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By WILLIAM F. HOWE, Assisted by ABE HUMMEL. Illustrated by A. B. SHULTZ

"Vy, dis is Dr. Honsaw, ain't it?" exclaimed Herr Steinmetz as he laid his great hand on the shoulder of a man walking rapidly past him on lower Broadway.

"You deserve to be thrashed within an inch of your life," he continued, "and I feel very much inclined to give you a severe chastisement to teach you better manners."

"Come, get away from here. I will not stand any more of this nonsense," replied the physician. "I shall call a policeman if you interfere with me."

"I shall not allow any one to insult a lady in my presence," said the artist, who felt that he had offered some justification for his conduct to the young man that had already collected around them.

"This is ridiculous! I spoke to an old friend of mine," was the final reply vouchsafed to the girl's champion, who allowed himself to be put aside as the furious doctor moved away.

Henshall followed, thinking that he might again have the opportunity of whomping his ideal and one from whom she was evidently anxious to escape.

"You must come to my concert," continued Herr Steinmetz. "I will be glad to have you."

"I think I can," returned the doctor, who was shifting around anxiously, and evidently desired to make the interview as short as possible.

"You can go out between the acts and see him. I may want to see a man myself, and I know that Lena will excuse me," said the banker with a facetious wink to the young man.

The artist came to the conclusion that the more lively interest than he did in Lena Hartman, had probably gone too far for him to overtake her, and so he allowed his fiancée to persuade him to enter the academy.

"I really have some business on hand, though," he remarked, "and I shall be obliged to leave before the end of the performance."

He had seen Denman Thompson's play before, and he was far too much engrossed in his own thoughts to take any interest in the quiet rustic scene on the stage.

In the meantime Dr. Watson, as the evil eyed one chose to style himself for the time being, had gone along Fourteenth street as quickly as his legs could walk.

When he reached Union square he looked around in the vain hope that he might catch sight of Miss Crawford. She had disappeared, and he did not know which way to turn.

People surged around in every direction, and he knew that if the girl had tried to escape she might have taken a horse car, as long as she had reached the corner ahead of him.

"Curse the luck," he muttered, "if it hadn't been for that young idiot on the block above I should have had her in safe keeping before now."

He went over to the Morton House cafe, sat down at one of the tables and ordered a glass of absinthe.

"I thought I had time to catch her again before she reached Union square," he mused. "I wonder if she really walked that whole block. She couldn't have taken one of the green cross town cars, as I did not notice any pass there. Let's see, where could she have gone? Not to any of the places on the south side of the street, that's very sure. She might have entered Steinway hall. By Jove she must have done it."

This idea impressed him as being very good, and he told the waiter to bring him some more absinthe. As he sipped the liqueur his mind was active.

"Of course that old fool Steinmetz is bringing out a new fiddler, and she would naturally want to attend the concert. Supposing—no, it is not possible—yes, it is, though—she might have sought work here herself. I do not know but that she is the new Camilla Urso herself. I'll find out."

He did not dream of going to the hall himself and seeing his old friends Steinmetz and Neuberger. He left the cafe, and as a first move bought an Evening World from a newsboy and turned immediately to the amusement column, where he saw the announcement that Miss Louise Neville, a talented young artist, would make her first public appearance in the United States.

"Louise Neville may be Edna Lewis," he thought. "It is not probable that she would appear under her own name or under the alias adopted by her father."

To settle the question to his own satisfaction, he walked around to the nearest florist and bought a large bouquet. Then upon a blank card he wrote:

"With the sincere regards of an old St. Louis friend who has often enjoyed in private the accomplishments that the public are now given an opportunity to applaud."

"EDWIN ST. LEONARD."

He instructed a young man to deliver the flowers to Miss Neville of the stage, and to say that he had been sent by Mr. St. Leonard. Fifteen minutes later the messenger returned.

"When I handed her the flowers," he reported, "she said she was surprised to hear that Mr. St. Leonard was in New York, and she told me to thank him for her."

"I am glad to have that much settled. Now I can lay my hands on Edna," thought Dr. Watson. "These infernal managers have hold of her, that's only trouble. I can't very well take her by force, and I'm afraid it is too late to get the old gentleman down here before the concert closes. I'll try, though."

Returning to the Morton house he wrote this letter:

"MY DEAR MR. CRAWFORD—My efforts have at last been crowned with success. I have discovered your daughter. She is now at Steinway hall, and if you will come down here without a moment's delay you

may be able to see her to-night. In haste, "G. L. WATSON."

He procured a messenger boy, and by aid of a liberal tip secured the promise that the note would be delivered in the shortest possible time at Kowenhoven place, near Sixty-seventh street.

He then stationed himself near the door of Steinway hall to await developments.

Not long after this he saw his whilom assistant pass him and speak to a friend. Henshall had sat through two acts of "The Old Homestead" by the side of Miss Hartman, and, believing that he had done his full duty to her, he pleaded the engagement he had mentioned when he met her and bade her good night. In front of Steinway hall he met a brother artist whom he had known for years.

"Come in here with me," said his friend. "A musician who heard the new violinist play in private yesterday says he is simply a marvel, and that she is bound to create an immense sensation. I bought tickets and intend to come here in time, but was delayed. I hope we have not missed her entirely."

Dr. Watson did not lose sight of Henshall until the swinging doors closed behind him.

VI.—CHECK! TO THE WRONG ONE? By PAULINE HALL. Illustrated by MISS ALICE M. LOVETT.

As Henry Henshall went into Steinway hall he caught sight of Dr. Watson standing over at the right hand entrance. Their eyes met, and each felt that it was war to the knife between them.

"What rascality is he up to now?" the young artist muttered to himself, as he followed his friend into the hall.

It was well filled. The new violinist had been thoroughly advertised. It was claimed that she was the "greatest of her sex in the use of the violin, and that Ole Bull, Joachim or Sarasate could not bring more clear and passionate tones from the instrument."

Henry Henshall read this on the programme with a smile. The concert was well on in the second half, and a woman was singing a solo when they entered. The next number was by Schumann, and was to be by the brilliant "Louise Neville."

The hall was so full that Henshall's friend said they would stand in the rear, as it would be a bother to go way down to the front of the house, where his seat was, and besides he wished to remain with Henshall, who had only purchased an admission ticket.

The young artist's attention was distracted by his reveries on Dr. Watson. "I must get Mrs. Smith to make a charge against him that will lead to his arrest if it becomes necessary to protect my ideal from him. But she must still be under his fascinations, for she wishes to avoid this if possible."

At this moment the applause drew his attention to the stage. The audience had evidently been carried away by Miss Neville's playing, for they were greeting her appearance by the Schumann number with that hearty clapping of hands which is the artist's most cordial and inspiring greeting from the public.

He glanced at the beautiful girl, who advanced with a dignified manner to the front of the stage, slightly smiling her recognition of the greeting which had been given to her.

One glance told him that Louise Neville was his ideal of the Wagner car. The fair face was that which had haunted him so constantly, waking or sleeping.

"Give me your glass for a moment," he exclaimed excitedly to his friend, almost snatching it from his hand. He leveled it straight at the girl's face. She had put the violin under her chin, and the fingers of her left hand were lightly touching the strings.

Yes! It was she. The dream of the artist stood before him, fairer than he had imagined. She was dressed very simply in a gown of white satin, with a large sash of white silk at her slender waist.

"She is a child of delight! She seemed nearer to him than ever. The purpose which he had sworn in the Wagner car, when it seemed so wild and impossible to carry out, now seemed to the excited young man a very easy matter.

He felt that her position as a public or professional performer argued some difficulty in her family, and he was not slow to think that in this way the beautiful girl had sought to escape from the hateful Dr. Watson.

The next moment he was entranced. A strain of music of the most delicious sweetness streamed from her bow as she lightly swept it over the nut brown instrument which she held so caressingly.

Henshall was passionately fond of music. He had heard her wonderful playing in the car, and it had held him in thrall, but that could not be compared to this.

Edna was inspired by the occasion to her best effort. In the inspiration of the moment she forgot all but her art. The dainty melody of the great German floated on the air like a lullaby sung by one spirit to another.

As she went on he felt that some occult influence was at work within the girl. Instead of the free, spontaneous movement and the entire absorption in the composition there seemed a tense, nervous agitation in the performer which betrayed itself to him he hardly knew how. The tempo was quickened, and the bow seemed to be contracted into a faint frown, her nostrils dilating slightly now and then.

Was she going to be overcome at the moment of her triumph? Could nervousness be asserting itself now after she had triumphantly conquered her public, and when the house was hanging breathless on her playing?

He felt in himself a sense of discomfort, which he was attributing purely to his sympathy with the young girl. But it seemed to augment. At last by an attraction which was almost against his will he felt his head turned to one side, as if drawn there by some subtle influence.

Not five yards away from him was Dr. Watson.

His eyes were bent with growing earnestness on the girl's face. They were hot, and seemed almost starting from his head. It was evident that the hateful man was concentrating all the power of his soul into that look. By his side stood Mr. Crawford.

Henry Henshall understood the situation at a glance. His own creeping, disgusted sense of being under some influence seemed explained by the magnetic attraction of this devilish man. He knew, too, that his ideal, this nervous, high strung girl whose artistic temperament must answer to the faintest impression, was being overcome by that terrible glance which Dr. Watson was directing toward her.

He felt that something must be done. A little more of this occult violence and Edna might break hopelessly down. He was her knight, self constituted, to be sure, but with the fond hope that some time he might receive from those soft brown eyes the sign that he was not an ungrateful de-

fender.

His course was quickly decided on. He walked behind the hateful form of the doctor, and after standing a moment turned around sharply and, as if by accident, struck the man in the back so heavily that he turned in wrath and surprise.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Dr. Leopardi," he said, with a stress upon the name.

He darted a glance at him as he said this that sufficiently conveyed his feeling. It was to be war to the knife.

Dr. Leopardi looked at him in return with a deadly hate.

"You are mistaken, sir," he said hotly, without a moment's hesitation. "My name is not Leopardi."

Henshall felt that his ruse had succeeded in what he chiefly intended. He had broken the fatal current which streamed from Dr. Watson's eyes, and which was slowly but surely unnerving the fair girl who struggled so bravely against the malign influence.

He stepped close to his ear and hissed into it: "If you do not withdraw at once and cease persecuting that innocent girl I will bring one that will prove you are Dr. Leopardi and a thief and a villain. Go, quietly and at once, and I will do nothing more at present, but otherwise beware, for I know you much better than you do me. Go!"

Leopardi's brown face grew sallow white and his eyes looked like an angry snake's. "I will be even with you some day," he said in a low tone of intense revengefulness. "I never forget a debt like this."

Then he turned and said something to Mr. Crawford, who had been watching his daughter too persistently to have remarked this side scene. After a moment apparently of hesitation on the old man's part he turned, and with an agitated air left the hall with the doctor.

"What did you do to that fellow?" asked his companion as Henshall returned to his side.

"I scolded a snake," he said, his lip curling with disgust and scorn.

Edna Lewis had completed her solo triumphantly, and twice she was obliged to return to bow her acknowledgments to the applauding house. She was deadly pale, and there was a strained look in the dark brown eyes which pierced Henshall's very soul.

He could not leave her unprotected. He must wait and see her safely home. Dr. Watson and old Mr. Crawford were nowhere in sight, but that did not dispel his fear.

He waited until the crowd had disappeared. Then he saw a slight figure, a gleam of white satin showing beneath the long fur trimmed cloak, which he recognized as the same that his ideal had worn at the time he had rescued her from Watson's persecutions.

She was so heavily veiled that he could not detect a single feature. He approached her humbly, and raising his hand said in the most deferential tones:

"Miss Neville, pardon my again intruding upon you, but it is only in your own regard that I do so. I have a cab here for you, which will bear you at once to your home, and if you will permit of my escort

I shall feel safer to know that you arrive there without any molestation."

She bowed, but seemed too nervous to speak. As if distraught, one little gloved hand fluttered out toward him and grasped his own, but it was instantly withdrawn, and she hastily entered the coupe and seated herself by her side.

The cabman drove off. Henshall's fair companion kept her handkerchief to her face, and seemed to labor under an agitation that she could with difficulty repress. He made no attempt to converse with her. He had said as he closed the door of the coupe:

"Dear Miss Neville, you will surely acquit me of want of respect under the circumstances. You know my one desire is to be your most trusted guardian should you need any. Do not try to speak. My only wish is to see you safely housed."

The agitated girl underwent some violent throes of feeling, but did not attempt to speak. The carriage bowed rapidly along over the pavements, and soon drew up at the door of a large flat.

Henshall sprang out and rang the bell. The janitor opened the door, and then only did the fair maiden spring lightly from the coupe and run up the steps into the hall.

She turned, with her hand upon the door, removed her veil, and with a mocking smile called out: "Thanks, awfully! Good night!"

The next instant she had closed the door in his face and was flitting up stairs. Henshall, with a muttered curse, turned, paid the cabman, then, scowling, took down the number of the house and strode away.

The fair he had seen was that of the young singer at Louise Neville's concert.

"They must have changed cloaks," he muttered to himself. Then, as he walked on, despite his chagrin, he had to laugh at the crowded condition of our columns. Next week, however, it will appear, also Chapters from Nell Nelson and Mary Eastlake.

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