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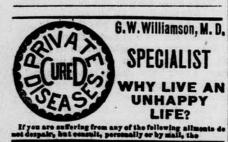
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Cluthor of An ISAACS. Dr

CHAPTER I.



GREAT multitude of people filled the church, crowded together in the old black bews, standing closely thronged in the nave and aisles, pressing, shoulder to shoulder, even in the two chapels on the right

many lands and many varying tradi-

tions of worship, unconsciously noted

these exceptions, looking with a vague

curiosity from one to the other. Then,

all at once his tall frame shivered

from head to foot, and his fingers con-

rulsively grasped the yielding sable

She was there, the woman he had

sought so long, whose face he had not

found in the cities and dwellings of

the living, neither her grave in the

silent communities of the dead.

There, before the uncouth monument

of dark red marble beneath which Ty-

cho Brahe rests in peace, there she

stood; not as he had seen her last on

that day when his senses had left him

in the delirium of his sickness, not in

dark loveliness, but changed as he

had dreamed in evil dreams that

death would have power to change

shadows beneath her velvet eyes were

deepened and hardened, her expres-

sion, once yielding and changing

under the breath of thought and feel-

ing as a field of flowers when the west

wind blows, was now set, as though

forever in a death-like fixity. The

delicate features were drawn a.d

pinched, the nostrils contracted, the

colorless lips straightened out of the

lines of beauty into the mould of a

lifeless mask. It was the face of a

dead woman, but it was her face still,

and the Wanderer knew it well; in the

kingdom of his soul the whole resist-

less commonwealth of the emotions

revolted together to dethrone death's

regent, sorrow-while the thrice-

tempered springs of passion, bent, but

not broken, stirred suddenly in the

palace of his body and shook the

During the seconds that followed

Then as the creed ended, the

his eyes were riveted on the beloved

vision sank down and was lost to his

sight. She was seated now, and the

broad sea of humanity hid her from

him, though he raised himself the full

distinguish even the least part of her

head-dress. To move from his place

done more than once to save them-

strains rose and fell, the Wanderer

bowed his head and closed his eyes,

listening through the maze of sounds

Something he heard at last, some-

thing that sent a thrill from his ear

ty of recognition which he had felt at

He who loves with his whole soul

or long dead, or never animate. They,

The lenses of his eyes can magnify

world, muffling in its tortuous passages

the reverberation of ordinary sounds,

while multiplying a hundred-fold the

faint tones of the one beloved voice.

gence form together an instrument

perceptions of his inmost soul are

The melancholy hymn resounded

through the vast church, but though

the Wanderer stretched the faculty of

hearing to the utmost, he could no

frigid waters of despair.

pews. The Wanderer, familiar with ir. Then an irresistible longing

possesses

was all but impossible, though the

strong foundation of his being.

head.

hue of wax, the soft

olive

turned to

warm

cheek was

on which they lay.

her. The

and left of the apse, a vast gathering of pale men and women whose eyes were sad, and in whose faces was written the history the freshness of her bloom and of her of their nation. The mighty shafts and pilasters of the gothic edifice rose like the stems of giant trees in a primeval forest from a dusky undergrowth, spreading out and uniting her their stony branches far above in the upper gloom. From the clerestory windows of the nave an uncertain light descended half-way to the depths and seemed to float upon the darkness below as oil upon the water of a well. Over the western entres he huge fantastic or-gan stled with blackened pipes dusty gilded ornaments of

colossai size, like some enormous king y crown long forgotten in the lumber room of the universe, tarnished and overlaid with the dust of ages. Eastward, before the rail which separated the high altar from the people, wax torches, so thick that a man might not span one of them with both his hands, were set up at irregular intervals, some taller, some shorter, burning with steady golden flames, each one surrounded with heavy funeral wreaths and each having a tablet below it. whereon were set forth, in the Bohemian idiom, the names, titles and qualities of him or her in whose memory it was lighted. Innumerable lamps and tapers before the side altars and under the strange canopied shrines at the bases of the pillars struggled ineffectually with the height of his stature in the effort to gloom, shedding but a few sickly yellow rays upon the pallid face of the

persons nearest to their light. Suddenly the heavy vibration of a fierce longing to be near her bade him single pedal note burst from the or- trample even upon the shoulders of gan upon the breathing silence, long the throng to reach her, as men have drawn out, rich, luminous and imposing. Presently, upon the massive bass, selves from death by fire in crowded great chords grew up, succeeding places. Still the singing of the hymn each other in a simple modulation, continued, and would continue, as rising then with the blare of trumpets he knew, until the moment of the and the simultaneous crash of mix- Elevation. He strained his heartures, fifteenths and coupled pedals ing to catch the sounds that to a deafening peal, and then subsiding came from the quarter where she sat. quickly again and terminating in one In a chorus of a thousand singers he long sustained common chord. And funcied that he could have distinnow as the celebrant bowed at the guished the tender heart-stirring vilowest step before the high altar, the brations of her tones. Never woman voices of the innumerable congrega- sang, never could woman sing again, tion joined the harmony of the organ, as she had once sung, though her ringing up to the groined roof in an voice had been as soft as it had been ancient slavonic melody, melancholly sweet, and tuned to vibrate in the and beautiful, and rendered yet more heart rather than in the ear. As the unlike all other music by the undefinable character of the Bohemian language, in which tones softer than those of the softest southern tongue for the silvery ring of her magic note. alternate so oddly with rough gutterals and strident sibilants.

The Wanderer stood in the midst of to his heart, unless, indeed, his heart the throng, erect, taller than the men itself were making music for his ears near him, holding his head high, so to hear. The impression reached him that a little of the light from the fitfully, often interrupted and lost, memorial torches reached his thought- but as often renewing itself and reful, manly face, making the noble and awakening in the listener the certainpassionate features to stand out clearly, while losing its power of illumina- the sight of the singer's face. tion in the dark beard and among the shadows of his hair. His was a has a knowledge and a learning which face such as Rembrandt would have surpass the wisdom of those who spend painted, seen under the light that their lives in the study of things living Rembrandt loved best; for the expression seemed to overcome the sur- indeed, can construct the figure of a rounding gloom by its own luminous flower from the dried web of a single quality, while the deep gray eyes leaf or by the examination of a dusty were made almost black by the wide seed, and they can set up the scheme expansion of the pupils; the dusky of life of a shadowy mammoth out of brows clearly defined the boundary in a fragment of its skeleton, or tell the the face between passion and thought; story of hill and valley from the conand the pale forehead, by its slight templation of a handful of earth or of recession into the shade from its mid- a broken pebble. Often they are dle prominence, proclaimed the man right, sometimes they are driven of art, the man of faith, the man of deeper and deeper into error devotion, as well as the intuitive by the complicated imperfections nature of the delicately sensitive mind of their own science. But he and the quick, elastic qualities of the who loves greatly man's finely organized, but nervous in his intuition the capacities of all bodily constitution. The long white instruments of observation which man fingers of one hand stirred restlessly has invented and supplied for his use. twitching at the fur of his broad lapel, which was turned back across the infinitesimal detail to the dimenhis chest, and from time to time sions of common things, and bring he drew a deep breath and objects to his vision from immeasura-sighed, not painfully, but wearily and ble distances; the labyrinth of his ear hopelessly, as a man sighs who knows can choose and distinguish amidst the that his happiness is long past and harmonies and the discords of the that his liberation from the burden of

life is yet far off in the future. The celebrant reached the reading of the gospel, and the men and women in the pews rises to their feet. Still His whole body and his whole intelli the singing of the long-drawn-out stanzas of the hymn continued with of exquisite sensibility, whereby the unflagging devotion, and still the deep accompaniment of the ancient hourly tortured, delighted, caught up organ sustained the mighty chorus of into ecstasy; torn and crashed by jealvoices. The gospel over, the people ousy and fear, or plunged into the sank into their seats again, not standing, as is the custom in some countries, until the creed had been said Here and there, indeed, a woman. perhaps a stranger in the country, re mained upon her feet, noticeable longer find the note he sought, among among the many figures seated in the the vibrations of the dank and heavy

and women, to reach the aisle and could slip between the tembstone of the astronomer and the row of black wooden seats. Once there, he should see her lace to face.

as d still the monotonous singing conas he faced the great congregation.

to him. "Pray let me pass." His face was white, indeed, and those who heard his words believed him. A mild old man raised his sad blue eyes, gazed at him, and, while features were half veiled in the folds expected to make way before the rich and strong. A lad of 15 stood upon head nor slacken her speed. tiptoe to make himself even slighter than he was, and thus to widen the way, and the Wanderer found himself, He was still trying to divide the crowd of the bell, the people swayed a little, all those kneeling who were able, and those whose movements were impeded by the press of the worshippers bending toward the altar as a field of grain rest, devoutly and humbly, with halfclosed eyes, as he strove to collect the fall of a footstep. and control his thoughts in the presence of the chief mystery of his faith. clear jingle of the metal broke the people stirred, and the soft sound of of the ancient church. Again the

the thousands of human voices took up the strain of song. The Wanderer glanced about him, measuring the distance he must traverse to reach the monument of the Danish astronomer, and confronting it with the short time which now remained before the end of the mass. He saw that in such a throng he would have no chance of gaining the posi- reached it unnoticed, unless, as was tion he wished to occupy in less than possible, he had been greatly dehalf an hour, and he had now but a ceived in the distance which had scant 10 minutes at his disposal. He lately separated her from him. gave up the attempt, therefore, determining that when the celebration turned to the left. He found no one

pedal note of the organ boomed

ame. The singing died away, the and all was over. The countless shuffling of innumerable feet sent heavy, tuneless echoes through vaulted space, broken every moment by the child, whom no one could see in the heavy foot striking against the wooden seats in the press. The Wanderer moved forward with the rest. Reaching the entrance of the pew where she had sat he was kept back during a few seconds by the half-dozen men and women who were forcing their way out of it before him. But at the farthest end a figure clothed in black was still kneeling. A moment more and he might enter the pew and be at her side. One of the other women dropped something before she was out of the narrow space, and stooped, fumbling and searching in the darkness. At the minute the slight, girlish figure rose swiftly and passed like a shadow before the heavy marble monument. The Wanderer saw that the pew was open at the other end, and without heeding the woman who stood in his way, he sprung upon the low seat, passed her, stepped to the floor upon the other side and was out in the was comparatively free.

aisle in a moment. Many persons had already left the church, and the space She was before him, gliding quickly toward the door. Ere he could reach her he saw her touch the thick ice which filled the marble basin, cross he had seen her face again, and he square windows. When the blackknew that he was not mistaken. The thin, waxen features were those of the dead, but they were hers, nevertheless, In an instant he could be at her side. But again his progress was momentarily impeded by a number of persons who were entering the building hasti-10 seconds later he was out in the narrow and dismal passage which winds Kirche and the buildings behind the dream, as the distance between himand towers cast deep shadows below them, and the blackened houses oppo- step, round a sharp corner to the site absorb what remains of the uncertain winter's daylight. To the left of the church door a low arch seans the lane, affording a covered communication between the north aisle and the sacristy. To the right the open space is somewhat broader, and three dark archways give access to as many passages, leading, in radiating directions, and under the old houses, to the streets beyond.

The Wanderer stood upon the steps beneath the rich stone carvings which orner he saw the heavy door just

came upon him to turn and force his set forth the Crucifixion over the door closing and heard the sharp resoundway through the dense throng of men of the church, and his quick eyes ing clang of its iron fastening. The scanned everything within sight. To lady had disappeared, and he felt sure pres past the huge pillar till he the left, no figure resembling the one that she had gone through that enhe sought was to be seen, but on the trance. right, he fancied that among a score of persons now rapidly dispersing he could distinguish a moving shadow He turned, indeed, as he stood, and just within one of the archways, black oddly ornamented, unnaturally narhe tried to move a few steps. On all against the darkness. In an instant sides curious looks were directed upon he had crossed the way and was hurhim, but no one offered to make way, rying through the gloom. Already far before him, but visible, and, as he the sides being erected on the onetinued until he fest himself deafened believed, unmistakable, the shade hand along the Karlsgasse, and on "I am ill," he said to those nearest noiseless as thought, but yet clearly aloud as he ran:

" Beatrice! Beatrice!" trying to draw back, gently shook his | yond. It was intensely cold, and the head. A pale woman, whose sickly still air carried the sound clearly to variably shut. The main entrance the distance. She must have heard takes in all the scant breadth of the of a torn black shawl moved as far as him, she must have known his voice. she could, shrinking as the very poor but as she crossed the open place, and and miserable shrink when they are the gray light fell upon her, he could is a great window, above that another. see that she did not raise her bent and highest of all, under the pointed

He ran on, sure of overtaking her in the passage she had now entered, The windows of the first and second for she seemed to be only walking, after repeated efforts, as much as two while he was pursuing her at a headsteps distant from his former position. long pace. But in the narrow tunnel, when he reached it, she was not, when the music suddenly ceased, and though at the farther end he imagined black, with the smoke of brown Boand at the first silvery tinkling in both directions to a distance of fifty ten score winters. yards or more. He was alone. The rusty iron shutters of the little shops were all barred and fastened, and every door within the range of his before it by day and by night, wonvision was closed. He stood still in before the gale. The Wanderer turned surprise and listened. There was no again and bowed himself with the sound to be heard, not the grating of barbarous sculptured saints, who kept a lock, nor the tinkling of a bell, nor | their interminable watch high up by

He did not pause long, for he made Three times the tiny bell was rung, a in the flash of a moment's intuition. pause followed, and thrice again the It was physically impossible that she should have disappeared into any of solemn stillness. Then once more the the houses which had their entrances within the dark tunnel he had just their simultaneous motion was like a traversed. Apart from the presumpmighty sigh breathed up from the tive impossibility of her being lodged secret vaults and the deep foundations in such a quarter, there was the selfevident fact that he must have heard the door opened and closed. Secthrough the nave and aisles, and again ondly, she could not have turned to the right, for in that direction the street was straight and without any lateral exit, so that he must have seen her. Therefore she must have gone to the left, since on that side there was a narrow alley leading out of the lane, at some distance from the point where he was now standingtoo far, indeed, for her to have

Without further hesitation, he should be over he would move for- in the way, for it was not yet noon, ward with the crowd, trusting to his and at that hour the people were superior stature and energy to keep either at their prayers or at their Sunhim within sight of the woman he day morning's potations, and the place sought, until both he and she could was as deserted as a disused cemetery. meet, either just within or just with- Still he hastened onward, never pausout the narrow entrance of the ing for breath, till he found himself all at once in the great ring. He Very soon the moment of action knew the city well, but, in his race, he had bestowed no attention upon benediction was given, the second the familiar windings and turnings, gospel was read, the priest and the thinking only of overtaking the fleetpeople repeated the Bohemian prayers, ing vision, no matter how, no matter where. Now, on a sudden, the great, heads began to move onward, the irregular square opened before him, flanked on the one side by the fantastic spires of the Teyn Church, and the blackened front of the huge Kinsky sharp, painful cough of a suffering palace, on the other by the half modern town hall, with its ancient multitude, or by the dull thud of some tower, its beautiful porch, and the graceful oriel which forms the apse of the chapel in the second story. One of the city watermen, muffled

uous by the great bunch of dark feathers that drooped from his black hat, was standing idly at the corner from which the Wanderer emerged. The latter thought of inquiring whether the man had seen a lady pass, but the fellow's vacant stare convinced him that no questioning would elicit a satisfactory answer. Moreover, as he looked across the square he caught sight of a retreating figure dressed in black. already at house, or in some semi-public institusuch a distance as to make positive recognition impossible. In his haste he found no time to convince himself that no living woman could have thus outrun him, and he instantly resumed his pursuit, gaining rapidly apon her he was following. But it is not an easy matter to overtake even a woman, when she has an advantage of a couple of hundred yards, and when the race is a short one. He passed the ancient astronomical clock. just as the little bell was striking the third quarter after eleven, but he did not raise his head to watch the sadfaced apostles as they presented their herself hurriedly and pass out. But stiff figures in succession at the two eyed cock under the small Gothic arch above flapped his wooden wings and uttered his melancholy crow, the Wanderer was already at the corner of the ring, and he could see the object of his pursuit disappearing before him into Karlsgasse. He noticed unly to attend the next mass. Scarcely easily that the resemblance between the woman he was following and the object of his loving search between the north side of the Teyn seemed now to diminish, as in a bad Kinsky Palace. The vast buttresses self and her decreased. But he held resolutely on, nearing her at every right, then to the left, to the right again, and once more in the opposite direction, always, as he knew, approaching the old stone bridge. He was not a dozen paces behind her as she turned quickly a third time to the right, round the wall of the ancient house which faces the little square over against the enormous buildings comprising the Clementine Jesuit monastery and the Astronomical Observatory. As he sprang past the

He knew the house well, for it is distinguished from all others in Prague, both by its shape and its row front. It is built in the figure of an irregular triangle, the blunt apex of one angle facing the little square, was speeding onward, light as mist, the other upon a narrow alley which leads away towards the Jews' quarter. to be seen and followed. He cried Overhanging passages are built out over this dim lane, as though to facilitate the interior communications of His strong voice echoed along the the dwelling, and in the shadow bedark walls and out into the court be- neath them there is a small door studded with iron nails, which is intruncated angle which looks toward the monastery. Immediately over it gable, a round and unglazed aperture, within which there is inky darkness. stories are flanked by huge figures of saints, standing forth in strangely contorted attitudes, black with the dust of ages, black as all old Prague is the tones of the organ died away far that the fold of a black garment was hemian coal, with the dark and up under the western window. It just disappearing. He emerged into unctuous mists of many autumns, was the moment of the elevation, the street, in which he could now see with the cruel, petrifying frosts of

He who knew the cities of men as few have known them knew also this house. Many a time had he paused dering who lived within its massive. irregular walls, behind those uncouth the lozenged windows; he would know now. Since she whom he sought had up his mind as to what he should do entered he would enter, too; and in some corner of that dwelling, which had long possessed a mysterious attraction for his eyes, he would find at last that being who held power over his heart, that Beatrice whom he had learned to think of as dead, while still believing that somewhere she must be yet alive, that dear lady whom, dead or living, he loved beyond all others, with a great love, passing

CHAPTER H.

HE Wanderer laid his hand boldly upon the chain of the bell. He expected to hear the harsh jingling of cracked metal, but he was suprised by the silvery clearness and musical quality of the ringing tones which reached his ear. He was pleased, and unconsciously took the pleasant impression for a

favorable omen. The heavy door swung back almost immediately, and he was confronted by a tall porter in dark green cloth and gold lacings, whose imposing appearance was made still more striking by the magnificent fair beard which flowed down almost to his waist. The man lifted his heavy black hat and held it low at his side as he drew back to let the visitor enter. The latter had not expected to be admitted thus, without question, and paused under the bright light which illuminated the arched entrance, intending to make some inquiry of the porter. But the latter seemed to expect nothing of the sort. He carefully closed the door, and then, bearing his hat in one hand and his gold-headed staff in the other, he proin his military overcoat, and conspicceeded gravely to the other end of the vaulted porch, opened a great glazed door and held it back for the visitor to pass.

The Wanderer recognized that the farther he was allowed to penetrate unhindered into the interior of the house, the nearer he should be to the object of his search. He did not know where he was, nor what he might find. For all that he knew, he might be in a club, in a great banking tion of the nature of a library, an academy or a conservatory of music. There are many such establishments in Prague, though he was not acquainted with any in which the internal arrangements so closely resembled those of a luxurions private residence. But there was no time for hesitation, and he ascended the broad staircase with a firm step, glancing at the rich tapestries which covered the walls, at the polished surface of the marble steps on either side of the heavy carpet and at the elaborate and beautiful iron work of the hand raii. As he mounted higher he heard the quick rapping of an electric signal above him, and he understood that the porter had aunounced his coming. Reaching the landing he was met by a servant in black, as correct at all points as the porter himself, and who bowed low as he held back the thick curtain which hung before the entrance. Without a word the man followed the visitor into a high room of irregular shape, which served as a vestibule, and stood waiting to receive the guest's furs, should it please him to lay them aside. [TO BE CONTINUED.]

Paradoxical.

Clive-"In some respects a nail manu facturer is like a man who fails in order to

Mr. Mauf-"I don't see it." Clive-"Why, if he is successful bigoods are likely to go under the hammer.'

All He Was Worth. Snively-"I hear that poor Muggins is Snodgrass-"Yes. Life insured?" Snively-"For \$5,000."

Snoigrass-"Oh, well, the loss is fully