accompaniment, while, near the window, were seated Silva and Vassilka. He ceased playing, and laid the violin in its case upon the piano.

From without there came to them the fresh odor of the garden and the soft splashing and tinkling of a fountain. With one accord they left the music-room and went out on the veranda. Beneath them lay the garden—such a garden as Henley had dreamed of as he sat upon the hillside in New Jersey, looking longingly toward the south and praying for the return of his other self.

Across the top of the stone wall surrounding the garden, far below, and down the white road, they could see the dim lights of a village; and, as they stood, faintly, yet clearly, they heard through the evening air the sound of the cathedral bell. It was eight o'clock.

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Ramon Silva raised his hand.

"There, to the west," he said, "something over four hundred miles from here, lie the great mines discovered by Stephen Harlow. Vassilka wishes it, and we must all go there soon. You, Henley, own a half interest, and you also own the shares that belonged to Harlow. For all that was taken by Doctor O'Brien, Vassilka and I will repay you; and it is my judgment that her shares should go for that purpose. I have this estate, I have my own mines, and we could not wish for more."

Henley was silent for a moment, and then Elsie pressed his hand.

"Back there in New Jersey," he said, slowly, "Father Rafael found the books and the records, and there was nothing else in existence to show the output of the mines. He brought them to me and I destroyed them. When I cancelled the insurance on that great building and put a match to it, I destroyed every record that could show a liability from him to me." He paused, and turned to look at Vassilka. "And I will say further," he added, "to that sad man I owe a debt greater in value than all the gold that all the mines of Mexico could produce from now to eternity.

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We have begun life anew. Let us speak of it no more."

Silva caught Henley by the hand and pressed it silently. Then he and Vassilka walked down the steps and out through the dusk of the garden, leaving Henley and Elsie standing there alone.

And they stood there, looking out into the night, their hands clasped, and their hearts and thoughts in unison.

Down the road a bullock cart creaked heavily, and they heard a drover's song as some herdsmen rode slowly by.

Elsie looked up into his face, and he slipped his arm about her.

"Arthur!" she whispered. "Arthur!"

"Back yonder," he said, in a low voice, "in the little lone cabin on an island in Canada, in years gone by, I loved you. If you had not seemed so far above me—if you hadn't seemed too brave and noble for such a purposeless idler as I then was, I would have clasped you to me then and told you what was in my heart."

"Oh," she cried, "if you only had! If you only had!"

After a moment she drew from her breast a locket, and in it was a bit of cloth wrapped

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about a bit of earth; and she told him the story, happy-heartedly and without shame. He drew her to him and kissed her again and again.

Then he quoted the lines:

“After long years of love in loneliness,—
Who would not part, to meet again like this!”

For a long time they stood in silence. They could see the dim forms of Ramon Silva and Vassilka passing to and fro along the walks among the tropical plants. They had been married in New York. Silva and Vassilka by a priest of the Greek Church, and Elsie and Henley by an Episcopal minister. The gray-haired mother had gone with Madame O'Brien, the aunt on a visit to Portugal, and the others, the newly married, had come south, to the land of their dreams—to Mexico. And the minds of Henley and Elsie reverted to Doctor O'Brien. The wonderful personality of the man who walked and worked among the shadows of mystery could not be shaken off, but it was held now by them in reverence for the good that he had done.

“Poor man,” said Henley at last. “His endeavors were ever to reach out, to grasp from the hands of the infinite. He stood

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alone, as he expressed it, upon 'a Peak in Darien,' looking out upon the silent sea. And now he has made his way across, where every ship of life must go to reach the harbor. He was truly 'A Watcher of the Skies!'

And below, as they stood, the fountain in the garden tinkled merrily, and the breath of the roses was about them. It all seemed so good, so fair, so peacefully beautiful, and Elsie, turning to him, whispered, quoting from the "Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner":

" 'He prayeth best who loveth best—' "

And he lifted her fingers and kissed them.

"It is so," he breathed, softly. "It is God's own truth."

