

# A Woman Intervenes.

BY ROBERT BARR.  
Author of "The Face and the Mask," "In the Midst of Alarms," Etc.

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John Kenyon, deserted by his only friend on board, made no complaint, nor did he endeavor to make up for his loss by finding new acquaintances. He was not a man who formed friendships readily, but fate was kind to him, and had already set about adjusting the balance of profit and loss; moreover fate, who likes to do things in a fitting manner, used the deserter as an instrument.

Wentworth's conduct seemed to be troubling him, because he left his old friend so much alone going east, whereas they had been constantly together on the trip westward; therefore he considered it his duty to make an apology to Kenyon every morning, before placing himself for the rest of the day under the fascinating influence of Miss Brewster.

"There is nothing you wish to talk with me about is there, Kenyon?" asked Wentworth on one of these occasions, looking down at his friend seated in his deck chair.

"Nothing whatever."

"Then you don't mind—"

"Not in the least," interrupted Kenyon, with a smile.

"I want you to do some energetic thinking about our mine, you know, so that you will be ready to open the campaign when we reach London. Thinking which is worth anything is best done in solitude, Kenyon, so I will not bother you for an hour or two."

Again Kenyon smiled, but made no reply, and Wentworth departed.

The elderly gentleman whose chair was next to Kenyon's looked around at the young man when his friend mentioned the mine and his name.

"Are you Mr. Kenyon, the mining expert?" he asked, when Wentworth walked away.

"I am a mining engineer," answered Kenyon with some surprise.

"Did you go out to Canada to report on mines there for the London syndicate?"

"Why do you ask?" said Kenyon, all his native caution being aroused in a moment, on hearing the astonishing question.

"Because the elderly gentleman laughed. "Because I am, in a measure, responsible for you," he said. "I am Mr. Longworth—John Longworth, of the city—and a member of the London syndicate. Two names were proposed—Scott's and yours. I voted for yours, not that I knew anything about you, but some of the others seemed very anxious that Scott should go, so I thought I best to vote for you. Therefore, you see, as I said before, I am partly responsible for your being here."

"I hope you will not be dissatisfied with the result," Mr. Longworth said.

"I hope not myself. I can see that you are a cautious man, and those who recommended you vouch for your capabilities, so with caution and capacity a man should succeed. I intended to visit the properties, but I was detained so long in the west that I did not have time to go north. How did you find the mines?"

"Since you complimented me on my caution, Mr. Longworth, I should be sorry to forfeit your good opinion by answering your questions."

"Quite right; quite right," said the elderly gentleman, laughing again. "That's one for you, and a good one, too. I must tell that to my daughter; and here she comes."

My dear, this is Mr. Kenyon, who went out to examine our mines. Curious, isn't it, that we should have been so long consulting her, when you see, as I said before, I am partly responsible for your being here."

John Kenyon had risen to his feet to greet the girl and to offer her his chair.

"No, thank you," she said, "I want to walk. I merely came to see if my father was all right. I was very much disappointed that we did not go to Canada this time, as I wished to see something of the snow-shoeing and tobogganing there. I suppose there was no tobogganing where you were?"

"Oh, yes," said Kenyon; "even out among the mines they had a toboggan slide, on which one trip satisfied me; and on several journeys I had to wear snow shoes myself."

A woman that she would have been if her mother had lived.

The friendship between Edith Longworth and John Kenyon ripened so rapidly that on the day Wentworth had his last disgusting interview with Jennie Brewster they also were discussing mining properties, but in somewhat different fashion. Kenyon confided to the girl that his own hopes and fears were wrapped up in a mine.

After completing their work for the London syndicate the young men had transacted a little business on their own account. They visited together a mica mine, which was barely paying expenses, and which the owners were anxious to sell. The mine was owned by the Austrian Mining company, whose agent, Von Brent, had met Kenyon in Ottawa.

Kenyon's educated eye told him that the white mineral they were placing on the dump at the mouth of the mine was more valuable than the mica for which they were mining. Kenyon was scrupulously honest—a quality somewhat at a discount in the mining business—and it seemed to him hardly fair that he should take advantage of the ignorance of Von Brent regarding the mineral on the dump.

Wentworth had some trouble in overcoming his friend's scruples. He insisted that knowledge always had to be paid for, in law, medicine or mineralogy, and therefore that they were perfectly justified in profiting by their superior wisdom. So it came about that the young men took to England with them a three months' option on the mine, which means that for three months they were to have the privilege of buying the property at a certain figure named in the legal document which was called in the mining language, the "option."

"Well, I am sure," said Miss Longworth, when Kenyon had given her all the details, "if you are confident that the mine is a good one, you could see no one who would help you more in that way than my father. He has been looking at a brewery business in which he thought of investing, and with which he has concluded to have nothing to do, so he will be anxious to find something reliable to take its place. How much would be required for the purchase of the mine you mentioned?"

"I thought of asking \$50,000 for it," said Kenyon, flushing as he thought of his tenacious Mr. Longworth.

"I hope not myself. I can see that you are a cautious man, and those who recommended you vouch for your capabilities, so with caution and capacity a man should succeed. I intended to visit the properties, but I was detained so long in the west that I did not have time to go north. How did you find the mines?"

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"How interesting," said the girl, "and the next thing John knew, he was walking the deck with her, relating his experiences. From that walk was the first of many, and from that time forward Kenyon did not miss his friend Wentworth."

Edith Longworth can hardly be called a typical representative of the English girl. She had the English girl's education, but she had not the training of the average English girl. She was the daughter of an early life, which makes a great difference in a girl's training, however wealthy her father may be. Edith's father was wealthy, there was no doubt of that. Ask any city man about the standing of John Longworth, and you will learn that the "home" is well thought of. People said he was lucky, but John Longworth asserted that there was no such thing as luck in business—in which statement he was very likely not correct. He had large investments in almost every quarter of the globe. When he went into a thing he went into it thoroughly. People talk of the inadvisability of putting all one's eggs into one basket, but John Longworth was a man who put all his eggs into one basket, but when John Longworth was satisfied with the particular variety of basket presented to him, he put a large number of eggs in it. When anything was offered for investment—whether it was a mine, a brewery, or a railway—John Longworth took an expert's opinion

"I didn't like their beer myself," admitted Kenyon.

"You are not wealthy, then?" said the girl, with apparent interest.

"No," replied the young man, "far from it. I will speak to my father, if you like, but I doubt if he would do much good. Perhaps William might take it up. You have not met my cousin yet, I think?"

"No. Is he the young man who sits next to you at table?"

"Yes. Except when there he spends most of his time in the smoking room, I believe. He is in father's office in the city, and we are both very anxious that he should succeed in business. That is why father took him with us to America. He wants to interest him, and it seems almost impossible to interest William at present. He does not like America; I think it's the beer."

"I didn't like their beer myself," admitted Kenyon.

"I saw him not very long ago, but I don't know where he is now. Perhaps you will find him in his state-room, in fact, I think it more likely he is there." With that Miss Brewster resumed her reading.

wrong. Come, wake up. Tell me what the trouble is."

"John, I am a fool—an ass—a gibbering idiot."

"Admitting that—what then?"

"I trusted a woman—imbecile that I am; and now—now—I'm what you see me."

"Has—has she—has she anything to do with it?" asked Kenyon, suspiciously.

"She has everything to do with it."

"What! That girl! Oh, you're the idiot now. Do you think I would ask her?"

"I cannot be blamed for jumping at conclusions. You must remember that girl, as you call her, has had most of your company during this voyage, and most of your good words when you were not with her. What is the matter? What has she to do with your trouble?"

Wentworth paced up and down the narrow limits of the stateroom as if he were caged. He smote his hand against his thigh, while Kenyon looked at him in wonder.

"I don't know how I can tell you, John," he said. "I must, of course, but I don't know how I can."

"Come on deck with me."

"Never."

"Come out, I say, into the fresh air. It is stuffy here, and besides, there is more danger of being overheard in the stateroom than on deck. Come along, old fellow."

Kenyon's companion by the arm, and partly dragged him out of the room, closing the door behind him.

"Pull yourself together," he said. "A little fresh air will do you good."

They made their way to the deck, and linking arms walked up and down. For a long time Wentworth said nothing, and Kenyon had the tact to hold his peace. Suddenly Wentworth noticed that they were passing back and forth in front of Miss Brewster, so he continued his walk around to the other side of the ship. After a few turns up and down he said: "You remember Rivers, of course?"

"Certainly."

"He was employed on that vile sheet, the New York Argus."

"I suppose it is a vile sheet. I don't remember ever seeing it. Yes, I know he was connected with that paper. What then? What has Miss Brewster to do with Rivers?"

"She is one of the Argus staff."

"George Wentworth, you don't mean to tell me that?"

"I do."

"And is she here to find out about the mine?"

"Exactly. She was put on the job after Rivers had fallen."

"George!" said Kenyon, suddenly dropping his companion's arm and facing him. "What have you told her?"

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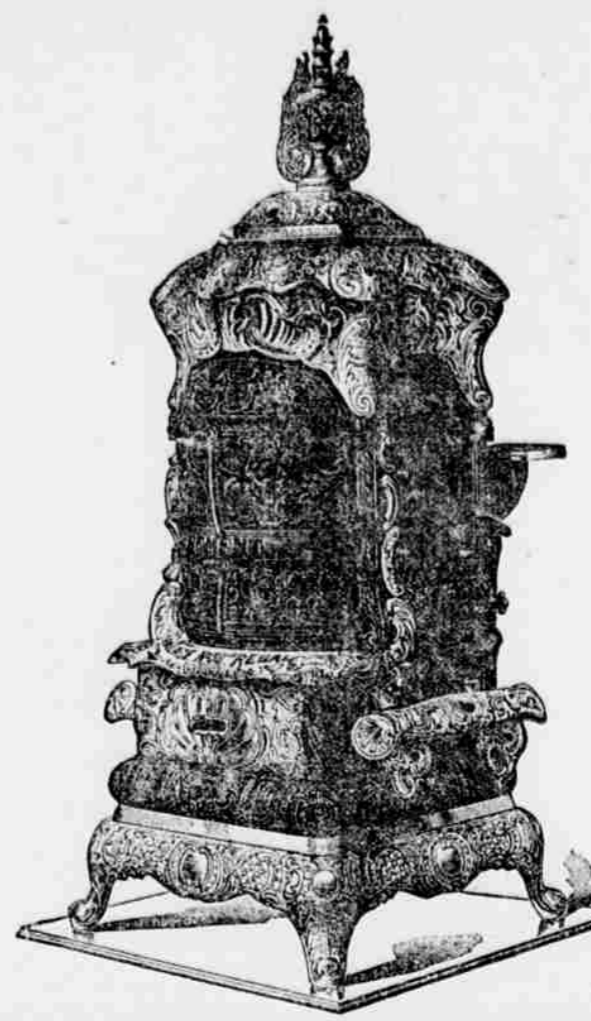
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over the situation. Thinking, however, did him very little good. He realized that, even if he got hold of the paper Miss Brewster had, she could easily write out another. She had the facts in her head, and all that he needed to do was to get to a telegraph office and there write out her message.

Kenyon looked at a few turns up and down the deck, thinking deeply on the same subject. He passed over to the side where Miss Brewster sat, but on coming opposite her had not the courage to begin. He did not side her. She was calmly reading her book. Three times he came opposite her, paused for a moment, and then continued his hopeless march. He saw that his courage was not going to be sufficient for the task, and yet he felt the task must be accomplished.

"I don't know you very well, Mr. Kenyon, but I know who you are. Won't you sit down beside me for a moment?" The bewildered man sat down on the chair she indicated. "Now, Mr. Kenyon, I know just what is troubling you. You have passed three or four times wishing to sit down beside me, and you would not venture. Is not that true?"

"Quite true. Now I know as what you have come for. Mr. Wentworth has told you what the trouble is, and he has told you that he has given me all the particulars about the mine, hasn't he?"

"He has."

"And he has gone off to his stateroom to think over the matter, and has left the affair in your hands, and you imagine you can come here to me and, perhaps, talk me out of sending the dispatch to the Argus. Isn't that your motive?"

"That is about what I hope to be able to do," said Kenyon, mopping his brow.

"Well, then, you need not recur to that out of your misery at once. You take things very seriously, Mr. Kenyon. I can see that. Don't you?"

"I am afraid I do."

"Why, of course you do. The publication of this, as I told Mr. Wentworth, will really understand it. It will not be any reflection on either of you, because your friends will be sure that if you had known to whom you were talking you would never have said anything so foolish."

Kenyon smiled grimly at this piece of comfort.

"Now, I have been thinking about something, Mr. Wentworth. I am really very sorry for you. I am more sorry than I can tell."

"Then," said John, "won't you recur to that phase of the subject. That is what I am here for, and no matter what you say, the matter doesn't matter, does it? Just one friend better to understand the first, and then I will create no trouble afterward. Don't you think that is the best?"

"Probably," answered the wretched man.

"Well, then, let us start there. I will say in the cablegram that the information comes from neither Mr. Kenyon nor Mr. Wentworth."

"Yes, but that wouldn't be true."

"Why, of course it wouldn't be true, but that doesn't matter, does it? Just one friend better to understand the first, and then I will create no trouble afterward. Don't you think that is the best?"

paper, finding that Rivers had failed after having tried the document, has tried a much more subtle scheme, which promises to be much more successful. They have put on board this ship a young woman, who has gained a reputation for learning secrets not intended for the public. This young woman is Miss Brewster, who sits next Wentworth at the table. Fate seems to have played right into her hand and placed her beside him. They became acquainted, and, unfortunately, my friend has told her a great deal about the mine, which she seemed to have an interest in. Or rather, she pretended to have an interest in him, and so he spoke, being, of course, of his guard. There is no more careful fellow in the world than George Wentworth, but a man does not expect that a private conversation with a lady will ever appear in a newspaper.

"Naturally not."

"Very well, that is the state of things. In some manner Wentworth came to know that this young woman was the special correspondent of the New York Argus. He spoke her name, and she is perfectly frank in saying she is here solely for the purpose of finding out what the reports will be, and that the moment she gets to Queenstown she will inquire what she has discovered to New York."

"Dear me, that is very perplexing. What have you done?"

"I have done nothing, so far, or rather, I should say, we have done everything I could think of, and have accomplished nothing. Wentworth has appealed to her, and I made a clumsy attempt at an appeal also, but it was of no use. I feel my own helplessness in this matter, and Wentworth is completely broken down over it."

They walked up and down the deck in silence for two or three hours. Then Miss Longworth looked up at Kenyon and said:

"Will you please say something in my hands?"

"I take a great deal of interest. Of course, you yourself are deeply interested in it, also, so I am acting in a measure for him."

"Have you any plan?"

"My plan is simply this: The young woman is working for the Argus now, if we can offer her more than her paper gives, she will very quickly accept, or I am mistaken in the kind of woman she is."

"Ah, yes," said Kenyon; "but we haven't the money, you see."

"Never mind, the money will be quickly forthcoming. Don't trouble any more about it. I'll see that it is arranged."

Kenyon thanked her, looking his gratitude rather than speaking it, for he was an unsteady man, and she had him goodly until she had said that.

"That evening there was a tap at the stateroom door of Miss Jennie Brewster."

"Come in," cried the young woman.

Miss Longworth entered, and the occupant of the room looked up, with a frown, from her writing.

"May I have a few moments' conversation with you?" asked Miss Longworth.

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