

OUT OF THE SEA.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.



CHAPTER VII.—[CONTINUED.]

She left an icy kiss on his lips and vanished. Ralph awoke with a start. It was all so real it was very difficult to make it appear a simple dream. But it took hold of this sensitive man. It seemed to him, in his excited state, like a message from heaven. He rose, dressed himself, and went down to the house of Dr. Hudson. Perhaps his mother had expected him, for she met him at the door and led him in to Agnes.

All Ralph's pride and anger broke down at sight of that poor stricken face. He could have cursed himself that he had ever been angry with her for a moment. He went to the bedside and lifted her head to his bosom, and put his face down to hers.

"My darling! my sister!" he cried, "Agnes, look up at me! I love you still!" She smiled dimly to comprehend, for she seemed and put her weak arms around his neck, and lying there on his bosom she fell asleep.

From that time she rallied, and by-and-by the old doctor said she would live. But she came back to life weak and feeble as a babe; it was weeks before her memory returned to her fully, and the spring opened with many a bud and blossom before they thought it safe to remove her to the Rock.

And then, as the warm weather advanced, and Agnes grew stronger, she was changed from her old self. She cared no more for the old charms of society, she sought no companionship, but would wander for hours down on the beach where she had played with Lynde Graham in childhood, with no companion save the great dog Quito, which had been Marina's.

She liked, too, to take long rides on horseback—in fact, she seemed to give out all the love she had to give on Jove, for the faithful horse had not died, but still lived and thrived under the careful tenderness of his mistress; and Agnes could never forget that Jove had lengthened out his life—the life of the man she loved.

CHAPTER VIII.

HE return of Agnes to the Rock gave Imogene Ireton an excuse for visiting there. During the summer she came over quite frequently, always making some errand the plea.

She was as beautiful and fascinating as ever, and it was not long before she tried her power on Ralph Trenholme. It was impossible to be in her society without feeling her magnetic influence, and then the sympathy she gave him was so very delicate, so entirely suited to his needs. He wondered he had not before discovered what a refinement of feeling she possessed. She made him understand without telling him that she pitied him; made him feel that his sufferings were more than the whole world.

Mrs. Trenholme looked on in secret exultation. Agnes with a half defined feeling of dread for which she could not account.

Imogene professed to be terribly superstitious and could not be prevailed upon to spend the night at the Rock on any occasion. But one day a storm set in while she was there and it raged so fearfully that it was unsafe to attempt reaching home, and she was obliged to remain. She was strangely nervous and restless all the evening. She forgot to smile when Ralph spoke to her, and played chess so badly that he put away the board in disgust. Imogene begged to be allowed to sleep with Agnes. It was such a fearful night, she said, and the old house was so lonely.

To reach the chamber of Agnes they had to pass the door of the room where Marina had been murdered. Imogene grew ashen pale as they approached it, and clutched the arm of her companion with something like terror. Agnes stopped and looked at her with wonder.

"What is it, Imogene? Are you ill?" The question acted on Imogene like a shock of electricity. She laughed loudly. "No! Not I. Only a little nervous. This old house is enough to give one the nerves, with its gloomy corridors and its innumerable dark closets."

"I did not know you might be thinking of the murder which was done in that room," said Agnes; "but I never fear poor Marina. The dead never come back."

"Don't they? I tell you, Agnes Trenholme, they do!" There was something absolutely fearful in the voice in which she spoke, but the next moment she said in her usual clear tones, "At least some people think so."

A year had elapsed since the murder of Marina, when Mrs. Trenholme ventured to speak to her son of what lay so near her heart. Ralph had been very tender to her that day, more like his old self than he had been since the

tragedy. She put her hand on his and spoke a little timidly.

"Ralph, you once intended to marry to please yourself; I wish you would really marry to please me!"

He smiled a little sadly and touched her hair caressingly.

"So you have not quite given up the old project, mother mine! Well, I will think of it. I love no one. I shall not easily love again."

"And Imogene loves you, my son; I think it no more than honorable that you should give her the benefit of your name. With such a woman for a wife, love will surely come. Trust me for it."

He kissed the lips that were so near his own.

"Mother, I will try to gratify you. I will ask Miss Ireton to be my wife."

Mrs. Trenholme's face flushed rapturously. Her lifelong wish would be gratified. Her only son, the pride of her heart, would be the husband of the most beautiful and nobly-born woman in that part of the state.

That night, Ralph sat by the side of Miss Ireton. He was pale and calm—nothing of the nervous expectancy that characterizes the doubtful lover. He took her hand in his and spoke very quietly.

"Miss Ireton, you know my sad history. You know of the blight that fell upon my life a little more than a year ago, and knowing what you do, will you be my wife?"

She looked into his cool eyes, and saw that he did not love her. And she had given him so much! All the homage of her impassioned soul! She flushed crimson and set her white teeth hard. It was cruel to be won in that cold way; but anything to be near him. She would have been happy as his dog, if she could have been no more to this man she loved so fervently. She put her hot hand into his.

"I will be your wife," she said, as coolly as he had spoken.

He touched the jeweled fingers with his lips and placed upon one of them a diamond—the betrothal ring.

All that night Imogene Ireton tossed restlessly on her bed. Her ambition, at last, was to be satisfied—she was to be Ralph Trenholme's wife; but his love, for which she would have given her soul, was not to be hers.

"He shall love me!" she cried, passionately. "I will win him! Good heaven! why is he so much unlike other men that my beauty has no attraction for him? Can it be that I am hideous in his eyes?"

They were married in the first week of January. There was no parade—not even a bridesmaid, save Agnes Trenholme. The old house at the Rock shook opposed all display. She would have no wedding party, no bridal tour.

A terrible storm swept over Portlea the night after Ralph took home a wife. Its like had not been known on the coast since that fearful storm when the foreign ship had been wrecked outside the harbor, and the waves had cast Marina up at the feet of Ralph Trenholme. The old house at the Rock shook with the force of the tempest, the very foundations trembled, the roar of the waves on the rocks below was perfectly deafening. Imogene paced her chamber all the night through; she could not sleep, she said—a storm like this always made her restless.

CHAPTER IX.

THREE weeks after her wedding, Imogene Trenholme was missing. She had dined with the family, and was in her usual health and spirits. At tea the bell had failed to bring her down, and the girl that went to her room said she was not there. The family felt little uneasiness until night fell, and then as she did not return they became seriously alarmed. Search began, and was continued through the next day, and far into the night; but no clue to the missing woman could be found.

Ralph came home towards daybreak to find himself upon the couch for an hour's sleep, and when he awoke his wife slept by his side. He started up and looked at her, almost doubting his own senses. How very beautiful she was, her mouth with the just parted scarlet lips, showing the pearls within, one exquisite arm under her head, and the long eyelashes curving upward from the glowing cheek. Ralph touched her hand and she awoke.

"Imogene!" he said sternly, "will you explain this problem to me? Here have I been searching for you these four-and-twenty hours and more, and now I find you calmly asleep, without a single word to me to relieve my anxiety. Where have you been?"

"I have been away. I was called away on business."

"On business? Very well. What was the nature of that business?"

"It was a private matter which concerns no one but myself," she replied, a little haughtily.

"Private business! Imogene, a wife should have no secrets from her husband! I do not wish to pry into your affairs, but it will be better to confide this thing to me at once."

"I have nothing that I can confide."

"This is very singular, Imogene. I

warn you that the like of this must not occur again. If it does, I shall be severely displeased. Mark you that! My wife must not subject herself to vulgar remark."

"We will pass the subject if you please," she said, in such a manner that he did not resume it.

As the time passed Ralph Trenholme grew cold and reticent. All his old geniality seemed to have died out of him. He was never cross, but he was not affectionate. He did not kiss his mother and Agnes as he was wont, and though he treated his wife with the most punctilious respect, she was to him no dearer than any other woman.

Strange stories were afloat among the servants and at last they reached the ears of the master. At first they excited only his indignation. He regarded them merely as silly inventions of the elderly butler, who was of Celtic origin, and most ridiculously superstitious. They said that at night the doors of the chamber where Marina had died were heard to open and shut; that ghostly feet paced back and forth across the floor, and that sometimes late at night pale, spectral lights gleamed from the dusky windows, far out through the gloom.

Mrs. Trenholme was greatly distressed by these tales, and Ralph positively forbade the discussion of the subject at any time in the house. He would not encourage such foolish superstition, he said, indignantly. But soon he was forced to acknowledge that there was something at work beside imagination. He was detained until late one night in his study, which was in the east wing of the house, and only a little distance from the chamber of blood. Through the dead silence came distinctly to his ear the sound of a door being opened, a door which creaked upon its hinges, like one long disused.

He remembered, with a half-suppressed shudder, that the door of that chamber creaked.

He sprang up, seized the lamp and hurried to the place. The door, which had always been kept locked since the tragedy, was ajar. He entered the chamber and stood appalled by what he saw. In the center of the room, standing just where the dark spot on the carpet showed that there the crime had been done, was a tall, white figure, its head enveloped in something misty and white, its right arm extended toward the empty chair where she last sat!

For a moment Ralph stood still with amazement, but only for a moment. He was a man of nerve, and he reached forward to seize upon the apparition—to determine whether it belonged to the world of shadows or of flesh and blood. But at the first step a rush of air, cold as that from an inclosed tomb, swept over him, extinguishing his light.

The place was dark as Erebus. He heard a faint, shivering sigh at his very elbow, then the soft closing of a distant door, and all was still. He groped his way out of the dreadful place, got another light, and went up to his wife's chamber. She was sleeping soundly, and he did not disturb her, but sat down to think over the strange thing he had witnessed. But the more he thought the more clouded his mind became. He could find no reasonable solution of the mystery, and by-and-by he fell asleep. When he awoke Imogene was gone. He knew at once that she had left the house, for a note directed in her hand to himself lay on the table.

He tore it open and read:

"Mr. Trenholme—Again I am called away. Business may keep me absent a couple of days. You need make no search."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PRACTICAL ANARCHISM.

Michael Braun Destroys Property to Spite the Rich.

Practical anarchism could be seen at work in the house of Mrs. Mary M. Bryson of New York recently. Mrs. Bryson engaged a man named Michael Braun to varnish the furniture, and she agreed to pay him \$4 a day. According to the story which Mrs. Bryson told the magistrate of the Yorkville police court Braun destroyed property in her house to the value of over \$1,000 and he had no other apparent motive but his hatred of the rich and his principles of anarchism. He is charged with mutilating a valuable oil painting entitled "The Holy Family." It is alleged that he cut off the arm of the Virgin, represented in the painting, and slashed the figure of the child Christ in a way that suggested his desire to show his hatred of things religious. He is a small man, with low forehead. Mrs. Bryson told the magistrate that she and her sister lived alone in the house, and became alarmed at the presence of the man, who continued his work of polishing. She said that when they addressed a remark to him he would reply in vile language, and they would be obliged to seek the seclusion of their rooms. He had complete run of the house. When spoken to on Aug. 6 he answered with an oath. A few moments later they saw him leave the house, and, going upstairs, discovered the mutilation of the picture. He has been arrested.

Hard to Suit.

"I guess you didn't sell no pants to that man that just went out, did you? That's the hardest feller to suit I most ever see. Him an' me boards at the same place. He wouldn't eat his eggs this mornin' 'cause they was both fried on one side; he wanted one fried on one side an' one on the other. Why wouldn't he take the pants?"

"Stripes all run the same way. Said he wanted 'em to run down one leg and up the other."

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Calling a Dog by Telephone.

An intelligent hunting dog who had strayed away was found in New Hartford, Conn., recently, and the finder notified the dog's owner in Winsted. The New Hartford man called up the owner by telephone to arrange for returning the dog, and while talking asked the owner the dog's name. "Hold him up to the telephone," was the reply. The part of the instrument was put against the dog's ear, and the owner called, "Dash." The dog recognized the voice, and set up a barking which showed his joy.—Boston Herald.

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