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write you a line, and you can go

and see for yourself if it suits you;

you look tired-you have had a long

journey, you say; I would advise you

to lie down and rest a bit the first

thing you do. You can go to this

Margaret was tired, and she was

"That will be your room, my

dear," she said, showing Margaret

into a small apartment that opened

out from the one in which they had

been seated, and which looked cer-

tainly more desolate and gloomy, if

"Lie down and rest for an hour or

so; then I will call you, and, after

you have a cup of nice hot tea, you'll

It seemed to Margaret that, al-

touched the pillow, she drifted off

into dream-land. How long she slept

she had no idea; she became sud-

denly conscious of a near presence,

of being intently watched by a pair

of steady, burning eyes, and she

could distinctly feel short, stifled

Margaret opened her eyes with a

startled cry. Her sensation had

bending over her; it was Mrs. Ham-

She drew back with a flushed, star-

"I only looked in to see how you

were resting, dearie," she said, con-

call you when lunch is ready."

fusedly; "rest a little longer - I'll

In obedience Margaret closed her

eyes again, and the next moment she

with an effort, she saw that Mrs.

Margaret told herself dreamily that

brain, and once again, despite her

subtle influence of some near presence

about her; and a hand passed slowly

and lightly over her face, but, try

as hard as she could, she was pow-

erless to arouse herself from the

Long hours dragged their - slow

lengths by; and when Margaret open-

and the moonlight was streaming in

through the looped curtains of the

"Why, Mrs. Hammond must have

forgotten all about calling me," she

thought, in alarm, springing from

the couch. But she found herself so

dizzy that she could hardly keep her

"I feel worse than I did before

lay down," she thought. "I guess

Reaching for her dress, which she

had removed, Margaret quickly don-

ned it, and in doing so made, to her

the pocket had been turned wrong

side out, and her porte-monnaie, .in

which she had every cent she posses-

No words can picture Margaret's

dismay, and wild grief, and what so

"I have been - robbed. Heaven

pity me," she moaned, groping her

way to the door, which she found

making her way into the other

apartment, and from thence into the

hall. But no voice answered her-

Mrs. Hammond was nowhere to be

tened, they looked at her with the

"Poor child! Poor child!" repeat-

ed the gentleman in the deepest com-

rageous swindles-the cruelest wrong

that ever cried out for justice. In a

city like New York knavery may ex-

we be unaware of it. The floors of

this house all save the lower - one, 1

for the accommodation of the work-

ing people hereabouts. The woman

calling herself Mrs. Hammond, claim-

ing that she was too poor to pay a

whole week's rent in advance, suc-

ceeded in obtaining these two rooms,

paying for them by the day. She

claimed to be looking for employ-

She took them only this

ist under the very roof with us, and

profoundest pity.

Hammond," she sobbed,

sed in the wide world, was missing.

terrible a loss meant to her.

cities do not agree with me. I feel

feet, and her head ached terribly.

ed her eyes again it was night

lethargy into which she had fallen.

been quite correct-some one

most as soon as her tired head

very grateful to Mrs. Hammond for

her considerate thoughtfulness.

such a thing were possible.

be as fresh as a June rose."

breathing on her cheek.

place in the afternoon."

******* | the place, though, I feel sure. I will

By Laura Jean Libbey. *******

Carefully and patiently she ran her eye down the column of "Boarders Wanted."

"This will do," she sighed, reading the advertisement half aloud, which ran as follows:

"A widow lady would take a young girl as boarder while her daughter is absent for a few weeks. Money not as much of an object as companionship. Apply to Mrs. Hammond, No. - E. 12th Street."

There were many other desirable places, but this seemed Margaret the most suitable. "I can board with her at least two

weeks," she ruminated, carefully counting over the few dollars had left after paying her fare. must surely get something to do in

that time.' It was late in the forenoon when she reached the great metropolis, and, limited though her means was, Margaret was wise enough to take

She knew it would have taken her hours and much patience otherwise, to have found her way through the streets of the great city. Her timid ring at the bell brought

a small, colored maid. "Yes, Mrs. Hammond was home," she said, "would the young lady please walk this way?"

Margaret followed her up several flights of stairs, and at last the maid pushed open a door at the further end of the corridor, and Margaret found herself in a large, meagrely-furnished, dingy room, and in the presence of Mrs. Hammond.

It must be confessed that Margaret did not take kindly to the woman at first sight. She could not tell

"I suppose you came to see about boarding, dearie," she said cajolingly, as she placed a chair for her vis-

"Yes, madam," said Margaret. " am a stranger in New York, and am here to find employment. I shall be obliged to board some place for a fortnight at least, and I thought if I could board cheap enough-this is just the kind of place I should

"How much did you expect to pav. dearie?" inquired Mrs. Hammond, stifled. The air seems thick and blandly.

"I had no idea how much it is worth," replied Margaret, frankly; "but whatever you think is right I will pay-that is, if it comes within horror, the startling discovery that my means."

"Would you mind telling me candidly about how much money you have with you, dearie?" murmured Mrs. Hammond, "I would know then about how cheap I must board

you." "I have just eighteen dollars my purse," replied the unsuspicious girl, flushing confusedly, as she modestly made the confession, "and that must last me until I find employment, even though it should take me two or even three weeks. Do you think that out of the way?" faltered

Margaret. "No, not at all," returned Mrs. perfectly "I am to take you that amount, my dear. think we shall get along famously. I think I can help you to just the very situation, too," she went on, enthusiastically - "a companion to

an heiress; the pay is excellent, and there is literally nothing to do." "Oh, I couldn't take any one's money for doing nothing," declared miseration. "You have been made Margaret, earnestly, "indeed I could the victim of one of the most out-

"What a straight-laced creature you are to be sure!" cried Mrs. | Hammond with a laugh that grated harshly on Margaret's ears; "one would imagine you were a verdant country girl to hear you talk like that," she cried, fairly shaking her

fat sides with laughter. "I am from the country," returned Margaret, proudly, "and there we give the full value in labor for mon-

ey received." "Let me give you a little advice, my dear," exclaimed Mrs. Hammond, still convulsed with laughter-'take all the money you can get, and do as little as you can, you will like

morning. Virtually the case amounts to just this: The woman rented these rooms by the day with just such an object in view. You walked into her net an unsuspecting victim. She has taken your money and-skipped. She is one of the many New York sharpers who live on their wits. To-morrow she will be trying some new dodge in another part of the city. There's little use in attempting to trace them-not one out of a thousand is ever brought to justice. You have learned the lesson - beware of New York sharpers-at a dear price, my noor girl "

on, what shall I do, what shall do, what shall I do?" sobbed Margaret, hysterically. "I do not know to whom I could turn in this dreadful hour."

"You look like a pure, true young girl, my dear," said the gentleman's wife, touched to the heart by Margaret's sorrow. "You shall come down to my rooms and stay with me a week, and I will do all in my power to help you to employment.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Finding a situation was not easy task Margaret Lancaster had anticipated. She had answered every advertisement in the daily papers, but everywhere it was the same -no one seemed to want her. How was she to know that in nine cases out of ten it was because she was so young and fair?

One lady was more frank than the "I would take you for a companion," she said, "but you would be very unhappy here. My-my husband street, homeless and penniless, nobleis too fond of young and beautiful hearted Margaret thanked God that pitiless world, that I was so anxi-

a long-drawn sigh. Margaret was far too innocent to understand the drift of the lady's thoughts.

"And," she continued, with a painful effort at a smile, "I am obliged to take old and remarkably homely women for companions, and I usually find that their disposition corresponds with their faces. I am sorry, Miss Lancaster, but I cannot engage you."

Thus it was day after day, and in home after home that she visited, Aurelia. and the girl's heart was almost broken in consequence.

On the morrow the week which her new kind friends had invited her to stay would be up, and Margaret told herself she must not remain another

day an object of their charity. Walking the streets to find something to do-homeless, penniless, God knows, and God alone knows, how bitterly hard it is-no wonder many poor young girls have been driven to desperate measures when they found themselves in a strait this. The world narrows down to a grave, and death seems the only way by

of escape. Margaret Lancaster was of a more patient, hopeful nature than most young girls, and the future was very dark and lowering, indeed, she began to despair.

The hour came all too soon when Margaret told herself that she must not trespass on Mrs. Millar's kindness any longer.

"Have you a situation, then, a was sensible of a sweet, subtle odor last, my dear?" said that lady when pervading the room; opening her eyes the girl made known her intention of leaving her that afternoon; and Hammond had placed a vase of flow- it did not occur to her at the time ers on a small table in the centre of that Margaret's answer was evasive.

When Margaret turned away from Mrs. Millar's door she could hardly he began to think of the advisabilshe never remembered flowers to have restrain the scalding tears that oppressive odor before; she seemed determined to force could feel the weight of them on her selves through her long curling in ordering loiterers to move on; lashes, fairly blinding her eyes. "Only Heaven knows what will be-

trailed off into a deep and dreamless come of me now," she sighed, add- the pale, silent young girl. sleep. Once again she could feel the ing, with a sob: "But I would die in that green park across the way before I would eat the bread of dependence for another meal. Surely the God that watches over the helpless little sparrows will not forget | not see him; she was not even aware me, His child."

Margaret was just about to cross to the opposite pavement, when the sudden shout from the driver of a passing coach caused her to glance quickly up, and draw hastily back with a low cry.

But it was not the driver's surly words. "You'd better look out where you're going the next time, young woman-you came within an ace of being run over." It was not his words that caused Margaret to utter that startled cry-she never even heard them, her eyes were so intently riveted upon the occupant of the coach— a young and beautiful girl robed in silk and glittering with costly diamonds that caught the sunlight and held it in myriad hues. But it was not even the magnificence of those wondrous tewels that held Margaret Lancaster spellbound-it was the face . that looked out at her from the coach

ed eyes; but, even while she uttered day; and now I am in despair. on, its wheels flinging a cloud of I should do next, but somehow no dust over Margaret as it passed her | thoughts would come to me; my

"Am I mad, or am I dreaming?" looking after the quickly disappear- | years, and that Gerald-" relia's face-how could I make mistake? There is no other face with his great rough hand. Margaret's lamentation soon in this whole wide world so beautibrought a gentleman and lady, from ful; and yet, how ridiculous to imaa lower flat, quickly to her side; gine for an instant that it could and by dint of much questioning be she, in New York City, riding they gleaned at length the girl's in a grand coach and dressed like a story from her lips; and, as they lis- fine lady. No-no! at this 'moment she is far from me in that isolated little village nestling among the Virginia hills, Heaven bless

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And, standing there in the faces," she added, with a flush and she had left seventy-five dollars ous to escape from? with Aurelia. Even though she was suffering she felt that Aurelia was provided for, and that brought her

a world of comfort. Tired, desolate-ay, even hungry, Margaret slowly threaded her way over to the cool, green park, that invited rest, and sunk down weak and faint, on one of the benches under a shade-tree, pondering over the wonderful resemblance of the beautiful, wealthy young lady in the coach to her far-off sister,

Slowly the golden sun rode blazing chariot through the sky, and sunk at last out of sight in

the western distance. The dusk crept up and into the deeper darkness of night. One by one the stars came out and fixed themselves in the night sky. A young moon rose and hung like a slender, crescent jewel in the firmament, shedding a pale, soft light bread? Why suffer the pangs over the waving trees and the sleeping flowers below.

Still Margaret sat under the trees. passed throngs women. and loitering lovers. more than one looked at the white faced girl sitting so listlessly the bench, who was gazing intently into vacancy, and more than one

wondered if she were ill. But in the great metropolis sorrow and desolation abounds on every hand-people look with pity on unfortunates-and hurry on. A policeman, in pacing his beat

to and fro, had noticed Margaret when she first entered the park, and sunk down so wearily on the first seat she had come to. As hour after hour passed by, and

she still lingered, even after the night had fallen darkly around her, ity of stopping to speak with her. He had always been gruff enough himself to give the usual order to But, when nine o'clock rung out

from the brazen throat of an adjacent belfry, he realized that the duty must be done, sooner or later. He stopped before her, but she did of his presence until he laid his rough hand kindly on her shoulder,

and asked quietly: what are you doing in the park so late, lass? It just struck nine: you have been here long hours." "Long hours!" repeated Margaret, wonderingly. "I-I-took no heed

"You have been here since noon, my girl. I am sorry to have to say it, but you must be moving on, you know."

She raised her white, despairing face with the night dew lying on it, entreatingly to his. "I am doing no harm," she ans-

wered, piteously, "please, let we stay here, I- Oh, Heaven help me, I have no where to go." "Have you no home-no friends or money, miss?" he asked, and his

voice was husky with deep pity. "No," answered Margaret, with a sob, "neither friends, home, or money. I came to New York to find "Aurelia!" she cried, springing for- employment, but I have been unsucward with clasped hands and amaz- cessful, though I have searched every the name, the grand coach whirled sat down here to think what

senses seemed to wander so-I quite think that I must have slept -I immuttered Margaret, standing quite agined I was back in the old farmmotionless on the cross-walk, and house where I spent so many happy ing vehicle. "That was surely Au- stopped suddenly, as she saw the a man wipe away tears from his eyes

"Are you crying because you are sorry for me?" asked Margaret, in The officer recovered his composure

by a great effort. "Yes, I am sorry for you, miss," he replied, "more sorry for you than you can imagine. Shall I tell you "Yes," returned Margaret, dream-

ily, "if you like." For a moment the great, burly policeman was silent, then he turned slowly from Margaret, saying, husk-"I know just how to pity you, my

lass, because a young girl, with Just such a story as yours, changed the whole current of my life not many years ago. It happened in this way: "I was down at the battery then; I went on duty at six in the even-

ing, patrolling the river-front until six the next morning. "One evening a young girl came to the park, and like you, sat motionless on one of the benches for long hours. I thought she could "

Castle Garden; there was something about her too genteel-like for that. "By eleven o'clock the crowds that usually congregate about the place on a summer's night, had gradually disappeared; still the young girl made no move to quit the place, and my curiosity was aroused by the furtive glances she began to take at last on all sides of her. I drew back in the shadow of the trees and

watched her. "At length, observing no one for to the into the waters; and, we policemen know too well what that means, and with a little heart-broken cry that would have pierced your very soul to have heard, she made a leap down into the dark waves. thanks be to Heaven, she reached them, I was too quick for her; in the very nick of time caught her, and drew her back to the world she was so bent leaving, and though the poor thing struggled desperately to free herself from my clasp, I held her fast in my grasp."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The officer paused a moment in his story, and then continued: "'What were you about to do, child?' I cried, in horror-for was little more than a child in years. 'Is life so hard with you that you rush headlong to destroy it?' "'Let me go!' she sobbed. 'Yes, life is so hard and bitter I want

" 'Why is life so bitter with you?' I asked. 'Won't you tell me, my poor girl?' And as I spoke, I drew her further and further away from the deadly brink of the treacherous

"Yes, I will tell you-why I should not?' she sobbed, dropping down on the bench again, and weepas though her heart would break. 'I am starving-yes, starving! Does that shock you- that a human being should starve in a land of plenty?-in a great city, where women spend fortunes senseless roses, and in glittering diamonds, and on every extravagant thing they see? I tried to get work in the mills-but everywhere it was the same old story, they had all the hands they wanted. So what could an honest girl do then get out of a world that had place in it for her to earn hunger another hour, when one leap,

(To be Continued.)

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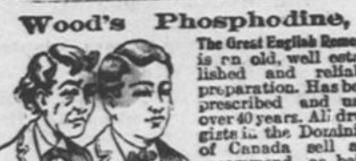
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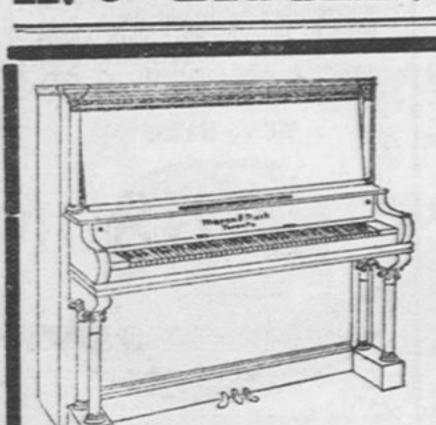
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