

WOMAN AGAINST WOMAN.

BY MRS. M. E. HOLMES.

CHAPTER X—Continued.

The old woman addressed as Dame Burden proved to be a stout comfortable looking person, dressed in a simple brown gown and apron, but with a string of costly pearls clasped around her thick throat.

"Something for me, George?" she repeated.

"Yes, something for you to look after," he said quietly, as he laid his burden on the mattress, and drew back the cloak.

The old woman's face dropped.

"A girl?" she exclaimed.

"A lady," answered Count Jura, "and as such you must treat her, or you will have to tell me the reason why."

"What have you brought her here for?" demanded Dame Burden sullenly.

"That's my business, and not yours. All you have to do is to wait on her and see that she gets all she wants. Myra can help you."

The old woman said nothing; she only stooped over the girl.

"You've drugged her!" she exclaimed.

"How long is it to stay here?"

"As long as I find it convenient. Now watch her carefully; I expect she will wake in a few minutes. Give her some water, and put the light out in the swag, and close up the entrance. You shall have something for your pains."

"Diamonds?" whispered the old woman eagerly. "You promised me diamonds the next job, George."

"You shall have them. Now, remember, look after her. I think she is moving. Where is Myra?"

"Asleep in the next place."

"Keep her there for to-night."

The Count moved out quickly, and Dame Burden stood alone looking at Alice.

The man was right. There was a sign of returning animation in the still young form; the small hands trembled slightly; the breast moved softly.

Dame Burden crept towards a cask and filled a dainty Venetian glass with water. She was stepping back from this task when a voice fell on her ear.

"Mother, who is this?"

She looked up and saw, just entering a narrow doorway from the adjoining vault, a girl. A young fine, splendidly handsome girl, with flashing black eyes, mane of blue-black hair, and skin as brown as a berry. The girl was wrapped in a loose garment of brilliant scarlet, and the contrast of the vivid color with her own dusky beauty would have gratified the soul of an artist.

The old woman frowned.

"Get back to your bed, Myra," she answered crossly. "George and Paul are returned, and they don't seem in the best of humors neither."

"Who is this?" repeated Myra, still pointing at Alice's form.

"That's a girl, as you can see for yourself," retorted Dame Burden, moving the candles as the Count had bidden her.

"Answer me at once—at once: do you hear?" muttered Myra, grasping the older woman's arm with a slender brown hand. "Which of them brought her here, and who is she?"

Dame Burden hesitated only one second.

"Which of them brought her?" she chuckled. "Why Paul, of course. As to who she is, I don't know more than the babe unborn; she looks like a lady."

"She is very beautiful," Myra said gloomily. "You swear you are speaking the truth, mother? It was Paul who brought her?"

"Deary—deary me! Of course I spoke the truth," exclaimed the old woman testily. "What should I tell a lie for?"

her dainty bed, her light airy room? Where was the window, and Davis? Who was this girl, and ah—who was that woman? She crouched down on the bed, trembling in every limb. Her lips opened to scream, but the sound seemed frozen in her throat.

"You are quite safe, deary. Lie down and rest again. Myra, go away, don't you see you frighten her. He will—I mean Paul—will be angry."

"I don't mind Paul's anger. Frightened, is she? I'm sorry for her, but that will wear off; she'll get used to a good deal of me, and she'll get used to me in time, perhaps."

Alice was still crushed on the bed; she did not understand the words, she was in a state of bewilderment, but something in the malignant tone roused her. She realized at once some terrible event had occurred to her; she could not grasp the full horror at that moment, but she vaguely understood that she was in some strange horrible place, separated from all she knew, and the fear in her breast lashed her almost to madness. She staggered from the couch and fell at Myra's feet.

"Oh, have pity—help me!" she murmured piteously. "I don't know what has happened to me. I can remember nothing clearly. I seem to have been asleep, but I feel—I am sure—something terrible has come. I am frightened of this gloomy place. It is strange. O, help me to get away! You are a woman—you will understand. I don't know where I am, but let me get out—breathe the air, and I shall feel better. You—will help me?"

"Come, come," broke in Dame Burden, trying to lift her from her knees; "you must lie down again and go to sleep. You will be ill."

Alice clung to Myra; she pushed the old woman away with a shudder.

"Oh, have pity, help me! I am afraid. I cannot tell what has come to me; but it is hideous, it is terrible. Take me away, carry me out into the air. Oh, help—help me for Heaven's sake!"

Myra stooped, her face softened; this girl was no willing accomplice. The next moment she would have pushed aside her mother and carried Alice across the vault to the other door, had not sounds of steps outside stopped her. Her expression changed.

"Here is someone coming who can help you, perhaps. I can't plead to him," she said roughly.

Alice looked round eagerly, while Myra folded her arms and fixed her glance like a hawk on the form entering through the curtains. She saw the Count gather on the Count's face as he saw her, but made no sign.

He advanced towards Alice with outstretched hands. She rose from her knees; her face was white, her hands clasped to her heart. She gazed at the Count with a look of deadly horror. He did not see it, but placed his hands on her arm.

"You are ill; rest here for a while. You will—"

"Don't touch me," gasped the girl, her brain reeling. "You—you—Oh, God! what terrible thing has happened to me? I—"

There was a confused sound in her throat, she made a faint movement with her hands, and the next instant Alice would have fallen to the ground in a swoon, but in two strides Myra left the wall, and had clasped her in her arms before the Count could touch her.

"Leave her to me, George," she said softly, yet to a well-toned ear her voice sounded stifled; "I will take her to my room. You don't understand women."

"I will carry her," interposed George hastily.

But she shook her head, and lifting Alice in her arms moved away as though the inanimate girl were but a featherweight.

The Count stood watching her as she walked away, and could not repress a feeling of admiration for her graceful muscular figure and wonderful strength and ease. He turned to the old woman as she disappeared.

"She will be kind to the other," he muttered quickly.

The old woman nodded.

"Yes, Myra is a strange one, but she ain't cruel. She—she thinks it's Paul's girl—I told her so. I thought it would be best."

"You did right, though I don't care much. She must know it sooner or later. I must make the golden-haired girl my wife."

"Do you, George?" answered the old woman in surprise, then after a moment's pause she added cunningly: "But how will you do that? I see she wears a wedding-ring on her finger."

The Count laughed.

"Have you lived all these years, Burden, to learn from me that a ring does not make a marriage?"

"Well, well, it's nothing to me; but what about the diamonds, George?" the old woman asked eagerly.

"Paul Rose entered as he spoke, carrying the case containing the Darrell diamonds."

"Hallo, mother!" he said jocularly; "all alone? Where's Myra and Sam?"

"Myra's in there," Dame Burden replied, nodding her head in the direction of the inner chamber. "Sam's out doing his duty."

Paul laughed.

"Where is it?" asked the Count abruptly.

glittering gems before the eager eyes of Dame Burden.

"Here," he said, picking out a ring that blazed like a star. "Here's your share, Burden. Paul, what will you have?"

"Nothing of that lot; give me the cups."

The Count glanced at him.

"Paul, you are growing cowardly. Well, take the cups. I keep the diamonds."

"What will you do with them, George?" asked Dame Burden, holding out her hand and watching the jewels flash in the light.

"Take them abroad and dispose of them there," the Count answered shortly.

Myra was leaning against the rough plank that formed a door between the two rooms.

"Take them abroad!" she whispered to herself. "He is going away and takes her with him. Coward! He forgets me."

She moved back to the bed on which she had placed Alice. The fainting-fit had passed but the poor girl lay in a state of coma. She knew nothing.

"How beautiful she is!" mused the unhappy Myra. "Fair as a lily. He loves her—all the love I gave him he treads under foot. He remembers nothing now that she will understand. It is all gone—all my pride, my honor, my peace of mind and my happiness. And she—what will become of her?"

Her eye caught the gleam of the ring on the white finger.

"Married, too. She hates him, for that I could love her. How would it be to—"

Alice stirred, she lifted her eyes.

"Help me! Oh help me!" she murmured.

Myra stood upright.

"I will help her," she said to herself quietly. "It will be my revenge."

CHAPTER XI.

Valerie Ross was in her room alone, her face was pale, but her eyes shone triumphantly.

Her plan had worked even better than she expected; the loss of the diamonds and plate, and Alice's disappearance, were now looked upon as an arranged thing.

The country rang with the news of the young Countess Darrell's elopement and robbery.

Two days had elapsed, and as yet no trace could be found of the fugitives.

Valerie saw nothing of Roy during this time; he was shut in his own room, hiding his head beneath the disgrace.

His mother was an altered woman; she seemed suddenly aged.

The loss of the diamonds was a sorrow to her, but she grieved far more over her son's acute pain; she knew alone what Alice's flight meant to him—not disgrace only, but desolation and a broken heart for Roy loved now as he never had or would again.

In her bosom lived many bitter thoughts of Alice, and the same to the proud honored woman was as a blow almost too heavy to bear.

Valerie's sympathy and tenderness were very soothing to her, but brought at the same time a sigh of sorrow as she thought of her son's wrecked life, and that Valerie could never be his wife now but through the shame of a divorce or death, and though she judged Alice harshly, she was too good a woman to pray for her death.

On the third day Roy left his room and went down to the library, he had made up his mind to go abroad for a time, and also to persuade his mother to leave the castle and seek mental change after all the trouble she had endured.

Valerie heard him leave his room, and trod softly after him.

"Roy," she said as he was about to enter the library.

He turned.

"Valerie," he said quietly, "forgive me; I did not hear you coming."

She gazed at his haggard face with a heart that burned from its jealousy.

"How ill you look!" she exclaimed.

"I feel tired—sick to death!" the Earl answered, passing his hand over his eyes.

"What are you going to do?" she asked hurriedly.

"I am making arrangements to leave here and go away."

"Do you intend to follow them?"

The question was asked involuntarily. Roy's face darkened.

"I shall seek it, if I go to the end of the world," he said quietly.

"Where shall you go first?" Valerie questioned him hurriedly.

Roy shook his head.

THEY LOVE TO TALK.

Woe be unto the inhabitant of China who seeks to exclude the rest of the world from the inner secrets of his house, says the New York Recorder.

Woe be unto him who imagines he can have secrets! Such a thing as a "private house" in China is unknown. Any one can go anywhere. The foolish ones shut their doors to shut the gossip out.

"What is going on now?" the old woman and even the men demand.

"What has he to hide from his fellow-townsmen?" As there are no newspapers to furnish the materials for conversation the neighbors must afford the subjects for speculation and so the gossip flourish.

A Chinaman who can give an accurate census of his relatives and connections has a freak of a memory. What he lacks he provides. His children marry early and supply all deficiencies.

At sixty he is related to literally hundreds upon hundreds of persons, and all have active recollections of the relationship, and their relatives in turn feel a family interest in the one great man of the family. There is usually at least one great shining light somewhere on the domestic horizon, and to this shrine all the curiosity of the enormous community of "friends" journeys.

Thus the poor man is watched and scrutinized and criticized and condemned, or, perhaps, praised, with subsequent demands upon his purse. Not a movement escapes the eyes of his relatives, and he goes through life a slave to gossip and "family interest."

Man who die at the right time are most likely to get monuments.

SWFETEST SOUND OF ALL.

BY TOMMY DON.

When dawn has gazed the fields with dew, when glows the eastern sky, I've heard the blood captured as I listened from on high.

Where'er the blue unadorned a deep the white, the sweet outstared singing of the distant nightingale.

I've heard the music of the wind, when sighing soft and low, now rising and now falling in melodious sob.

I've listened when in ruidous rage the storm King churns the seas, and strike the leaves in myriads from the bending, groaning trees.

I've heard the merry chatter of the mountain stream at play, and the murmur of the river as it hurries to the bay.

I've listened to the Titan tumbler of Niagara's mighty roar, and the many mingling voices of the waters of Lodore.

I've heard the prattling laughter of a babe in infant glee, and the cooing of the mother as she rocks him on her knee.

I've heard the passion's song of eager suitor, and the softly whispered tender notes that loving maidens use.

I've heard my head in clister-raisin, when from the organ loft are breathed out wondrous waves of rare harmonies sweet and soft.

I've heard the music ripple forth from Paganini's bow, and felt my blood run faster when the martial bugles blow.

I've owned the sway of Patti and I've heard even H. H. H. And the answering dome of concert hall, with grand old choruses ring.

I've listened to the harmonies of massed orchestral bands, and been charmed by operatic stars of this and other lands.

But, as for me, all other sounds the subtle essence lack of the sweet music that comes rolling down the track.

When comes a strain and flanks a drip, and the well-hung field of thoroughbreds comes quivering to the wire.

—The Horseman.

JOSH'S BAR-L.

The landlord of the tavern at Geenville in the Hemlock Belt was all alone in the bar-room the first time I ever entered that un-ue hostelry, one cold day in December, and I had scarcely closed the bar-room door, when taking his pipe out of his mouth for the purpose, he said:

"Josh Emberly's found his bar'l."

When I recovered from my surprise at this strange greeting, I assured the landlord that I was glad Mr. Emberly had found his barrel, but I had to admit that this was the first intimation I had had that he had lost his barrel.

"Night be his Thanksgrivin'," said the landlord, planting his pipe on the chimney-piece and lighting up the fire in the fire place.

This was addressed to a customer snoozing at one side of the wide hearth and was accompanied by a kick from the landlord's boot.

The hound got up and walked jauntily to the opposite side of the hearth and was soon continuing his nap there.

The landlord resumed his pipe and his chair, and said:

"It is, indeed," I replied, sitting down by the fire. The landlord took his pipe from his mouth, stared at me a moment, and then said:

"Day before Thanksgrivin', I mean."

"Oh!" said I. "Was it?"

"Desp't cold," replied the landlord. "Too cold for hog killin', so Josh Emberly put his'n off. Thought maybe it mout be all right Thanksgrivin' Day. Josh had his bar'l all ready, though to pack his pork in. Got it to me. Powerful proper bar'l. Wanted like p'ison to let him hev it. Hated it myself. Pork bar'l's is skeecer'n June bugs in Janiweary."

But Josh hung on for me to sell him the bar'l. Funny Josh never told ye 'bout that bar'l."

I said to the landlord that there was nothing strange about it, as I had never seen Mr. Emberly.

"Josh ain't pooty sociable, that's so," continued the landlord. "Never did like comp'ny. Mout ez well show himself to ye fust ez last, though. Josh be hung on an' hung on fer me to sell him the bar'l."

"Josh," says I, "bar'l's is bar'l's is now."

"Know it," says Josh. "An' I want that bar'l," says he.

"Josh," says I, "twenty shillin' wuth o' bad."

"Pooty blame hefty lot, that is!" says Josh.

"Josh," says I, "bar'l's is bar'l's."

"Know it," says Josh. "Twenty shillin' it is," says he.

"Hated like p'ison to let him hev it. Think Josh wanted it ez much ez twenty-two shillin' wuth o' bad. Git out ring."

The old hound accepted his master's kick without protest and got up and walked back to his former place by the hearth and went to sleep again.

"Josh took the bar'l home," resumed the landlord after lighted his pipe. "Was goin' to hog kill day before Thanksgrivin'. Too desp't cold. Put it off. Thought maybe it mout be all right Thanksgrivin' Day. Couldn't be a pro'er day fer a hog killin' than Thanksgrivin' Day turned out. Seen that soon ez I got up in the mornin'."

"Jane," says I to my ol' woman, "Providence don't seem to be holdin' no grudges ag'in Josh Emberly," says I.

"Can't get it out this time of the moon," says she. "Hain't grow faster an' stu' border than fig weed cut this time of the moon. David, says she. Mean to say ez Providence is smilin' on the hog killers an' frownin' on folks ez wants their hair cut?" says she.

"Jane," says I, "stick to the pint! Moon's right fer hog-killin', ain't it?" says I.

"Stom ed her."

"David," said she, "it is."

"Look at this bar'l!"—says I. "Couldn't hev a pro'er bar'l to pack his pork in than that bar'l he got o' me, could he?" says I.

"Mout a had twenty-two shillin' for that bar'l," says she.

"Jane," says I, "stick to the pint! Couldn't hev a pro'er bar'l to pack his pork in than that bar'l he got o' me, could he?" says I.

"Stumped her."

"Settled," says I. "Settled that Providence don't seem to be holdin' no grudges ag'in Josh Emberly," says I.

"Spoke a leetle too sudden. Set up for a prophet a leetle ahead of my time. Hain't more'n eat my breakfast. In comes Josh Emberly. Lookin' fluster, too."

"Mornin', Joshua," said I.

"David," said he, "they've hooked my bar'l," says he.

"Josh Emberly," says I. "Not that identical bar'l?" says I.

"Similar an' the same," says he.

"Josh Emberly," says I. "Who?"

"Dunno!" says he. "They've hooked it. Botted it outen my doorway. Can't find hide nor hair of it. David," said he, "wan't hog kill today," says he.

"Joshua," says Jane, "don't wail," says she. "Member that if yer can't hog kill to-day that's a heap more than can't hait cut," says she.

"Jane," says I, "stick to the pint!" says I. "Bar'l gone, hain't it?" says I.

"Stumped her."

"David," says she, "it looks that way."

"Wan't no doubtin' it. Josh Emberly's bar'l had been hooked. Hunted high an' hunted low fer it. No use. Couldn't strike its trail. Josh wanted to skeer up another bar'l. Wan't one in the deestrick. Turned to an' sold his pork. Foolish. Tol' him so. Orter he' enter it Yester-day Josh were over in Barley Run woods. Three miled from home. Seen sumpin' down in the bottom o' the hoiler. Went down to see what it were."

"Jupiter Graylegs!" says Josh. "My pork bar'l," says he.

"Put his foot on the bar'l. Sumpin' scumbled an' grumbled inside of it. Then sumpin' tumbled an' jumbled outside of it. Bar. Tremens us big bar. Seen Josh an' dug fer the laurels. Bar had stole Josh's bar'l. Colled it three miled through the woods an' made a winterin' place outen it. Singlar an' queer that Betsey ain't never tol' ye 'bout that bar'l."

I told the landlord that I didn't know any Betsey. He took his pipe out of his mouth and stared at me. At last he exclaimed:

"Ain't you him?"

"Ain't I who?" I asked.

"Feller from the county seat. Goiner marry John Emberly's darter Betsey," said he.

I was compelled to say I was not the fortunate gentleman from the county seat. The landlord got up and gave the fire a poke.

"Stumps me," said he. "Git out, Ring."

And the kick he gave Ring this time was such an astonisher that the old hound got up and never stopped until he reached the other side of the room.—New York Sunday Sun.

AHEAD OF THE COWCATCHER.

How the Electric Headlight is Now Used on Numerous Railroads.

The electric headlight is now used on many railroads, and W. B. Sparks who is interested in a southern road, recently told a writer of the Pittsburgh Dispatch that his company had found it a very profitable investment. The lights cost about \$375 each, fixed on the locomotive, and they cost no more than the oil light to maintain. The old headlight would not throw its light on a very dark night more than 100 feet, and it is impossible for an engineer to slow up his train in that distance, even with the emergency brake. Quite an item in the expense of the road used to be claims for cattle killed. During the rainy season the lands along the lines of road become very wet—in places they are entirely covered with water and the cattle come upon the track seeking some dry spot on which to sleep. When the old headlight was in use as many as thirteen cows have been killed at one time and the damage claims have sometimes amounted to over \$1,000 per month. Now the electric light throws its rays from half to three-quarters of a mile in front of the engine. Obstructions can be easily seen at that distance and some of the engineers insist that a switch disk can be more easily made out by it at night than in the daytime. The lights, moreover, do away with switch lights, which is quite a saving to roads that use them to any great extent. Mr. Sparks says that the engines using the electric headlights on his road have never killed a cow, and he is confident that the saving in stock claims alone will more than pay for all the headlights on the road within two years.

They Have Bath Money.

Among the Turks bath-money forms an item in every marriage contract, the husband engaging to allow his wife a certain sum for bathng purposes. If it be withheld, she has only to go before the Cads, and turn her slipper upside down. If the complaint be not then redressed, it is a ground for divorce.

HUXLEY OR DARWIN.

The Great Biologist Deared That His Friends Be Accorred Fair Play.

What Prof. Huxley did in these masterful essays was to place on a scientific and popular basis the Darwin hypothesis and to meet the many scathing criticisms directed against it. It was his high privilege to enjoy the friendship of Darwin for many years, and he at that time in England, was the man who summed up the work and showed best what was the true course of scientific thought.

Prof. Huxley, referring to the two essays of 1859 and 1860, writes that those who read them then "will do me the justice to admit that my real to secure fair play or Mr. Darwin did not drive me into the position of a mere advocate and that while doing justice to the greatness of the argument, I did not fail to indicate the weak points. I have never seen any reason for departing from the position which I took upon these two essays, and the assertion which I sometimes meet with nowadays that I have 'recanted' or changed my opinions about Mr. Darwin's views are quite unintelligible to me."

The one part in which Prof. Huxley differs from Darwin, it may be stated, is that we are still in the dark as to all the causes of variation. We are not yet at the bottom of what is inheritance. We are laboring in this and the other directions, and still the great hypothesis holds its own and is triumphant. What Gull calls "The tige Skepsis," or active doubt, has benefitted the Darwin an theory, for if doubt be honest and free from prejudice, then in time the truth is sure to come.

Perhaps in 1860 Prof. Huxley, in one sentence, explained the vast acquisitions of the man he eulogized. Recalling that superabundance of matter which Darwin gives, and the difficulties of those who for want of scientific training could hardly understand him, he wrote: "Those who attempt fairly to digest this book (The Origin of Species) find in much of it a sort of intellectual penicium—a mass of facts crushed and pounded into shape, rather than held together by the ordinary medium of an obvious logical bond. Due attention will, without doubt, discover this bond."—New York Times.

The Khyber Pass.</