

The LAPSE of ENOCH WENTWORTH by ISABEL GORDON CURTIS Author of "The Woman from Wolverton" ILLUSTRATIONS by ELLSWORTH YOUNG

SYNOPSIS.

Enoch Wentworth, newspaper man, and Andrew Merry, actor, after the guests at a poker party depart, play a last hand, the stakes to be absolute control of the future of the loser. Wentworth, who has decided to leave the matter secret, loses. Enoch's sister, becoming interested in Merry, knowing of his shortcomings from her brother's tries to arouse the actor's ambition. He outlines the plot of a play he has had in mind and the girl urges him to go to work on it. When he completes the play and reads it to Wentworth the latter demands it as the forfeit of the bond you to the poker game. Wentworth interests Oswald in the play and preparations for staging it are begun. Dorcas suspects her brother of having stolen the play from his friend, Merry, who was to have played the leading part, disappears.

CHAPTER VII—Continued.

Before the middle of October all the parts were in rehearsal except two. An Englishwoman, Eliza Paget, was crossing the Atlantic to play "Mrs. Esterbrook." Oswald refused obstinately to give "Cordelia" to any actress that Wentworth suggested.

"We must close with somebody mighty quick," said Enoch, when Oswald had turned down Katherine Dean.

"Miss Dean is not even to be thought of," answered the Englishman decisively. "She's beautiful, but where's her feeling, her intelligence? I sat watching her face—the light fell strong upon her while you talked. There's absolutely nothing to her but beauty."

"She can act," insisted Wentworth. "I've seen her act. It isn't acting we want in 'Cordelia.' The woman who plays 'Cordelia' must have feeling, tender, compassionate understanding, dignity, with a young face—not a face into which youth is painted."

"Cordelia" must have beauty. "We may get both. I am not searching for 'Cordelia' among the stars; I have hopes of finding her among the unknowns."

"That's a risky proposition," said Wentworth impatiently. "Cordelia" is a big part. Why, it's almost leading business—it ought to be in rehearsal now.

"Wait a few days," suggested Oswald. "Now, tell me, when is Merry to show up? He should have been here a week ago. Can't you wire him today?"

"I'll do it right away," Wentworth tossed his hat on his head and left the office. He drew a long breath, when he stepped out on the sidewalk, and looked anxiously up and down Broadway as if hoping to see Merry approach with his nonchalant stride. He paused for a moment to light a cigar, then started at a brisk gait down the street. He was accosted here and there by a friend. Each one offered congratulations. He was in no mood for that sort of thing. A block further ahead he saw Phillips of the Herald in the moving throng. There would be no escaping him. He jumped on a downtown car, and a few minutes later he was at the Battery. He stepped off and crossed the square. The tide was coming in and a stiff breeze blew off the ocean.

He seated himself on a bench and watched the spray dash over the pier. Throng came and went, but Enoch did not see them. His mind was centered desperately upon one anxiety; Merry must be found. He had felt so certain that the actor might appear at any moment that he had allowed Oswald to think he knew where he was. He reported him half-sick, trying to recuperate, and hating the worry of a lawsuit with an angry manager, which Oswald was trying to settle out of court. He assured him that the comedian was letter perfect in his part; all he needed was to appear at late rehearsals. The strain, however, was telling on Wentworth. He had grown nervous and irritable. Oswald saw traces of it, but laid it to anxiety over the preparations for his play.

Dorcas realized the change in her brother and felt it keenly. She contrasted the care-free, generous, gay Enoch as he had been a month ago, with the man who had aged suddenly, who was growing morose, fretful, uncommunicative, and impatient over trifles. Day after day she saw less of him. His plea was hard work, so the girl was left to her own devices. She had few friends in the city. She spent the fall days in long, solitary walks, and her mind dwelt constantly on Merry. Her brother scarcely mentioned the play to her. She read nothing of it in the papers. Through them came the information that Enoch had relinquished journalism and was working on the production of a new play by a new author. She drew a long breath of relief over that announcement. She felt sure Enoch would do full justice to Merry when the time arrived. She was too proud to ask questions. Her brother had always taken her completely into his confidence; she was certain she would do so again when the toll and worry were over.

Wentworth watched her closely. He realized how she felt his reticence and change of feeling; her every glance told it. He wondered frequently what the thoughts were that she did not put into words. In every woman he had admired for beauty, intellectual or heart qualities there had been imperfections which were temperamentally feminine. Dorcas was different. Sometimes he fancied it might be caused by her seclusion from the world during girlhood. Then he remembered a few of her girl friends he had met. In each of them he had seen some petty conceit or frivolity which, manlike, he accounted typical feminine vice. Dorcas was different in heart and intellect. She resembled stalwart men he had known.

He sat with his eyes fixed on an ocean steamer moving majestically up the harbor. When her whistle shrieked in response to a salute, Wentworth rose with a start and glanced sharply about him. He felt that some one was watching him. His eyes met the gaze of his sister. She sat on a nearby bench staring at him, a newspaper in her lap and her hands clasped listlessly over it.

"Why, Dorcy! How long have you been here? Did you call me?" "I did not speak to you," she answered quietly. "When I laid down my paper a minute ago you sat there. He did not offer to take a place beside her, though she moved to make room for him. His face flushed hotly when his glance fell on the headlines of a paper that lay in Dorcas's lap.

"Have you seen the story about yourself in the Times?" "Of course I have," answered Enoch impatiently. "It was not my doing. Oswald insisted on it. Every paper is clamoring for news. We reproduce the play the first week of December."

"The paper speaks of you alone, Merry isn't given credit for even suggesting the plot. His name is not mentioned."

Wentworth's brow wrinkled into an ugly scowl. "How could he be mentioned? He can't be found—anywhere."

"Mr. Oswald said yesterday he was in the Catskills, ready to come on at a moment's notice."

"I wish to God he were!" cried Wentworth desperately. "Why don't you tell Mr. Oswald the truth?"

"Dorcas, you're a child. You don't understand that I am up against a harder proposition than I can meet."

"It's a bargain," she answered. "About 'Cordelia,' Dorcy, do as you please. I cut loose when father planned my future, and did what I wanted to. A girl, I suppose, has the same rights, especially if she's a girl who can be trusted—implicitly."

When he unlocked the door, Dorcas passed in before him. As he shut it behind him she threw her arms about his neck and kissed him. Wentworth held her for a moment in a close, affectionate grasp. On the hall table lay a note addressed to Dorcas, also a telegram for Wentworth. He tore it open and stood for a minute deep in thought.

"Enoch, I have an invitation here from Mr. Oswald to see Nazimova to-night. Do you mind if I go?"

"No. Give Oswald a message from me. I shan't have time to see him before I leave."

"Leave for where?" "For Montreal. I put a detective on Merry's track. He has almost laid his hand on him. Tell Oswald I will bring Merry back with me in two days at the latest."

"Oh!" cried Dorcas radiantly, "then everything will be righted!" "Everything will be righted," repeated her brother.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Bread Line.

"Miss Wentworth, what does 'Hilda' in 'The Master Builder' mean to you?" asked Grant Oswald during the first lull of quiet they met after leaving the theater. Their cab had been held up in a Broadway blockade and the street became suddenly still. "She means something, Iben, frat, last, and all the time, deals in parables. Six people whom I know, intelligent people, have six different interpretations of 'Hilda.' I am curious to know what she stands for to you."

Dorcas turned her candid gray eyes to his. "I see only one thing—conscience. She appears when the 'Master Builder,' by one cruel, unjust, selfish action, is bound to go down to the depths. Nothing can save him but his conscience. 'Hilda' is his conscience, of course."

"That is my interpretation exactly. It is a wonderful play!"

"It is a wonderful play!" She pointed to a crowd on the sidewalk. "What is that string of men?" she asked. Their cab had been moving step by step for half a block. Again it came to a standstill.

"It's the bread line. Had you never seen it before?" "No. Who are the men?"

"God knows!" answered the Englishman, with a thrill of compassion in his voice. "They are a lot of half-frozen, starving, human wreckage, who have been waiting there for an hour to get a loaf of bread."

Dorcas lowered the carriage window and gazed out. Oswald watched her. The girl's face mirrored her feelings so keenly he could feel what was passing in her mind. Her lips quivered and tears hung on her lashes. She could not trust herself to speak.

"I shall never forget how that pitiful line appeared to me the first time I saw it," the man continued, "although I had known the poor of London since boyhood. This homeless, famished, orderly column, growing and growing as one man after another comes creeping from his burrow to hold a place, was too much for me. I stood watching it from that corner," he pointed across the street, "night after night. I used to try to help. In a few cases I did manage to put a man on his feet. The task was generally hopeless, except that I could satisfy the hunger of the moment. During hard winters in New York I have seen the line grow till there were hundreds in it. Sometimes it goes down Tenth street and around the corner."

Dorcas turned to look at him. Tears stood in her eyes and her lips quivered.

"I understand," he went on. "You are wondering why we, well clothed, fed and sheltered from the wind, are here, and they are—there. I do not know. It is a problem as old as the world itself. All we can do is to help individually, man to man."

"Do you think," Dorcas asked eagerly, "there would be any chance of his being here tomorrow night?"

"The likeliest chance in the world. If a man's wolfish with hunger—and you'd think some of them were wolfish the way they eat—there's a heap of comfort in even a mouthful of bread and a cup of coffee."

"If I should come tomorrow night—" "I'll give you any help you want."

"What is it?" asked her companion, rising. "What frightened you, Miss Wentworth?" He stared past her out into the street. The block of vehicles had begun to move. They were again driving slowly down Broadway.

"Nothing," she answered quickly, "nothing but a chance resemblance. I thought I saw some one whom I once knew. It must have been a mistake."

The Englishman glanced at her curiously. She began to chat about the play and other things. She was trying to forget whatever had startled her. She said "Good-by" at the door of her home. Oswald realized that she was eager to have him go. As he drove away he tried to recall anything which could have happened. A woman of her poise would not be disturbed by a trifle.

Dorcas shut the street door and ran upstairs to her brother's study, where the "phone" stood. She searched distractedly through the directory for the address of a livery from which occasionally she called a cab. The name had escaped her. She stood for a moment trying in vain to recall it, then she rang the bell. Her wait seemed endless before the old servant appeared.

"Jason," she cried impatiently, "who is Mr. Wentworth's livery man?" "Castley, missy."

"Stay here a minute," she said as she paused for central's answer. Then she stooped to the "phone."

"Send a cab, please, to 26 Waverly place, immediately."

She turned again to the old servant. "Jason," she asked, "you have waited on Mr. Merry when Enoch brought him here—stuck—haven't you?"

"Deed I has, missy. Many's de time Marsa Enoch en 's done all sorts ob waitin' on him, when he's done been sick, perfectly misable, missy. Yo'-all don't know how misable."

"Can you help tonight? I may bring Mr. Merry back with me—miserable."

"Deed I can," cried the old man, with eager sympathy. "Yo' des leeb him to me. Lawdy! I 'ink es much ob Marsa Andrew mos' as I do ob yo'-all. He's been mighty good to me."

"Thank you," said Dorcas gratefully. "I am not sure whether he will come, but in case he does, be ready for him. He may want a hot bath and supper. Have a cheerful fire; it is bitterly cold outdoors."

She turned and ran downstairs when she heard the rattle of wheels on the street below.

"Don't yo' want me to go wid yo', missy?" suggested Jason. "Hit's pow'erfu' late fo' a lady to be goin' round New York alone."

"No; I would rather have you here waiting for our return."

"Tenth and Broadway," she directed, as the cabman shut the door. He pulled up at her signal opposite the bakery. The place was closed, the bread line had dispersed, and the

quiet gray of early morning had begun to creep over the street. Occasionally a cab dashed past or a trolley went on its clamorous way. But there were few stragglers to be seen. Here and there a man on foot walked briskly, as if a shelter waited him somewhere. On the sidewalk stood a tall policeman. Dorcas studied his face for a moment, then she beckoned him. He came instantly to the cab window.

"Is this your beat every night?" "Every night this week," said the man in blue.

"The men in the bread line have dispersed. Do you know where they go?"

"Where they go, lady?" The policeman smiled. "I couldn't tell you no more where they go than if they were rabbits scurrying to their holes."

Dorcas shivered. "Are they absolutely homeless—on such a night as this?"

"A good share of them are." The man spoke with little interest. The misery in the streets of New York was an old story to him.

"Do the same men come to the line night after night?"

"A man has to be mighty hungry when he stands an hour or two waiting for a hunk of bread. If his luck turns he drops out. Still, I've seen the same faces there every night for a month. Are you a settlement lady?" he asked respectfully.

"No." The girl's face flushed. "I thought tonight when we were passing that I saw some one in the bread line I knew, somebody we can't find."

"That happens many a time."

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said the officer kindly, as Dorcas hesitated. "I don't believe I'll want help. The only thing is—I wish to do it as quietly as possible. It is altogether a family affair."

"I understand. You'll find me here."

"Thank you. Good night," said Dorcas gratefully.

"I didn't bring Mr. Merry tonight, Jason," she said, when the old servant opened the door for her; "but tomorrow night I think he will come."

The following day seemed to Dorcas the longest she had ever lived through. The weather was crisp and cold. She went for a long walk, treading for the first time a tangle of streets in the vicinity of the docks. It was a part of the city which belongs to the very poor. She searched everywhere for one figure. Poverty, famine, and hopelessness seemed to create a family resemblance among men, women, and children. Still—she found nowhere the man for whom she looked.

When she reached home at noon she felt tired, physically and mentally. She had spent an almost sleepless night. As she dropped off in a drowse she dreamed of finding Merry, of bringing him back to the world where he belonged, of setting his face towards fame, happiness, and an honorable life.

Not a thought of love—the love of a woman for a man—stirred in her heart. She had forgotten her brother's question. There was something singularly childlike about Merry. With his magnetism was blended a strange dash of childish dependence which a few men never lose. It had appealed to the maternal instinct in Dorcas the first time they met.

From morning till night she waited anxiously for news from her brother, but none came. She realized that he was on the wrong clue, but he had left no address, and Dorcas could merely wait. After her walk she lay down to rest on the library couch. A few minutes later she was sleeping peacefully as a child. When Jason came in he closed the shutters noiselessly and covered her with an afghan. The city lights were ablaze when she woke. She waited impatiently for the hours to pass. The policeman had told her it was of no use to come to his corner until eleven or later; it was past midnight when the bread was dispensed. The clock struck eleven when a carriage Dorcas had ordered stopped at the door. Jason hovered anxiously about her.

"You must put on yo' big fur coat, missy, please." He was trying constantly to manage her as he had done when she was a little girl.

"Jason, I don't need it; I'm perfectly warm."

"Yo' do, sure ez yo' breathin' missy," he pleaded anxiously. "Hit's grown bitter col' fo' November. Yo'-all 'll freeze ef yo' don'."

"All right," laughed the girl, and she slipped her arms into the wide sleeves. "Just to please you, Jason—remember that—not because I'm cold. Now," she added, "don't get nervous if it is an hour or two before I return. I shall be quite safe. Mr. Merry will come back with me tonight, I know. Have everything as cozy and cheerful as possible. And—Jason—I've got my key. I'll ring when I want you. Don't bother about opening the door." The girl's intuition told her that Merry might have fallen to such low estate that it would hurt for even the old servant to see him. The negro understood.

"I know, missy, I'll do des ez yo' care—but fo' de Lawd's sake do take care ob yo'self. What could I say to Marsa Enoch if anything happened to missy?"

"Nothing's going to happen, good old Jason," cried the girl, as she ran down the steps.

The officer was waiting at the corner. He beckoned the cabman to pull up where an electric light would not shine into the carriage, then he stopped for a minute at the window.

"I'll stay near by and keep my eye on you. When you see your party, signal me. I'll give your cabby the order, and he can drive around a block or two and take you up Tenth street. Then slip out and get your—your—friend that way. There ain't no chance of him seeing you come up behind, as he would if you crossed the street."

"Has the bread line begun to gather yet?" she asked.

"Hardly, ma'am. There's a few stragglers hangin' round. Them that come first get the first chance, of course, only it's a nasty night to wait outdoors with an empty stomach."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



Policeman Is Taken Prisoner by a Lively Cow

CLEVELAND, OHIO.—A big spotted cow with regulation crumpled horns and a determined cast of countenance captured Patrolman Chambers of the Detroit avenue station the other day and bound him so tightly that it required the united efforts of every person living in Nell terrace, West Eighty-ninth street and Detroit avenue, to free him. Then she started off down the street with him hanging to the end of a chain and flopping like the tail of a kite.

At the "moonings" of the cow and the yells of Chambers all the men at the Detroit avenue station rushed out and managed to corral her in Andrew Hartwell's lively stable. As the door slammed on her, Chambers drew a long breath and began to take inventory of the three hundred odd bones in his anatomy.

"Strange," he muttered in a dazed voice. "I was sure some of them must be broken."

The cow, which belongs to W. H. Ford, tired of her pasture and started to hunt a new one early in the morning. She pulled up the stake to which her chain was attached and started. At the Nell terrace the green lawn of the court attracted her and she tarried long enough to get all tangled up in the chain. Her half-strangled groans and "moonings" awoke every one in the terrace and someone called Patrolman Chambers. With soft words he tried to calm the frightened cow, but failed. She caught him between a tree and herself and proceeded to wind the chain around him. Chambers yelled for help.

The cow then decided to investigate Detroit avenue to the eastward and she took Chambers along. Through lawns and over flower beds she went until the station house was reached at about seven o'clock. The day and night forces were just changing and between the two Chambers' prisoner was subdued.

Buys Meal for a Wayfarer; Lacks Cash to Pay

NEW YORK.—A story is being told of an experience of a wealthy bachelor, a member of a very old New York family, who takes a great deal of interest in charitable work, and who does a lot of investigating on his own account.

Some time ago he was walking on one of the streets of the lowest East side when he was accosted by a wayfarer whose whole appearance indicated the depths of misfortune and misery. The tramp said he wanted the price of something to eat. The millionaire looked him over.

"I won't give you any money," he said, "but I'll be glad to buy you a good square meal."

The millionaire was very plainly dressed, and the other, after looking him regretfully over, agreed to become his guest. They turned into a restaurant in the vicinity, and the host let the man order what he wanted. He himself ordered a meal and ate.

When it was finished, the millionaire called for his check. When it came, he felt in his pockets. Not a cent did he have. It was an embarrassing moment, but he sought to explain to the waiter.

"None of that stuff goes here; we got too much of that kind of conversation," the attendant informed him. "You pays that check—see!"

The man from uptown called for the manager, and sought to explain the situation, but the manager, too, happened to be from Missouri.

When the millionaire was arguing with the manager, and protesting that he would pay the bill if time was given him, he was surprised by a loud guffaw from the tramp across the table.

"Do," cried that worthy, leaning over and putting out his hand, "you certainly put one over on me. I never knew anybody could fool me like that. Why, I had no idea you were one of us. I'll pay the check," and he did, producing a sum that was much more than sufficient.

House Lined With Honey Found in Southern City

MOBILE, ALA.—Mobile has a real, sure-enough "honey" residence. It is at the corner of Kentucky and Marine streets, and carpenters say that the walls are practically interlarded with honey. Several weeks ago the flooring in the attic of the building, now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Gray, and owned by Mrs. Annie B. Fields, began to show unmistakable signs of rotting, although it was far from the ground. Before the floor was taken up, honey began to appear through the boards, and despite efforts to mop the sticky stuff up, it continued to appear.

Mrs. Fields was notified and after being told about the honey she recalled that about five years ago while she was living in the house she had a large flower garden in the yard and that it attracted a colony of bees to the place.

When the flowers were removed the bees also disappeared. The honey-makers had discovered an abandoned water spout and through this they gained access to the walls and beneath the weatherboarding they proceeded to make pound after pound of honey.

Mastodon Hog Weighs 1,000 Pounds on the Hoof

BALTIMORE, MD.—One hog, 1,000 pounds on the hoof. H. F. Martin of Hampstead, in the Fifteenth district of Baltimore county, sold an animal of this weight, says the Sun, to H. F. Sharrer, a butcher of Hampstead. It was five years old. Facially and by several other characteristics, it looked like the veritable millstone of the swine tribe, but it had the bulk of a horse—of a large horse. Seeing it move across the field on a moonless night gave one the apprehension that the bushes or fairies were moving a haystack.

Only now that the western winds have come along does Farmer Martin realize the invaluable boon he lost when he parted with the colossus porcuro. Staked on the windward side of the Martin homestead, not a ripple of air could reach the unprepared roof; no whining, convulsive sobs could be wrung from the free and easy weatherboarding.

It might have been that C. P. hog, pig, swine—call it what you will, for there doesn't seem to be any Latin or Dacian designation adequate to embrace the animal's massivity and projection into the circumambient atmosphere—as before said, perhaps it was because the animal's appetite was built along the lines of its displacement or because of the luring offer of nine cents a pound "dressed," that Mr. Martin sold it—at any rate, Mr. Sharrer got the hog.

The carcass dressed down to 795 pounds net, for which Mr. Martin received the monetary equivalent of \$71.52.

Praise. Epictetus, the philosopher, was lame. When he was a young man his master had twisted his leg until it broke. Epictetus writes: "Do you think that because my soul happens to have one little lame leg that I am to find fault with God's universe? Ought we not when we dig, when we plow, and when we eat, to sing this hymn to God, because he has given us these implements whereby we may till the soil? . . . What else can I do, who am a lame old man, except praise to him?"

A Rejection. Knick—Did you lay your heart at her feet? Knack—Yes; and she stubbed her toe over it walking away.—Judge.



His Eyes Met the Gaze of His Sister.

After a few minutes' silence he asked suddenly: "How did you happen to see Mr. Oswald yesterday?"