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A. C. HOSMER.

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LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF WEBSTER county, Nebraska.

Joan Agnes Guellow
against
William Elden Guellow.

The defendant, William Elden Guellow will take notice that on the 26th day of January, A.D. 1885, the plaintiff in the above entitled cause Joan Agnes Guellow filed her petition against you in the district court of Webster county, Nebraska charging you, the said defendant with being her lawful husband and that you have abandoned her without cause or provocation for two years last past, also charging you with having cruelly abused and insulted the plaintiff and also with failing to support plaintiff and her minor children, the issue of said plaintiff's inter-marriage with you, the said defendant. The object and prayer of her said petition is to obtain an absolute decree of divorce against you and also for a decree awarding her the care, custody and control of said minor children, Walter Elden Guellow, Minnie May Guellow, and William Robert Guellow and for such other and further relief as equity and good conscience may suggest. You are required to answer said petition on or before Monday, March 9th, 1885 or your default will be taken and decree rendered against you as prayed for in said petition.

Dated Red Cloud, Nebraska, Jan. 26th, 1885.

JOAN AGNES GUELLOW.
Per her attorneys, Case & McNeny.

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The original letter from which the above is an extract, and several hundred others expressing similar opinions, is regularly strung for inspection at our office and will be shown to any one calling at our office who shows that his interest in the matter arises purely from a desire to guard against impositions.

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Attention Teachers.

Notice is hereby given that I will examine all persons who may desire to offer themselves as candidates for teachers of the common schools of Webster county at my office in Red Cloud on the third Saturday of each month. Examinations to commence at 9 a. m. Do not ask for special examinations.

C. W. SPRINGER,
County superintendent of public instruction.

THE RED CLOUD CHIEF

A. C. HOSMER, - - Proprietor

FRIDAY, FEB. 20, 1885

DARK DAYS.

BY HUGH CONWAY.

Author of "Called Back."

Heavens! can it be that she is waiting to see this man once more? Never! never! Perish the thought!

But, all the same, every fiber in my body quivered at the bare supposition of such a thing.

I could bear the suspense no longer. For the hundredth time I glanced at my watch. It wanted but ten minutes to seven o'clock, and by 7 I had resolved to start from Mrs. Wilson's, on my way to Roding. Yet now I dared not leave my own house. Any moment might bring Philippa. What would she think if I was not there to receive and welcome her?

Five more precious minutes gone! I stamped in my rage. After all I can only do one-half of my task; the street, but not the siren half. Shall I, indeed, do either? The train must now be close to Roding. In an hour everything may be lost. The man will see her before she leaves the house. He will persuade her. She will listen to his words, for did he not once love her? He must have loved her! After all, he broke the law for the sake of possessing her, and—strange! though—she loved him then; and she is but a woman!

So I tormented myself until my state of mind grew unbearable. At all hazards I must prevent Ferrand from meeting Philippa. Oh, why had she not come as she promised? Could it be she was detained "ill or her will"? In spite of her manner, I distrusted the woman I had seen last night. It is now past seven o'clock. Philippa's house, from which I had reckoned my time, was nearly three miles away. I must give up my scheme of vengeance. I must go in search of Philippa. If I do not meet her I must call at Mrs. Wilson's, find out what detains her, and if needful bear her away by force.

By this time my steps had brought me back to my own house. I called William, and told him I was going to walk up the road and meet my expected guest. If by any chance I should miss her, he was to welcome her on my behalf, and tell her the reason for my absence.

"Just take a lantern, sir," said William; "snow'll be bitter, and them roads is pretty rough."

"I can't be bothered with that great horn affair," I said, rather testily.

"Take the little one—the bull's-eye—that's better than nothing," said William. To humor him I put it into my pocket.

I ran at the top of my speed to the house at which I had last night left Philippa. It took me nearly half an hour getting there. I rang the bell impetuously. The door was opened by a maidservant. I inquired for Mrs. Forrest, knowing that Philippa had passed under this name to all except her lover. To my surprise I was told that she had left the house, on foot and alone, some little while ago. The maid believed she was not going to return, as her luggage had that morning been sent for.

The first effect of this intelligence was to cause me to blame my haste. I must have missed her; no doubt passed her on the road. No; such a thing was impossible. The way was a narrow one. The moon still gave some light. If I had met Philippa, I must have seen her. She must have seen me, and would then have stopped me. She could not have gone the way I came.

As I turned from the house I became aware that a great and sudden change had come over the night. It seemed to me that, even in the few minutes which I had spent in considering what to do, the heavy clouds had banked and massed together. It was all but pitch-dark; so dark that I paused, and drawing from my pocket the lantern with which William's foresight had provided me, shaded it after several trials to light it. Then, impatient at the delay, I sped up the road.

I was now almost facing the wind. All at once, sharp and quick, I felt the blinding snow on my face. The wind moaned through the leafless branches on either side of the road. The snow-flakes whirled madly here and there. Even in my excitement I was able to realize the fact that never before had I seen in England so fierce a snow-storm, or one which came on so suddenly. And, like myself, Philippa was abroad, and exposed to its full fury. Heavens! she might lose her way, and wander about all night.

This fear quickened my steps. I forced my way on through the mad storm. For the time all thought of Sir Mervyn Ferrand and vengeance left my heart. All I now wanted was to find Philippa; to lead her home, and see her safe beneath my roof. "Surely," I said, as I battled along, "she cannot have gone much further."

I kept a sharp look-out—if, indeed, it can be called a look-out; for the whirling snow made everything, save what was within a few feet of me, invisible. I strained my ears to catch the faintest cry or other sound. I went on, flashing my lantern first on one and then on the other side of the road. My dread was that Philippa, utterly unable to fight against the white tempest, might be crouching under one of the banks, and if so I might pass without seeing her or even attracting her attention. By doing so on such night as this I might mean her death.

Oh, why had she not come as promised? Why had she gone to meet the man who had so fearfully avenged herself? After what had happened, she could no longer not love him. And for a dreary comfort I recalled the utter bitterness of her accent last night when she turned to me and said, "Basil, did you ever hate a man?" No, she could not love him!

I halted, irresolute, in the center of the road. Instinctively I beat my hands together to promote circulation. I had left my home precipitately, and had made no provision for the unexpected outbreak of such an ordeal as this terrible, unprecedented snow-storm in fact. In spite of the speed at which I had traveled, my hands and feet were growing benumbed, my face was numbed with the cold. Heaven help me to decide aright, whether to go on or turn back!

The decision was not left to me. Suddenly, close at hand, I heard a wild peal, a scream of laughter which made my blood run cold. Built from the whirling, twisting, drifting snow emerged a tall gray figure. It swept past me like the wind; but as it passed me I knew that my quest was ended—that Philippa was found!

She vanished in a second, before the terrors which rooted me to the spot had passed away. Then I turned and, fast as I could run, followed her, crying as I went, "Philippa! Philippa!"

I soon overtook her; but so dark was the night that I was almost touching her before I saw her shadowy, ghost-like form. I threw my arms round her and held her. She struggled violently in my grasp.

"Philippa, dearest! it is I, Basil," I said, bending close to her ear.

The sound of my voice seemed to calm her, or I should rather say she ceased to struggle.

"Thank Heaven, I have found you!" I said. "Let us get back as soon as possible."

"Back! No! Go on, go on!" she exclaimed. "On, on, on, up the road yet awhile—on through the storm, through the snow—on till you see what I have left behind me! On till you see the wages of sin—the wages of sin!"

Her words came like bullets from a mitrailleuse. Through the night I could see her face gleaming whiter than the snow on her hood. I could see her great, fixed, dark eyes full of nameless horror.

"Dearest, be calm," I said, and strove to take her hands in mine.

As I tried to gain possession of her right hand something fell from it, and, although the road was now coated with snow, a metallic sound rang out as it touched the ground. Mechanically I stooped and picked up the fallen object.

As I did so Philippa with a wild cry wrested herself from the one hand whose numbed grasp still sought to retain her, and with a frenzied reiteration of the words, "The wages of sin!" fled from me, and was lost in the night.

Even as I rushed in pursuit I shuddered as the sense of feeling told me what thing it was I had picked up from the snowy ground. It was a small pistol! Cold as the touch of the metal must have been, it seemed to burn me like a coal of fire. Impulsively, thoughtlessly, as I ran I hurled the weapon from me, far, far away. Why should it have been in Philippa's hand this night?

I ran madly on, but not for long. My foot caught in a stone, and I fell, half stunned and quite breathless, to the ground. It was some minutes before I recovered myself sufficiently to come more stand erect. Philippa must have obtained a start which coupled with her frenzied speed, almost precluded the possibility of my overtaking her.

Moreover, a strange, uncontrollable impulse swayed me. The touch of that deadly weapon still burned my hand. Philippa's words still rang in my ears. "On, on, on, up the road yet awhile!" she had cried. What did she mean? What had been done to-night?

I must retrace my steps. I must see! I must know! Philippa is flying through the cold, dark, deadly night; but her frame is but the frame of a woman. She must soon grow exhausted, perhaps sink senseless on the road. Nevertheless the dreadful fears which are growing in my mind must be set at rest; then I can resume the pursuit. At all cost I must know what has happened!

Once more I turned and faced the storm. Heavens! anything might happen on such a night as this! I went on and on, flashing my lantern as I went on the center and each side of the road. I went some distance past that spot where I judged that Philippa had swept by me. Then suddenly with a cry of horror I stopped short. At my very feet, in the middle of the highway, illumined by the disk of light cast by my lantern, lay a white-robed mass, and as my eye fell upon it I knew only too well the meaning of Philippa's wild exclamation, "The wages of sin! The wages of sin!"

CHAPTER IV.

AT ALL COST SLEEP.

Dead! Before I knelt beside him and, after unbuttoning his coat, laid my hand on his breast, I knew the man was dead. Before I turned the lantern on his white face I knew who the man was. Sir Mervyn Ferrand had paid for his sin with his life! It needed little professional skill to determine the cause of his death. A bullet fired, it seemed to me, at close quarters had passed absolutely through the heart. He must have fallen without a moan. Killed, I know, by the hand of the woman he had wronged.

It could not be true! it should not be true! Yet I shuddered as I remembered the passion she had thrown into those words, "Basil, did you ever hate a man?" I gave a low cry of anguish as I remembered how I had hurled from me the pistol she had let fall—the very weapon which had done the dreadful deed.

Killed by Philippa! Not in a sudden burst of uncontrollable passion, but with deliberate intent. She must have gone armed to meet him. She must have seen him through the heart; must have seen him fall. Then, only then, the horrible deed which she had wrought must have been fully realized! Then she had turned and fled from the spot in a frenzy. Oh, my poor girl! my poor girl!

Utterly bewildered by my anguish, I rose from my knees and stood for a while beside the corpse. It was in that moment I learned how much I really loved the woman who had done this thing. Over all my grief and horror this love rose paramount. At all cost I must save her—save her from the hands of justice; save her from the fierce elements which her tender frame was even at this moment braving. Right or wrong, she was the woman I loved; and I swore I would save her from the consequences of her crime, even—Heaven help me!—if the accusation, when made, must fall upon my shoulders.

Yet it was not the beginning of any scheme to evade justice which induced me to raise the dead body and bear it to the side of the road, where I placed it under the low bank on which the hedge grew. It was the reverence which one pays to death made me do this. I could not leave the poor wretch lying in the very middle of the highway, for the first passer-by to stumble against. To-morrow he would, of course, be found. To-morrow the hue and cry would be out! To-morrow Philippa, my never, never!

So I laid what was left of Sir Mervyn Ferrand reverentially by the side of the lonely road. I even tried to close his glassy eyes, and I covered his face with his own handkerchief. Then, with heart holding fear and anguish enough for a lifetime, I turned and went in search of the poor unhappy girl.

Where should I seek her? Who knew what her remorse may have urged her to do? Who knew whither her horror may have driven her? It needs but to find Philippa lifeless on the road to complete the heaviest tale of grief which can be extracted from one man in one short night! I muttered my teeth and rushed on.

I had the road all to myself. No one was abroad in such weather. Indeed, few persons were seen at night in any weather in this lonely part of the country. I made straight for my own house. The dismal thought came to me, that unless Philippa kept the road she was lost to me forever. If she strayed to the right or to the left, how on such a night could I possibly find her? My one hope was that she would go straight to my cottage; so thither I made the best of my way. If she had not arrived, I must get what assistance I could, and seek for her in the fields to the right and left of the road. It was a dreary comfort to remember that all the ponds and spaces of water were frozen six inches thick!

I hesitated a moment when I reached her late residence. Should I inquire if she had returned thither? No; when morning revealed the ghastly event of the night, my having done so would awake suspicion. Let me first go home.

Home at last. In a moment I shall know the worst. I opened the slide of my lantern, which was still alight, and threw the rays on the path which led to my door. My heart gave a great bound of thankfulness. There on the snow, not yet obliterated by more recent flakes, were the prints of a small foot. Philippa, as I prayed but scarcely dared to hope she might, had come straight to my house.

My man opened the door for me. It was well I had seen those foot-prints, as my knowledge of Philippa's arrival enabled me to assume a natural air.

"My sister has come?" I asked.

"Yes, sir; about a quarter of an hour ago."

"We missed each other on the road. What a night!" I said, throwing off my snow-covered coat.

"Where is she now?" I asked.

"In the sitting room, sir." Then, lowering his voice, William added, "She seemed just about in a tantrum when she found you weren't at home. I expect we shall find her a hard lady to please."

William, in spite of his stolidity, occasionally ventured upon some liberty when addressing me.

His words greatly surprised me. I forced myself to make some laughing rejoinder; then I turned the handle of the door and entered the room in which Philippa had taken refuge.

Oh, how my heart throbbed! What would she say to me? What could I, fresh from that dreadful scene, say to her? Would she excuse or palliate, would she simply confess or boldly justify her crime? Would she plead her wrongs in extenuation? Would she assert that in a moment of ungovernable rage she had done the deed? No matter what she said; she was still Philippa, and even at the cost of my own life and honor I would save her.

Yet as I advanced into the room a shudder ran through me. Fresh to my mind came the remembrance of that white face, that still form, lying as I had left it, with the pure white snow falling thickly around it.

Philippa was sitting in front of the fire. Her hat was removed, her dark hair disheveled and glittering well with the snow which had melted in it. She must have seen me enter and close the door, but she took no notice. As I approached her she turned her shoulder upon me in a pettish way, and as one who by the action means to signify displeasure. I came to her side and stood over her, waiting for her to look up and speak first. She must speak first! What can I say, after all that has happened to-night?

But she kept a stony silence—kept her eyes still turned from mine. At last I called her by her name, and bending down, looked into her face.

Its expression was one of sullen anger, and moreover, anger which seemed to deepen as she heard my voice. She made a kind of contemptuous gesture, as if waving me aside.

"Philippa," I said, as sternly as I could, "speak to me!"

I laid my hand upon her arm. She shook it off fiercely, and then started to her feet.

"You ask me to speak to you," she said; "you who have treated me like this! Oh, it is shameful! shameful! I come through storm and snow—come to you, who were to welcome me as a brother! Where are you? Away; your wretched servant tells me. Why are you away? I trusted you! Oh, you are a pretty brother! If you had cared for me or respected me you would have been here to greet me. No! you are all in a league—all in a league to ruin me! Now I am here, what will you do? Poison me, of course! kill me, and make away with me, even as that other dear one killed and made away with my poor child? He did! I say he did! I saw him do it! 'A child of shame,' he said; so, he killed it! All, all, all,—even you—you, whom I trusted—leagued against me!"

She was trembling with excitement. Her words ran one into the other. It was as much as I could do to follow them; yet the above is but a brief condensation of what she said. With unchecked volubility she continued to heap reproaches and accusations, many of which were of the most extravagant and frivolous nature, on my head. At last she was silent, and revealed herself in her former attitude; and the sullen, discontented, ill-used look again settled on her face.

And yet, although I, who loved her above all the world, was the object of her fierce reproaches, no words I had as yet listened to came more sweetly to my ear than those. A great joy sweet through me; a tide of relief bore me to comparative happiness. Whatever dreadful deed the poor girl had that night accomplished, she was morally innocent. Philippa was not accountable for her actions! She was mad when she broke from my grasp; she was mad now as she sat by my fire, eying me with morose, suspicious glances. She was mad—and innocent!

Her manner toward me troubled me but little. It is a well-known peculiarity of the disease that the patient turns with hatred from those who were the nearest and dearest to her. Fits of sullen, stubborn silence, alternating with fierce outbursts of vituperation, are the most common characteristics of the malady. Hideous, startling as it is to see the change wrought in the sufferer, the malady is by no means of such an alarming nature as it seems. In fact the majority of cases are treated with perfect success.

But all this is professional talk. Again I say that the discovery of Philippa's state of mind was an immense relief to me. My conscience was cleared of a weight which was

(Continued on the Eighth Page.)