

# AVENGED AT LAST;

## Or, a World-Wide Chase.

A STORY OF RETRIBUTION.

BY "WARASH."

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### CHAPTER X.

"Non est cert, non est cert," sang Percy Lovel, in a rich voice, full of pathos. Certainly he seemed to feel what he sang, and accompanied himself on the piano in a perfect manner. As the last notes died away he turned round on the stool and noticed that he was not alone.

"How long since you returned, Armida? I did not hear you enter the room."

"No, you were too much engrossed in your song to notice any thing else. But how is it, Percy, that you always sing such sad songs? One would imagine that there was some terrible grief gnawing at your heart, when you sing those songs—you do it with what seems to be so much real feeling."

"If I do I can not give a more than ordinary reason for it. I passionately love music, and my whole soul responds when I commence to sing," replied Percy. Continuing, he asked:

"Have you been to the hospital again to-day?"

"Yes, I was there for over an hour. I saw that unfortunate young man's mother, a French lady, whom I should imagine was at one time in circumstances far superior to her present condition. Even her son seems to possess a bearing which is hardly compatible with their surroundings."

"Did you learn any more of their history?" asked Percy.

"Nothing, but I promised to call some time at the store and have a long talk with Mrs. Bregy."

Percy was silent a few moments; but he resumed:

"Armida, I have been thinking that I would like to have a talk to that lady and her son some time. In fact, I have made up my mind to do it. Their strange connection with Mr. Emerick puzzles me, and my curiosity impels me to learn more."

"What is your motive, Percy?"

"You will pardon my abruptness, Armida, but for the present it must remain a secret; in due time you shall know all."

"No doubt you have excellent reasons," answered the unsophisticated girl.

Changing the subject, Percy asked if she could tell whether Mr. Wilcox was in the house or not. Armida replied:

"I saw him a moment ago in the library."

"Then if you will please excuse me, I will go to him, as I wish to speak with him on his business." With these words Percy left the room.

He had not gone more than a moment when Mrs. Delaro entered the room where Armida sat alone.

"Well, my dear, and how did you find the patient to-day?"

"He was very much improved, mamma, and will leave the hospital in a few days."

"Armida, we must try to do something for that young man; it is not right that he should suffer so much and not be recompensed."

"But they will not take money; what then can we do?" said the girl.

"We must put our heads together and devise some means. By the way, my dear, was that Percy who went across to the library a moment ago?"

"Yes, he has gone to talk business with Mr. Wilcox."

"Then I must go too, for I also have some business matters to attend to this morning, and I need Percy's assistance." With these words the widow rose to go.

"As usual," said Armida, with a pretty pout, "I am always left out in the cold. Why can't I know something of what transpires in these conclaves you are always having?"

"It is hardly necessary that you should be troubled with any business matters," said Mrs. Delaro as she left the room.

Shortly afterward Armida ordered the carriage and went down-town to do some shopping. For the past few months they had been living in a handsomely furnished house near Gramercy Park. Armida and her mother passed their time very much in each other's company, and the days went by pleasantly enough, except for the fact that thoughts of great and lasting trouble continually recurred to Mrs. Delaro's mind, often making her sad even in her daughter's company. Mr. Wilcox and Percy found plenty to occupy their time attending to various business matters when they were not busy trying to get a fresh blow to Mario Delaro's murderer.

This morning there was to be a consultation of the three interested persons regarding the recent developments in connection with the Bregy's.

"If Mr. Emerick is Alphonse Bregy and this woman's husband, then he certainly can not be Velasquez," argued Mr. Wilcox.

"Yet," said Percy, "there may be other information to come which will change our opinion. For my part I am now too thoroughly interested in knowing who this Mr. Emerick really is to let the matter drop. His actions from first to last during the brief time that we saw him were of a character which gave me dark suspicions, and if there is a way to find out who he really is I am going to do it. I am afraid I do not dare to even hope he is the man we want, but I have become so imbued with the detective spirit that I am anxious to satisfy my own curiosity."

"I would suggest," said Mrs. Delaro, wisely, "that we send for Eugene Bregy and his mother and ask them to tell us all they know. Mrs. Bregy will doubtless give us their history and Eugene may have found out something, the knowledge of which will be worth possessing."

"That is undoubtedly the proper course to pursue," remarked Mr. Wilcox.

"Then it can not be done too soon," said Percy. "I am not even so far

sleep at night without cursing that emerald's image before me, and something tells me he is hiding from us or from some one."

It was several days before Eugene was able to come up to the Delaros' house. The neighbors stared hard enough when they saw him and his mother seat themselves in the stylish victoria which was drawn up in front of the store door to convey them to the temporary home of our California friends, and some queer remarks were passed about the airs which the French woman gave herself.

Upon reaching the house they were at once ushered into the library and the consultation immediately commenced.

Mrs. Bregy had very little to tell concerning her history prior to the time her husband deserted her. She related the incident of meeting him at a ball to which she had been invited by some friends from her own country, and told the story of their brief courtship and finally of her marriage to Alphonse Bregy. But she either could not or would not tell what her husband's business was. She said that for the first six months of their married life he was a loving husband and treated her kindly, but afterwards he began to go away for a week or two at a time and grew cold towards her. Finally, about a month after Eugene was born, he went away and never again returned. After that time she never heard of her husband but once and that was from a French plasterer, who had been out to Denver. This man asserted positively that he saw Alphonse Bregy in that city, but that he could not get to speak to him. "That," concluded Mrs. Bregy, "was all I ever heard of him, and I had given up all hope of ever seeing him again until I met him a few months ago at the dock in Brooklyn."

"Was there any thing peculiar in his general bearing?" asked Percy.

"Yes, he stooped a little, but showed more especially when he grew tired of wearing his shoulder-braces and would leave them for a day or two," answered Mrs. Bregy.

Then Mr. Wilcox asked what steps they had taken to discover who Mr. Emerick really was since he went away on the "Trinidad."

"All that has been done I did myself," said Eugene. "I went down to the office of Emerick & Co. on Pearl street and the clerk told me that Mr. Emerick was in Buenos Ayres." Eugene then recounted what he had heard while the door was closing.

After this very little information of importance was gained from the mother and son, but before they left, after being entertained during the evening by Mrs. Delaro and Armida, Mr. Wilcox said to Mrs. Bregy: "Inasmuch as the carelessness of our coachman was the cause of your son's accident, and as you persistently refuse any recompense, you must allow me to do one thing."

"What is that, Mr. Wilcox?" said Mrs. Bregy in a pleasant manner.

"You must permit us to make some inquiries regarding this Mr. Emerick and give us permission to find out all we can about him," he replied.

In a grateful tone the woman replied: "Any information you may be able to give to me, no matter how scanty in detail, will be gladly received and acknowledged."

As the mother and son were being driven home, Mr. Wilcox and Percy sat in the library still talking about Emerick.

"There is a mystery attached to all of it," said Percy to Mr. Wilcox. "If you could have only seen the fellow Emerick, it might have cleared up doubts, but as the matter now stands we can do nothing but speculate."

"Very true, but if for no other reason than to oblige this poor woman we must follow him up. Do you suppose there is any possibility of Emerick returning to New York in the near future?"

"That is something that mystifies me," said Percy. "Why should a presumably reputable merchant have reason for keeping his whereabouts a secret? Eugene Bregy called at the office

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and was told that Mr. Emerick was in South America. I called to make the same inquiry and was told he was in Europe. Probably neither of their replies was the truth."

"Still it will not be hard to determine on the most favorable chances," said Mr. Wilcox. "The man has no business in Europe, and as we know, he has an office in Buenos Ayres. The latter would undoubtedly be the most likely place to find him."

"Then what do you propose to do?" said Percy.

"That is for us now to decide," replied the old man.

"I will make a proposition," said Percy, "that I go alone to Buenos Ayres and find out just where this man is, who he is and what he is doing. My further actions must depend to a large extent on what I discover."

"Good," said Mr. Wilcox, "and in the meantime, I will keep a sharp lookout to see if he returns to New York."

"But what excuse shall I have for going?" asked Percy. "It will not do to let too many into the secret."

"You can soon frame an excuse. I have, as you know, a large interest in a beef extract company down there and that will furnish a plausible reason for your going."

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effort see all that was going on yet not attract particular attention to himself.

He had been seated there about an hour when, happening to look up, his eyes rested upon the familiar form of Mr. Emerick standing up in one of the boxes. He was just arranging his chair so that he could sit behind the curtains and not be visible to the audience but Lovel noticed that he was alone and had a single bottle of wine before him.

Percy failed to get a glimpse of him again during all that evening, but he waited patiently and, after the performance, he still lingered hoping to see the merchant pass out. He had to wait some time and in parts of the hall many of the lights were being extinguished before Mr. Emerick arose to leave. When he did he moved about as though afraid of being seen. It was hardly the place where one would expect to see a person of his position and that was probably his reason for his cautious movements. Percy followed his man rather closely as he went towards the stage door where he met a lady just coming out. Together they walked across the Plaza and found a conveyance which was evidently waiting for them, for, without a word to the driver, they took their seats and were driven away.

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"Where are you staying, may I ask?"

"At the Hotel Victoria," was the reply.

"Then you are an Englishman, I presume?"

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"If you ever find the time hanging heavily on your hands while here," said Mr. Emerick, "drop in at my office and see me." Saying which he drew out a card and handed it to Percy. "May I inquire your name?" he asked as he handed the card.

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Nothing could have suited Percy better than this. He went and stayed late. Percy left a winner to such an extent that he felt in honor bound to accept the invitation pressed upon him to attend again a week later and give the losers an opportunity to recoup their losses.

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CHAPTER XI.

When Percy arrived at Buenos Ayres he did not rush with precipitate haste to Emerick & Co.'s office; he took up his quarters at a quiet English hotel and then went systematically to work to find out what he could about Mr. Emerick. There was little to be learned, however, for all he could hear was that Emerick lived in quiet seclusion in a handsome modern residence lying to the north of the town, which had been previously occupied by Mr. Howe, his partner, and family. When not at business Emerick was reported to spend his time at this house, where he would sometimes entertain a few friends, particularly some Spanish gentlemen, who, strange to say, were not admitted to the better society of Buenos Ayres. To these guests of Emerick's the houses of the civil authorities were not open, neither did any of the numerous wealthy foreign residents invite them to their tables. Yet it was no uncommon thing for them to spend the evening and greater part of the night at Mr. Emerick's house, and one of the servants had once told a confidential friend outside that their amusement consisted almost entirely of playing cards, drinking wine and smoking. Yet Mr. Emerick was exceedingly strict in his attendance to business and was regularly seen at his desk in the office of Emerick & Co., in a large four-story modern business block situated near to the customhouse. Only very seldom did the merchant appear at the theater. Occasionally he could be seen at an Anglo-German concert hall, but not often, and then he was usually alone and would drink his wine in a little private box and go quietly home.

effort see all that was going on yet not attract particular attention to himself.

He had been seated there about an hour when, happening to look up, his eyes rested upon the familiar form of Mr. Emerick standing up in one of the boxes. He was just arranging his chair so that he could sit behind the curtains and not be visible to the audience but Lovel noticed that he was alone and had a single bottle of wine before him.

Percy failed to get a glimpse of him again during all that evening, but he waited patiently and, after the performance, he still lingered hoping to see the merchant pass out. He had to wait some time and in parts of the hall many of the lights were being extinguished before Mr. Emerick arose to leave. When he did he moved about as though afraid of being seen. It was hardly the place where one would expect to see a person of his position and that was probably his reason for his cautious movements. Percy followed his man rather closely as he went towards the stage door where he met a lady just coming out. Together they walked across the Plaza and found a conveyance which was evidently waiting for them, for, without a word to the driver, they took their seats and were driven away.

"The more I see of this man the more of a mystery does he become to me; but I would like to get a good look at him face to face once," soliloquized Lovel.

The opportunity was not long delayed, for a few days later Percy was seated on one of the marble seats in the shade of the Paradise trees on the Plaza Victoria when he should approach but Mr. Emerick. Percy was reading a portion of a London paper which had arrived on the last mail, and was handed to him by an English army officer at the hotel. He hardly knew how to accost Emerick, but resorted to very simple tactics by asking him in the free and easy manner which he had acquired in America, if he would permit him to take a light from his cigar. Mr. Emerick at once drew out a gold match box and supplied the want.

"You are a stranger here?" he said to Percy.

"I am, indeed. I arrived here only a few days since," replied Percy, at the same time feeling devoutly thankful that Mr. Emerick had not recognized him. It was so dark on the piazza at Long Branch, the only place where Mr. Emerick had met Percy, that it was a safe risk to take, and it had apparently passed safely.

"Have you any acquaintances in Buenos Ayres?"