

# The City of Purple Dreams

Edwin Baird

CHAPTER VIII.—Continued.

"I like to hear a man talk that way. I despise modesty in business. Of course you are coming in with us? As I said, we shall require five additional millions, perhaps more, to work the thing properly. There is no need now to go into further details. You understand the situation even better than I do." He paused.

"Since this is Saturday," said Fitzhugh, "and since nothing can be gained by your knowing my decision before Monday, I shall meet you Monday morning at ten o'clock and will then give you my answer."

A slight frown appeared on Otis' thin face. He began gathering up his data. "Very well. At what place?"

"At my brokers—Shirley & Co., in the Merrimac block."

"At ten? Very well. I know already what your answer will be—an emphatic 'yes.'" Suddenly he stood up, with a sweeping gesture, as though to force into the background everything pertaining to business.

"Now let's talk no more shop. We've had enough for one night."

While they were exchanging parting words the hall door opened and Mrs. Otis and Kathleen entered.

Fitzhugh's heart seemed to stop for the infinitesimal part of a second, and then, as Kathleen came down the hall, it leapt, bounded, raced on with maddening speed. He tingled to his finger tips. It was the first time he had seen her since that moonlight night two summers ago. Then, with the soft June moon on her glorious hair, a gauzy scarf over her bare shoulders, he had thought her exquisite, ethereal. Now, with her saffron, her turban of white fur, the tang of the frosty night in her glowing skin, he thought her ravishing, distractingly beautiful.

Momentarily Otis seemed to hesitate, as though reluctant to do something that might afterward earn him a rebuke. But as Kathleen and her mother drew near he intercepted them with his guest and presented him, first to his wife then to his daughter.

As the girl spoke an acknowledgment of Fitzhugh's salutation she looked up for the first time into his eyes. The next instant she started visibly, and, seemingly unconscious of her act, did a rather singular thing: she came very close to him and looked searchingly into his face. The bright color heightened in her cheeks. Her fingers closed convulsively on the muff she carried. Her eyes traveled swiftly over him to his feet, and came to rest again on his face. She seemed in a state of bewilderment.

Then, recovering her composure as quickly as she had lost it, she murmured something conventional and was gone.

He never quite knew, when he found himself walking rapidly down the drive, with the snow swirling round him, how he got there. His brain was in a whirl, his pulse on fire, and over and over he repeated to himself: "She's wonderful—more wonderful than ever. . . . And she knows me—knows me—Of them all she is the only one. . . ."

His appointment was with Hunt at a Michigan avenue club. It was here he renewed the third acquaintanceship of that memorable day. A "quiet little game" was brewing in an upper room, and he arrived in time to join at the beginning. The first deal fell to him, and as he shuffled the cards in high feather, exchanging quips with the men around the table and his obvious good spirits, the door behind him opened and some new players entered.

The next moment Fitzhugh was being introduced to the new arrivals.

"Mr. Fitzhugh, this is Artie Sparkle." A foppish young man, smiling vacuously, came forward with mincing step and held out a flabby, bejeweled hand.

The "quiet little game" lasted all Saturday night and until late Sunday afternoon. Fitzhugh's Golden Goddess, Luck, frowned upon him at first and he lost steadily; but later his superior playing began to tell, and as her inclemency gradually turned to smiles he won much faster than he had lost. He was decidedly the master of the others.

Artie Sparkle lost continually. Also, he continually drank. It was not quite clear whether his adversity was responsible for his intemperance, or vice versa, but certainly as his libations increased he played the more recklessly. He distributed his paper freely, but as he became more intoxicated there was a decided reluctance to the advances. At length he was flatly refused and advised to go to bed.

At this point Fitzhugh, who so far had loaned him nothing, removed the requested number of chips from his generous heap and shoved them across the table to the tipsy one, who with much difficulty counted them and gave in exchange his I O U for five hundred dollars. They soon went the

way of the rest, and he sat slumped down in his chair, his arms dangling limply at either side, his head sunken, his mouth open, leering stupidly from under drooping lids.

Fitzhugh caught his wandering eye. "Better try another stack, Sparkle," he invited in a friendly way, and began cutting off a small section of his chip pile. "How many may I help you to, Sparkle?"

Artie struggled valiantly to speak distinctly. "A thou—a thou—a hie! a thousand, ol' shap."

With considerable slowness and deliberation the transaction was made, and Fitzhugh pocketed Artie's I O U for a thousand dollars.

The early winter darkness had closed in before the game ended, and most of the gamblers were ready for bed.

Very quietly Fitzhugh went in turn to all those who had taken Artie's I O U's and bought them in. In all they amounted to over eight thousand dollars, and the ones he himself held brought the total to ten thousand five hundred.

Fitzhugh was alone in a private compartment of his broker's office on Monday morning when, promptly at ten, Otis entered. With a brief "Good morning," the capitalist came straight to the point.

"You are with us, Fitzhugh?"

"Sit down, Otis. Make yourself comfortable. Try one of these cigars? You'll find them of an excellent flavor."

Otis took a cigar from the proffered case and sat on the edge of the only remaining chair in the small room. Resting a long hand on his knee, he tapped his wiry fingers impatiently against his leg. He was a little annoyed by Fitzhugh's easy cordiality. He never liked to mix good fellowship with business.

"Well? You are coming in with us?"

"For all I am worth."

"Good!" Otis sat back a little farther on his chair and smiled his satisfaction. "Good for you."

"What was your most of all just now is cash?"

"Yes, and lots of it."

Fitzhugh took out his check book, rested it on the small writing table,



"No!" Artie jumped violently. "You let me have no such sum. It's a falsehood!"

dipped a pen in the ink. "I will give you my check now for two hundred thousand."

Otis returned to the edge of his chair. "We must have at least half a million now, and perhaps five millions altogether. I thought we went into all that Saturday night."

"So we did. And I repeat I am with you for all I am worth."

Otis removed the glasses from his aquiline nose, and, twirling them on his finger, looked at the younger man inquiringly.

"I don't believe I quite understand you," he said.

"Didn't I speak distinctly? I say again I am ready to pool my interests with yours to the last cent I possess."

He opened his check book, filled in the date, stopped with pen poised. "Will you take my check for two hundred thousand?"

While Fitzhugh talked a great light had been dawning upon his caller. It now burst upon him effulgently and he saw the truth. He stood up.

"I understand," he said icily. "I hardly think there is need for further words."

He turned to go. But suddenly the thought of how simply he had been "taken in" became too much even for his half-starved sense of humor. He stopped at the door.

"It was very cleverly done," he congratulated. "You are a gifted actor."

an answer, and the door closed behind him.

## CHAPTER IX.

Monday afternoon Fitzhugh rang the doorbell of Artie's apartment. Soon Artie appeared.

"My business," explained Fitzhugh, when the servant had gone, "has to do with your I O U's which I hold."

"Aw, yes. You did let me have a few hundreds, I remembah."

"The total amount," said Fitzhugh, "is eleven thousand dollars."

"No!" Artie jumped violently. "You let me have no such sum. It's a falsehood!"

"Don't get excited. I bought in all your paper after the game. It totals eleven thousand dollars, just as I said."

Artie sprang to his feet, and, lighting a cigarette, began pacing nervously to and fro. Tossing the cigarette aside, he sat down, resting his elbow on his knee, and passed his hand shakily across his brow.

"I can't do anything for you now," he muttered, without looking up. "My allowance is overdrawn and I'm in a hole. You'll have to wait, that's all."

"Have I said I wouldn't?" suggested Fitzhugh.

Artie looked up quickly, a sudden glad hope leaping to his pale eyes.

"Then you won't press me for it?" he wondered eagerly.

"I may not ask you for it at all. I may make you a Christmas present of the entire batch, if you—"

"Only command me! I'll do anything you say."

"The last three days," continued Fitzhugh, watching the effect of his words, "I've had detectives working for me on a rather delicate matter. They were making a secret investigation of you and your family. I know to a nicety your financial status, your social standing, and I knew before I came here that you were unusually hard up at present. I need a social valet, and I'm willing to give you the job."

"My dear fellow—"

"I shall want to join the best clubs. Your part is obvious. You will introduce me to people whom I wish to meet, you will procure me the entrée to homes I wish to enter. There will be other commissions which I shall give you from time to time, and as you fulfill them I will return, one by one, your I O U's."

The effect of the proposal upon Artie was somewhat singular. He screwed up his mouth in a ludicrous manner and emitted a sound that was a cross between a baby's cry of delight and the screech of a peacock.

"It's ex-cru-ci-ating!" he cried, when he found his breath. "It'll be frightful fun." He sobbed suddenly. "Aw—I say! One teeny-weeny peep at the slips, what?"

Fitzhugh showed him the I O U's and he nodded his head brightly. Then his mirth overcame him a second time and he went off into another peal of delight.

While Fitzhugh sat watching him in critical silence a servant entered and announced several callers.

"Ask 'em to tiddle right in." Then, turning on Fitzhugh: "I'll try you on my friends—what?" He smiled prettily.

"I suppose I can stand it."

The four or five young men who entered were, for the most part, of Artie's class. They were flaccid, listless, seemingly consumed with ennui and a weary of the world. They talked languidly of tailors and different makes of motorcars. They expressed lukewarm preferences for a certain brand of cigarette or a particular kind of mixed drink. None had any individuality but all were cut from the same pattern.

Some time later, in the street below, Fitzhugh paused a moment in the falling snow and spoke feelingly to himself.

"It's enough," said he, "to make a man stop posing."

Then he went home, addressed an envelope to Kathleen Otis, slipped therein a one-dollar bill and after it a card, upon which he wrote:

"May you have a Merry Christmas in the wish of him who bought the soap and water."

Fitzhugh planned well in making Artie his "social valet." After that Monday conference in his broker's office he had surmised the relations between himself and Otis would therefore be unamiable. His surmise proved correct when not long afterward he met Otis and his wife one Sunday on the drive. He doffed his silk hat with a Chesterfieldian gesture—and was rewarded for his courtesies by being ignored more pointedly than if he had been an utter stranger.

Clearly after this there was but one way for him to see Kathleen, and that was by the aid of Artie Sparkle. Fitzhugh never required a second attempt to scale the citadel of any home, no matter how "exclusive" that home might be. He immediately became "the sensation" wherever he went. What with his distinguished appearance, his flashing wit, his skill at repartee, and, above all else, his gift of adapting himself readily to any role and playing it with avidity, his popularity was of a wondrous growth. He never lacked an audience, nor did he ever fail to keep one hanging on his every word.

But Fitzhugh had little time to be a society pivot. Though he was become a lion he seldom went out to roar. Only when he believed he should see Her would he accept any of the invitations.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

All is fair in love—except brunettes.

## GIRL PLEADS TO DIE, KILLS HER

### Youth's Confession Clears Up Mysterious Murder in Michigan.

## KISSES HIM GOOD-BY

### Boy Tells Weird Story of Chance Acquaintance Pleading for Death and How He Choked Her With Handkerchief.

Pontiac, Mich.—The murder by strangulation of twenty-year-old Vera Schneider, telephone operator, was solved by a confession of Anson Best, twenty-one years old, of Flint, who under a grilling by Prosecutor Gillespie admitted the murder.

The confession was a weird affair, Best asserting the girl, with whom he said he had struck up an acquaintance in the street, declared she was tired of living and forced him to strangle her with his handkerchiefs despite his protest.

Miss Schneider's body was found on the porch of a partially constructed house. There were signs of a severe struggle, but the girl had not been criminally attacked.

Here is the Confession.

Following is Best's confession: "Vera Schneider spoke to me and I spoke and we turned right around and she started to talk to me," Best said. "She wanted to go downtown and I got to talking to her, and I told her my name and asked her name and I asked her how she came to speak to a strange fellow."

"She seemed to be discouraged over something and I told her it was no use feeling that way about it, so we walked down Saginaw street and crossed the street and after we crossed the railroad track, we crossed the street back and went down Auburn street until we came to this house."

"We stopped on the sidewalk and she threw both arms around my neck and kissed me and we sat there and talked a little while."

"She was discouraged over something, but wouldn't say what it was; she wouldn't tell me, and finally she asked me if I would kill her. She said she wanted to die and I told her it was no use feeling that way because other people in the world didn't think that way."

"She asked me if I had a handkerchief or something, that she wanted me to choke her to death."

"I kept refusing and finally she asked me to and I took the handkerchief



Then She Kind of Kicked. and tied the knot around her neck. It didn't choke her or anything, but just was tight or lay loose. And I told her that she didn't want to be choked; she didn't want to die."

Kisses Him Good-By. "She said she did; she wanted me to do it, and she threw both arms around my neck and kissed me and said good-bye. She wanted me to pull the handkerchiefs tight, and so I took hold of them and pulled them tight."

"She didn't kick any at first at all, then she kind of kicked—just her feet a little and it was only a few minutes after that that I went across from the edge of the porch to the sidewalk and down to the creek and washed my hands, and an officer stopped me, and I stood around there until the body was taken down in the ambulance and then I went down and got a sandwich and a glass of milk and went on home."

Officials discredit the youth's story. They believe Best sought to overpower the girl, fought with her, and finally placed the knotted handkerchiefs about her throat.

"Kick" in Mule Feed. Cynthia, Ky.—Though many brands of liquor have originated in this county it has been dry here recently until three young men sniffed the fumes of a certain brand of "horse and mule" feed. They boiled some, adding a little water, and then sampled it. For four days they knew no more.

"Blue" Law is Beaten. Huntington, W. Va.—William Brown, charged with clearing land on Sunday in violation of the state's "blue" laws, was found not guilty. Brown testified that he was cutting down trees for firewood, and this coming under the head of necessities, he was freed.

## SETTLED QUESTION OF HAIR

### After Experience With Kerosene, Captain Hopkins Had Not Any Further Worry About It.

Baldness is a condition the threat of which will frequently stir men of even the most dormant vanity. Hair tonics have netted fortunes for their inventors and there are countless remedies of the old housewife, some of which, such as the application of kerosene, make the writer, at least, feel that the disease might be preferable to the cure. The sea captain John D. Whidden tells of his "Ocean Life in the Old Sailing Ship Days," certainly discovered to his sorrow one of the possible results of such a "cure."

Captain Hopkins was giving a dinner to some of the other ship captains and their wives who were in the harbor of Bahia at the same time with him. As the cabin of the captain's brig was small, the table was laid under awnings on top of the cabin. The guests arrived and dispersed about under the awnings to enjoy themselves until dinner was served. Captain Hopkins, who was a general favorite, after a few minutes went below, "presumably to put a few finishing touches to his appearance." The captain, who was "a small man, with a quaint, seamed, whiskerless face," was troubled about his thinning hair and, after trying all sorts of tonics, some one had told him that "kerosene oil, well rubbed in, would cause a healthy growth when everything else had failed." Captain Hopkins tried it and came to have great faith in it, "going around with his head glistening, and an odor distilling from him like a Pennsylvania oil derrick." Down in his cabin, now, he proceeded to give a fresh application of the kerosene.

Suddenly the people on deck were startled by a yell, "and the next instant the head of old Hopkins appeared above the companionway, blazing like a giant candle. The ladies screamed, while one or two captains caught up buckets and, dipping up salt water over the brig's side, deluged the captain's head, extinguishing him in a moment, but leaving him as bald as an egg, although beyond a few blisters he was not seriously hurt." Captain Hopkins, it turned out had lighted a lamp and somehow brought the match in contact with his head.

Concentration of Wealth. In substantiation of the contention that very much of the national wealth is finding its way into a few private hands, Congressman Henry T. Rainey, in the house of congress, made the following statements, based on statistics of the federal income tax bureau:

"There are two men in the United States whose income last year was over \$16,000,000. There are five men in the United States whose income last year was over \$5,000,000 apiece. In 1914, before the war started, there were 60 men whose annual incomes were over \$1,000,000 apiece. Last year there were 248 whose incomes were over \$1,000,000 apiece. In 1914 there were 114 men whose incomes were between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 apiece. Last year there were 405 men whose incomes reached this immense sum. In 1914 there were 147 men whose incomes were between \$300,000 and 400,000 apiece."

"Today there are 400 men who enjoy that large income. In 1914 there were 130 men whose incomes exceeded \$250,000, and was under \$300,000. Now there are 350 who enjoy that income. In 1914 there were 233 men with an income between \$200,000 and \$250,000. Now there are 750 men who are enjoying that income. In 1914 there were 400 men whose incomes exceeded \$150,000 and was under \$200,000. Now there are 1,300 men who enjoy that income."

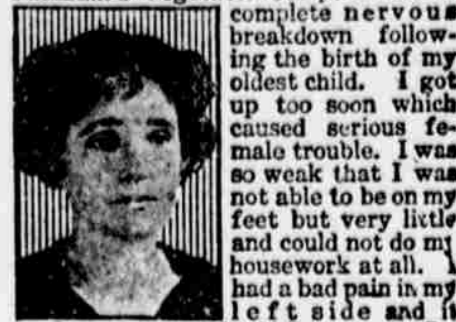
A Wilderness Establishment. Sam Cook is the keeper of a stopping place at Rocky Lake on the main winter trail in from the Pas in Manitoba to the Flin Flon mining country. He supplies shelter for man and beast—but no provender. Horse and dog teams transport their own feed. For the human travelers, the Cook establishment provides dishes, water and fire only, the visitors doing their own cooking. If there is any food left, the travelers usually leave it for their host. Cook keeps a set of books of a sort and these show that since November last 1,600 freight teams, that is, horse-drawn outfits, and 1,500 dog teams have passed his place, and 932 men used his roof as shelter overnight. Cook collects 25 cents for each traveler that uses his cooking utensils. He says that business is looking so good as the result of the mining development that he is going to erect a much larger stopping place this summer, including a stable capable of giving shelter to 100 horses.

He Came Back. I am employed in an attorney's office. One afternoon he was leaving for his golf club and not wanting to miss his train by waiting to lunch, sent me for some sandwiches, writes a correspondent. When I returned the switchboard operator told me he had left and apparently forgot the sandwiches. So I ate them. I had just finished eating them when he returned for his sandwiches. What followed was my most embarrassing moment.

Does Anybody Know? "Fishing season is open now." "Yep, but I'm afraid to think of it." "Why?" "I feel certain that when I start in to get my tackle in shape they'll tell me there's a scarcity of fish hooks and fish lines."

## A LETTER FOR WOMEN

### From a Woman Whose Serious Illness Was Overcome by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.



Garnett, Kas.—"I first took Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound for a complete nervous breakdown following the birth of my oldest child. I got up too soon which caused serious female trouble. I was so weak that I was not able to be on my feet but very little and could not do my housework at all. I had a bad pain in my left side and it would pain terribly if I stepped off a curb-stone. One day one of your bottles was thrown in the yard and I read every word in it. There were so many who had been helped by your medicine that I wanted to try it and my husband went to town and got me a bottle. It seemed as though I felt relief after the second dose, so I kept on until I had taken five bottles and by that time I was as well as I could wish. About a year later I gave birth to a ten pound boy, and have had two more children since and my health has been fine. If I ever have trouble of any kind I am going to take your medicine for I give it all the praise for my good health. I always recommend your medicine whenever I can."—Mrs. EVA E. SHAY, Garnett, Kansas.

## Prayed for Cure Finds it After 10 Years Food Would Sour and Boil—Teeth Like Chalk

Mr. Herbert M. Gessner writes from his home in Berlin, N. H.:

I had stomach trouble over ten years' kept getting worse. I tried everything for relief but it came back worse than ever. Last fall I got awfully bad; could only eat light loaf bread and tea. In January I got so bad that what I would eat would sour and boil; my teeth would be like chalk. I suffered terribly. I prayed every day for something to cure me. One day I read about EATONIC and told my wife to go to a box at the drug store as I was going to work at 4 p. m. I took one-third of it, and began to feel relief; when it was three-fourths gone, I felt fine and when it was used up I had no pains. Wife got me another box but I have felt the pain but twice. I used five tablets out of the new box and I have no more stomach trouble. Now I write to tell you how thankful I am that I heard of EATONIC. I feel like a new man; I eat what I like, drink plenty of water, and it never hurts me at all.

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