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me again.

quiringly.

once more," he said.

In about twenty minutes Jed came to

"Mr. Morgan wishes to speak to you

"Well?" I said, looking at him in-

"A downright, direct and positive

sort of a person," he said, smiling,

"but although keen, not a real intel-

CHAPTER XII.

back in the office much enraged.

Mr. Morgan was pacing forth and

"Look here," he said. "This does

not get us anywhere. My time is val-

uable. I am wasting a lot of it. I'll

tell you now I've got enough informa-

tion to know this is the sort of case

we like, a tough case. I haven't been

fooled a bit. You may not be interest-

but I'm interested. Do you get that,

Mr. Doctor, Mr. Representative, Mr.

Fiance? I'm interested. This case is

going to be gone into. There's a crime

concealed somewhere which will do

our agency good to discover. We

sha'n't do it for money. We shall

do it for publicity. The advertising

will be worth thousands of dollars to

"I know you can make life very mis-

"I can pack that lawn out there with

reporters and photographers from the

city. They'll see and talk to Mr. Sid-

ney. Take my word for that. They'll

see and talk to Mrs. Sidney and to

Miss Sidney. I can bring that down

I said. "You might suggest that to

the newspaper people for their own

"The shyster and that common thief

"No, but you know Agnes Mitchell.

Well, you know Ann Forth, man. Say.

It stands-copy of sheet from manu-

script-Spaniard-running off with

Jed-theft of menuscript-death of

I knew it and was appalled by the

"It would be a very cruel and use-

less thing to do." I said, "but as I

told you, you must use your own judg-

ment. We are not interested in this

child's nursery story you are follow-

ing, and I do not intend to have peo-

ple who are not well disturbed by the

I knew how to deal safely with

Morgan, but the method was out of

the question. I should indeed have

been a simpleton if I had not known.

We were wholly resolved against

paying blackmail, knowing that it was

only a gradual descent to ruin. It

was better to go in one direct plunge

Morgan looked at me steadily for a

few moments as if giving me a chance

to listen to the voice of reason. His

method had been perfect. He was be-

yond a legal suspicion, and I knew

"Well, young man," he said at last,

"we are both wasting time-at least

I am. But it's only fair to you to

tell you that this is not the end of

the case. It's the kind of a case we

like, something tough and difficult.

We may not make any money out of

it, but when we are ready, we at least

shall be paid in publicity. You

needn't be afraid of the reporters and

photographers just now. It's too good

a case to waste that way. There's al-

ways that, no matter what we turn up.

to spend some money on. It's just

good enough to send a couple of men

down to Montevideo. I'll tell you

in advance that is what we're going

"We'll go into the life of Mr. Sidney

such things well. And we'll do this

well. We'll get something here or in

South America. We'll follow that

copied two chapters of "The Moon-

"Then we'll come back here and ask

for a little more co-operation in serv-

don't get some help, the reporters and

photographers will be swarming on the lawn. That's all, Mr. Doctor,"

I knew at first glance that Morgan's

"I'll have Jed show you the door,"

"And tell him we do not know

whether we take Dravada to South

America or not. It will make him

Jed was scrupulously the servant as

That was the fashion in which in-

we dismissed Mr. Morgan,

face was malevolent. Now I saw it

the springs of his bed.

extraordinarily so.

I said.

happy."

"This case is just good enough

All I had to ask was "How much?"

questioning of a detective."

Ann Forth got in, didn't they?"

"I don't know Ann Forth."

"The house has some protections,"

to you by midnight."

erable for us for a couple of days.

You will have to use your own judg-

us. Do you understand me?"

ment."

try."

certain prospects.

if it were fated.

he was dangerous.

to do.

ed. Maybe no one here is interested.

ligence. He is waiting for you, sir."

CHAPTER XI-Continued. -13-

He was a curious instrument of such abstract justice. He served fate is if it had sworn out a police court warrant. As a nemesis he was h lown, or at least a beadle or a bailiff. The manner in which he served inevitibility will appear. Mr. Sidney's crime, I soon saw, whatever manner or kind of crime it had been, was one of unescapable consequence.

"A man named Dravada," said Morran, after we had looked at each other in interrogative hostility for an instant, "has come to our agency with very strange tale. From what I earn of the things he and his disreputable attorney have done, I can see hat they are heading directly into the penitentiary. I understand that the lawyer is dead and that all their schemes are closed. Dravada has come to our agency, and I have come firectly to you. I want you to understand our methods of doing business They are honest. The paper Dravada carries about him says that crime has been committed. Are you familiar with that paper?"

"I have seen what a blackmailing lawyer said was a copy of a sheet in the possession of Dravada."

"I am not much of a literary man," sald Morgan, taking from a black eather case a manuscript which he anded to me, "but I've read "The Moonstone,' and this looks to me like a couple of chapters copied out of it. Probably you are familiar with 'The Moonstone."

"I have rend it several times." "Then what do you make of that

nanuscript?" I looked at several of the pages. The manuscript was a copy of part of "The Moonstone."

"I am right, then," said Morgan. good." 'Moonshine' it had better be called. That's the manuscript the maid stole out of your man Jed's room and that Dravada took after the lawyer had been killed. Here's my reasoningmaybe you will be interested: This you simpleton, you don't know what man Jed and this fellow Dravada you're up against. This story just as worked for Mr. Sidney in Montevideo. Oravada is a thief; Jed isn't much tetter. Dravada got one sheet of a manuscript that had something to de shyster-Ann Forth back in housewith a concealed crime. Jed got the hidden crime-millionaire reclusetest of the manuscript, so Dravada beautiful daughter-haunted housesays. Dravada has been trying to it's copy for every paper in the counmake Jed go 50-50. He has been trying to get the rest of the manuscript. He'll murder Jed yet.

"Now here's the way I look at it: A man like Jed does not go to the trouble of copying a couple of chapters of 'The Moonshine' and planting the copy in his room just to devil a desperate fellow like Dravada. He does



'I Suppose You're Something to Miss Sidney, Too."

it for a purpose. That proves he has the real manuscript. That proves there is a concealed crime. Our agency is interested in finding out what that crime was. As an agent of the law I am interested in this case. Are you? Is this family interested?"

"I am not, and the family is not." "I'll take your word for it, but I'll see Mr. Sidney. "It is quite impossible. He never sees catters, I am his doctor. I

should forbid it." "Then I'll see Mrs. Sidney."

"That also is impossible. I am her representative." "Well, I'll talk to Miss Sidney."

"That also is out of the question," "I suppose you're something to Miss Sidney, too,"

"I am her flance." "You are a little bit of everything tround here. Well, how about seeing this man Jed?"

"That can be arranged," I said, and I rang for Jed. When he came in, I "Jed, this is Mr. Morgan, of the

Metropolitan Detective agency. He vants to talk to you."

"Yes, sir," said Jed, and I went out g who coom.

gan surely and certainly represented fate. It had become only a matter of time when in one fashion or another the security of this home, so carefully studied, would be invaded successfully. That was apparent. It might be

that Morgan would be able to expose us to nothing more than the publicity he mentioned. But that was sufficient; it would be destructive. I had telephoned McGuire, telling

him of Morgan's part in the new turn of events, and he later informed me that two of the Morgan agency operatives had sailed for South America, taking Dravada with them. The hunt had begun-but a long way off.

The hunters knew as much of the quarry as I did, and I had no way of knowing whether it was likely that they could find a trail back to Hartley house. It was impossible not to feel uneasy. Dravada had been to me, whatever he had been to Jed, merely an incident grotesque and extravagant, a preposterous dash of color in odd conditions. The lawyer had been resourceful and cunning enough, but his actions had to be those of a slinking feral animal. He was not to be greatly feared, but Morgan was. He had the machinery for the work. His cupidity was aroused. Every rascal who smelled the mystery of Hartley house became eager to collow the scent into the strong box of the house.

I thought I was not assuming enough responsibility. I asked Mrs. Sidney again if it would be of service to give me the secret of the house. I told her I was far from certain that my relia-



And, by George! She Danced Up and Kissed Her Mother and Kissed Me.

bility and trustworthiness had been es tablished, but if they had been, and if the question were merely one of fidelity and stanchness, I hoped I could regarded loyal.

"If only those qualities were involved, John," said Mrs. Sidney, "you has been noted once every year and could have the inmost secrets of my soul. I would trust you with anything anywhere, but for your own salvation I would not have this terrible thing in your consciousness. Knowledge of it would curse you. It will be unless there is expiation in a great love, and exculpation in self-sacrifice. Jed's soul is gone beyond redemption. I dare not think of Mr. Sidney nor of myself. But Jed is a gross sinner."

She was by nature and wish an unemotional, untheatric lady, but she was dramatic in her seriousness. Then she said:

"I should like to have "ou for a

I was much embarrassed—the more so when she kissed me. To concent some disconcerting emotions I laughed awkwardly and went on about my business. I was to go blindfolded into the intricacles of the strangest situations I ever encountered.

With early October beautiful days came and brought tranquillity. Life is full of zest in October, the rich, rare month of the year; physical senses are made morè sensitive. Hartley house blazed out in autumn spiendor. What had been beautiful before was now glorified.

I could have hours, but not complete days of happiness. I could use my common sense part of the time, but Isobel broke it down at other times. Occasionally I thought her willful and tried to believe that she amused herself by playing the devil with the only man available, but when I came to my senses. I knew I was a fool.

All she did was to associate frankly and friendlily with the only available man, and if she liked to be with me, it was a compliment I did not see that deserved.

with a fine-tooth comb, and we'll do With the return to normality, with it well. We are accustomed to doing Jed back and immediate alarms quieted, our family routine was re-established. Dinner, which had been less the sociable occasion that it might something until we know why Jed have been, because of Jed's malevolent superserviceability, became a pleasant stone' and hid them in a box built in event.

Heretofore Jed had made it a point to restrict and embarrass our attempts at easy conversation. Now he withdrew ing the purposes of the law, and if we and left us to ourselves.

It was owing to this extraordinarily favorable disposition that I, coming to dinner one evening in a sullen mood, had opportunity to take up a subject which concerned me.

"Mrs. Sidney." I said when Jed had placed the coffee-tray beside her and had retired, "I must ask you to release me from the absurd position I am in." "What position, John?" asked the kindly lady.

"I am engaged to Isobel," I said. "Which is a torment and a trial," sald Isobei.

"It is." I replied with warmth. "It is

evitability entered the house. We is trial and forment from which I wish release. I do not want to be hedged in by the absurdities of this arrange ment.

"John, my boy," said Mrs. Sidaey what's happened to you?"

"Nothing, but I'm confused. I'd feel better if Isobel and I were not on this preposterous footing."

"But there was a reason," Mrs Sidney suggested mildly, "and it still exists, and we relied upon you, John. We don't want to make you unhappy. but you don't care for Isobel. That's so apparent, and it helps us so much."

"I don't care whether he cares for me or not," said Isobel suddenly, "We are joing to remain engaged. Get your precise mind reconciled to the fact. John. While you are in this house, you and I are engaged to be married." "Isobel!" her mother exclaimed.

"I'm going to have the freedom that this man John brings me as my betrothed," said Isobel, "Both of you can recoacile yourselves to that. John, you are a victim. You are engaged to me, and I know you are unhappy. Mother, you see me do things because I am engaged to John. Well, I intend to remain engaged and to do thingsand I love you both."

And, by George! she danced up and kissed her mother and kissed me.

### CHAPTER XIII.

At times I hated myself as a methodical person, but it did no good, J was methodical, and from it there was no escape. I kept a diary. And each night as I made an entry, I turned back to the day of the year before. In doing so this night I rend in the entry of the previous year: "Mr. Sidney made a sudden and astonishing recovery of strength. He walked about his room without assistance and was in a high degree of animation."

I recalled that night with the sharper interest because the entry I was about to make this night was substantially if not precisely to the same effect. Mr. Sidney had again revealed an astonishing recovery of strength and had displayed the greatest animation. He had asked us to have our dinner in his room, a thing very seldom done, and he had been wonderful as the majestic, courteous head of the family, full of humor and joviality.

Jed was an amiable servitor, bantered by Mr. Sidney from time to time. Isobel's animation was as infectious as her father's, but Mrs. Sidney, 1 thought, had a look of apprehension in her eyes which was something apart from the pleasant smile on her face, She seemed to find the occasion significant, and I wonder that I had to rend m, diary to be refreshed in mem-

When I had read it, I also saw the significance, and turning the page in the record of the year before, I read: "Mr. Sidney is in a condition of exhaustion which might be called a complete and dangerous collapse. . . . Dr. Brownell, summoned in alarm, says that during his acquaintance with e case this transition overnight from extraordinary activity to exhaustica at approximately the same time of the

year, if not precisely on the same The apprehension which Mrs. Sidney could not wholly conceal had this good foundation. Mr. Sidney was in the periodic miracle of renewed health and strength, but for whatever cause. he would be found tomorrow morning

in a precarious condition of weakness The event seemed so certain that 1 thought it best to acquaint Dr. Brownell that night of the premonitory

symptoms. I decided to telephone a message to Dr. Brownell's residence in the city, to be given to him immediately if he were awake or as soon as he arose in the morning. I did not want to be everheard, by any chance, by any one, in telephoning this premonitory message. and thought that the office would be my most secure place.

The house was not yet in full darkness when I came down the stairs to the main hall. It was lighted, and the stairway leading directly to Mr Sidney's room was lighted, which indicated that Jed was still with Mr. Sid-

The office deer never was locked. 1 did not want Jed blundering in on me while I was telephoning. He would be along presently, I thought, and I decided to go out on the main portice until by the extinguishing of the lights I should know he was on his way to

I was on my way to act on this plan when the light in the ttairway leading to Mr. Sidney's room was extinguished, and I knew Jed was on his way downstairs. I did not have time to reach the entrance. I doubted that I even had time to retrace my steps. I did not want to meet Jed. So I supped into a sort of little lounging space off the ball, which was quite dark.

In a few minutes Jed went by, humming, not singing. I had expected him to be very tipsy, considering the jovial mood of Mr. Sidney it had even occured to me that once a year, on a certain date-one to be commemerated -Mr. Sidney joined Jed in the wine and that this caused the relapse. But Jed was not drunk, his step was

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Something Doing Then. If only more millionaires had the imagination of poets, sighs a Florida editor, what a wonderful world this might be! But wouldn't it be a still more wonderful world if more poets had the incomes of millionaires?-Springfield Republican.

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