

# THE MILL MYSTERY

BY ANNA KATHRINE GREEN.

He struck his glance from hers, which was newly withering him away as if it were a lightning.

And it succeeded. After an effort that brought the sweat out on his brow, he turned his look on mine, and, gathering strength from my expression, probably, gave me one eager and appealing glance, and thrust his left hand under his pillow.

His wife who saw everything, leaned forward with an uneasy gesture. "What have you there?" she asked. "But he had already drawn forth a little book and placed it in my hand.

"Only my old prayer-book," he faltered. "I fear as I should like Mr. Barrows to have it."

She gave him an incredulous stare, and allowed her glance to fall on the book. I immediately put it in my pocket. "I shall take a great deal of pleasure in possessing it," I remarked.

"Read it," he murmured; "read it carefully." And a tone of relief was in his voice that seemed to alarm me greatly; for she half rose from her seat and made a gesture to some one I did not see, after which she bent again toward the dying man and whispered in his ear.

But, though her manner had all its wonted force, and her words, whatever they were, lacking in neither earnestness nor purpose, he did not seem to be affected by them.

For the first time in his life, perhaps, he rose superior to their insidious influence, and, nerved by the near approach of death, kept his gaze fixed on mine, and finally stammered:

"Will you do something else for me?" "I will," I began, and might have said more, but he turned from me with sudden energy addressed his wife.

man followed their glances, and with a final exertion of strength, raised himself on his elbow.

"My curse on him or her who seeks to step between me and the late reparation I have sought to make. Weaker than most men, I have submitted to your will, Margaret, up to this hour, but your reign is over at last, and—"

The passionate words died away, the feverish energy subsided, and with one last look into my face, Samuel Pollard fell back upon his pillow, dead.

CHAPTER XIX. A FATAL DELAY. Wouldst thou have that Which thou esteems't the ornament of life, And live a coward in thine own esteem, Letting "I dare not," wait upon "I would," Like the poor cat in the adage?

He was to all appearance immediately forgotten. As with mutual consent we all turned and faced each other, Mrs. Pollard with a stern inextinguishable look in her dark eyes, which, while it held me enchained, caused me to involuntarily lay my hand upon the document which I had hidden in my breast.

She noticed the movement, and smiled darkly with a sidelong look at her son. The smile and the look affected me strangely. In them I assumed to detect something deeper than hatred and baffled rage, and when in a moment later her son responded to her glance by quietly withdrawing from the room, I felt such revolts against their secrecy that for a moment I was tempted to abandon an undertaking that promised to bring me in conflict with passions of so deep and unrelenting a nature.

But the impression which the pain and despair of my dead friend had made upon me was as yet too recent for me to yield to my first momentary apprehensions; and summoning up what resolution I possessed, I took my leave of Mrs. Pollard, and was hastening towards the door, when her voice, rising cold and clear, arrested me.

"You think, then, that it is your duty to carry this paper from the house, Mr. Barrows?" "Yes, madam, I do," was my short reply. "In spite of my protest and that of my son?"

"Yes, madam." "Then upon your head be the consequences!" she exclaimed, and turned her back upon me with a look which went with me as I closed the door between us; leading a gloom to the unlighted halls and sombre staircases that affected me almost with an impulse of fear.

In a confusion of emotions difficult to analyze at the moment, hastily accepted his advice, and withdrew from the house.

The relief of breathing the fresh air again was indescribable. If I had not escaped the misdeeds and oppression of a prison, I certainly had left behind me influences of darkness and sinister suggestion which, in the light of the calm moonbeams that I found flooding the world without, had the effect upon me of a vanished horror.

Only I was still haunted by that last phrase which I had heard uttered, "Don't go by the way of Orchard Street," an injunction which simply meant, "Don't go with that document to the lawyer's to-night."

Now was this order, given as it was by Dwight Pollard, one of warning or of simple threat? My good-will toward this especial member of the Pollard family inclined me to think it the former.

There was danger, then, lurking for me somewhere on the road to Mr. Nicholls's house. Was it my duty to encounter this danger? It appeared to me not, especially as it was not necessary for me to acquit myself so instantly of the commission with which I had been intrusted. I accordingly proceeded directly home.

But once again in my familiar study, I became conscious of a strong dissatisfaction with myself. Indeed, I may speak more forcibly and say I was conscious of a loss of trust in my own manhood, which was at once so new and startling that it was as if a line had been drawn between my past and present.

CHAPTER XX. THE OLD MILL. Whither wilt thou lead me? I'll go no further.

I did not sleep well that night, but this did not prevent me from beginning work early in the morning. The sermon I had been interrupted in the afternoon before had been completed that day; and I was hard at work upon it when there came a knock to my study-door. I arose with my shirt and slippers, and opened it. Dwight Pollard stood before me.

It was a surprise that called up a flush to my cheeks; but daylight was shining upon this interview, and I knew none of those emotions which had unnerved me the night before. I was simply on my guard, and saw him seat himself in my own chair, without any other feeling than that of curiosity as to the nature of his errand. He looked at me calmly for some instants before speaking.

FOURTYFOOL. At the last regular meeting of L.O.L. No. 888, which meets the 1st Monday of each month, the following officers were elected:—W. M., George Ward; D. M., Wm. Corbett; Chap., James Chambers; Fin. Sec., Robert Corbett; Rec. Sec., T. W. Williamson; Treas., W. J. Coulter; Ed. Sec., Albert Holmes; D. of C., Robt. McMillan; Com., Ed. Syson, Samuel Gillies, Wm. Gibson, Robert Graham, James Cavana.

EMILY—CON. II. SOCIAL.—The members of the Methodist Sabbath school of this part, intend holding a social in Mr. David Kennedy's house, in the early part of January. After refreshments have been served a lengthy programme will be rendered in the orange hall, which is near by. A good time is expected.

W. C. T. U. COLUMN. "For God and Home and Native Land."

THE SCOTT ACT IS DEAD BUT NOT FORGOTTEN. In the days of the Scott Act rule, a great number especially the farmers looked upon the Act, as certain ruin.

Assignee's Notice. In the matter of SOOTHERAN & CO. of Lindsay.

Trent Valley Canal. The Commissioners appointed by the Dominion Government will meet in the Council Chamber at Lindsay, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, the 2nd, 3rd and 4th January next.

Presents For Everybody. Jewelry, Watch Chains, Watches, Charms, Rings, Accordions, Co. certines, Violins, Boxes Cigars, Meerschaum and Briar Pipes, Cigar Cases, Cigar and Cigarette Holders, or a nice Singing Bird.

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Estate of the Late George Laidlaw. Auction Sale of Valuable FARM PROPERTY. In the Township of Eldon, in the County of Victoria.

Valuable Farm in the Township of Mariposa. In the County of Victoria, by tender. We have received instructions from the administrator of the Estate of Angus McDonald, late of the Township of Mariposa, in the County of Victoria, to sell by tender the following valuable farm property.

MORTGAGE SALE. Of Valuable Hotel Property and Stores. In the VILLAGE OF CANNINGTON, in the County of Ontario.

Presentations for Everybody. Toys, Dolls, Bleighs in great variety AT J. RIGGS' Lindsay.

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