



"I've Heard Enough," She Says, Cold as Ice.

SYNOPSIS.

Mr. Solomon Pratt began comical nar-ration of story, introducing well-to-do Nathan Scudder of his town, and Edward Van Brunt and Martin Hartley, two rich New Yorkers seeking rest. Because of latter pair's lavish expenditure of money, Pratt's first impression was connected with lunatics. Van Brunt, it was learned, was the successful suitor for the hand of Miss Agnes Page, who gave Hartley up. Adventure at Fourth of July cel-bration at Eastwich. Hartley rescued a boy, known as "Reddy," from under a horse's feet and the urchin proved to be one of Miss Page's charges, whom she had taken to the country for an outing.

which this gentleman has been kind enough to offer you?" He pointed to

Brown as he said it. "Hey?" asks the invalid, feeble. Martin said it all over again; he He coughed afore he answered. She had to stop in the middle so's to give shivered, kind of, at that cough, and cough and turn loose a few groans. graveyard quick-step, Washy Spar-And all that Washy said when the row's cough was it.

Twin had finished was another "Hey?"

selves. Don't you remember you She flashed a look at Martin as she said it. He turned white under his said-

"Shut up!" "Twas Scudder who got sunburn purple now. It looked to me like the "Miss Page," he said, "you do not understand. I must insist that you invalid was having all the fun. He seemed to be expecting something and hear our reasons for this proceeding." playing- for time. I guess Hartley "It is not necessary," she says, cold thought so, too, for he says:

as ice. "I have heard enough." The minister plucked up spunk to "That's enough of this. It's plain that he doesn't intend to accept. Mr. speak. But she snapped him up short as ple crust. Then I tried it-and got Scudder, you have given him formal my medicine. notice. Come on.'

Then Washy broke down. He "Mr. Sparrow," says she, "let them sniffed and half cried and wanted to do their worst. The children shall know things. The work would kill come to my school. As for you, I him in a day or so, of course, but he mean to-" Then she turns to me. didn't mind that. When he thought "Does Mr. Van Brunt know of this?" of his poor fatherless childrenshe asks. Course I couldn't say nothing "The children will be provided for."

but I believed he didn't. says Martin. "I told you that. Mr. "Thank goodness!" she says. And Morton will care for Editha and the just then who should walk in but Van baby. himself.

"Mr. Morton? Morton? Seems to "Hello!" says he, surprised. "Eume I've heard that name afore. Ain't reka told me you were at the village, he the gambler? The one that come Martin, so Lycurgus rowed me across, near being run out of town for stealing One of the children said you were a bedquilt from the poorhouse, or here. What is this, a surprise party? something like that? Is he the man And Agnes, too! Am I too late for the to trust with innocent little children?" refreshments?"

There it was again. The minister He smiled, but nobody else did. was red as a beet and stammering "Edward," says the Page girl, "will about "Impertinence" and "blackyou do a great favor for me?" guardism." I thought he'd lick that "Yours to command, of course," he consumptive right then and there. It answers, puzzled. took another five minutes to calm him

"Will you find a boarding place for down. And so far we hadn't gained an Mr. Sparrow?" "Who? Eureka's father? Why,

And just then a horse and buggy certainly. What's the trouble? Is it come rattling into the yard. The time for the Sparrows to nest again? horse was all over lather, like he'd He can come over to the Island with been drove hard, and the buggy was us. There's plenty of room. Hey, white with dust. Everybody looked Martin ?" out of the window. Sparrow looked "Never mind your friend, please, and his face brightened up. I callate says Miss Page. "If he comes will

twas exactly what he had been hoping you protect him and treat him kindly? and waiting for. Martin Hartley looked Thank you. Then that is settled. Genand his eyes and mouth opened. So tlemen, I believe there is no necessity did mine. for your further inconveniencing your-

inch.

"Twas Lord James that was driving selves. Your several bills will be the buggy, and there was a young paid." woman with him. The young woman I looked at the doctor and he looked

was Agnes Page. at Poundberry. The minister and Agnes jumped from the step and run Brown and Scudder looked at each to the kitchen door. In spite of the other. Maybe it seems queer that we dust and her clothes being rumpled didn't speak up and make her hear and her hat shook over to one side she our side-the right side. It does was as pretty as a picture. The next seem strange now, I'm free to say, but, minute she was in the room, staring as for me, I couldn't have faced her solemn at all us men. And her eyes then no more than the boy with the seemed to look right through a feller. jam 'round his mouth could face "Why, Agnes-Miss Page!" ex- his ma. Hartley was the only plucky one.

claimed Hartley. "Why are you here? What's the matter?" He says, swallowing once, as if he She didn't answer him. Just turned was gulping down his pride, "Miss

to Washy. And says she: "Am I in time, Mr. Sparrow? I didn't

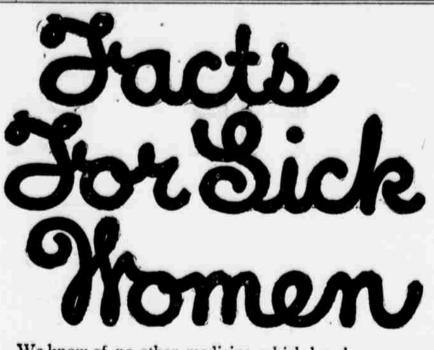
most unfair. To judge without a hearget your letter until nearly nine, being is not-' cause James was delayed at the of-She held up her hand. There was a fice. But I hurried right over. 1 was kid glove on it, and even then I so afraid I would be too late. Am I?"

noticed how well that glove fitted. The invalid looked at her. And, if "Mr. Pratt," she says to me, "I want he'd been the picture of misery afore, to ask you one question. Who is rehe was a whole panorama of it now. Whose idea sponsible for this? was it?"

much.

I hemmed and hawed. The other the candidate for the job a chance to I don't wonder. If ever there was a fellers might not have meant to do it, but somehow their eyes all swung round to Hartley.

"No, ma'am," says he. "I guess not, "I thought as "I see," she says. but I don't know. The shock of it, and



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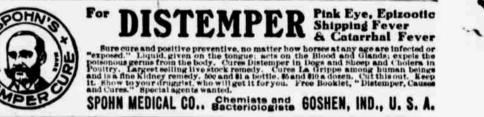
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horse's feet and the urchin proved to be one of Miss Page's charges, whom she had taken to the country for an outling. Out sailing later, Van Brunt, Pratt and Hopper were wrecked in a squall. Pratt landed safely and a search for the other two revealed an island upon which they were found. Van Brunt rented it from Scudder and called it Ozone island. In charge of a company of New York poor children Miss Talford and Miss Page vis-ited Ozone island. In another storm Van Brunt and Hartley narrowly escaped be-ing wrecked, having aboard chickens, Brunt and Hartley marrowly escaped be-ing wrecked, having aboard chickens, pigs, etc., with which they were to start a farm. Eureka Sparrow, a country girl, was engaged as a cock and Van Brunt and Hartley pald a visit to her father, who for years had been claiming con-sumption as an excuse for not working. Upon another island visit by Miss Page, Eureka diagnosed Hartley's case as one of love for Agnes. At a lawn fete, Van Brunt shocked the church community by raffling a quilt for the church's benefit. raffling a quilt for the church's benefit, Hartley invented a plan to make Wash-ington Sparrow work.

CHAPTER XIV .-- Continued.

We walked on together the rest of the way, laughing and talking. Nobody took the business serious at all. They all thought Washy would go to work when he found 'twas either that or get out and hustle for a place to put his head in.

We marched into the Sparrow yard like a Fourth of July parade. Hartley knocked at the kitchen door. Editha opened it.

"Is your father in?" asked the Twin. "Yes, sir," says Editha. "He's in. I s'pose you'd like to see him, wouldn't you? Pa, here's Mr. Hartley."

room. Then some coughs, like a string | care to hear it." of small earthquakes. Finally a dreadful weak voice orders us to step right in. The rest of the crowd went on ahead. I stopped for a jiffy to speak to Editha

"Where's the rest of the children?" I asks.

"I sent 'em over to the grocery store on an errand," she says. "I thought you'd be along pretty soon. They took the baby with 'em."

"How's your dad been since he heard the news?" says 1.

"Oh, he was going on terrible last night. Had nerve spells and fired the chairs around and carried on so we was all scared. But he went out about nine o'clock with a letter he'd wrote, and this morning he seems better. Say, Mr. Pratt," she whispers, eager, "is it true that me and Dewey are going to live with the minister's folks?" "Maybe so," says I. "Why?"

"Oh! I hope so," she says. "Then I could go to school, and pa wouldn't be 'round to jaw us, and Reky'd have

a little rest. She does need it so." Think of a 12-year-old young one talking like that. But the children was all grown-ups in that family.

I went into the dining room. The delegation was gathered on one side up in his rocker on the other. He looked some scared.

Hartley begun to lose patience. You heard what I said," he snaps, sharp. "Have you made up your mind?"

"Don't get mad, Mr. Hartley," pleads the sufferer, sad and earnest. "Please don't. My nerves is dreadful weak this morning and I ain't able to stand it. I've had coughing spells ever since I got out of bed. Well, I won't have to linger here much longer. Pretty soon I'll be laid away, and-"

"Have you made up your mind?" interrupts Martin. "Answer quick. The time of these gentlemen is valu able.'

"Don't, Mr. Hartley. Please don't. How can you cruelize a poor feller this way? Don't you know that any kind of stir and rumpus is the worst thing for me? Any doctor'll tell you that-"

"Bosh!" 'Twas Dr. Penrose that said it, and he stepped forward. 'Bosh!" says he again.

"What's that? Why, if it ain't my old friend the doctor! I never noticed you was there. I'm awful glad to see you, Doc. Seems just like old times.

You'll excuse my not getting up, won't you? I've wasted away so since you was here that-" "Bosh!" says the doctor again.

'You're fatter than ever. There's nothing in the world the matter with you but pure downright dog laziness. There was a groan from the dining Don't cough on my account. I don't

Washy looked at him as reproachful and goody-goody as a saint.

"I forgive you for them words, doccan make allowances."

to-" He was purple in the face. Peter Brown caught his arm.

"Ain't this a little off the subject? he says. "Look here, Sparrow, We and can't bring myself to-to-passing

size at the hotel. We'll pay him ten be put out of my house and home. My dollars a week. I've offered you the little home, that I've thought so much job. Are you going to take it?"

"There ain't nothing in the world I should like better, Mr. Brown. I like to work, and-'

"All right, then. Get your hat and come along."

"Come along! Why, how you talk! If I was to stir out of this house 'twould-'

'Twas Scudder's turn. "You'll have to stir mighty quick," says he. "I his bill ain't been all paid; and we won't have no do-nothing tramps in a lowe Mr. Scudder some rent; and I house of mine. Either take this chance s'pose likely Eureka would be able to or out you go next Saturday, bag and give more of her time to the Island baggage."

"Why, Mr. Scudder! Why, Nate!

"Well, Mr. Sparrow," Hartley was had a couple of soft rich folks over to lieve there are such people in the beginning when I come in, "have you Horsefoot Bar that was paying you a world. And yet, I have had some ex- the Candlemass procession without made up your mind about the position good living and more, too, all by them- perience."

-and all, has pretty nigh finished me concerning what is bred in the bone. up, I'm afraid. I don't cal'late I'll pull through, but I may. Let's hope for the things in this world which outweigh best, anyhow. But, ma'am, if you'd my personal convenience and-money. heard the things that's been said to me!"

She whirled around on us and her eyes flashed chain lightning.

"Ain't you ashamed?" she says. "Great strong men, every one of you, stuck his chin into the air and and all banded together to torture a poor helpless invalid."

A feller's conscience is the biggest tool part of his insides. Now I knew that what we'd been doing was exactly the right thing to do, but 1 felt as

mean and small as if I'd been caught stealing eggs. I kind of shriveled up as you might say, and tried to scrouge back into the corner. Maybe I'd have got there, only the rest of the crowd was trying to do the same thing.

All but Hartley. He was a lot set back, but he spoke up prompt.

"Miss Page," said he, "I'm sure you don't understand. We-' She was back at him afore he'd be-

gun.

"I think that is exactly what I dounderstand," she says. "At any rate, I mean to understand thoroughly. Mr. Sparrow, what have they said to you?" Washy cleared his throat. When he answered 'twas in a sort of beg-pardon voice. You could see how he hated to speak ill of anybody. He wouldn't hurt nobody's feelings for the world. Bless him! he was a cute shyster, if ever

there was one.

"It's like I wrote you, ma'am," says tor," says he. " I realize I ain't been he. "They've offered me a place to go able to pay my bill to you, and so I to work, and I've been awful tempted to take it. I want to take it. My land! "Allowances! Why, you confounded how I want to! But I don't feel able impudent loafer! I've a good mind to dig cellars. I wouldn't last at it more'n a few days and then what would become of my fatherless children with nobody to look after 'em? And because I think of these things need a good husky man about your away from 'em so soon, I'm going to 01-

He had to stop and wipe his eyes. Agnes' eyes were wet, too, and her feet patted the floor. "But why?" says she. "Why?"

"I don't know-that is, for sure, ma'am. You see I ain't been able to earn nothing for some time. Eureka, poor girl, she's had to look out for us all. And I b'lieve the doctor there,

work, and maybe for less pay, if-" "I see," says Miss Page, scornful. "I of the table, and Washy was crumpled How can you talk so! Just for a little see. And so, for a few dollars you are matter of rent. You don't need it. to be turned out of your home. You, a Ain't you been telling me that you poor sick man! Oh! I can hardly be-

Thank heaven, to me there are some You needn't answer, Mr. Pratt. He pays your salary, I believe." My, but she said it bitter and scorn-

Page," says he, "you are treating me

ful. Hartley was white afore, but now he was like chalk. He bowed to her, marched out of that house as proud and chilly as a walking icicle. The rest of us, all but Van and Agnes, trailed along astern, like a parcel of kicked dogs.

There is a proverb, I believe,

Washy sung out to us as we went: 'Good day, gentlemen," he says; "I hope you'll come and see me sometimes while I'm over to Horsefoot. I forgive you free and clear. I haven't no doubt you meant for the best."

The doctor and the rest was brave enough when we was out of Agnes Page's sight and hearing. They was talking big about what they'd do to Sparrow when they had a chance. But noticed none of 'em said much to Hartley. He marched ahead, stiff and white and glum. Peter Brown's last word to me was this:

"Pratt," says he, "if you see a hole in the sand anywheres 'tween here and the beach, mark my name around it, will you? The way I feel now I'd like to crawl into it and pull it after me. One about the size of a ten-cent piece would do, and even then I guess there'd be room and to spare for the rest of this gang."

When I got down to the skiff Van comes running to catch up. He caught me by the arm and hauled me to one side.

"Skipper," says he, "what the devil's the matter?"

I told him in as few words as I could. He roared. "That's all right," he says, "I'll fix that."

He went over to his chum and slapped him on the back.

"Brace up, old man," he says; "it's a mistake, and a mighty good joke on you, isn't it? Of course I'll square you with Agnes."

Hartley turned on him so quick that he jumped.

"If you please," says Martin, cutting and clear as a razor. "you will perhaps be good enough to mind your own business. If you mention one word concerning me to that lady you and I part company. Is that thoroughly plain ?"

"Twas the first time I'd ever heard them two have a hard word. The trip to Ozone island was as joyful as a funeral.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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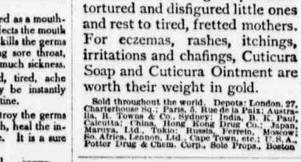
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