

# The Lady Brandolin ;

OR, THE LOST PATRIMONY.

## CHAPTER III.—(Cont'd)

Mentally resolving that our journey must now be deferred a day or two, and that therefore there was no longer a necessity of hastening to bed, I went down into the drawing-room, for the purpose of finding and congratulating my sister. The drawing-room was vacant, she had gone to her chamber. I returned to mine in a well satisfied frame of mind; but I wished to see Wallraven again.

Before retiring to bed that night I tapped at his door, and then without waiting for leave, and with the freedom of old friendship, I pushed the door open, and entered the room.

Good heaven! were the old horrid days of the preparatory school come back, and with a vengeance, too! He was sitting bolt upright at the foot of his bed, his hands on his knees, his open gray eyes staring into vacancy, his black locks hanging wildly, elf-like, about his livid and haggard cheeks, his whole appearance cold, stiff, corpse-like. A blood-guilty and unconverted criminal on the eve of his execution—a man in a cataleptic fit—one struck dead by a thunderbolt—might sit so rigid, statue-like, still. My very blood ran cold with a vague horror, as I looked at him.

Terrified for his health, for his life, I sprang toward him, seized his frozen hands, gazed into his stony eyes, placed my hand upon his death-like brow. At that touch a shudder ran all over him, relaxing the rigidity of his form, and he laughed! Such a sardonic, such a maniac, such a devilish laugh, I never heard in my life before, and never wish to hear again! It was not loud, but long, low, and bitter. Dreadfully alarmed for his sanity, I exclaimed,

"In the name of heaven, Wallraven, what is the matter? speak! Tell me, I conjure you!"

Again the shudder, again the long, low, and bitter laugh, and then he said,

"Am I not a Wallraven, whose family dates back to a period anterior to the Saxon Heptarchy?"

I gazed at him in a fixed horror. He seemed to know my thoughts, for he replied to them sardonically.

"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and soberness. Ask that snow queen of beauty, your fair, proud sister!"

I was spell-bound by grief and terror. I could not stir. I gazed at him.

"I am not mad! I would to heaven I were!

For then 'tis like I should forget myself.

Oh! if I could, what grief should I forget!

I am not mad! This hair I tear is mine."

he declaimed, travestying the lines with sardonic exaggeration, and finishing with a shouting laugh of mockery.

"Oh! heaven! but this is horrible! Wallraven! Wallraven!"

"I am not mad!" he said, with an omnipotent effort that at length sent apart the curdled blood in his veins, and dispersed the storm clouds that darkened over his spirit.

"Oh! Wolfgang! Wolfgang! you are not mad but you will become so. You will inevitably become so, if this secret suffering of yours recommences and augments so fearfully!" said I.

A spasm convulsed his frame. He dropped his head upon his hands, and his stringy black locks fell forward, veiling both.

"Oh! Wallraven, my heart's dearest brother, is there no way in which I can relieve, can serve you?"

Again the spasm shook him.

"I will not, as in the days of my thoughtless boyhood, ask you for your secret, my soul's dear Wolfgang, but—"

"But I will tell you! I will tell you!" he exclaimed desperately, "tell you while my good angel has power over me! while her escape is possible! tell you the dark and fatal thing that has burned, blighted, and blasted me and mine forever! Listen!"

## CHAPTER IV.

Well, I listened eagerly, too eagerly.

erily. He paused, dropped his head upon his hands, and seemed to be diving into the past.

Deep silence reigned between us, broken only by the supernaturally loud ticking of the chamber clock, hurrying on toward midnight. There he sat upon the foot of the bed, his elbows resting on his knees, his face buried in the palms of his hands, his stringy, jet black locks falling forward, shudder after shudder shaking his frame!

"Poor fellow! he does not know how to begin," thought I, and waited anxiously some time, a feeling of delicacy withholding me from interrupting him, until I found, by the cessation of his shudders and the perfect immobility of his form, that he had fallen into a fit of deep abstraction, and that his thoughts were far, far from me. Then, after some hesitation, I recalled, by a word spoken in a low, gentle tone,

"Wallraven!"

He started slightly, raised his shaggy black head, and gazed upon me from his light gray eyes with the bewildering look of one awakened from a deep sleep, with a dream still overshadowing his spirits.

"Wallraven!" said I again, in a still kinder tone, "you were about to give me—"

"Ha! ha! ha! Oh, thou son of Eve! Never tell me of woman's curiosity! We have not a bit, have we?" laughed he, in the most sarcastic and exasperating manner.

You will wonder, perhaps, at the strange patience I had with that bitter and sardonic youth; but, in truth, I was more pained than angry at his sarcastic and insulting tone, for under all was betrayed the profoundest sorrow, the acutest suffering. I felt the same compassionate toleration for his ill-temper that we feel for the irritability of any dearly loved sufferer. I replied, gently,

"I did not solicit your confidence, Wolfgang. It was voluntarily proffered on your part; and I tell you now, that unless by so doing I can very materially serve you, I have no wish to pry into your secrets, further than fidelity to my sister's interests under existing circumstances seems to require."

"To what existing circumstances do you refer?" he asked, quickly.

"To your relations, or implied relations, with Miss Fairfield."

"And what do you suppose them to be?"

"From what I witnessed this evening, I presume that you are engaged," I replied, gazing at him with anxious scrutiny.

"You are wrong—we are not engaged!"

"Not! Is it possible that Regina has rejected you?"

"No; for I have not offered her my hand."

"What! not! Then you intend to do so at the first opportunity."

"No! I have no intention of ever offering myself to Miss Fairfield!"

"Then, by heaven! much as I have forgiven you on my own account, you shall first give me satisfaction for your unpardonable conduct of this evening, and then swear never to offend Miss Fairfield by coming into her presence again."

"Oh! Ferdinand, my fine fellow, don't flare up. You do not know what you are talking about!"

"I say I will have satisfaction!"

"And so you shall; any and every satisfaction you please, and as much of it as you please! Come, I will fight, or apologize, as you will."

"Sir, you are my guest. I beseech you, with all convenient speed that you put yourself in some more practicable relation to the brother of the woman you have offended, that he may—"

"Blow my brains out with a better grace!"

"Call you to a strict account of your proceedings of this evening."

"I have betrayed friendship, trust, hospitality; I merit death! Shoot me where I sit, Ferdinand. I wish you would!"

"You are mad."

"I kissed her twenty times, Ferdinand, and I never intend to marry her. Come, why don't you shoot me?"

"You are a lunatic—you are not responsible for any word or act," said I, and I was beginning to feel

so. If I had been ever so angry with him, my resentment would have vanished, when with one of his sudden changes of mood he dropped his head upon my shoulder, and sobbed and wept like the melting of an avalanche, gasped between whiles, in low, earnest, fervent, interrupted tones.

"I love and worship your beautiful and haughty sister! Love her because she is fair, worship her because she is proud! Yes! yes! I worship the ground she walks on—for it is holy ground; the pebble her foot spurns—for it is a precious stone! Words! words! breath! air! Look you! People have talked about dying for their beloved! I am doing it! I am doing it!"

(To be continued.)

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First, obtain of any well stocked druggist, three ounces of essence of pepsin and three ounces of syrup of rhubarb in an 8 ounce bottle. Then add one ounce compound essence cardiol. Shake and let stand two hours. Then add one ounce tincture cadomene compound (not cardamom). Shake well and take one teaspoonful before each meal, one after each meal. Drink plenty of water between meals and when retiring. Keep up this treatment regularly and of a certainty from one to three pounds will be added to the weight each week, and the general health will also improve.

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INCORPORATED A.D. 1851.

HEAD OFFICE, TORONTO

STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDING DEC. 31, 1909.

Assets ..... \$ 3,267,082 55  
Unearned Premiums and other Liabilities..... 1,725,711 33  
Surplus to Policyholders ..... \$ 1,531,371 22

Losses paid since organization of the Company \$52,441,172 44

Fire Premiums ..... \$ 2,111,875 94  
Fire Losses ..... \$1,086,875 89  
Fire Expenses ..... 858,121 58  
Marine Premiums ..... \$ 688,426 61  
Marine Losses ..... 249,896 16  
Marine Expenses ..... 155,694 55  
646,590 71

Interest and other receipts ..... 51,836 80  
Profits on Year's Trading ..... \$383,596 27

W. B. MEIKLE, General Manager. C. C. FOSTER, Secretary.

Applications for Agencies at unrepresented points to be addressed to the Secretary.

## For Three Successive Years

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In 1909 the Paid-for business of the Company in Canada amounted to \$9,564,269.00—the largest Paid-for Canadian business ever secured in a year by any Company.

This prominence is readily explained. In The Great-West Life high interest earnings (7.05 p. c. net in 1909) are added to low expenses, and the result is—low rates and unequalled profits to Policyholders.

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ASSURANCE COMPANY,

HEAD OFFICE, WINNIPEG.

## The National Life Assurance Co.

OF CANADA.

### A RECORD OF PROGRESS.

Applications for New Insurance Received		Policies Issued, Taken Up and Paid for	
1899 (5 months) .....	\$ 666,500.00	1899 (5 months) .....	\$ 648,000.00
1900 .....	1,359,500.00	1900 .....	1,350,000.00
1901 .....	1,456,500.00	1901 .....	1,378,755.00
1902 .....	1,672,500.00	1902 .....	1,528,331.00
1903 .....	1,641,100.00	1903 .....	1,569,000.00
1904 .....	1,632,250.00	1904 .....	1,474,594.00
1905 .....	1,816,300.00	1905 .....	1,617,646.00
1906 .....	2,011,600.00	1906 .....	1,724,090.00
1907 .....	2,079,250.00	1907 .....	2,001,300.00
1908 .....	3,284,040.00	1908 .....	2,877,500.00
1909 .....	3,300,000.00	1909 .....	2,950,000.00

Assurance Record.		Mortality Experience		
Assurance Annual Prem.		1899 .....		Nil.
1899 (5 Mos) \$ 604,000	\$ 22,954.60	1900 .....	\$ 6,000.00	
1900 .....	1,792,500	1901 .....	11,500.00	
1901 .....	2,554,904	1902 .....	22,269.00	
1902 .....	3,425,897	1903 .....	9,250.00	
1903 .....	4,086,112	1904 .....	23,714.00	
1904 .....	4,509,754	1905 .....	14,993.00	
1905 .....	5,125,437	1906 .....	16,691.00	
1906 .....	5,802,358	1907 .....	23,250.00	
1907 .....	6,678,057	1908 .....	27,108.00	
1908 .....	8,625,509	1909 .....	41,831.00	
1909 .....	10,310,500			

Interest Earnings, Etc.		ASSETS.	
1899 (5 months) .....	\$ 1,794.21	1899 .....	\$ 105,004.00
1900 .....	3,239.01	1900 .....	118,672.00
1901 .....	3,431.87	1901 .....	154,534.00
1902 .....	5,536.20	1902 .....	199,070.00
1903 .....	7,360.37	1903 .....	273,604.09
1904 .....	10,041.24	1904 .....	362,853.00
1905 .....	14,810.91	1905 .....	575,336.00
1906 .....	35,410.10	1906 .....	720,405.00
1907 .....	46,177.32	1907 .....	834,202.00
1908 .....	60,707.25	1908 .....	1,104,874.00
1909 .....	80,379.76	1909 .....	1,394,832.00

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