

Her Great Love;

Or, A Struggle For a Heart

CHAPTER XXXII.—(Continued).

He was pale, save for a red spot on each cheek, and his small eyes shone vindictively. "A clear case," he said, with a note of satisfaction in his thin voice. "He did it, right enough. And they'll have him presently. They've cabled to stop the ship at the Canaries."

Bobby shrunk from him with a look of horror. "I don't believe it," he said, his voice breaking. "Gaunt is as innocent as—"

Mershon shrugged his shoulders. "All right! Let him come home and prove it!" he said, sullenly. He went over to Mr. Gilsby, who was talking to Mr. Boskett—Mr. Boskett cheerfully, triumphantly, and clutched him nervously by the arm.

"They'll get him, eh, Gilsby? He can't escape, can he?"

Mr. Gilsby smiled reassuringly. "Oh, no; certainly not. Quite impossible! You may make your mind easy on that point, Mr. Mershon. They'll bring him back in a few days."

Mershon drew a breath of satisfaction, and hurried out of court.

Mr. Boskett glanced after him, and raised his eyebrows questioningly.

Mr. Gilsby smiled. "Both of them," he said, answering the unspoken question. "You'll bitterly disappoint my client if you fail to get a conviction, Mr. Boskett. But that's a certainty, I suppose?"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The "Pevensey Castle" went on her way. There were a number of passengers, and the usual amusements and entertainments were arranged, and a good deal of laughter and merry-making on board the big ship.

But Gaunt took no part in the quizzing, the concerts, or the dances. He craved for solitude, and he avoided his fellow-passengers and spent most of his time in solitary pacing of the deck, or shut up in his cabin.

It seemed to him as if his heart would never cease to ache with the longing for the girl-love whom he had so nearly wronged, and whom he should never see again.

Decima was always before him, always in his thoughts; and as he imagined, and he could so easily picture it, her sorrow and horror at his conduct, he felt almost too wretched to live.

And yet he had not sinned willfully. He had gone to Scotland to avoid her; he had been on his way to Africa to put still greater distance between them, when fate had led her to his rooms.

There was one other passenger who took no part in the pastimes of the vessel; this was Mr. Jackson.

He, like Gaunt, spent his time pacing the deck, but in another part than that which Gaunt so restlessly trod. But, when down below, Mr. Jackson did not confine himself to his cabin, though he spent some time there. He was very often in the smoking-saloon, or in the purser's cabin; and there was always a glass of champagne or brandy and soda before him. He drank a great deal; but he was never intoxicated; indeed, his liquor seemed to take little or no effect upon him.

For some days he avoided his fellow-passengers, only speaking when he was obliged, and then only in monosyllables. People on board a ship are always curious about their fellow-voyagers, and there was a general idea that Mr. Jackson had lost all his money in Africa; but this idea was dropped when Mr. Jackson one evening joined the inevitable card-party and took a hand at poker.

He played every night; indeed, whenever play was going on, and he did not seem to care very much the stakes were. Nor did he seem to care very much whether he won or lost.

It can not be said that he added much to the reality of the party, for he rarely spoke, and never laughed or even smiled. The other players regarded him rather curiously, and with a certain amount of doubt for there was something peculiar and uneasy about his manner and appearance. His face was so unnaturally pale, his eyes so unpleasantly red and bloodshot, and he had a singular trick of looking up suddenly, in the midst of the game, with staring eyes as if he were seeing something that was not perceptible to the others; and once or twice he had laid down his cards and risen from his chair, as if he had forgotten that the game was in progress.

"Our friend, Mr. Jackson, has got something on his mind," remarked one of the players one evening, after Jackson had left the saloon.

He had walked out with a perfectly unmoved countenance, as impassive as a stone mask, though he had won a considerable sum.

"I'd drink, I think," said another. "He drinks like a fish. Why, how many glasses do you think he's put down while he's been sitting here?"

"And the extraordinary thing is, that it never seems to have any effect upon him," remarked a third. "Why, most of us would have been under the table if we had drunk that quantity of wine."

"You meet some queer characters on board a ship, don't you?"

Now and again Gaunt met or came across Mr. Jackson, and Jackson would always eye him sideways and give him a nod, which Gaunt returned in an absent-minded way. One evening Gaunt was talking up and down on his favorite part of the deck, thinking, of course, of Decima, when he saw Jackson coming toward him. The moon was shining brightly and Gaunt could see the young fellow's face quite plainly.

It was working spasmodically, the lips were moving as if he were talking to himself, and his hands were clenched at his side. Gaunt stopped half mechanically in the shadow of a deck-house, absently watching the man.

Jackson brought up his walk within a few yards of Gaunt, and leaning over the vessel's side, stared out to sea with blood-shot eyes. Suddenly he put one foot on the gunwale, then drew up the other, and stood in imminent danger of falling over.

It looked to Gaunt as if the man were meditating suicide, and Gaunt sprang forward, seized him by the arm, and dragged him down to the deck.

"What are you doing?" he asked, sternly.

Mr. Jackson eyed him vacantly for a moment, then he said, without a smile: "I wanted to see if I could stand there without falling over."

"Rather a dangerous experiment, wasn't it?" said Gaunt.

Jackson looked up at him with a kind of sullen defiance.

"Anyhow, it's no business of yours," he said.

Gaunt smiled grimly. "I suppose not," he said. "But I am not sure. If I had allowed you to fall over, you would in all probability have been drowned, and I should have been necessary to your suicide; I might have been charged with your murder."

At the word "murder," Mr. Jackson stared and shuddered, and looked at Gaunt with a half-suspicious, half-furious stare.

"What do you mean by that?" he said.

"Exactly what I say," said Gaunt. "He said that the young fellow had been drowned, and a kind of dirty story from

Gaunt's breast; his own sorrow made him very tender toward the weakness and folly of his fellow-men.

"Better go down to your cabin," he said; "and don't drink any more to-night."

"I'm not drunk," said Jackson, sullenly. "No; but you've had enough," said Gaunt.

There was a touch of sympathy in his tone which appeared to affect the young fellow.

"I'm awful wretched!" he said.

"My dear fellow," remarked Gaunt, "if all the men who were wretched like you then elved into the sea, how many passengers do you think would remain on board the Pevensey Castle?"

Jackson looked at him curiously. "You don't look particularly cheerful," he said.

Gaunt froze instantly. "Better go down to your cabin," he said. "I will see you down."

"I'll go, if it's all right," said Jackson, with a dejection of the lips which was not for a smile. "I shan't try the experiment again."

"Don't," said Gaunt, quietly. "Nothing in this world is so bad that it might not be worse."

"That's a lie!" remarked Jackson, sarcastically.

Gaunt made no response, but accompanied the young fellow as far as the saloon stairs, and waited until he had entered his cabin.

The next morning Mr. Jackson passed him on deck with a casual kind of nod, but after Gaunt had passed, Jackson looked after him with a curious expression on his face.

There were half a dozen children on board, and though Gaunt had avoided his fellow-passengers, some of these children had, not so much attracted his attention, but forced themselves upon it, for there was something about Gaunt which exercised a magnetic influence upon animals and children. Decima had felt it that first day on meeting him at the Zoo.

One little girl—a pale-faced little thing, whose mother was taking her to Africa in the hope of snatching her from the demon Consumption—had, on several occasions, contrived to attract Gaunt's attention, and once or twice Gaunt had stepped in his pacing and spoken to her; and the child had looked so pleased that he had not got into the habit of pausing beside her deck-chair and talking to her about the ship's log, the absence of any toys on board, and her own complicated ailments.

He would draw the shawl across her chest, or carry her and her chair bodily into the sun and out of the wind. He rarely spoke to the mother, who was rather afraid of the grim-looking gentleman, but Maude did not share her mother's fear and shyness, but talked to Gaunt with the frankness of childish innocence.

Gaunt loved all children, and the child's liking for him brought him some kind of consolation in his misery. There was a look—or he fancied there was a look—in her pale face which reminded him of Decima. Perhaps, he thought, Decima had looked like that when she was a child. He knew, as well as the ship's doctor knew, that the little one was doomed, and his heart was full of sympathy for the anxious mother. The child told him all about herself, and often plied him with questions about himself.

"Why do you always walk about alone?" she asked, one evening.

"Well, I like it," he said. "Now, if you were able to walk about with me, Maude—"

"I wish I was!" she said in her thin voice. "I often watch you when you think I'm not looking, and I see that you are always thinking, thinking. Mamma says that she's sure you're something on your mind. Have you?"

"A very great deal, Maude," said Gaunt, with a smile.

"And yet you're not going to Africa because you're ill and going to die?" said the child, drawing her hand closely round her.

"I hope none of us is going to Africa to die," he said.

"Oh, I am," she remarked, confidentially. "Mamma thinks I am going to get better, but I know I am not. Something inside me seems to tell me so."

"Well, I hope for the best, Maude," said Gaunt.

"Oh, yes," she assented cheerfully; "but it isn't much use hoping. And now you're going to walk on the upper deck by yourself, with your arms behind your back and your thinking face on. I wish I could be thinking, you, but I can't walk."

"You shall come all the same," said Gaunt. "I'll carry you."

"Will you, really? I'm very heavy, you know!"

With a glance, which asked permission, at her mother, Gaunt lifted her in his arms, drew her hand closely round her, and carried her to the upper deck.

She was wonderfully delighted, and prattled to him in her childish, artless way.

"You must be very strong to carry me like that," she said; "but perhaps you are used to it."

He thought of the night he had carried Decima, and his lips set tightly.

"No; I've not had much practice in this kind of thing; but you're not very heavy, and I like carrying you."

"And I like you to carry me," she said. "I think you, my very kind gentleman."

"Thank you, Maude," said Gaunt. "That was a very nice thing to say."

Presently, he knew, by the way in which her head lay upon his breast, that she was asleep, and he carried her down to the saloon to her mother.

"Thank you very much," the lady said, as he placed her little one in her arms. "You must have a kind heart to be so kind to my child."

"I'm fond of children," said Gaunt.

He went up on deck again. A fog was coming on, and he watched it rolling up from the horizon. He was thinking, not of the child, but of Decima. Where was she now? What would happen to her? She would not marry Mershon. But there would be some one else. Some one, please God, worthy of her. His heart ached with anguish as he thought that he had no right even to protect her. He was startled by a voice near him. It was Mr. Jackson's.

"The fog's coming on thick," he said, in the dull, expressionless tone which was habitual to him.

Gaunt assented.

"How far are we off the Canaries?" asked Jackson.

"About two days' sail, I should think," replied Gaunt.

Jackson moved away, and Gaunt paced up and down. Presently he almost ran against the captain.

"Thank you," he said.

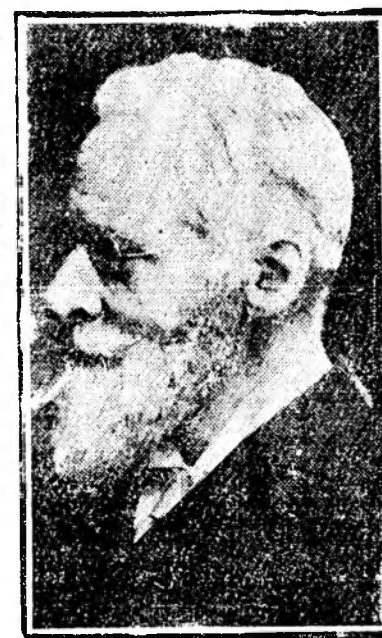
The captain greeted and passed on.

During the night the fog increased, Gaunt, coming on deck the next morning, found the vessel steaming in an immense, impenetrable fog.

Every now and then she almost came to a standstill. The captain's bell seemed to ring incessantly, the mate's voice was heard at intervals gravely and sternly giving orders.

Gaunt knew that they were nearing a dangerous coast; but the other passengers, less experienced and well-informed, displayed no great interest, and felt no anxiety. They grumbled at the fog, grumbled at the captain, as if he were answerable for it, grumbled at each other; but there was no anxiety.

Gaunt himself was not apprehensive until the evening of the second day's fog.



Sir William Crookes, English inventor of the Crookes tubes which made the X-ray possible. He has received from King George the Order of Merit and has been chosen president of the Royal Society.

Then, as he was pacing the forward deck, he overheard the captain remark to the first mate:

"Better stop the engines!"

Gaunt paused, and the ocean too many times not to know what this meant.

The vessel had lost her reckoning; the captain did not know where he was.

Gaunt went down to the saloon. Some one was laughing and laughing at the piano; there was the usual laughing and talking. Some of the young men were under the shelter of the music, flirting boldly; they all looked happy and free from care.

Then suddenly that peculiar noise of the screw, to which the ocean traveler so soon became accustomed, ceased.

Every voice was silent; the young lady at the piano stopped playing, every one glanced interrogatively at his neighbor.

Before any question could be asked, the captain came into the saloon. There was an easy smile on his face, and when a particularly nervous gentleman exclaimed:

"The screw's stopped! What's the matter, captain?" he nodded carelessly, and replied:

"Giving the stocks a rest. Go on with your playing, Miss Brown. We shall be off again directly."

But the fog increased, and the engines did not start.

Gaunt went on deck and found the captain in close confab with the mate.

"Anything wrong, captain?" asked Gaunt, quietly.

The captain was about to make a brusque reply, but as he glanced at Gaunt's face, he seemed to change his mind.

"Yes, my lord," he said. "We've lost our reckoning. The fog has caught us, fairly caught us."

"Then, anything I can do?" asked Gaunt. "But of course, there is not."

The captain shook his head.

"No," then he said, "if with an afterthought: 'Well, yes; you can go below and keep 'em easy till we get out of this. It may drift directly.' But he looked into the fog doubtfully."

Gaunt, after a glance at the thick vapor, through which one could not see a yard, went back to the saloon.

Miss Brown had ceased playing, and the silence had settled upon the lately light-hearted crowd. Gaunt went to the piano and struck a chord.

"Have you ever heard this song?" he said.

Everybody turned to him with expectation and surprise.

He was no musician, and he had not touched a piano for years, but in his younger days he had been able to sing and vamped an accompaniment. He played and sang Judge's song in "The Trial by Jury."

He scarcely knew what he was singing, but the audience applauded vociferously—all the more vociferously because he sang and reserved man had condescended to make an effort for their amusement.

"Encore! Encore! Give us another!" they cried.

Gaunt puzzled his brains, and after dint of thinking, remembered another song. It was absolutely necessary that this crowd of timid passengers should be diverted from knowing and thinking of the peril that lay so near them.

He played and sang, and little Maude stole up to the piano and leaned against him admiringly and cordially.

"You are a clever man!" she said in her childish treble.

Gaunt drew the piano and induced a more skillful performer to take the seat vacated by him.

"Let us have something with a chorus," he said, with a gravity which surprised his hearers, who had hitherto regarded him as the most grim and unapproachable of men.

A young lady went to the piano and began the accompaniment to a comic song, to which one of the young men essayed to sing.

Gaunt heard the stern voice of the captain, and the tramp of the crew as they obeyed.

The song proceeded, the chorus was being roared, when suddenly there came a peculiar shock and sound which struck the singers dumb.

No one knew what had happened, but through every man and woman there had run something which had sent cold fear and dread to every heart. They sprang to their feet and looked wildly at one another for a moment in silence; then the first shriek arose from a woman's lips, and was instantly followed by others.

"There was a man for the saloon door. That terrible thing, panic, had taken hold of them, and men and women fought for the narrow door-way, some of the former forgetting their manhood in their terror, pushing the women aside."

Gaunt stood near the door. He had heard the captain, as he passed the upper deck, pause and say calmly and sternly: "Oblige me by keeping the passengers in the saloon, my lord!"

Gaunt closed the door, and stood with his back to it. The ship was rocking hideously, like a living thing in pain, and some of the women fell to the floor or were thrown there by the mad rush of the men for the door. Gaunt stood firm and square, with his legs apart.

"We must remain where we are," he said. "We must obey the captain's order. There may be no danger; we should certainly not better things by crowding on the deck and hindering the men."

Some of them fell back, but one or two of the men still pressed on him, and the nearest caught him by the collar of his coat.

(To be continued.)

"Have you hot water in your house?" "Have I? My dear boy, I am never out of it."

The Struggling Lawyer (pompously)—Anything unusual happen while I was out? Office Boy (after some thought)—Yes! There wasn't any debt collectors called.

MANY POISONOUS WOODS.

Woodworkers and Gardeners Should Protect Their Hands.

Nettles, poison ivy and poison sumac are by no means the only plants which have a poisonous effect on the human skin. Poisonous substances exist in many trees, and even after they have been cut and sawed a sufficient quantity of the poison remains in the lumber so that workmen who handle it are liable to infection.

Amberwood is impregnated with a powerful poison, according to Dr. Heinz Graf, who has been investigating the subject for the German Botanical Society.

Two different kinds of wood are included under the term amberwood—the genuine East Indian or Asiatic satinwood, or silkwood, and the satin hardwood or amberwood. The two are quite different in external appearance. Nestler succeeded in extracting the active substance only from the latter. This is a stearine-like substance soluble only in ether. A small quantity of it placed in contact with the skin of the under-arm, in the course of about five hours produced a tensely swollen yellowish blister surrounded by a red area of inflammation. After the bursting of the blister an ulcer remained which required four weeks to heal.

What is known as cocobolo wood contains a poisonous substance easily soluble in alcohol and benzol, less so in water. It is apparently an ethereal oil. The placing of fine sawdust of this wood on the moist skin causes first a violent smarting. Following this, red spots or pimples appear, accompanied by redness and inflammation of that part of the skin.

Similar phenomena are caused by the plant *Cortusa Matthioli*, but they are even stronger, since blisters are produced. Touching the plants is enough to cause irritation, and the infection may be transmitted to other persons by hands so infected. The bearers of the irritating substances in this case are gland-hairs, as in the case of the primrose. This substance is crystallizable sap which can be extracted from gland-hairs.

The sawdust of the Mexican blue-gum is harmful when the skin is especially sensitive from some other cause. A workman who was suffering from tuberculosis, and who later died from it, was attacked, after splitting this lumber, by an eruption of the underarm which forced him to stop work. Others who did similar labor for years had no ill effects. In this case the tuberculosis may have created the disposition.

As a result of his investigation Dr. Graf urges all cabinetmakers who work in satinwood and gardeners who grow poisonous plants to protect their hands, arms and head from direct contact with the wood, sawdust or injured portions of the plants. At the first sign of any inflammation of the skin the sufferer should receive the attention of a dermatologist.

It has long been thought that poisoning might result from the proximity of sumac, even if the plant was not touched, but Dr. Graf denies this. A visitor to the Berlin Botanical Gardens recently brought suit for damages for injuries which he alleged he had suffered on account of his proximity to a poisonous sumac, which is on exhibition in the gardens. But the suit was lost, for the directors of the gardens proved conclusively that for poisoning to occur the plant must be injured and the injured portion brought into direct contact with the skin.

Pointed Paragraphs.

Don't pass your worries; chloroform them.

Moreover, the freckled criminal is bound to be spotted.

The suspicious man always finds what he is looking for.

Success seldom comes to a man who is too lazy to go after it.

The more a man's thirst is irrigated, the faster it grows.

The easiest thing for a man to acquire is old age—if he lives long enough.

When a watch is run down it stops working, but it's different with some men.

It is well enough to be a thinker, but too often the man who thinks does nothing else.

It's rather difficult for an easy going man to keep people from using him for a door mat.

No, Cordelia, practice doesn't always make perfect. Even good physicians occasionally lose a patient.

Paying premiums on a fire-insurance policy is like throwing money in the fire—until one has a fire.

On the Farm

Scraping Apple Trees.

Dr. J. B. Dandeno, Bowmanville, Ont.

On the question of scraping apple trees a difference of opinion seems to exist as to the advisability of scraping the coarse bark off old apple trees. It is not the intention here to inflict the views of the writer upon the orchardist; but rather to give an explanation, with reasons, relative to the effects upon the trees which have been scraped. The arguments offered in favor of scraping are:—(1) It removes scale insects, and eggs or cocoons of other insects; (2) it somehow or other improves the growth of the tree.

The arguments against it are:—(1) It removes a coating of cork which is a non-conductor of heat, and therefore leaves the tree more liable to frost injury and sun scald; (2) if removed deeply—and it is almost impossible not to scrape too deeply—the tree suffers from drying out, or loss of moisture which may be considerable during cold dry weather; (3) if wounded in this way down to the living layers, fungus diseases gain a foothold; (4) it is a waste of time, and if the bark so scraped off is not burned the insects and eggs are still capable of injury.

This outside cork layer is impervious to water, and at the same time it permits passage of gases, that is to say, it supplies the tree with a covering perfectly suitable to its needs. And, as it is a non-conductor of heat, it protects the tree against sudden changes of temperature.

It is stated that the chief insect aimed at in scraping is the oyster shell scale, or bark louse. This can not be very serious, for this scale can not penetrate the bark of the trunk and therefore can do no damage there. It must crawl to the twigs where the bark is thin. However, even if there were many scales on the trunk, it would be so much easier to kill them with lime-sulphur. One could spray ten trees while he would scrape one, and destroy the scale much more effectually.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN AFRICA. Has the Privilege of Marrying Whom She Pleases.

Although woman in Africa is regarded as property she has certain rights which are seldom infringed upon, and of these the most important is her right to marry whom she pleases, or rather to refuse to marry one who does not please her.

There are two reasons for this. First, women married against their wills have been known to commit suicide. Second, women married against their wills have murdered their unloved husbands, usually strangling them when asleep. So, in forcing one's self upon one of these women there is liability to a great loss—the loss of valuable property or of no less highly prized life.

The young girls are well cared for, partly that they may be comely and draw many suitors. Every girl will tell you frankly that she wishes to marry and have a good husband and children. Every father is anxious to have his daughters marry well. To obtain a wife one must pay a dowry in cattle to the father, or, should the father be dead, to the nearest male relative. If a girl is much sought after, her father naturally asks a larger dowry. When the man has paid part of the dowry the father may give consent to a provisional marriage and permit the couple to live together. Should the husband be too slow in paying the remainder of the dowry the wife is taken from him.

Trial marriages are common and can be set aside by either party. Their principal objects in marriage are mutual helpfulness and the perpetuation of the race.

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