The MAN in LOWER TEN

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21

SYNOPSIS.

Lawrence Blakeley, lawyer, goes to Pittsburg with the forged notes in the Bronson case to get the deposition of John Gilmore, millionaire. A lady requests Blakeley to buy her a Pullman ticket. He gives her lower 11 and retains lower 10. He finds a drunken man in lower 10 and retires in lower 9. He awakens in lower 7 and finds his clothes and bag missing. The man in lower 10 is found murdered. Circumstantial evidence points to both Blakeley and the man who stole his clothes. The train is wrecked and Blakeley is rescued from a burning car by a girl in blue. His arm is broken. The girl proves to be Alison West, his partner's sweetheart. Blakeley returns home and finds he is under surveillance. Moving pictures of the train taken just before the wreck reveal to Blakeley a man leaping from the train with his stolen grip. Investigation proves that the man's name is Sullivan. Mrs. Conway, the woman for whom Blakeley bought a Pullman ticket, tries to make a bargain with him for the forged notes, not knowing that they are missing. Blakeley and an amateur detective investigate the home of Sullivan's sister. From a servant Blakeley learns that Alison West had been there on a visit and Sullivan had been attentive to her. Sullivan is the husband of a daughter of the murdered man. Blakeley's house is ransacked by the police. He learns that the affair between Alison and his partner is off.

CHAPTER XXVII.—Continued.

And when the endless meal was over, and yards of white veils had been tied over pounds of hair—or is it, too, bought by the yard?—and some eight ensembles with their abject complements had been packed into three automobiles and a trap, I drew a long breath and faced about. I had just then only one object in life—to find Alison, to assure her of my absolute faith and confidence in her, and to offer my help and my poor self, if she would let me, in her service.

She was not easy to find. I searched the lower floor, the veranda and the grounds, circumspectly. Then I ran into a little English girl who turned out to be her maid, and who also was searching. She was concerned because her mistress had no dinner, and because the tray of food she carried would soon be cold. I took the tray from her, on the glimpse of something white on the shore, and that was how I met the girl again.

She was sitting on an over-turned boat, her chin in her hands, staring out to sea. The soft tide of the bay lapped almost at her feet, and the draperies of her white gown melted hazily into the sands. She looked like a wraith, a despondent phantom of the sea, although the adjective is redundant. Nobody ever thinks of a cheerful phantom. Strangely enough, considering her evident sadness, she was whistling softly to herself, over and over, some dreary little minor air that sounded like a Bohemian dirge. She glanced up quickly when I made a misstep and my dishes jingled. All considered, the tray was out of the picture; the sea, the misty starlight, the girl, with her beauty—even the sad little whistle that stopped now and then to go bravely on again, as though it fought against the odds of a trembling lip. And then I came, accompanied by a tray of little silver dishes that jingled and an unmistakable odor of broiled chicken!

"Oh!" she said quickly; and then, "Oh! I thought you were Jenkins."

"Timeo Donaos—what's the rest of it?" I asked, tendering my offering. "You didn't have any dinner, you know." I sat down beside her. "See, I'll be the table. What was the old fairy tale? 'Little goat bleat; little table appear!' I'm perfectly willing to be the goat, too."

She was laughing rather tremulously.

"We never do meet like other people, do we?" she asked. "We really ought to shake hands and say how are you."

"I don't want to meet you like other people, and I suppose you always think of me as wearing the other fellow's clothes," I returned meekly. "I'm doing it again; I don't seem to be able to help it. These are Granger's that I have on now."

She threw back her head and laughed again, joyously, this time.

"Oh, it's so ridiculous," she said, "and you have never seen me when I was not eating! It's too prosaic!"

"Which reminds me that the chicken is getting cold, and the ice warm," I suggested. "At the time, I thought there could be no place better than the farm-house kitchen—but this is. I ordered all this for something I want to say to you—the sea, the sand, the stars."

"How alliterative you are!" she said, trying to be flippant. "You are not to say anything until I have had my supper. Look how the things are spilled around!"

But she ate nothing, after all, and pretty soon I put the tray down in the sand. I said little; there was no hurry. We were together, and time meant nothing against that age-long wash of the sea. The air blew her hair in small damp curls against her face, and little by little the tide retreated, leaving our boat an oasis in a waste of gray sand.

"If seven maids with seven mops
swept it for half a year
Do you suppose, the walrus said, that
they could get it clear?"

she threw at me once when she must have known I was going to speak. I held her hand, and as long as I merely held it she let it lie warm in mine. But when I raised it to my lips, and kissed the soft, open palm, she drew it away without displeasure.

"Not that, please," she protested, and fell to whistling softly again, her chin in her hands. "I can't sing," she said, to break an awkward pause, "and so, when I'm fidgety, or have something on my mind, I whistle. I hope you don't dislike it?"

"I love it," I asserted warmly. I did; when she pursed her lips like that I was mad to kiss them.

"I saw you—at the station," she said suddenly. "You—you were in a hurry to go." I did not say anything, and after a pause she drew a long breath. "Men are queer, aren't they?" she said, and fell to whistling again.

After awhile she sat up as if she had made a resolution. "I am going to confess something," she announced suddenly. "You said, you know, that you had ordered all this for something you—you wanted to say to me. But the fact is, I fixed it all—came here, I mean, because—I knew you would come, and I had something to tell you. It was such a miserable thing I—needed the accessories to help me out."

"I don't want to hear anything that distresses you to tell," I assured her. "I didn't come here to force your confidence, Alison. I came because I couldn't help it." She did not object to my use of her name.

"Have you found the—your papers?" she asked, looking directly at me for almost the first time.

"Not yet. We hope to."

"The—police have not interfered with you?"

"They haven't had any opportunity," I equivocated. "You needn't distress yourself about that, anyhow."

"But I do. I wonder why you still believe in me? Nobody else does."

"I wonder," I repeated, "why I do!"

"If you produce Harry Sullivan," she was saying, partly to herself, "and if you could connect him with—Mr. Bronson, and get a full account of why he was on the train, and all that, it—it would help, wouldn't it?"

I acknowledged that it would. Now that the whole truth was almost in my possession, I was stricken with the old cowardice. I did not want to know what she might tell me. The yellow line on the horizon, where the moon was coming up, was a broken bit of golden chain; my heel in the sand was again pressed on a woman's yielding fingers; I pulled myself together with a jerk.

"In order that what you tell me may help me, if it will," I said constrainedly, "it would be necessary, perhaps, that you tell it to the police. Since they have found the end of the necklace—"

"The end of the necklace!" she repeated slowly. "What about the end of the necklace?"

I stared at her. "Don't you remember"—I leaned forward—"the end of the cameo necklace, the part that was broken off, and was found in the black sealskin bag, stained with—with blood?"

"Blood," she said dully. "You mean that you found the broken end? And then—you had my good pocket-book, and you saw the necklace in it, and you—must have thought—"

"I didn't think anything," I hastened to assure her. "I tell you, Alison, I never thought of anything but that you were unhappy, and that I had no right to help you. God knows, I thought you didn't want me to help you."

She held out her hand to me and I took it between both of mine. No word of love had passed between us, but I felt that she knew and understood. It was one of the moments that come seldom in a lifetime, and then only in great crises, a moment of perfect understanding and trust.

Then she drew her hand away and sat, erect and determined, her fingers laced in her lap. As she talked the moon came up slowly and threw its bright pathway across the water. Back of us, in the trees beyond the sea wall, a sleepy bird chirruped drowsily, and a wave, larger and bolder than its brothers, sped up the sand, bringing the moon's silver to our very feet. I bent toward the girl.

"I am going to ask just one question."

"Anything you like." Her voice was almost dreary.

"Was it—because of anything you are going to tell me that you refused Richey?"

She drew her breath in sharply.

"No," she said, without looking at me. "No. That was not the reason."

She Was Sitting on an Overturned Boat.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Alison's Story.

She told her story evenly, with her eyes on the water, only now and then, when I, too, sat looking seaward, I thought she glanced at me furtively. And once, in the middle of it, she stopped altogether.

"You don't realize it, probably," she protested, "but you look like a—a war god. Your face is horrible."

"I will turn my back, if it will help any," I said stormily, "but if you expect me to look anything but murderous, why, you don't know what I am going through with. That's all."

The story of her meeting with the Curtis woman was brief enough. They had met in Rome first, where Alison and her mother had taken a villa for a year. Mrs. Curtis had hovered on the ragged edges of society there, pleading the poverty of the south since the war as a reason for not going out more. There was talk of a brother, but Alison had not seen him, and after a scandal which implicated Mrs. Curtis and a young attache of the Austrian embassy, Alison had been forbidden to see the woman.

"The women had never liked her, anyhow," she said. "She did unconventional things, and they are very conventional there. And they said she did not always pay her—her gambling debts. I didn't like them. I thought they didn't like her because she was poor—and popular. Then—we came home, and I almost forgot her, but last spring, when mother was not well—she had taken grandfather to the Riviera, and it always uses her up—we went to Virginia Hot Springs, and we met them there, the brother, too, this time. His name was Sullivan, Harry Pinckney Sullivan."

"I know. Go on."

"Mother had a nurse, and I was alone a great deal, and they were very kind to me. I—I saw a lot of them. The brother rather attracted me, partly—partly because he did not make love to me. He even seemed to avoid me, and I was piqued. I had been spoiled, I suppose. Most of the other men I knew had—had—"

"I knew that, too," I said bitterly, and moved away from her a trifle. I was brutal, but the whole story was a long torture. I think she knew what I was suffering, for she showed no resentment.

"It was early and there were few people around—none that I cared about. And mother and the nurse played cribbage eternally, until I felt as though the little pegs were driven into my brain. And when Mrs. Curtis arranged drives and picnics, I—I slipped away and went. I suppose you won't believe me, but I had never done that kind of thing before, and I—well, I have paid up, I think."

"What sort of looking chap was Sullivan?" I demanded. I had got up and was pacing back and forward on the said. I remember kicking savagely at a bit of water-soaked board that lay in my way.

"Very handsome—as large as you are, but fair, and even more erect."

I drew my shoulders up sharply. I am straight enough, but I was fairly sagging with jealous rage.

"When mother began to get around, somebody told her that I had been going about with Mrs. Curtis and her brother, and we had a dreadful time. I was dragged home like a bad child. Did anybody ever do that to you?"

"Nobody ever cared. I was born an orphan," I said, with a cheerless attempt at levity. "Go on."

"Did You Marry Him?" I Demanded.

"If Mrs. Curtis knew, she never said anything. She wrote me charming letters, and in the summer, when they went to Cresson, she asked me to visit her there. I was too proud to let her know that I could not go where I wished, and so—I sent Polly, my maid, to her aunt's in the country, pretended to go to Seal Harbor, and really—went to Cresson. You see I warned you it would be an unpleasant story."

I went over and stood in front of her. All the accumulated jealousy of the last few weeks had been fired by what she told me. If Sullivan had come across the sands just then, I think I would have strangled him with my hands, out of pure hate.

"Did you marry him?" I demanded. My voice sounded hoarse and strange in my ears. "That's all I want to know. Did you marry him?"

"No."

I drew a long breath.

"You—cared about him?"

She hesitated.

"No," she said finally. "I did not care about him."

I sat down on the edge of the boat and mopped my hot face. I was heartily ashamed of myself, and mingled with my abasement was a great relief. If she had not married him, and had not cared for him, nothing else was of any importance.

"I was sorry, of course, the moment the train had started, but I had wired I was coming, and I could not go back, and then when I got there, the place was charming. There were no neighbors, but we fished and rode and motored, and—it was moonlight, like this."

I put my hand over both of hers, clasped in her lap. "I know," I acknowledged repentantly, "and—people do queer things when it is moonlight. The moon has got me to-night, Alison. If I am a boor, remember that, won't you?"

Her fingers lay quiet under mine. "And so," she went on with a little sigh, "I—began to think perhaps I cared. But all the time I felt that there was something not quite right. Now and then Mrs. Curtis would say or do something that gave me a queer start, as if she had dropped a mask for a moment. And there was trouble with the servants; they were almost insolent. I couldn't understand. I don't know when it dawned on me that the old Baron Cavalcanti had been right when he said they were not my kind of people. But I wanted to get away, wanted it desperately."

"Of course, they were not your kind," I cried. "The man was married! The girl Jennie, a housemaid, was a spy in Mrs. Sullivan's employ. If he had pretended to marry you I would have killed him! Not only that, but the man he murdered, Harrington, was his wife's father. And I'll see him hang by the neck yet if it takes every energy and every penny I possess."

I could have told her so much more gently, have broken the shock for her; I have never been proud of that evening on the sand. I was alternately a boor and a ruffian—like a hurt youngster who passes the blow that has hurt him on to his playmate, that both may bawl together. And now Alison sat, white and cold, without speech.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Leaves Pennies in Church.

A Boston clergyman, commenting on the large number of cents in the average church collection, said that when on a recent Monday he had offered a newswoman outside the subway station a 5-cent piece in payment for a newspaper she threw up her hand, remarking:

"Why is it that men never have pennies on Monday morning? It is the only day in the week I have trouble making change."

"My good woman," replied the clergyman, the reason is that on Sunday they leave their pennies in church."

The Church—Its Danger and Security

By REV. W. G. CURRY

TEXT—Awake, awake, put on thy strength; O Zion.—Isaiah LII. 1.

Jehovah spoke this when Judaism had fallen into great weakness. Enemies beset on every side. The church has often had its times of moral weakness. Deliverance always came. The slumbering giant not only awoke but exerted himself. A deep slumber prevailed when Christ came. Great systems of idolatry prevailed. The true God was nigh forgotten. The Saviour gathered a little band around him and sent them forth. With matchless strength they attacked the the powers and Satan's kingdom was shaken. Another crisis came—papal corruption. Pure Christianity slept beneath gaudy trappings of Catholicism, movements for freedom were watched, and dungeons were filled with those who dared look up. "Awake awake!" was sounded. Martin Luther arose to restore spirituality. Since then the truth has been gaining power. When we consider the facilities we have, the outlook is now hopeful.

There is another side.

I. The church is threatened with danger.

1. Danger from peculiar activity and excitability of the times in which we live—entirely an earnest age. New discoveries, new forces appearing. Law of change is everywhere. Wonderful schemes claim public attention. Science, art are ever presenting new questions. Our minds and hands are full; never was there more activity. It is not an unfortunate condition. We would not lock the wheels of progress, and remand the age back to the darkness of the past. In the midst of the excitement we are in danger of infection, unless there be a corresponding earnestness in Christian character. Our danger is inability to control these forces. We are too much controlled by them. We are being permeated by the spirit of the world, instead of permeating it with our spirit. We must show a religion full of life and energy—not a cold, sleepy religion.

2. The tendency to innovation. We believe all essentials are clearly revealed in the Scriptures. Yet we think more light and improved methods may be employed. But from Germany comes a spirit that would say our foundations. It has found its way into our theological schools, and is poisoning the minds of the rising ministry. They tell us that reason and not faith must be the guide. They have discovered the Bible is an antiquated book, and the gospel too cold. They would take away the Bible as a perfect rule of faith and practise. The danger lies in having our minds alienated from the simplicity of the gospel, and a desire to seek the novelties. We need now more than ever before to cry for the old paths.

3. In danger from the increasing boldness and energy of the enemies of Christianity. We are no longer attacked by a few, but the ranks are strong and the infidelity declares its truths to be the only truths. It has never displayed so much determination. It is widespread and is with men in daily walks; is in politics, taints legislation, and has taken hold upon the public press. The world is flooded with its literature. Vast multitudes listen to infidelity's modern apostle.

In the light of all these facts have we not cause for alarm? Are we in a condition to successfully contend with these forces? The church is not putting forth her strength. She has had smooth sailing a long time, and sleeps.

II. What are the elements of strength.

1. Sound doctrine. In these days of laxness and insidiousness we need to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. The doctrines of depravity, atonement and salvation by grace must be emphasized. Let this be done, and infidelity will not affect the religion of personal experience.

2. Spiritual life. We need a higher-toned spirituality, a religion that enters into all our social and business relations, giving color and shape to the daily life.

How shall this strength, which God calls on us to exert, be put on? It is not physical, but spiritual strength that we need. It must be put on upon our knees.

His Saving Power.

Jesus said: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

He displayed His wonderful power while here upon earth. His miracles were a definite attestation to His mission. He claims and exercises that saving, helping power—a power not now limited by physical conditions, as might have been charged in His earthly life, but a power which flows with authority from the mediatorial throne on which He reigns.

Some Consolation.

Mrs. Gramercy—My husband is anxious to get rid of me.

Mrs. Park—Don't cry, dear. In that case he won't haggle over the alimony.—Smart Set.

To Put It Mildly.

"They say he has a swelled head."

"I must admit that he seems to appreciate himself very much."

A man ought to know a great deal to acquire a knowledge of the immensity of his ignorance.—Lord Palmerston

True men and women are all physicians to make us well.—C. A. Bartol.