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to the point.

"The undersigned will be obliged," it ran, "if Mr. Burton Lawrence will be present this evening at eight o'clock, in the main-line booking-office of the Brighton Railway, at Victoria Station. An interview is of very pressing importance."

The note was signed by that single word which had always possessed such mysterious signification, the word "Avel."

Hitherto, in my old life long ago, receipt of communications from that mysterious correspondent had caused me much anxiety of mind. I had always feared their advent; now, however, I actually welcomed it, even though it were strange and unaccountable that the unknown writer should know my whereabouts and the name beneath which I had sought to conceal my identity.

I made a hasty dinner in the coffee-room, and went forthwith to Victoria, wondering whom I should meet. The last time I had kept one of those strange appointments on that summer evening long ago in Hyde Park, I had come face to face with the woman I loved. Would that I could meet her now!

I entered the booking-office, searching it with eager eyes. Two lines of persons were taking tickets at the pigeon-holes, while a number of loungers were, like myself, awaiting friends. Beyond, upon the platform, all was bustle, as is usual at that hour, when the belated portion of business London is bound for the southern suburbs. From that busy terminus of the West End trains were arriving and departing each moment.

The big illumined clock showed that it was yet five minutes to the hour. Therefore I strolled out upon the platform, lounged around the bookstalls, and presently returned to the spot indicated in the letter.

As I re-entered the booking-office my eager eyes fell upon a figure standing before me—a well-dressed figure, with a face that smiled upon me.

An involuntary cry of surprise escaped my lips. The encounter was sudden and astounding; but in that instant, as I rushed forward to greet the newcomer, I knew myself to be on the verge of a startling and remarkable discovery.

CHAPTER XXV.

The encounter was a startling one.

At the moment when my eyes first fell upon the figure standing patiently in the booking-office awaiting me, I halted for a second in uncertainty. The silhouette before me was that of a youngish, brown-haired, and rather good-looking woman, neatly dressed in dead black, wearing a large hat and a feather boa round her neck.

By the expression of her face I saw that she had recognized me. I had, of course, never seen her before, yet her personal appearance—the grey eyes and brown hair—were exactly similar to those described so minutely on several occasions by West, the cab-driver. I regarded her for a moment in silent wonder, then advanced to meet her.

She was none other than the unknown woman who had saved my life on that fateful night at The Boltons—the mysterious Edna!

As I raised my hat she bowed gracefully, and with a merry smile, said—

"I fear that, to you, I am a stranger. I recognize you, however, as Mr. Heaton."

"That is certainly my name," I responded, still puzzled. "And you—well, our recognition is, I believe mutual—you are Edna."

She glanced at me quickly, as

a light
she echoed in
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description given of
cabman who drove me
that memorable morning."
Ah! Of course," she ejaculated in sudden remembrance. Then, for a few seconds, she remained in silence. It seemed as though the fact that I had recognized her had somewhat confused her.

"But I am extremely glad that we have met at last," I assured her. "I have, times without number, hoped to have the opportunity of thanking you for the great services you once rendered me."

"I find with satisfaction that although six years have gone by you have not forgotten your promise made to me," she said, her large serious eyes fixed upon mine.

"I gave you that promise in exchange for my life," I remarked, as at her suggestion, we turned and walked out of the station.

"And as acknowledgment of the service you rendered by preserving secret your knowledge of the events of that terrible night I was enabled to render you a small service in return," she said. "Your sight was restored to you."

"For that, how can I sufficiently thank you?" I exclaimed. "I owe it all to you, and rest assured that, although we have not met until this evening, I have never forgotten—nor shall I ever forget."

She smiled pleasantly, while I strolled slowly at her side across the station-yard.

To me those moments were like a dream. Edna, the woman who had hitherto been a strange ghost of the past, was now actually beside me in the flesh.

"I have received other notes making appointments—the last, I think, a couple of years ago," I observed after a pause. "Did you not meet me then?"

She glanced at me with a puzzled expression. Of course she knew nothing of those lost years of my life.

"Meet you?" she repeated. "Certainly not."

"Who met me, then?"

"I really don't know," she answered. "This is the first time I have approached you, and I only come to you now in order to ask you to grant me a favor—a very great favor."

"A favor! What is it?"

"I cannot explain here, in the street," she said, quickly. "If you will come to my hotel I will place the facts before you."

"Where are you staying?"

"At the Bath Hotel, in Arlington Street."

I knew the place well. It stood at the corner of Arlington Street and Picadilly, and was an eminently respectable, old-fashioned place, patronized by a high-class clientele.

"And you are alone?" I inquired, thinking it strange that she should thus ask me to her hotel.

"Of course. I have come to London expressly to see you," she responded. "I went down to Budleigh-Salterton two days ago, but I ascertained at Denbury that you had left suddenly."

"Whom did you see there?" I inquired, much interested.

"Your butler. He told me some absurd story how that you had become temporarily irresponsible for your actions, and had disappeared, leaving no address."

"And you came to London?"

"Of course."

"And how did you find out where I was hidden, and my assumed name?"

She smiled mysteriously.

"It was easy enough, I assure you. A man of your influence in the City, well known as you are, has considerable difficulty in effectively concealing his identity."

"But who told you where I was staying?" I demanded.

"Nobody. I discovered it for myself."

"And yet the police have been searching for me everywhere, and have not yet discovered me!" I remarked, surprised.

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"I consider it my duty to learn what I can of this affair," I answered determinedly.

She raised her eyebrows with an expression of surprise, for she saw that I was in earnest.

"After your vow to me?" she asked. "Remember that, to acknowledge my indebtedness for that vow, I searched for the one specialist who could restore your sight. To my efforts, Mr. Heaton, you are now in possession of that sense that was lost to you."

"I acknowledge that freely," I answered. "Yet, even in that you have sought to deceive me."

"How?"

"You told me that you were not the writer of those letters signed with a pseudonym."

"And that is true. I was not the actual writer, even though I may ve caused them to be written."

"Having thus deceived me, how you hope that I can be free with

eplied.
I said. "Of
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what I say—it sounds
d—but I have absolutely
wledge of keeping those ap-
nents except the one at Gros-
r Gate, and I am totally ignor-
of having met anybody."

She paused, looking me full in the face with those grey eyes so full of mystery.

"I begin to think that what the butler told me contains some truth," she observed bluntly.

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kept a profound secret unto myself, and now, for the first time, had revealed it.

Her face showed how utterly taken aback she was.

"There is some mistake, I think," she said lamely, apparently for want of something other to say.

"Surely your memory carries you back to that midnight tragedy!" I exclaimed rather hastily, for I saw she would even now mislead me, if she could. "I have discovered where it took place—I have since re-entered that room!"

"You have!" she gasped in the low, hoarse voice of one fearful lest her secret should be discovered. "You have actually re-discovered the house—even though you were stone blind!"

"Yes," I answered.

"How did you accomplish it?"

I shrugged my shoulders, answering, "There is an old saying—a very true one—that 'murder will out.'"

"But tell me more. Explain more fully," she urged in an earnest tone.

I hesitated. Next instant, however, I decided to keep my own counsel in the matter. Her readiness to deny that the events occurred in that house had re-aroused within me a distinct suspicion.

"It is a long story, and cannot be told here," I answered evasively.

"Then come along to the hotel," he suggested. "I, too, have much to say to you."

I do not know that I should have obeyed her were it not for the mystery which had hitherto veiled her identity. She had saved my life, it is true, and I supposed that I ought to consider her as a friend, yet in those few minutes during which I had gazed upon her a curious dislike of her had arisen within me. She was, I felt certain, not the straightforward person I had once believed her to be.

Not that there was anything in her appearance against her. On the contrary, she was a pleasant, smiling, rather pretty woman of perhaps thirty-five, who spoke with the air and manner of a lady, and who carried herself well, with the grace of one in a higher social circle.

After a few moments' hesitation my curiosity got the better of my natural caution, and I determined to hear what she had to say. Therefore we drove together to Bath Hotel.

In her own private sitting-room, a cosy little apartment overlooking Piccadilly, opposite Dover Street, she removed her big black hat, drew off her gloves, and having invited me to a chair, took one herself on the opposite side of the fireplace. Her maid was there when we entered, but retired at word from her mistress."

"You, of course, regard it as very curious, Mr. Heaton, that after these six years I should again seek you," she commenced, leaning her arm lightly upon the little table, and gazing straight into my face without flinching. "It is true that once I was enabled to render you a service, and now in return I ask you also to render me one. Of course, it is useless to deny that a secret exists between us—a secret which, if revealed, would be disastrous."

"To whom?"

regret," she answered, "that
nt deception has been necessary
preserve the secret."

"The secret of the crime?"

She nodded.

"Well, and what do you wish to tell me this evening?"

She was silent for a moment toying with her rings.

"I want to appeal to your generosity. I want you to assist me."

"In what manner?"

"As before."

"As before!" I repeated, greatly surprised. "I have no knowledge of having assisted you before."

"What!" she cried. "Is your memory so defective that you do not recollect your transactions with those who waited upon you—those who kept the previous appointments of which you have spoken?"

"I assure you, madam," I said, quite calmly, "I have not the least idea of what you mean."

"Mr. Heaton!" she cried. "Have you really taken leave of your senses? Is it actually true what your butler has said of you—that on the day you left Denbury you behaved like a madman?"

"I am no madman!" I cried with considerable warmth. "The truth is that I remember nothing since one evening, nearly six years ago, when I was smoking with—with a friend—in Chelsea, until that day to which my servant has referred."

"You remember nothing? That is most extraordinary."

"If strange to you, madam, how much more strange to me? I have told you the truth, therefore kindly proceed to explain the object of these previous visits of persons you have apparently sent to me."

"I really think you must be joking," she said. "It seems impossible that you should actually be unaware."

"I tell you that I have no knowledge whatsoever of their business with me."

"Then if such is really the case, let me explain," she said. 'First, I think you will admit that your financial transactions with our Government have brought you very handsome profits."

"I am not aware of having had any transactions with the British Government," I answered.

"I refer to that of Bulgaria," she explained. "Surely you are aware that through my intermediary you have obtained great concessions—the docks at Varna, the electric trams at Sofia, the railway from Tirnova to the Servian frontier, not to mention other great undertakings which have been floated as companies, all of which are now earning handsome profits. You cannot be ignorant of that!"

(To be Continued.)

ON THE FARM

MATCHING FARM TEAMS.

Matching horses is an art, and an art which quite a number of farmers and horsemen seem unable to master. It requires some skill and judgment to bring together a pair of horses that resemble each other in all characteristics sufficient to work in harmony. A man has to have more than the color of the animals in mind to do this successfully. To have a team closely alike in color and markings is desirable, but it's not the whole thing, as some men seem to think.

Action comes first when considering the matching of horses. Proper action; strong, clean, vigorous movement of feet and legs, attracts a buyer more quickly than anything else. Style is required in the action of any class of horse. A snappy, straight and balanced movement of the motive apparatus; a team, each of which stands up to the bit in about the same way, are attractive to buyers and pleasing to the man who drives them.

In a farm team, strength and conformation might possibly be placed before action; at any rate, it should come second. A team ill-matched in regard to strength and staying powers, is a mighty poor asset. In selecting horses to work against each other in a team, get them in general conformation as nearly alike as possible, good and strong behind, and muscled well in the back and loin, short and thick in the middle, with muscles, not fat, beneath the hide. Size, to a certain extent, may be sacrificed for strength and conformation, but only within certain limits. A difference of a hundred pounds or so in weight doesn't matter greatly when a pair is being matched up, but if much more than that, the difference in size will be so clear as to detract from the value of the team. Size is important, but it comes after strength, just as strength and conformation follow action in relative importance. Color comes last of all in the major points to be considered. A difference in color, however marked, is among the least objectionable features in a team. Yet, strangely, some men consider it the all-important consideration, and will match up horses so unlike in action and temperament, that one's whiffletree is always scouring the wagon wheel, while the other is drawing ahead keen and strong to the bit, so unlike in strength and conformation that one is fagged out hours before the other shows fatigue; but if the two stand about the same in height, weigh up very nearly alike, and resemble each other in color and markings, they are rated as a well-matched team. In reality, they are anything but matched.

FATTENING FOWL IN PENS.

The proportion of farmers who fatten their fowls in coops in this country is small compared with the number of those who do not fatten at all, but send their fowls to market in a lean state, and there are also numbers of poultry keepers who enclose fowls for a couple of weeks in a pen or shed. Something can be done towards improving the condition of chickens by shutting them up in a shed and feeding liberally on nutritious and high fattening foods. The foods may be made up in the same way, and may consist of the same ingredients as recommended for crate fattening. It is best not to shut up a large number of birds together, and the number not to exceed twenty, whilst half that many would do still better. Cockrels and pullets must not be penned in one lot, and the nearer all the fowls in a pen are to another in breed, age and size, the better. Chickens may be penned in any kind of enclosure, where they will be undisturbed and where they cannot take too much exercise; but a shed or covered pen is best, as the floor will keep dry, and the birds will be all the more contented from being shut away from the sight of birds roaming about the yards.

The experienced fancier will always get best results from fattening in coops; but the beginner is generally more successful with fattening fowls in pens, because there is not the same tendency to loss of appetite, provided that due care is taken to feed only sweet and wholesome foods and not to feed more than the birds will eat at any meal. There are opportunities of feeding a greater variety of stuffs to fowls in pens than to those in coops. Whole grain may be given occasionally, although it is not recommended unless the birds become listless, and show marked loss of appetite, and green food may also be fed occasionally as a pick-me-up. Cleanliness and thorough ventilation in the house are absolute essentials to success, and it must not be supposed for a moment that the "pen system" of fattening is one which lends itself to carelessness, and the shirking of duties which ought to be performed with machine-like regularity.

Young Popperton—"Wife has gone shopping and left me in charge of the baby, and I am regularly put to it to know how to keep the little fellow quiet." Grimshaw (after regarding the howling and contorting juvenile critically)—"I should think you could easily keep him quiet, both in a vocal and physical way, by gagging him carefully, tying his hands behind his back, binding his feet together, nailing his clothes to the floor and then administering chloroform to him."