

The Gypsy's Sacrifice

OR
A SECRET REVEALED

CHAPTER XXXIV.

She went swiftly, with the shawl drawn closely around her head, along the drive, its wondrous smoothness cut up by the carriages; passed the gates and into the high road. She paused a moment or two to gain breath and looked around her. As she did so, the clock of the Towers struck five. In another hour or two, she reflected, workmen would be about and she would be seen. She must hasten on, but whither? At that moment if any idea at all found room in her bewildered mind it was that of going to her own people. If she walked long enough, if she could only manage to avoid recognition, she must in time come across a band of gypsies. Whether they belonged to her own tribe or not, she knew that they would succor, and, if necessary, hide her.

She hurried on and for a time, supported by the excitement, was not sensible of fatigue; but presently she became conscious of it. Her feet seemed to be of lead, her head ached, her eyes burned. She knew that she could not go much further. Suddenly she found herself off the road and upon the grass. She looked around confusedly and saw she was on Gorse Common. As she looked a faint light attracted her attention, and she realized, after a moment or two, that it was from Martha Hooper's cottage. It seemed like a beacon—not to warn but to welcome; and it occurred to her that she might rest there for a short time, perhaps until the night had fallen again. The woman had evidently known what sorrow was, and would sympathize with her and hide her. It was true that there was some secret understanding between her and the countess, but Madge reflected that she could show Martha Hooper that she, Madge, was flying from Monk Towers to save the countess from further humiliation, and that would induce Mrs. Hooper to help her in her flight.

She made her way across the common and, nearly fainting now with the exhaustion produced by the reaction of excitement, she leaned against the door and knocked.

Two or three minutes passed—minutes that seemed an age to Madge—and she was asking herself whether she should have strength to keep from falling upon the step, when Martha Hooper's nervous voice was heard from behind the door:

"Who is it? Is it you—Jake?" she asked in trembling tones.

Madge moistened her lips; she was almost incapable of speech.

"It is I," she said at last.

Mrs. Hooper opened the door, then shrank back and uttered a cry of alarm.

"Who is it?" she panted. "I—I don't know you! I've nothing to give."

"It is I—Mrs. Landon!" said poor Madge. "Let me come in, I—"

Martha Hooper uttered a cry of astonishment and nervous apprehension, and, drawing her in, closed the door.

"It is you, ma'am!" she gasped as Madge sank onto a chair. "Oh what has happened? Why are you dressed like that? You are ill."

"I—I am tired," said Madge faintly.

Martha Hooper ran for a glass of water, and brought it to her and stood by as Madge drank it, wringing her hands.

"What has happened, ma'am?" she repeated. "Has—has he been there? Oh tell me quick! My poor heart!" and she put her hands to her side.

"I am in great trouble, Mrs. Hooper," said Madge faintly. "I—I have left the Towers!"

"Left the Towers! You!" gasped Martha. "Why have you done that?"

"I don't think I can tell you," said Madge with a heavy sigh. "And yet you will soon know the truth. All the world will know it! I have left the Towers and—my husband, because I have brought shame and disgrace upon him—upon all of them."

She spoke with the awful calmness of resignation and despair. Why should she not tell this woman the truth? All the county knew it—were probably discussing it at this moment.

"Shame, disgrace!" echoed Martha Hooper.

"Yes," said Madge. "You know—perhaps you do not; but it will be known before daylight that I am a gypsy."

"A gypsy!" the woman looked at Madge's brown dress and red shawl. "A gypsy! I thought you were playing acting. Yes, you look like a gypsy in those clothes!"

"I am a gypsy," said Madge sadly. "It was in a gypsy camp that Jack—that my husband first saw me—and—her voice broke—"loved me. I—I did not know the harm I was doing in letting him marry me. How could I have known?" She was not so much speaking to the frightened woman before her as communing with herself. "Then I came to the Towers and—and I tried to be like the others, to be a lady and—and worthy of him; and to-night—her

voice broke—"to-night I thought I had done so, that he would be proud of me. Then, just when I had forgotten what I had been, a man came into the midst of them all, and told them all what I was!" Her eyes were dry and hot, and yet as if the unshed tears were burning in them. "Poor Jake!" she breathed with a heavy sigh. "He did not know the harm he was doing—"

"Jake!"

"Yes, that is his name," she said faintly. "He is one of our tribe, and he followed me, I suppose, to get money. I would have given him all I could get; Jack would have given him anything he spare me. I know that but it is all over now; the blow has fallen. Everybody knows, everybody looks down upon me and him with scorn," she put her hands to her face and sighed.

Martha Hooper looked straight over Madge's head with a strange expression on her face.

"Did he—Jake—come only to tell the grand people all he knew about you?" she asked in a dry voice.

Madge shook her head.

"I suppose so. I do not know. It does not matter; it is all over! All I can never go back. There is only one thing for me to do; to hide myself away from Jack till I die. I must go back to my own people."

She paused a moment, then raised her eyes to the white face in front of her. "Will you help me? You have known sorrow and trouble have you not?"

"Ay!" came from Martha's dry lips.

"And you will help me who am in such bitter need?" pleaded Madge. "I can only rest until—the evening. If you will hide me somewhere and keep me hidden from any one—any one—who may come! Will you do that?" She put out her hand and touched Martha Hooper's gently, imploringly, for the woman seemed to have become lost in a kind of reverie.

Martha started slightly, and looked down at the white, lovely face with its great eyes full of misery and despair.

"Yes," she said with a long breath. "I will help you!"

Madge raised her eyes gratefully and with a dim surprise, for a change seemed to have come over Martha if Madge's appeal had aroused a Hooper's face and voice; it was as if Madge's appeal had aroused a touch of resolution and an indication of strength in the nervous, fear-burdened woman.

"Come upstairs with me she said in the new and firmer tone. "You will be ill if you do not get rest. Do not be afraid, ma'am, you will be quite safe here. I will protect you."

"If you will hide me till night," said Madge.

Mrs. Hooper put her arm around the slight girlish figure and helped Madge up the narrow stairs to a small room. It was scrupulously neat and clean, like Martha Hooper herself, and Madge looked around with a weary sigh of relief.

Martha Hooper helped her to undress; and such help was necessary, for poor Madge was almost incapable of lifting her hand. And when Madge dropped her tired and aching head on the pillow, Martha Hooper sat beside her and held her hand.

"You have been very good to me," Madge murmured, with her eyes closed. "You will not give me up to any one?"

"No," said Martha Hooper. "You are safe here. No one shall harm you or take you away. You said that I had known sorrow and trouble; you spoke the truth. But I have deserved them, whereas you have not, poor lady!"

"Don't call me 'lady,'" said Madge almost inaudibly, "I am only a gypsy. Only a gypsy!"

The sweet sad voice continued to murmur—sometimes broken with a sob—for an hour or more, until sleep fell like a blessed balm upon the weary spirit; and all that time Martha Hooper sat beside the bed and held the hand that burnt like fire one minute and struck like ice the next. And the look of resolution which Madge had noticed grew stranger in the elder woman's face as the dawn broke; and the thin lips usually so weak and tremulous, grew firm and determined.

Royce left the countess' room, and mechanically went toward his own, but he stopped at the door. He would not go in and let Madge see the trouble in his face, for he knew that it would only add to her suffering. He listened a moment, expecting to hear her crying, but all was still, and hoping—though against hope—that she might have fallen asleep, he went downstairs. The library door was open and he went in to sit down and think over his future course, for he had resolved that he would take Madge away from the Towers that day.

There was no light in the room, and he struck a match. As he did so he saw that he was not alone. Seymour was sitting on a chair by the table, his head on his arms.

The room redolent of brandy, and a decanter of that fascinating but destructive spirit had been overturned by the sleeping man's elbow.

Royce looked at him with infinite disgust. He had always doubted Seymour's elaborately-paraded and loudly-proclaimed virtue, but to-night Royce knew that the mask had been torn from the arch-hypocrite's face.

He went up to the motionless figure and shook it by the shoulder.

"Wake up," he said sternly. "Wake up, and get to bed."

Seymour roused slowly, and looked up at the stern face with the stare of drunken stupor.

"Er—er—is that you, Royce?" he said. "I have been busy with my Blue-books and Reports as usual, and dozed off."

"Get up!" said Royce with increased loathing, "and spare yourself any lies! I know you quite well now Seymour."

"Ah, it's you, is it?" snarled Seymour. "You dare come and talk to me after—to-night's business, do you? You order me about! I should have thought you would have felt too much like a beaten cur. But you don't know what shame is, do you?"

"Yes, I do—when I look at you," said Royce grimly. "But I know what you mean, and I'll tell you—if you have sense enough to understand—what I am going to do."

"I—I can understand," said Seymour; "there's only one thing you can do. At all, do you hear—not you alone? You've brought ruin and disgrace on our name. You and your gypsy—"

"Stop!" said Royce, his face white his eyes blazing ominously. Then he remembered that he was dealing with a drunken man and flung him from him.

"There, go to bed. Wait!" he said, as Seymour, scowling at him under his swollen lids, moved to the door. "You will not see me again; try and remember these, my last words to you: You are a fraud, Seymour! You talk of the shame and disgrace I have brought upon the old name! You forget that the people who have just gone have something else to talk about as well as the poor wretch's presence here to-night! You forget your performance in the card-room, and the man's assertion that he had seen you in a gambling den in London."

"It is a lie. He was drunk!" stammered Seymour, glaring at the stern face malignantly.

"No, it was truth. I know it, feel it," responded Royce grimly. "Take my word of warning, Seymour. You are on the road to ruin. Draw back while there's time, or you will bring a deeper shame and disgrace upon the house than any I—or my dear wife—have done! Don't speak! It's useless to lie to me about it. I—we are going from the Towers in an hour or two, and forever!"

"It was time."

"Yes," said Royce sadly. "We should never have come. But enough of that. I want to speak about yourself. My mother and Irene will be left in your care."

"My future wife. What has your highness to say about her, pray?"

"God save her from that! No, Irene will never be your wife, Seymour."

"We shall see. And now you've finished your sermon, my immaculate brother, I'll go to bed. If you can manage to leave the house before I am up, I shall be grateful for my own sake and for my future wife's! Good-night!"

He got out of the room, and Royce heard him stumble up the stairs. Royce opened the window to purify the room, and stepped out on the terrace. He stood there, thinking of Madge and their future, for perhaps an hour; then, calmed by the stillness and the solemnity of the dawn, he re-entered the house and went upstairs.

A light was burning in the bedroom, and he expected to find Madge still sitting up, but the room was empty. He went quickly into her dressing-room and into her boudoir. The hall-dress lying on the chair, the open drawer with the things tumbled out on the floor told him, as plainly as her absence, what had happened.

"Madge!" he called in an agony. "Where are you, Madge?"

Then he strode from table to table to see if she had left a note for him to find her. But there was no note.

He leaned against the mantel, his head upon his arms for a moment or two, trying to think. That she had flown he felt as surely as if she had left word that she had done so, and a great pity and love welled up in his heart.

"My poor darling," he cried. "My poor, beautiful Madge!"

Then he roused himself, and hurriedly changing his coat, and snatching up his hat, went out. As he passed along the corridor a door opened and Irene called to him.

He looked around in a dazed way. She was dressed, and her fair face was full of anxiety.

"Oh, what is it? Where are you going, Royce?" she said in a frightened whisper.

"Madge has gone!" he stammered.

"Gone! Madge? Oh, no, no, Royce! Not that!"

"Yes," he said hoarsely. "She has gone."

Irene put her hands over her eyes. "Let me think, Royce! I could not sleep for thinking of her! I would have gone to her but I thought you were with her! Oh, poor Madge, poor Madge!"

He stood with his hands grasping the hand rail of the stairs.

"She cannot have gone far," he said hoarsely. "I shall find her."



FEEDING FOR A RECORD.

In a letter to the London (Eng.) Gazette, an English dairyman gives his method of feeding cows during a public test, with advice as to treatment, which has the merit of being simple and easily followed:

"The production of milk having become the staple industry of farming, the breeding of good dairy cows should receive encouragement and liberal support, and there is nothing that will further the object more than carefully conducted milking trials and butter tests. It is impossible to select the best dairy cow from a fair-sized class without testing them."

"The feeding for quantity and quality of milk needs great skill and attention, although there is nothing more written upon in our live stock and agricultural papers than the rations for dairy cows, and nothing more variable than their formula. There is a difficulty to be met at this time of year that seems to have escaped attention, that is the difficulty of obtaining suitable green food at our summer shows for cows that have been allowed to grass previous to their being exhibited. The green food found by the societies varies from lucerne and sainfoin to mixed clover and grasses, often so much fermented by being cut too long that the cattle will not eat it. The safest course to ensure success is not to feed on green food at all, but to depend only on such foods as can be taken with you, thereby avoiding the possibility of your cow or cows being thrown off their feed just when you want them at their best."

"As regards cakes and meals, there is probably nothing to equal or surpass one part of best linseed cake to three parts of decorticated cotton cake, with good hay and water ad libitum. Commence with four pounds of the mixed cakes per day, increasing to eight or twelve pounds per day, according to the size and appetite of your cow, keeping a watchful eye so as not to sicken or purge; the cakes being rather hard, requires good mastication, and being greatly relished, causes a free flow of saliva, rendering digestion easy and assimilation perfect. Be sure to obtain your cake from a reliable source, with a guarantee of purity. Many competitors feed with mashes and other slops, with the result of a large quantity of milk of poor quality, and this is attributed to the food being swallowed too rapidly and not being properly digested; in fact, to overload the stomach defeats your object of obtaining the best results."

"The treatment of cows having to travel any distance to shows requires attention. They should be fed sparingly the day previous to the journey, and should only get a little hay and water on the morning before

Say nothing, Renie! Oh, God! where shall I go first?"

"Let me think, Royce! Wait! Yes! Don't you see? See has gone back to her own people! You must find them!"

"God bless you, Renie!" he murmured. "You understood—loved her! My poor Madge!"

He touched the sleeve of her dress with his lips in miserable gratitude, and sprang down the stairs.

The sight of the open door—for Madge had not closed it—struck a chill to his heart; but Irene's words buoyed him up with hope, for in the moment of his discovery of her flight an awful dread had assailed him, a dread of worse than flight—death.

He went to the stables and woke the coachman, and helped him saddle a horse.

"Is it my lady who is ill, Master Royce? Can't I go for the doctor?" asked the man.

"No!" said Royce hoarsely. "I will go. Say nothing."

He sprang into the saddle and went out of the gate at a gallop.

He gained the road and went tearing along toward the town, looking from right to left with anxious, straining eyes, when suddenly he saw three men on the pathway. They were walking abreast, and the two outside had hold of the man in the middle.

As he rode up to them they stopped, and he saw that they were two policemen, and that the central figure was Jake.

He pulled his horse up on his haunches and stared at them.

One of the policemen touched his hat.

"We've got him, sir," he said.

Jake peered up at Royce and opened his mouth as if to speak, but the policeman on the other side of him shook him roughly.

"Hold your tongue!" he said.

"Have you seen a lady?" began Royce, as if they and their business were no concern of his, as indeed at that moment they were not, for all his thoughts were of Madge. "A lady—tall—"

he stopped.

The policeman shook his head and stared at him with surprise.

"No, sir. We've passed no one on the road. As I was saying, sir, we've got him. We had a hard tussel for it."

But Royce waited for no more, and with a groan urged the horse on again, taking the road to the left.

(To be Continued.)

they start. To truck cattle with loaded stomachs upsets their whole systems, and causes the attendant a lot of unnecessary work; but if lightly fed the animals will stand the journey much better and commence feeding as soon as they reach their destination. A careful herdsman will see that his charge is not disturbed by every curious passerby. Quietude is essential to dairy cows.

"The milking is a most important item, and upon which success much depends. The cow and her milker should be on the best of terms, in fact, they should be positively fond of each other. The milking should be done so carefully that the cow looks forward to the operation as a relief and comfort, the pace at which the milk should be drawn must be regulated by the cow and not the milker; it is all very well for men to talk about fast or slow milking, but it must be done in accordance with the construction of the udder and teats, if the latter are large and the outlet the same, free milking may take place, but if the teats are small and the passage somewhat constricted, it is impossible to force out the milk rapidly without causing the animal pain, therefore, slow milking must be resorted to. Be sure and get the last drop out, that is often what wins."

FEEDING SOW AND PIGS.

If all goes well at farrowing time, the feed for the sow may be gradually increased after two or three days, with the increasing flow of milk and the growing demands of the pigs, until a full ration is supplied. Brood sows should be heavily fed, for the gains of young pigs are made at low cost for feed consumed. Good brood sows with large litters will usually fall off in weight despite the best of care and feed, but such decrease is no reflection upon the skill of the feeder.

In feeding a brood sow the herdsman can draw upon all feeds at his command. Middlings, ground oats and corn meal are particularly useful and should be liberally supplied. Some bran, ground peas, barley and other grains will prove helpful. The by-products of the dairy, skimmilk and buttermilk, are always in place, and may be used to almost any extent. Cooked roots, potatoes or pumpkins, with a liberal admixture of meal, form a good ration.

When two or three weeks old, pigs will take a little nourishment provided for them in a separate trough, which should be located at a convenient point in pen or lot accessible to the pigs but not to the dam. At first, place only a pint or two of feed in the trough, and when this is eaten give more. Skimmilk will be the most relished, but in its absence a thin porridge of middlings or sieved ground oats with a little oil meal will prove satisfactory.

KEEPING WEEDS IN CHECK.

Our readers of this season of the year are planning a campaign against weeds. Prof. L. H. Baily and if the person had really died from phosphorous poisoning, then he would destroy the phosphorous, and could never discover the cause of death.

What usually happens is that a hint is obtained from some liquid or powder found in a glass or bottle, or paper. The appearance of the body, externally and internally, gives further information. And, with these guides, perhaps the analyst goes straight to the point and discovers the poison quickly. But if he has nothing to guide him, then his task is a long and tedious one, far too complicated to describe in detail here.

WISE AND OTHERWISE.

What a man can do is his greatest ornament.

Don't accept a favor unless you expect to pay interest on it.

Better to be occasionally deceived than to be always distrustful.

It is best to be on with the new cook before you are off with the old. Enthusiasm generates energy as naturally as the sun gives forth heat.

A man may have more money than brains without having much money.

Of all the advantages which come to any young man, poverty is the greatest.

As soon as a man begins to love his work then he will also begin to progress.

A woman may be as young as she looks, but would rather be as young as she thinks she looks.

It always pays to be polite. When you are shaking hands with a man he can't very well be picking your pocket.

Faith is that quality which leads a man to expect that his flowers and garden will resemble the views shown on the seed packets.

WONDERS WITH GOLD.

A particle of gold weighing one 1-25,000,000 of a grain is readily discernible to the eye. A grain of gold can be beaten out so that it will cover a space of 80 inches. Gold wire so fine can be drawn that it will take 500 feet to weigh one grain. It can be beaten into leaves of 1-280,000 of an inch in thickness.

SHE OVERDID IT.

"My daughter bought that latest popular piece o' music to-day," said Mrs. Neddore, "and she tried it on our piano."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Peppery, "and it was a wretched fit, wasn't it?"