

Woman The Mystery

By HENRY HERMAN

CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

at the time when Walter and Adams were inquiring for him at the St. Charles hotel. Mr. Robert Beringuy was seated in the first floor room of the Hotel de Paris. His pale face was of a papery white, and a nervous twitch distorted his mouth from time to time.

"I am afraid," he said, in his slow, quiet voice, "I was very indiscreet this morning; but you can imagine my surprise when I saw the fellow standing before me—I, who thought him dead years ago. You never reported to me that you knew all about him. That was unwise."

"I would have had to make reports that would have filled books if I had wanted to inform you of everything that came under my notice," said Bernard Quayle, who was sitting opposite him. "I don't think there is much harm done. He has lost all memory through his accident, and I care as he has by this time forgotten your question and all concerning it."

"Let us hope so," retorted Beringuy. "Anything that can mar your success falls so heavily upon me. Do you think you are approaching the end of your luck?" he whispered in hoarse gutturals.

"I think our chances are decidedly favorable," rejoined Quayle. "I have a man downstairs who will settle the business for us, and if he won't—here his eyes glared more ferociously—"I will take it in hand myself."

"Mind," whispered Beringuy then, "there must be proof, absolute proof of her death. The whole business is in the hands of the Court of Chancery now, and there must be such proof as the court will accept before I can obtain possession of the property. It is a matter of life and death to me now. I am in the hands of men who will show me no mercy. It will mean the prison if I cannot find money to pay them, and I would at any time rather die than that. Therefore, name your own price—any sum you like. You shall have it. Only rid me of my millions."

At this moment they were interrupted by the entrance of Henri, dressed in a Marine uniform.

"I finish," he cried, with an imperious wave of the hand. "I no more scrub floor. I not clean knife. I go soldier, I go fight."

"When you are sane again, my friend," said Quayle, quietly, "I will talk to you. Do you know in whose regiment you are going to fight? Do you know who your colonel is?"

"I not care," rejoined Monsieur Henri, with alacrity. "But I see her. I see Helena. Beautiful. An' I shall be near her."

"Yes," retorted Quayle; "you will be near her—near the woman who sent us back to the gallies; and when your senses come back to you, you driving idiot, you will not be so pleased that you are under the heel of a man who has already once given you a taste of his quality, and who will again, if he only dreams of you really are."

"I not care. I not afraid, an' if 'e comes 'cross me—I kill 'im!"

"Go downstairs!" hissed Quayle. "It is a miracle," he whispered when Henri had gone down. "All goes swimmingly. If I had asked the camp to join Adams' corps, he might have refused. Now that he is already in the battalion, it will be so easy to let a stray bullet find a billet where it is least expected."

CHAPTER XI.

Over a year had passed, and the cloud of battle lay dark and sullen over the pine woods near Richmond. On the previous day, the 31st of May, 1862, a battle had been fought. The Louisiana battalion had shared the fight, which had ended in a temporary retreat of the Union forces.

Col. Adams and Walter Glydes, now a major, were in camp, while Helena was in Richmond, only a few miles away. Toward morning Walter was walking a mile way behind the outpost, when he became across Henry Salton, who had actually sneaked into the Union camp across the ditch and brought back with him some coffee, which was already a rare luxury in the Confederate army. He was soundly reprimanded by his superior officer, who told him he would report him to Col. Adams.

In return Henri informed Walter that the enemy were getting ready to march on them and take them by surprise. Major Glydes immediately conveyed this startling information to Col. Adams, who at once called his men into action. It was not a moment too soon. With a push and a roar the Union troops swept down upon them.

All along the line of the Louisianians the musketry rattled, and the powder smoke wrapped the battalion in its stowery shroud. Every eye was fixed on the front, where the enemy's rifles flashed and cracked. Henri was but three or four paces behind Adams, and a little to the latter's left.

"Fire into the bushes! Fire into those bushes!" cried the officers.

Henri had just reloading his musket, and as he raised it a fendish thought flashed into his mind. Adams was standing with his back to him, waving his sword, and pointing out to a sergeant a spot in the enemy's line where the firing seemed to be fiercest.

Henri gripped his weapon and looked about him frantically. He placed the musket to his shoulder and fired, and Adams threw up his arms and fell to the ground.

"Zat for Toobee," hissed Henri between his teeth. "Zat for penal servitude. Monsieur Quayle will be pleased."

In a little garden in the western outskirts of Richmond, behind a screen of camellias, and in the shade of five or six large and venerable oaks, Helena was seated opposite a box, middle-aged negro woman, in whose shrewd black eyes the white teeth gleamed so brightly on the white lips.

the stems of the sunflowers a face flashed upon her, a man's face, which she knew—Capt. Denon's.

On the first impulse of recognition, she was about to rise and ask him aloud to step indoors, but with the self-same heart-beat, she remembered that he was a United States officer, and her pulse nearly stood still as it flashed upon her that, at that time, he could be in Richmond only as a spy or prisoner. A hall seemed to stick in her throat, and she stood slowly and said to the astonished negro woman:

"I have heard all I want from you, Sue, and I am so much obliged. You can go back to your work. I'll call you again when I want you."

She had advanced a step or two and was standing there with white face and flashing eyes. Capt. Denon took off his hat and bowed to her. "May I come in, Miss Lamure?" he whispered; and she simply nodded, hardly knowing what she did.

The latch clicked under Capt. Denon's hand, and he stood before her, and was about to address her; but she, remembering the circumstances of the case, said to him:

"I think we had better go within doors, captain. Follow me."

She led the way to the parlor, bright with its gay chintzes and comfortable with its homely furniture. Denon had followed, hat in hand, and stood before her like a great overgrown schoolboy, who cannot find words to express his thoughts. The woman was the first to recover her self-possession.

"What is the meaning of this?" she said. "Why did you come here?"

"I came here because, being in Richmond, I would have died rather than not see you."

"I am weary of hearing this, Capt. Denon," she said. "Every man I meet tells me that he is in love with me. I wish I could find a man who hated me, so that I might make him love me. Just for a change."

"I am very sorry," he said, quietly, "in making my life for a glimpse of you, and your first words are a reproach."

"You risk your life!" exclaimed Helena, hotly. "Of course, you are in Richmond as a prisoner of war!"

"Not a prisoner of war," he answered, with slow diffidence. "Then you can only be in Richmond as a spy. Confess it. Confess it, sir."

"I am not a spy," was the pained rejoinder. "I came here as the bearer of instructions to the principal United States agent."

She turned with an angry haunter. "Bearer of instructions to a spy, or a spy yourself, is all the same."

"I should not have accepted the mission," he said, so slowly and so solemnly that, in spite of her seething anger, the words touched her heart-strings. "I would never have come to Richmond had it not been that I was inspired by the hope that I might see you. For a glimpse of you I have risked my life and my honor. For another glimpse of you I would risk my life and honor twenty times again, even under the dread of offending you."

The noise of horses' hoofs and of carriage wheels upon the gravelly road attracted their attention, and when Helena flew to the window she saw that a two-horse ambulance had arrived at the garden gate. Walter, who had been sitting with the driver, jumped from the wagon. Helena leaned against the window with her face as white as Denon's, and her staring eyes saw the stretcher men take Adams from the ambulance and prepare to bring the wounded man into the house.

"Poor Daddy!" moaned Helena, staggering back and looking frightenedly at the man who, if he were discovered by a Southern officer, was certain to meet his fate on the gallows. Her glance traveled all around the room in a feverish trouble. Her sympathy for her wounded protector was crushed out of her heart by the dread of the fate in store for the man who, she said to herself with the same breath, was nothing to her after all.

"It's all up with me," gasped Capt. Denon, "and I am not sorry. Since you give me no hope, death is the happiest fate that can befall me."

CHAPTER XII.

Walter stood for a second or two dumb with pain and amazement. In the next moment, however, he remembered that he had no right to express surprise or pain, even if he were racked by either. Helena was free to show her preference for any man. At the same time it seemed to him as if Helena's act were poisoned by a guilty secrecy, and he felt the sting of it bitterly.

"The Colonel is badly hurt," he said at last, with broken voice. "He was shot through the lung on Sunday. Will you not go to him? The doctor says that we have every reason to hope for the best, but the Colonel is very weak, and he asked for you the moment he approached the house."

Helena cast an anxious glance toward the door of her room, and an unusual pallor spread over her face. She hesitated for a few seconds, and then tripped out of the room. As she reached the landing outside she had to lean against the wall for support.

"Has Jack seen Denon?" she asked herself, starting into the gray vacancy. "What will Jack think of me? That poor Denon! Jack will find him, and they will show him or hang him."

At that moment Sue's black face gleamed upon her in the light of the upper landing window, and she hastened to the woman.

"Yes, get him out of the house with out being seen. His life and my home depend upon it." Helena gasped while she muttered the words.

The old servant pressed her mistress' hand, and darted upstairs without a word. Helena had to grip the banisters while she ascended the stairs. On the first floor she drew a long breath, and said to herself, "Well, if there is no way out of it I cannot help it, but I must try to save him if it can be done."

The wounded man was lying on a little iron bedstead near the window when Helena entered the room, and the summer light rippling through the muslin curtains shone upon the pale, pain-struck face. The once clear gray eyes were dull and nearly glassy. Suffering had angularized every line and every feature, and the barely perceptible smile which gleamed there was the only token of recognition.

"Come, my dear," said the weak voice, "sit by me here, and let me hold your hand. I am glad, if I am to die, that I can end my days near you."

"I am so sorry, Daddy Adams," she said, "but I must be brave. You will get over this."

"I don't know," was the hoarse and feeble rejoinder. "I am not so sure about it. The doctor says he thinks I will. He says I must not speak. Well, sit by me here. I do not feel strong enough just now; but I have so much to tell you, and I don't want to miss a chance, if I am to go out of this world."

The dusk of the early summer evening had settled to darkness, and Walter was meditating whether he ought to remain in the house or return to camp. The weather was hot, and scarcely a breath of air troubled the summer hush. Walter was standing in the mellow twilight in the porch of the house, when he saw Sue and a negro whom he did not know, both of them carrying bundles on their heads, come through the side entrance and walk to the front gate.

The negro was a tall fellow, well set up in his limbs, but walking with a slovenly, uneasy gait. He was dressed in old blue jean trousers, and wore over his red flannel shirt an open striped cotton waistcoat with big brass buttons. A big black felt hat covered his eyes, which were further obscured by the bundle he was carrying. She was chatting and laughing as they were walking along, and they had opened the gate and were already outside, when their progress was cut short by the entry of a dog.

"Hey, stop!" cried the man. "Who are you?"

"You kin see, shoo, souny," replied Sue, grinning her broadest. "It's Sue, I is, Miss Helena's servant, an' dis kallered semainan, dat's Elijah, an' he's helpin' dis chile carry de clothes to de laundry."

Walter's eyes followed Sue and the negro as they walked along the road, when a sudden thought gripped his mind, and he gasped:

"It is Denon. I thought I knew him," he muttered. "It is Denon, as sure as I am a living man."

Without another word he walked through the little garden and out at the gate. The sentry saluted respectfully as he passed. Walter walked down the road slowly, keeping Sue and the negro in view all the while. Two streets farther down the pair turned to the left, and Walter followed them.

At the corner he increased his pace and at the same time Sue and the negro walked seemingly as fast as their legs would carry them. That was enough for Walter. He started to run after the pair, and soon caught them. One glance at the negro's face was sufficient. It was Denon—Denon magnificently disguised, but Denon, and nobody else.

"Stop a moment," said Walter to the negro. "I want to speak to this gentleman. Take that bundle. You are quite strong enough to carry them both. When you have done your errand, go back to the house, and tell Miss Helena that I will look after your friend."

The poor woman stood there in a feverish trepidation, hesitating about what she ought to do, and then went away weeping as if her heart were breaking.

"We will not stop here, Capt. Denon," said Walter. "The neighborhood is dangerous to you. I will be obliged if you will answer my questions as we walk along. Did you come to Richmond at Miss Lamure's request?"

"No," was the simple rejoinder. "You came unbidden and unasked."

"One more question," said Walter, "and then I have done. Is Miss Helena in any way engaged to you?"

"In no wise engaged," he said. "Good!" ejaculated Walter. "I will have to ask you to come to my room. It is to be continued."

Embarrassed as he was, he had the last man accepted at the United States recruiting office, 8th and Main streets, before the close of the week's business last night proved an interesting subject for the recruiting officers. He gave the name of Thomas H. Valentine and hailed from Great Yar mouth, England. He is a vet in occupation and is but 21 years old. He gave the name and address of his only friend as Miss A. Johnson, St. Paul, Minn.

WOMEN AND FASHION

STYLISH FUR COATS.



1. Seal-skin jacket with cuffs and collar of mink.
2. Chinchilla blouse with muff and toque to match.
3. Seal-skin jacket with stole muff and toque of ermine.

Lavender water is made by slowly steeping for one hour in a covered farina boiler one pound of fresh lavender with one pint of water. On its removal from the fire add two quarts of alcohol, filter and bottle for use. One of the most delightful home-made toilet waters is cherry laurel water. Bruise one ounce of bay leaves and add to them one half pint of water. Steep slowly for one hour in a farina boiler. Take it from the fire and add one quart of lavender water. Filter and bottle for use.

Top Garments in Fur.



These models in top garments are among an exhibit of the very latest fashions in furs, and are exclusive in design and with pronounced features in finishes of revers and vests. The model on the left side is of seal-skin and is an Eton of latest type. It is snugly fitted and is finished at the front with stoles. The revers and cuffs are of ermine. The vest is of seal-brown velvet fleeced with pale tan. The other top garment is a Louis XV. coat, built of astrakhan, and glorified with blue fox revers and a white velvet vest embroidered in gold thread and Persian silk. The sleeve dispenses with fullness at the top and is pouffant above the elbow, and finishes in a ruffle.

Women and the Ledger.

Women are coming to the front rapidly as bookkeepers and accountants. In 1890 over 28,000 filled these responsible positions in commercial houses in the United States, and in 1900 their number had increased to nearly 74,000, or over 100 per cent. The number of men in the same business in 1890 was 131,000, and in 1900 it was 180,000, an increase of only about 50 per cent.

To Keep Rugs Flat.

To keep rugs from turning over make at each corner a sort of patch pocket of good stout drilling at the underside. Into this slip a lead weight. This can be easily removed when the rug is to be cleaned. In case of extra large sizes one or more pockets may be put in between.

The Overturned Ink Bottle.

If the ink bottle happens to be overturned upon household linen lose no time in placing a blotter beneath the stain to soak up as much as possible, and press another from above. Then immerse the article in a deep vessel containing sweet milk. Wash well with soap and bleach in the sun.



Veils of black Chantilly are worn. There are silk and chiffon hoods for evening wear.

Pretty little purses of gold or silver chain are shown.

The tricorne hat needs to be worn with a certain pliancy.

A dark velvet hat trimmed with just one silver rose is commended.

It is at the neckwear counter that a woman's purse strings creek.

Among the silver fancies is a small decorated vase for holding hatpins.

Some satisfying hatpins of dull old silver and blue stones have appeared.

There are collars of black crepe, ornamented with jet buttons, for mourning.

Most attractive are the girdles of amber silk, shading with every movement.

Dainty collars of linen or soft muslin are worked in colors to match the gown.

Cunning little fur sets are got out for children in all the white and gray skins.

Coque hats may not be so pretty as the fluffy kind, but they can't come out of curl.

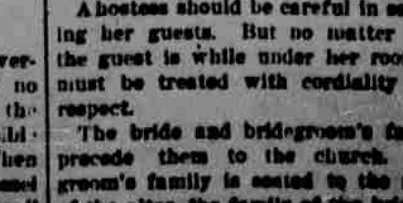
Just a swirl of dainty chiffon and a bit of fine lace makes a ravishing neck thing.

A big bronze beetle, speckled with old gems, is among covetable neck jewelry.

This is a day of revivals, and the stomach, as the very long, deep-boned bodice point is called, is much in evidence.

Very splendid are the separate waists of fine fabric and handwork, the price whereof sometimes soars into three figures.

A three-quarter pongee coat lined with satin is a handsome and useful garment that can be worn nearly all the year round.



The servant serves each person at the left, giving the diner the privilege of using the right hand.

Good manners are the sign of a refined civilization; where manners are bad no society can be improving.

A gentleman calling upon a young lady, if he leaves visiting cards, must leave one also for her mother or chaperon.

True politeness may be said to have for its basis the Golden Rule; in other words, "Treat others as you would have them treat you."

A hostess should be careful in seating her guests. But no matter who the guest is while under her roof, he must be treated with cordiality and respect.

The bride and bridegroom's family precede them to the church. The groom's family is seated to the right of the altar, the family of the bride to the left.