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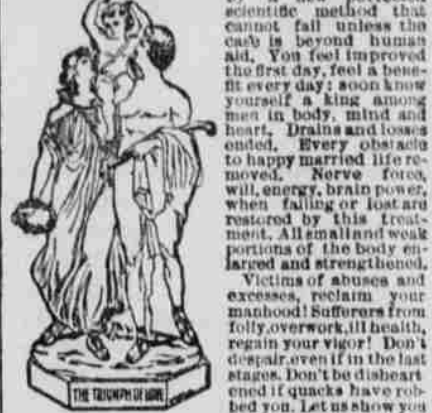
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WAVERLAND

Continued From Third Page.

Some of us climbed the broken stairway to gain a more general view of the wreck time was making of this grand creation of the middle ages.

"Through all the ruin, from chapel walls to oriel windows, there came voices reaching downward from the misty past, saying to me: 'You, too, must vanish into dust!'" said Stella, as though echoing some long forgotten thought of her childhood.

Back, down the winding stairs we went, feeling the solemnity of the sacred place in spite of our mirth. No one spoke until we stood beneath the old yew tree, through whose foliage the golden sunshine was dancing in merry glees upon the broken walls.

"There, I can breathe again!" exclaimed Johnny O'Rork. "I'm glad the sunshine can be merry in that ghostly old place."

We passed out through the avenues, winding among the evergreens and hedges, to see the Turk's waterfall. As we scrambled out and in, around the trees and rocks, we became separated. I was busy keeping Stella and Myrtle from slipping from the fallen logs and rolling stones, but just as we were gaining a firm footing at the head of the falls, we heard a scream of terror. Looking down we saw the Colonel just catching Annie as she slipped

"I hit the d—d Yankee, when I meant to kill the meddling fool of a woman!" Just then some one called to me that I was needed at my carriage. I could hardly stand! All the strength in my body seemed to have deserted me and I stood trembling with fear. But it was only for an instant that I stood paralyzed. As I neared the carriage I saw my wife safe. But her face was white as a ghost! She was supporting the Colonel's head. He seemed entirely senseless. His face was ashen white, his lips were colorless, and there was a cold, clammy sweat upon his brow. His countenance seemed shrunken and contracted. His eyes were partly closed and lustreless.

"Is he dead?" I anxiously inquired.

"No, I think not, but get him into a house as quickly as possible," said my wife in nervous haste.

He was taken into the first house we could find and in a few moments the surgeon came. He found that the ball had entered the muscles of the shoulder, breaking the shoulder blade and touching some of the sensitive nerves of the spinal column, had caused utter prostration by the shock. The surgeon kept administering stimulants and applied artificial heat to maintain the normal temperature of the body. After what seemed to us a very long time the patient drew a long breath and tried to turn himself. Then for the first time he opened his eyes. He looked around in a dazed, bewildered sort of way until he saw me, then in a feeble voice he asked:

"What is it? where have I been?"

"You have been hurt," I said, "and you must remain quiet."

"Where is Lady Waverland?"

"She is safe at home," I answered, "and you must keep still."

For some time he remained quiet and seemed to be sleeping. While a few of us had been watching the wounded man there had been a most fearful tragedy enacted outside. The villain who had so basely tried to murder my wife, had been taken by the infuriated people to an old tree by the roadside where he paid the penalty for his unnatural crime with his life.

One of my tenants came to me saying: "Lady Waverland has sent a light wagon with bed and cushions, prepared to take the wounded man to Waverland. That man," said the tenant, pointing to the tree where the would-be murderer hung, "has got what he deserved! He begged most piteously for mercy, (the coward), but we had no mercy, for such as him!"

"It's a sad affair for him as well as for my friend," I said, turning away with a shudder.

I went back into the sick man's room and explained to the surgeon everything was ready to take Col. Haynes to Waverland as soon as he thought proper to try moving his patient.

"After a little if we can keep him warm, it will be best to move him before the wound is finally dressed."

The wagon was brought to the door and men lifted the colonel, bed and all, into it. The surgeon took his place beside his patient, and we drove home with the greatest possible care, followed by an excited crowd, ready to carry wagon, horses and all in their powerful arms if necessary.

At Waverland men took the colonel in their arms and soon he was comfortably resting in his own warm room. He seemed relieved, knowing that he was in a familiar place. The wound was properly dressed and the surgeon pronounced his patient out of immediate danger.

"How are you now?" I asked after a little rest.

"Better, does Annie know of this?"

"Yes, Stella has sent word to her and she will soon be here," I answered.

"But you can see no one to-night," said the surgeon, with decision.

"I would like a message sent to my mother. She will look for me home soon," he said.

"Doctor," I said, turning to the surgeon, "will you write the message?"

He assented and I handed him the necessary writing materials. After he had written it he read it to the colonel.

Mrs. A. I. HAYNES, New York, U. S. A. 1886.

Your son was accidentally hurt to-day while riding out in his carriage, but not fatally. It will delay his return home at present.

S. D. BROWN, Surgeon.

"Poor mother, how anxious that will make her, but it is the best that she should know at once. When Annie comes let me know," he said, as I turned to leave the room.

When I found Stella she looked sad and forsaken.

"So I was, for here I am safe and sound thanks to Col. Haynes," she said, giving the Colonel a quick bright look.

"Miss Annie, I am glad I was able to save you," he said to Annie. "And I am very glad the day has been so pleasant; it will be something to be remembered when I am far from here."

"Why, are you going to leave us soon?" asked Sir Wren.

"I may after to-morrow I expect to start for London, from there to New York, in a short time. I promised my mother that I would spend the holidays at home. I have been away more than a year."

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE EVENTFUL DAY.

In the morning at the request of Lady Waverland, the family carriage was brought to the door. Very early the Colonel and she started on their political campaign to secure votes for me. They set off in the best of spirits, each wearing a blue rosette. Stella gave me a peep into a box she had with her. It was full of the same colored rosettes, which she meant to distribute among the people. Bless her dear heart, I thought as they drove away, if I am not elected it will not be her fault, at least.

At the polls we saw evidence of her success. Nearly every one, it seemed to me, had donned my color. As some of my tenants came with a rosette pinned on their breasts, I asked where they got them.

"The 'swate leddy' gave them to us," was the answer I was sure to hear. How proud I was of my good angel on that day! Her gentle loveliness was winning her warm friends every day. She was continually busy in a quiet way aiding the cause so dear to our hearts.

Late in the afternoon Lady Waverland entered the village. As soon as her carriage was discovered she was greeted with deafening cheers from the crowd. "Long live the noble lady!" "God bless the swate leddy!" came from every direction.

In the midst of the shouting a shot was heard. We could not tell whence it came. In an instant there seemed to be a fight near where Sir Wren and I were standing. Four or five men were struggling with one who was uttering the most profane oaths. While I was trying to discover what it all meant, I heard the prisoner say:

"I hit the d—d Yankee, when I meant to kill the meddling fool of a woman!" Just then some one called to me that I was needed at my carriage. I could hardly stand! All the strength in my body seemed to have deserted me and I stood trembling with fear. But it was only for an instant that I stood paralyzed. As I neared the carriage I saw my wife safe. But her face was white as a ghost! She was supporting the Colonel's head. He seemed entirely senseless. His face was ashen white, his lips were colorless, and there was a cold, clammy sweat upon his brow. His countenance seemed shrunken and contracted. His eyes were partly closed and lustreless.

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Mrs. A. I. HAYNES, New York, U. S. A. 1886.

Your son was accidentally hurt to-day while riding out in his carriage, but not fatally. It will delay his return home at present.

"I feel almost guilty for having asked the colonel to go with me," she said. "Is he dangerously hurt?"

"I handed her the message. I thought that would be the best way to answer her question. I called a servant and the message was sent with lightning speed away to grieve a mother's heart."

"Darling do you know that ball was aimed at you?" I asked, as I led my wife to a sofa. She shuddered but made no answer.

"I heard the fellow swearing because he missed his aim," I said.

"Can that be true?" she asked. "I wonder if it was the man who swore so fearfully when I offered him a rosette, saying he would not wear the colors of any follower of Parnell in the country. He told me I had better not be meddling with politics, but that I had better stay at home and mind my own business. Did he have a shock of shaggy red hair about his head and face?"

"That describes the man who is now hanging from a tree near where the shooting was done," I said, holding her close to my side, thankful to my Heavenly Father for having spared my precious wife to me a little longer. In the brief pause before I knew that she was safe I realized how very dear she was to me.

"How terrible," she said, putting her hands over her eyes, "to think of the death of that poor mistaken man!"

"But think how terrible he meant it to be for you and I. Here comes Annie," I said.

Stella went out to meet her, and, clasping her in her arms led her into the drawing-room where she told her what she thought was necessary about the colonel's wound. After a while they came to me in the library and Annie with a face so white and full of sorrow asked if she might see the colonel.

I told her of the surgeon's order and said I would deliver any message she wished.

"Then tell him I am here and that I will come to him as soon as I have permission."

The colonel had been listening and waiting for a word from Annie. As I opened the door his eager eyes asked the question before his lips could utter the words.

"Yes, she is here," I said, going to his side, "and will come to you as soon as the surgeon will permit."

"May I see her just a moment, doctor? I'll be quiet."

"Not till morning," said the surgeon; "I'm not going to risk anything now, so send your message."

"Be patient, very comfortable now. The surgeon has ordered perfect quiet, and he has taken his position as nurse to enforce his order."

"I am elected," I said, as we entered the drawing-room where Stella and Annie were sitting.

"But we came near making a terrible sacrifice for it," said Sir Wren. "What could the wretch have thought?"

"Hard to tell," I said, "I almost think the fellow was insane, but he can never explain his motives now."

"I would not be surprised that we heard of a god many desperate things before the returns for this election are all in," said Sir Wren.

"Well, how's your hero?" he asked of Annie, as he took his place on the sofa beside Annie. She leaned her head upon her father's shoulder and found comfort in a woman's bath—a flood of tears.

"Through the long evening, Myrtle, with a noiseless step brought frequent reports from the sick man's room. She had taken her position by the surgeon's side to do his bidding from the moment of our arrival."

"How is your patient now?" I asked, as she came and perched herself on her favorite seat upon my knee.

"He is sleeping now. I'm not to go back again to-night, but in the morning I may come early the doctor said."

"I sent Melvorne a message telling him of the colonel's hurt and that we would not be at Blue Ridge as we had anticipated. I also sent word of your election," said Sir Wren, as he bade me good-night.

The next morning Annie and Myrtle took their positions as assistant nurses to the sick man, and the dainty morsels of food and cool drinks that found their way into the colonel's room were evidence of tender care.

Annie was happy when the professional nurse that the surgeon had sent would allow her the pleasure of caring for Fred, as she now called the colonel. At his request she had discarded all the formal names.

The colonel continued to improve from day to day, though great care was necessary to prevent fever. When Annie was by his side, reading or talking to him, he seemed perfectly happy.

One day when he was nearly well, as I went to his room, he said:

"Loyd, I am glad I was hurt. I have learned to know Annie's sweet disposition and gentle nature as I never could in any other way."