

FRIDAY The 13th

By Thomas W. Lawson

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CHAPTER VI.—Continued.

She had drawn his head down close to her face, and her great blue eyes searched his as though they would go to his very soul. She was a child in her simple appeal for him to allow her to see his heart, to see that there was nothing black there.

As she gazed her beautiful hands played through his hair as do a mother's through that of the child she is soothing in sickness.

"Bob, speak to me, speak to me," she begged, "tell me there was no dishonor in the getting of those millions. Tell me no one was made to suffer as my father and I have suffered. Tell me that the suicides and the convicts, the daughters dragged to shame and the mothers driven to the madhouse as a result of this panic, cannot be charged to anything unfair or dishonorable that you have done. Bob, oh, Bob, answer! Answer no, or my heart will break; or if, Bob, you have made a mistake, if you have done that which in your great desire to aid me and my father seemed justifiable, but which you now see was wrong, tell it to me, Bob, dear, and together we will try to undo it. We will try to find a way to atone. We will give the millions to the last, last penny to those upon whom you have brought misery. Father's loss will not matter. Together we will go to him and tell him what we have done, what we have lived through, tell him of our mistake, and in our agony he will forget his own. For such a horror has my father of anything dishonorable that he will embrace his misery as happiness when he knows that his teachings have enabled his daughter to undo this great wrong. And then, Bob, we will be married, and you and I and father and mother will be together, and be, oh, so happy, and we will begin all over again."

"Beulah, stop; in the name of God, in the name of your love for me, don't say another word. There is a limit to the capacity of a man to suffer, even if he be a great, strong brute like myself, and, Beulah, I have reached that limit. The day has been a hard one."

His voice softened and became as a tired child's.

"I must go into the hustle of the street, into the din and sound, and get down my nerves and get back my head. Then I shall be able to think clear and true, and I will come back to you, and together we will see if I have done anything that makes me unfit to touch the cheek and the hands and the lips of the best and most beautiful woman God ever put upon earth. Beulah, you know I would not deceive you to save my body from the fires of this world, and my soul from the torture of the damned, and I promise you that if I find that I have done wrong, what you call wrong, what your father would call wrong, I will do what you say to atone."

He took her hand between his hands, gently, reverently, and touching his lips to her glorious golden hair, he went away.

Beulah Sands turned to me. "Please, Mr. Randolph, go with him. He is soul-saddened. One can never tell what a heart sorely perplexed will prompt its owner to do. Often in the night when I have got myself into a fever from thinking of my father's situation, I have had awful temptations. The agents of the devil seek the wretched when none of those they love are by. I have often thought some of the blackest tragedies of the earth might have been averted if there had been a true friend to stand at the wrung one's elbow at the fatal minute of decision and point to the sun behind, just when the black ahead grew unendurable. Please follow Mr. Brownley than you may be ready, should his awakening to what he has done become unbearable. Tell him the dreaded morrows are never as terrible actually as they seem in anticipation."

I overtook Bob just outside the office. I did not speak to him, for I realized that he was in no mood for company. I dropped in behind, determined that I would not lose sight of him. It was almost one o'clock. Wall street was at its meridian of frenzy, every one on a wild rush. The day's doings had packed the always crowded money lane. The newsboys were shouting afternoon editions. "Terrible panic in Wall street. One man against millions. Robert Brownley broke 'the street.' Made twenty millions in an hour. Bank failed. Wreck and ruin everywhere. Pres-suicide." Bob gave no sign of hearing. He strode with a slow, measured gait, his head erect, his eyes staring

ahead, a man thinking, thinking, thinking for his salvation. Many hurrying men looked at him, some with an expression of unutterable hatred, as though they wanted to attack him. Then again there were those who called him by name with a laugh of joy; and some turned to watch him in curiosity. It was easy to pick the wounded from those who shared in his victory, and from those who knew the frenzied finance buzz-saw only by its buzz. Bob saw none. Where could he be going? He came to the head of the street of coin and crime and crossed Broadway. His path was blocked by the fence surrounding old Trinity's churchyard. Grasping the pickets in either hand he stared at the crumbling headstones of those guardsmen of Mammon who once walked the earth and fought their heart battles, as he was walking and fighting, but who now knew no ten o'clock, no three, who looked upon the stock-gamblers and dollar-trailers as they looked upon the worms that



Upon a Bench Sat a Sweet-Faced Mother Holding a Sleeping Babe in Her Arms.

honeycombed their headstones' bases. What thoughts went through Bob Brownley's mind only his Maker knew. For minutes he stood motionless, then he walked down Broadway. He went into the Battery. The benches were crowded with that jet-sam and flotsam of humanity that New York's mighty sewers throw in armies upon her inland beaches at every sunrise. Here a sodden brute sleeping off a prolonged debauch, there a lad whose frankness of face and homespun clothes and bewildered eyes spelt "from the farm and mother's watchful love." On another bench an Italian woman who had a half-dozen future dollar kings and social queens about her, and whose clothes told of the immigrant ship just into port. Bob Brownley apparently saw none. But suddenly he stopped. Upon a bench sat a sweet-faced mother holding a sleeping babe in her arms, while a curly-pated boy nestled his head in her lap and slept through the magic lanes and fairy woods of dreamland. The woman's face was one of those that blend the confidence of girlhood with the uncertainty of womanhood. 'Twas a pretty face, which had been plainly tagged by its Maker for a light-hearted trip through the world, but it had been seared by the iron of the city.

"Mr. Brownley—" She started to rise.

He gently pushed her back with a "hush," unwilling to rob the sleepers of their heaven.

"What are you doing here, Mrs. —?" He halted.

"Mrs. Chase. Mr. Brownley, when I went away from Randolph & Randolph's office I married John Chase; you may remember him as a delivery clerk. I had such a happy home and

my husband was good; I did not have to typewrite any longer. These are our two children."

"What are you doing here?" The tears sprang to her eyes; she dropped them, but did not answer.

"Don't mind me, woman. I, too, have hidden hells I don't want the world to see. Don't mind me; tell me your story. It may do you good; it may do me good; yes, it may do me good."

I had dropped into a seat a few feet away. Both were too much occupied with their own thoughts to notice me or any one else. I could not overhear their conversation, but long afterward, when I mentioned our old stenographer, Bessie Brown, to Bob, he told me of the incident at the Battery. Her husband, after their marriage, had become infected with the stock-gambling microbe, the microbe that gnaws into its victim's mind and heart day and night, while ever fiercer grows the "get rich, get rich" fever. He had plunged with their savings and had drawn a blank. He had lost his position in disgrace and had landed in the bucket-shop, the sub-cellar pit of the big stock exchange hell. From there a week before he had been sent to prison for theft, and that morning she had been turned into the street by her landlord. I saw Bob take from his pocket his memorandum-book, write something upon a leaf, tear it out and hand it to the woman, touch his hat, and before she could stop him, stride away. I saw her look at the paper, clap her hands to her forehead, look at the paper again and at the retreating form of Bob Brownley. Then I saw her, yes, there in the old Battery park, in

the drizzling rain and under the eyes of all, drop upon her knees in prayer. How long she prayed I do not know. I only know that as I followed Bob I looked back and the woman was still upon her knees. I thought at the time how queer and unnatural the whole thing seemed. Later, I learned to know that nothing is queer and unnatural in the world of human suffering; that great human suffering turns all that is queer and unnatural into commonplace. Next day Bessie Brown came to our office to see Bob. Not being able to get at him she asked for me.

"Mr. Randolph, tell me, please, what shall I do with this paper?" she said. "I met Mr. Brownley in the Battery yesterday. He saw I was in distress, and he gave me this, but I cannot believe he meant it," and she showed me an order on Randolph & Randolph for a thousand dollars. I

cashied her check and she went away. From the Battery Bob sought the wharves, the Bowery, Five Points, the hothouses of the under world of America. He seemed bent on picking out the haunts of misery in the misery-infested metropolis of the new world. For two hours he tramped and I followed. A number of times I thought to speak to him and try to win him from his mood, but I refrained. I could see there was a soul battle waging and I realized that upon its outcome might depend Bob's salvation. Some seek the quiet of the woods, the soothing rustle of the leaves, the peaceful ripple of the brook when battling for their soul, but Bob's woods appeared to be the shadowy places of misery, his rustling leaves the hoarse din of the multitude, and his brook's ripple the tears and tales of the man-damned of the great city, for he stopped and conversed with many human derelicts that he met on his course. The hand of the clock on Trinity's steeple pointed to four as we again approached the office of Randolph & Randolph. Bob was now moving with a long, hurried stride, as though consumed with a fever of desire to get to Beulah Sands. For the last 15 minutes I had with difficulty kept him in sight. **Fixed he arrived at a decision, and if so, what was it? I asked myself over and over again as I plowed through the crowds.**

Bob went straight to Beulah Sands' office, I to mine. I had been there but a moment when I heard deep, guttural groans. I listened. The sound came louder than before. It came from Beulah Sands' office. With a bound I was at the open door. My God, the sight that met my gaze! It haunts me even now when years have dulled its vividness. The beautiful, quiet, gray figure that had grown to be such a familiar picture to Bob and me of late, sat at the flat desk in the center of the room. She faced the door. Her elbows rested on the desk; in her hand was an afternoon paper that she had evidently been reading when Bob entered. God knows how long she had been reading it before he came. Bob was kneeling at the side of her chair, his hands clasped and uplifted in an agony of appeal that was supplemented by the awful groans.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Moorish Idea of Feminine Beauty.

The amiability of Moorish women strikes me greatly, says a writer in the National Review. I visited some the other day, and they were full of kindly interest. They liked my fair hair, they liked my clothes; one old crone suggested how lovely I should be were I to paint my cheeks a brilliant red, stain my under lips coal black, adding three black vertical lines on my forehead and one in the middle of my chin, also stain my teeth with walnut juice, my hands with henna! I therefore rubbed my cheeks with my handkerchief till they turned crimson; that amused them highly, and they laughed and said I needed no paint, but did need henna and blacking!

Milk Peddler's Trick.

"Of course, in this city," said a Philadelphia milk inspector, "the milk is pure, but I've been in some towns where impure milk dealers have played some funny dodges on me. You know how I work? Sneak along the streets, hold up a milkman, and take a sample right out of the can? Well, it has been a common thing when a milkman has known me by sight for him to pretend to trip on seeing me coming, fall headlong and upset his can of milk all over the pavement. Yes, that trick worked the first time, and I wasted a lot of pity on the man that played it."

Trade with Malaysia.

Malaysia—that is, Java, Sumatra and the federated Malay states—is of much more commercial importance than is usually thought. It buys canned apricots, peaches and pears almost entirely from California. Until 1903 the United States supplied three-fourths of the flour, but Australian flour has cut into that trade heavily. It is a large buyer of condensed milk from Europe, the United States and Canada. Its agricultural implement requirements are large. Modern mining machinery is growing in use for tin mining.

Records Depth of Water.

An instrument has recently been invented for recording the depth of water, and which makes a pen record something on the principle of the machine which records the rough places in a railroad track. A slab of metal attached to a rope is dragged over the bottom by a boat moving slowly. The other end of the rope extends over pulleys to the charting room, where a pen records the ups and downs, or peaks and valleys of the bottom, making a topographical map. Experts know how to translate these tracings into feet or fathoms. The results are much more accurate and vastly quicker than the old method of sounding with a hand line.

The Whole Thing.

"It's called a 'loving cup,' you say? My! what a big cup it is! What's it for?"

"The rum punch and things like that."

"But why is it called a loving cup?"

"Because it's for people loving rum punch and things like that."

MANY HAVE SOUGHT

AND NONE FOUND, PERFECT SYSTEM OF SHORTHAND.

Desire Was As Ardent in the Days of the Romans as in Our Own Time —Fortune Awaits the Discoverer.

Sir Edward Clarke, in joining the ranks of the inventors of systems of shorthand, has yielded to a temptation common to great men of all ages. The learned Egyptian who first got tired of writing out a complete hieroglyphic, and took to suggesting part of it only, was on the way not only to an alphabet, but toward the goal reached by Sir Edward himself. Since that dim period we have all been doing our best to find a royal road to expression, and have achieved the gramophone. Even Herbert Spencer, whose father invented a "Lucid Shorthand," was bitten with the desire to conquer time, and he tells us that an examination of his father's system left him in no doubt whatever that it was the best of all.

The fatality of all systems, however, is that what seems easy to the eye of filial piety may be terribly difficult to the cold gaze of the stranger. Of the innumerable systems of shorthand that were in vogue a century ago how many survive today? In spite of Pitman, fame and fortune still await the man or woman who can invent a system that will appeal to the reader as effectively as to the original writer. Perhaps if we were to rediscover the lost shorthand writing of the ancient Romans we might feel ourselves on the road toward a solution of the problem.

For the Romans were on affectionate terms with shorthand. Did not Suetonius, speaking of Calligula, express surprise that an emperor of so many promising parts should, nevertheless, be an ignoramus in shorthand; and did not Titus Vespasianus pride himself on his facility in the use of stenography both for business and amusement? So fond was he of the sport that he delighted to gather his amanuenses around him in order that they should tilt against each other in the stenographic field. It may be that but for the rediscovery of the art in our own country toward the end of the sixteenth century the curious Pepsys would not have been moved to write his Diary, says the London Chronicle.

The first impulse to the rediscovery and cultivation of shorthand in modern times may probably be traced to the desire, at the time of the Reformation, of preserving the discourses of the preachers of the new doctrines. "To write as fast as a man speaketh treatably," the Elizabethan writing master and stenographer, Peter Bales, declared to be "in effect very easy" * the shortness whereof is attained by memory, and swiftness by practice, and sweetness by industry." But the early systems were very inefficient, and this has been considered by critics to be one of the causes of the corrupt readings of the text of some of Shakespeare's plays. Contemporary opinion on the subject may be gathered from the "Pleasant Dialogues and Drammas" of Thomas Heywood (1637), who says that his play of "Queen Elizabeth"

"Did throng the seats, the boxes and the stage So much so that some by stenography drew A plot, put it in print, scarce one word true."

Neighborly Affection.

They met on the suburban car. They were next door neighbors, but Mrs. Snaggsley and her family were spending the summer in the country.

Mrs. Snaggsley—Have you had a pleasant summer, Mrs. Sassem?

Mrs. Sassem—Oh, yes. But when are you coming back?—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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In Ocean's Greatest Depths.

Pressure of Water That Would Destroy a Battleship.

More than half the surface of the globe is hidden under water two miles deep; 7,000,000 square miles lie at a depth of 18,000 feet or more. Many places have been found five miles and more in depth. The greatest depth yet sounded is 31,200 feet, near the island of Guam. If Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain, were plucked from its seat and dropped into this spot the waves would still roll 2,000 feet above its crest. Into this terrific abyss the waters press down with a force of more than 10,000 pounds to the square inch. The staunchest ship ever built would be crippled under this awful pressure like an eggshell under a steam roller. A pine beam, 15 feet long, which held open the mouth of a trawl used in making a cast at a depth of more than 18,000 feet, was crushed flat as if it had been passed between rollers. The body of the man who should attempt to venture to such depths would be compressed until the flesh was forced into the interstices of the bone and his trunk was no larger than a rolling pin. Still, the body would reach the bottom, for anything that will sink in a tub of water will sink to the uttermost depths of the ocean. —Eugene Willoughby in The Ocean.