

Rainforth's Strange Case.

By WILL LISENBEE.

Copyright, 1894, by American Press Association.

Continued from last week.

CHAPTER IV.

GERALD RAINFORTH'S STORY CONTINUED. I shall never forget the moments that I sat there holding the hand of the unconscious woman...

She lay limp and pallid in the damp grass, one hand resting in the soft folds of exquisite lace upon her breast...

I now woke to the realization that something must be done for her at once. It would not do to remain idle when every moment might be precious as life.

I lifted her tenderly in my arms and bore her swiftly up the slope, my heart beating in a wild tumult of conflicting emotions.

I heard a rustling within. Then there came a voice from the window overhead. "Who is there?"

"Here is some one in distress," I replied. "It is a lady. She is seriously hurt, I fear."

"I still held the senseless burden in my arms, and the woman uttered a cry of horror as she saw me."

"This lady is hurt and needs your help," I said hastily. "She is doubtless a sleepwalker."

"My God, it is Miss Grace!" The woman uttered the exclamation as she came forward, and then she threw her arms about the unconscious form I supported.

"Thank heaven she is not killed," cried the woman. Then, turning, she led the way through a dark hall and into a wide, airy room.

"Having no living relative now, Miss Dangerfield cared little where she made her home. Her old and trusted servants were with her, and she had decided to spend a few months at the Villa del Bargaccio, then return to New York."

As the days went by a great happiness came into my life. She whom I worshipped with my whole soul loved me—she had promised to be my wife!

"Some water and a little spirits, if you have any in the house," she disappeared to execute the order, calling loudly to some other inmates of the house as she did so.

"Your mistress is hurt badly," said the woman beside the couch. "Call Beppo and send him for the doctor!"

"Beppo! Beppo!" she called in a frightened voice. In a few moments an Italian lad of about 16 appeared at the door.

"Go for Dr. Bargaccio at once! Your mistress is very ill!" she said. With a bow the youth disappeared to execute the order.

"Thank heaven she is recovering," came from the woman beside the couch. I turned to the girl.

"I shall remain till after the doctor arrives," I said. "I should like to know the extent of her injuries before I return to the city."

"It seemed like an age till the doctor arrived, but when he at last came he found the patient fully restored to consciousness. He remained a half hour, and when he came out said:

"She is asleep now and resting quietly. She is not seriously hurt and will recover in a few days."

"We are very grateful to you," she said. "How fortunate that you brought her here! This is her home. Poor darling! She has been waiting in her sleep again. It always happens when she is in great trouble."

"I am happy to have been of service to her," I said. "I shall take the liberty to call and inquire after her tomorrow."

"Miss Dangerfield would be glad to thank you for your kindness in person," she said.

Then I took my departure and walked the entire distance to my lodgings, happier than I had ever been before in my life.

On the following evening I called at the villa. Miss Dangerfield was almost entirely recovered, the servant informed me. She was in the drawing room and would see me.

There was a strange fluttering of my heart as I was ushered into her presence. I shall never forget the picture she made as my eyes encountered her.

The curtains were closely drawn save at the eastern window, and a mellow twilight pervaded the room.

I next came here, but learned that the place had never been occupied by its owner. I decided to remain in Mayburg for some time, hoping that she for whom I had vainly searched so long might come to the place to make it her home.

On the evening of Sept. 10 I received a cipher dispatch from a New York detective, whom I had employed, stating that Miss Grace Dangerfield had come to Mayburg and would take up her abode at Darkwood Hall.

I shall never forget the look of speechless agony upon her face as I stood before her. She became as white as death and clutched the back of a chair for support.

"I will tell you," she said, her voice sinking almost to a whisper. "I fled from you at Rome because—because I had deceived you—because I was then and am still the wife of another!"

"Then, like one who reels under a heavy load, she staggered from the room, leaving me alone."

"Just how I made my way from the house I never knew. She was another's wife!"

"Like one who has heard his death sentence, I made my way across the lawn to the gate. Then, turning, I walked through the park toward Mayburg."

"During the remainder of the night I never closed my eyes in sleep. The next morning I learned that a murder had been committed near Darkwood Hall."

"Later I was arrested, accused of committing the crime. Of the man who was murdered or the one who murdered him I know nothing."

"What evidence is to be brought against me I do not know. Shall I be made to suffer for another's crime? Despair has made me indifferent to life, yet something tells me that I shall yet be the means of clearing up the mystery that surrounds the dark affair."

"He ended abruptly the manuscript Gerald Rainforth had given me."

CHAPTER V. The contents of the manuscript I had just read impressed me strangely. Surely the young artist's experiences had been as strange as they were romantic.

The object of his visit to Darkwood Hall on that fatal night was fully explained, yet the revelation he had made only served to deepen the veil of mystery that enshrouded the fair young mistress of the hall.

"As I reflected over the matter the ending of the human finger in the murdered man's valise and my subsequent discovery that a corresponding member was missing from the self-accused's hand came forcibly to my mind."

"As soon as I had finished reading the manuscript I went to visit the young artist in his cell at the jail. He was strangely moody and had little to say. Presently his manner changed."

"You have read the manuscript I gave you?" he asked. "Yes," I replied.

"Can you believe that she ever committed the murder?" "I cannot. There is a great mistake—a great mystery somewhere."

"You are right," he answered, "and I am going to solve that mystery. I know she is innocent. Look at this and tell me what you think of it."

Here he produced a piece of paper about 8 inches square on which a drawing had been recently made. It was a pen drawing—an excellent piece of work—showing a scene by moonlight.

A low, well-trimmed hedge and a grove of trees formed a shadowy background. In the foreground, the moonlight plainly revealing their features, were two men, one slightly behind the other, an upturned knife in his hand.

"What does this mean?" I asked, turning to Gerald in astonishment. "Do you recognize either of the faces in the picture?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied. "One has the face and form of the man who was murdered."

"You are sure of it?" "Yes." A bright light gleamed in the young artist's eye.

"You knew the deceased then?" I asked. "No."

"You have seen him?" "Never."

"Yet you drew this picture?" "Yes."

"I don't understand—surely"—He interrupted me with a wave of his hand. "Listen," he said. "I will explain."

"I said that I would solve the mystery—I would discover the real murderer, for whose crime I have been arrested. This is his picture!"

As he spoke he placed his finger upon the picture of the man with the upturned knife in the drawing. I looked at the speaker in amazement: Had he taken leave of his senses?

He saw the astonishment upon my face and continued hastily: "I see you are surprised—I am often surprised at it myself—it is nothing I cannot explain, but the scene you see on this paper came to me in the middle of the night following that on which the murder was committed. It has twice been repeated. Call it dream, vision or what you will, it so stamped itself upon my brain that I was able to reproduce it in the drawing as accurately as any very it had actually transpired before my very eyes."

Photographs of this drawing are now in the hands of the detectives, and I have hopes that the murderer will soon be caught."

"I could not help but be impressed with the sanguine manner of the young artist; yet, being very skeptical, I could regard the matter in no other light than that of an illusion or the product of an excited imagination."

But there was the likeness of the murdered man—that was something that set my whole reasoning faculties into a tangle.

"Believing that Grace Dangerfield is innocent, how do you account for her confessing to have committed the crime?" "It is all very strange," he answered after a pause.

"Why, it is absurd to think she is guilty, for as near as I can judge by the evidence in the case I must have been with her at the very moment that the murder was committed."

I remember that the clock struck 9 just as I came through the hall after I left her. But, then, there is her confession, and in addition to that there is the mystery of the missing finger. All taken together makes the whole affair seem decidedly strange."

"Have you ever thought that she might be laboring under a spell of temporary insanity?" I asked. "I have known in my own practice patients that labored under hallucinations of almost similar character."

"I have thought of that," he replied, "and your words strengthen the belief that such may prove to be the case."

I remained in the cell for over an hour discussing the subject with the prisoner. Then I took my leave and went to see Miss Dangerfield, who was still lying in an unconscious condition at the sheriff's home. I found a little change in her condition for the better.

So the days went by till a week had passed. Grace Dangerfield had recovered her consciousness, but was very weak. As yet she had spoken to no one regarding the murder, and I had given orders that she must not be allowed to talk on any subject till she was stronger."

It was two weeks later before Grace Dangerfield recovered sufficiently to leave her bed. Then she was taken to the jail, where she was confined in a cell to await the sitting of the court.

One evening, about a week later Gerald sent for me and handed me a telegram dated at New York city and which contained the words: I have the man. Will be there at 4:30."

"This is from my detective," said Gerald, "and he has captured the murderer. But this is not all the good news I have to tell you."

"Grace has just sent me this. Read it—it will explain many things that have puzzled us both."

As he spoke he handed me some sheets of paper, closely written in a fine, round hand. Unfolding the manuscript, I read as follows: (To be continued.)

Errors of Youth. SUFFERERS FROM: Nervous Debility, Youthful Indiscretions, Lost Manhood, BE YOUR OWN PHYSICIAN.

Many men, from the effects of youthful indiscretions, are rendered a state of weakness that has reduced the general system so much as to induce almost every other disease, and the real cause of the trouble is never being ascertained, they are directed for relief to the right, and they have learned the only reliable remedy that restores them to health and vigor.

As soon as I had finished reading the manuscript I went to visit the young artist in his cell at the jail. He was strangely moody and had little to say. Presently his manner changed.

"You have read the manuscript I gave you?" he asked. "Yes," I replied.

"Can you believe that she ever committed the murder?" "I cannot. There is a great mistake—a great mystery somewhere."

"You are right," he answered, "and I am going to solve that mystery. I know she is innocent. Look at this and tell me what you think of it."

Here he produced a piece of paper about 8 inches square on which a drawing had been recently made. It was a pen drawing—an excellent piece of work—showing a scene by moonlight.

A low, well-trimmed hedge and a grove of trees formed a shadowy background. In the foreground, the moonlight plainly revealing their features, were two men, one slightly behind the other, an upturned knife in his hand.

"What does this mean?" I asked, turning to Gerald in astonishment. "Do you recognize either of the faces in the picture?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied. "One has the face and form of the man who was murdered."

"You are sure of it?" "Yes." A bright light gleamed in the young artist's eye.

"You knew the deceased then?" I asked. "No."

"You have seen him?" "Never."

"Yet you drew this picture?" "Yes."

"I don't understand—surely"—He interrupted me with a wave of his hand. "Listen," he said. "I will explain."

"I said that I would solve the mystery—I would discover the real murderer, for whose crime I have been arrested. This is his picture!"

As he spoke he placed his finger upon the picture of the man with the upturned knife in the drawing. I looked at the speaker in amazement: Had he taken leave of his senses?

He saw the astonishment upon my face and continued hastily: "I see you are surprised—I am often surprised at it myself—it is nothing I cannot explain, but the scene you see on this paper came to me in the middle of the night following that on which the murder was committed. It has twice been repeated. Call it dream, vision or what you will, it so stamped itself upon my brain that I was able to reproduce it in the drawing as accurately as any very it had actually transpired before my very eyes."

Photographs of this drawing are now in the hands of the detectives, and I have hopes that the murderer will soon be caught."

"I could not help but be impressed with the sanguine manner of the young artist; yet, being very skeptical, I could regard the matter in no other light than that of an illusion or the product of an excited imagination."

But there was the likeness of the murdered man—that was something that set my whole reasoning faculties into a tangle.

"Believing that Grace Dangerfield is innocent, how do you account for her confessing to have committed the crime?" "It is all very strange," he answered after a pause.

"Why, it is absurd to think she is guilty, for as near as I can judge by the evidence in the case I must have been with her at the very moment that the murder was committed."

I remember that the clock struck 9 just as I came through the hall after I left her. But, then, there is her confession, and in addition to that there is the mystery of the missing finger. All taken together makes the whole affair seem decidedly strange."

"Have you ever thought that she might be laboring under a spell of temporary insanity?" I asked. "I have known in my own practice patients that labored under hallucinations of almost similar character."

"I have thought of that," he replied, "and your words strengthen the belief that such may prove to be the case."

I remained in the cell for over an hour discussing the subject with the prisoner. Then I took my leave and went to see Miss Dangerfield, who was still lying in an unconscious condition at the sheriff's home. I found a little change in her condition for the better.

So the days went by till a week had passed. Grace Dangerfield had recovered her consciousness, but was very weak. As yet she had spoken to no one regarding the murder, and I had given orders that she must not be allowed to talk on any subject till she was stronger."

It was two weeks later before Grace Dangerfield recovered sufficiently to leave her bed. Then she was taken to the jail, where she was confined in a cell to await the sitting of the court.

One evening, about a week later Gerald sent for me and handed me a telegram dated at New York city and which contained the words: I have the man. Will be there at 4:30."

"This is from my detective," said Gerald, "and he has captured the murderer. But this is not all the good news I have to tell you."

"Grace has just sent me this. Read it—it will explain many things that have puzzled us both."

As he spoke he handed me some sheets of paper, closely written in a fine, round hand. Unfolding the manuscript, I read as follows: (To be continued.)

Errors of Youth. SUFFERERS FROM: Nervous Debility, Youthful Indiscretions, Lost Manhood, BE YOUR OWN PHYSICIAN.

Many men, from the effects of youthful indiscretions, are rendered a state of weakness that has reduced the general system so much as to induce almost every other disease, and the real cause of the trouble is never being ascertained, they are directed for relief to the right, and they have learned the only reliable remedy that restores them to health and vigor.

As soon as I had finished reading the manuscript I went to visit the young artist in his cell at the jail. He was strangely moody and had little to say. Presently his manner changed.

"You have read the manuscript I gave you?" he asked. "Yes," I replied.

"Can you believe that she ever committed the murder?" "I cannot. There is a great mistake—a great mystery somewhere."

"You are right," he answered, "and I am going to solve that mystery. I know she is innocent. Look at this and tell me what you think of it."

Here he produced a piece of paper about 8 inches square on which a drawing had been recently made. It was a pen drawing—an excellent piece of work—showing a scene by moonlight.

A low, well-trimmed hedge and a grove of trees formed a shadowy background. In the foreground, the moonlight plainly revealing their features, were two men, one slightly behind the other, an upturned knife in his hand.

"What does this mean?" I asked, turning to Gerald in astonishment. "Do you recognize either of the faces in the picture?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied. "One has the face and form of the man who was murdered."

Farmers Mutual Insurance Co. OF NEBRASKA. Organized in 1891. \$2,000,000 + Insurance + Now + In + Effect. PRINCIPAL OFFICE: 245 South 11th Street, LINCOLN, NEB.

Office of Nebraska State Hail Insurance Association (MUTUAL) Six reasons why every farmer should investigate the merits of the Nebraska State Hail Insurance Association of Fairfield, Neb., (formerly of Kearney) before insuring elsewhere: 1st. It is the only Hail Insurance company in the world that gives each member DELEGATE representation in the ELECTION OF OFFICERS and management of all business.

FREE GOLD FILLED WATCH AND BOX OF 5000 CIGARS C.O.D. \$5.95 WESTERN UNION MFG. CO., 281 Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill.

WEBER GASOLINE ENGINES The best because the most simple. A few minutes' attention a day will keep it running. Most economical; guaranteed cost of running is one cent per horse power per hour. Address: No. 401 Southwest Boulevard, Weber Gas & Gasoline Engine Co., Kansas City, Missouri.

Make Your Own Cheese! At Home. Send One Dollar to C. E. Kittinger, Powell, South Dakota, for 10 rennets and instruction in making and curing cheese at home with such apparatus as every farmer now has. Your money refunded if you fail. Three pounds of cheese can be made in place of one pound of butter, and can all be sold to your neighbors. HUNDREDS HAVE TRIED MY PROCESS WITH NOT ONE FAILURE.

FOR SALE! OR WILL TRADE FOR SOME GOOD FARM LANDS. I have a lot of excellent good pure bred (covered) stallions and mares, both Percheron and English Shire. Also imported and American bred Standard Ponies. This stock is of our own importations and raising; clean, healthy and all right. We will sell one animal or all, as the entire stock must be disposed of. For a list and description address: A. L. BULLIVANT, The Importing Draft Horse Company, LINCOLN, NEB.

L. BANKS WILSON, Creston, Iowa. IMPORTER OF Percheron, English Shire, Belgian and Coach Horses.

MY horses won more honors than any importer's in America, at the following fairs: Iowa State Fair, Des Moines; Nebraska State Fair, Lincoln; and the Kansas City Fair, second year. My Black Percheron stallion, Jeannot, and my Belgian stallion, Bampton, never failed to take first premium and sweepstakes over all. For strictly first-class imported horses, low prices, low interest and long time visits the Creston City Farm, Creston, Iowa. Telephone to farm, one mile distant. New importations just received.

HELLO. Turkish Gonorrhoea Cure, the only internal medicine made that will cure in from 24 hours without causing strictures, only one cure for gonorrhoea, gonorrhoea, gonorrhoea. Sold only by HALL'S PHARMACY, 215 Farmers St., Omaha, Neb.

F. M. WOODS, Fine Stock Auctioneer. 1283 E St., Lincoln, Neb.

RUPTURE PERMANENTLY CURED OR NO PAY UNTIL CURED. WE NEVER YOU \$,000 PATIENTS. Write for Bank References. EXAMINATION FREE. No Operation. No Detention from Business. SEND FOR CIRCULAR. THE O. E. MILLER CO., 397-308 N. Y. Life Bldg., OMAHA, NEB.

Burlington Route BEST LINE TO ST. LOUIS AND CHICAGO. NOW OFFERS Reduced Rates! for round trip tickets to Many Tourist Points. AMONG THEM: Hot Springs, Deadwood, Rapid City, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth, Ashland, Bayfield, Madison, Milwaukee, Oconomowoc, Wis., and other points too numerous to mention in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Ontario, etc. For Rates, Maps, Etc., see S. A. MORTON, A. S. FIELDING, Gen'l Agt., City Tr. Bldg., 117 So. 10th St., Lincoln, Neb. Depot: Center St. and 9th streets.