

thing! And then to have the idiotic utterances of the tongue registered and judged as a confession of faith—or, rather, of faithlessness! A foot to the last, Keyork, as you always were—and who would make a friend of such a fool?"

Unorna leaned upon the back of the chair watching him, and wondering whether, after all, he were not in earnest this time. Suddenly, he stopped, looked at her and came toward her. His manner became very humble.

"You are right, my dear lady," he said. "I have no claim to your forbearance for my outrageous humor. I cannot even ask you to forgive me, for if I tell you I am sorry you will not believe me."

His voice trembled and his bright eyes seemed to grow dull and misty.

"Let this be our parting," he continued, as though mastering his emotion. "I have no right to ask anything. When I have left you, when you are safe forever from my humors and my tempers and myself—then, do not think unkindly of Keyork Arabian. He would have seemed the friend he is, but for his unruly tongue."

Unorna hesitated a moment, then she put out her hand, convinced of his sincerity, in spite of herself.

"Let bygones be bygones, Keyork," she said. "You must not go, for I believe you."

"You are as kind as you are good, Unorna, and as good as you are beautiful," he said, with a glance which would have been courtly in a man of noble stature, but which was almost grotesque in such a dwarf, he raised her fingers to his lips.

"I must be going," she said. "So soon?" exclaimed Keyork, regretfully. "There were many things I had wished to say to you today, but if you have no time—"

"I can spare a few moments," answered Unorna, pausing. "What is it?"

"One thing is this. His face had again become impenetrable as a mask of old ivory, and he spoke in the ordinary way. "This is the question. I was in the Teyn Kirche before I came here. While there, I met an old acquaintance of mine, a strange fellow, who I have not seen for years. He is a great traveller—a wanderer through the world. His name? It is strange, but I cannot recall it. He is very tall, wears a dark beard, has a pale, thoughtful face. But I need not describe him, for he told me he had been with you this morning. That is not the point. He is a Hindu, poor man, that is all. I struck me that, if you would, you might save him. I know something of his story, though not much. He once loved a young girl, now doubtless dead, but whom he still believes to be alive, and he spends—or wastes—his life in a useless search for her. You might cure him of the delusion."

"How do you know the girl is dead?"

"She died in Egypt four years ago," answered Keyork. "There is no convincing him, and if he were really convinced he would die himself. I used to take an interest in the man, and I know that you could cure him in a simpler and safer way."

"How am I to convince him that he is mistaken, and that the girl is dead?"

"That is very simple. You will hypnotize him, he will yield very easily, and you will suggest to him very forcibly to forget the girl's existence."

"That is true," said Unorna, in a low voice. "Are you sure that the effect will be permanent?" she asked with sudden anxiety.

"A case of the kind occurred in Hungary last year."

"It will interest me extremely. I am very grateful to you for telling me about him."

Unorna had watched her companion narrowly during the conversation, expecting him to betray his knowledge of a connection between the Wanderer's visit and the strange question she had been asking of the sleeper when Keyork had surprised her. She was agreeably disappointed in this, however. Keyork spoke with a calmness and ease of manner which disarmed suspicion.

"I am glad I did tell you," said he. He stood upon the foot of the couch upon which the sleeper was lying, and looked thoughtfully and intently at the calm features.

"We shall never succeed in this way," he said, at last. "This condition may continue indefinitely, till you are old, and I—until I am older than I am by many years. He may not grow weaker, but he cannot grow stronger. Theories will not renew tissues."

"That has always been the question," she answered. "At least, you have told me so. Will lengthened rest and perfect nourishment alone give a new impulse to growth or will they not?"

"They will not. Theories will not produce tissues."

"What will?"

"Blood," answered Keyork Arabian, very softly.

"I would make it constant for a day, or for a week if I could—a constant circulation, the young heart and the old should beat together; it could be done in the lethargic sleep—an artery and a vein—a vein and an artery—I have often thought of it; it could not fail. The new young blood would create new tissue, because it would itself constantly be renewed in the young body, which is able to renew it, only expending itself in the old. The old blood would itself become young again as it passed to the younger man."

"A man?" exclaimed Unorna.

"Of course."

"But it would kill him."

"Not at all, as I would do it, especially if the younger man were very strong and full of life."

"Are you perfectly sure of what you say?" asked Unorna eagerly.

"Absolutely. I have examined the question for years."

"Have you everything you need here?" inquired Unorna.

"Everything."

"You seem interested," said the gnome.

"Would such a man—such a man as Israel Kafka answer the purpose?" she asked.

"Admirably," replied the other, beginning to understand.

"Keyork Arabian," whispered Unorna, coming close to him and bending down to his ear. "Israel Kafka is alone under the palm tree where I always sit. He is asleep and he will not wake."

The gnome looked up and nodded gravely. But she was gone almost before she had finished speaking the words.

"As upon an instrument," said the little man, quoting Unorna's angry speech. "Truly I can play upon you but it is a strange music."

Half an hour later Unorna returned to her place among the flowers, but Israel Kafka was gone.

CHAPTER VII.



HE Wanderer, when Keyork Arabian had left him, had intended to revisit Unorna without delay, but he had not proceeded far in the direction of her house when he turned out of his way and entered a deserted street which led toward the river. He walked slowly, drawing his furs closely about him, for it was very cold.

His heart was filled with forebodings which his wisdom bade him treat with indifference, while his passion gave them new weight and new horror with every minute that passed.

He had seen with his eyes and heard with his ears. Beatrice had been before him, and her voice had reached him among the voices of thousands, but now, since the hours had passed, and he had not found her, it was as though he had been near her in a dream, and the strong certainty took hold of him that she was dead, and that he had looked upon her wraith in the shadowy church.

The fear of evil, the presentiment of death defied logic, and put its own construction and interpretation upon the strange event. He neither believed, nor desired to believe, in a supernatural visitation, yet the inexplicable certainty of having seen a ghostly vision overwhelmed reason and all her arguments. Beatrice was dead. Her spirit had passed in that solemn hour when the Wanderer had stood in the dusky church; he had looked upon her shadowy wraith, and had heard the echo of a voice from beyond the stars, whose crystal tones already swelled the diviner harmony of an angelic strain.

The Wanderer was of those who dread nothing save for the one dearly beloved object, but who, when that fear is once roused by a real or an imaginary danger, can suffer in one short moment the agony which should be distributed through a whole lifetime. The magnitude of his passion could lend to the least thought or presentiment connected with it the force of a fact and the overwhelming weight of a real calamity.

Love is the first, the greatest, the gentlest, the most cruel, the most irresistible of passions. In his least form he is mighty. A little love has destroyed many a great friendship. The merest outward semblance of love has made such havoc as no intellect could repair. The reality has made heroes and martyrs, traitors and murderers, whose names will not be forgotten for glory or for shame. Helen is not the only woman whose smile has kindled the beacon of a 10 years' war, nor Antony the only man who has lost the world for a caress. It may be that the Helen who shall work our destruction is even now twisting and braiding her golden hair; it may be that the new Antony, who is to lose this same old world again, already stands upon the steps of Cleopatra's throne. Love's day is not over yet, nor has man outgrown the love of woman.

He who has won woman in the face of daring rivals of enormous odds, of gigantic obstacles, knows what love means; he who has lost her, having loved her, alone has measured with his own soul the bitterness of earthly sorrow, the depth of total loneliness, the breadth of the wilderness of despair. And he who has sorrowed long, who has long been alone, but who has watched the small twinkling ray still burning upon the distant border of his desert—the faint glimmer of a single star that was still above the horizon of despair—he only can tell what utter darkness can be upon the face of the earth when the last star has set forever.

Such a man was that Wanderer, as he paced the deserted street in the cruel, gloomy cold of the late day.

Cold and dim and sad the ancient city had seemed before, but it was a thousandfold more melancholy now, more black, more saturated with the gloom of ages. From time to time the Wanderer closed his heavy lids, scarcely seeing what was before him, conscious of nothing but the horror which had so suddenly embraced his whole existence. Then, all at once, he was face to face with some one. A woman stood still in the way, a woman wrapped in rich furs, her features covered by a dark veil which could not hide the unequal fire of the unlike eyes so keenly fixed on his.

"Have you found her?" asked the soft voice.

"She is dead," answered the Wanderer, growing very white.



BY MARION CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER VIII.

URING the short silence which followed and while the two were still standing opposite to each other, the unhappy man's look did not change. Unorna saw that he was sure of what he said, and a thrill of triumph, as jubilant as that which she had felt before him, and touching his brow. He obeyed.

"You are the image in my eyes," she said, after a moment's pause.

"Yes. I am the image in your eyes," he answered in a dull voice.

"You will never resist me again. I command it. Hereafter it will be enough for me to touch your hand, or to look at you, and if I say 'sleep' you will instantly become the image again. Do you understand that?"

"I understand it."

"I promise," he replied, without perceptible effort.

"You have been dreaming for years. From this moment you must forget all your dreams."

His face expressed no understanding of what she said. She hesitated a moment, and then began to walk slowly up and down before him. His half-glazed look followed her as she moved. She came back and laid her hand upon his head.

"My will is yours. You have no will of your own. You cannot think without me." She spoke in a tone of concentrated determination, and a slight shiver passed over him.

"It is of no use to resist, for you have promised never to resist me again," she continued. "All that I command must take place in your mind instantly, without opposition. Do you understand?"

"Yes," he answered, moving un- easily.

For some seconds she again held her open palm upon his head. She seemed to be evoking all her strength for a great effort.

"Listen to me, and let everything I say take possession of your mind forever. My Will is yours, you are the image in my eyes, my word is your law. You know what I please you should know. You forget what I command you to forget. You have been mad these many years, and I am curing you. You must forget your madness. You have now forgotten it. I have erased the memory of it with my hand. There is nothing to remember any more."

The dull eyes, deep set beneath the shadows of the overhanging brow, seemed to seek her face in the dark, and for the third time there was a nervous twitching of the shoulders and limbs. Unorna knew the symptom well, but had never seen it return so often, like a protest of the body against the enslaving of the intelligence. She was nervous in spite of her success. The immediate results of hypnotic suggestion are not exactly the same in all cases, even in the first moments; its consequences may be widely different in different individuals. Unorna, indeed, possessed an extraordinary power, but on the other hand she had to deal with an extraordinary organization. She knew this instinctively, and endeavored to lead the sleeping mind by degrees to the condition in which she wished it to remain.

She knew that if, when he awoke, the name he loved still remained in his memory, the result could not be accomplished. She must produce entire forgetfulness, and to do this she must wipe out every association, one by one. She gathered her strength during a short pause. She was greatly encouraged by the fact that the acknowledgement of the delusion had been followed by no convulsive reaction in the body. She was on the verge of a complete triumph, and the concentration of her will during a few moments longer might win the battle.

"And so," she continued, presently, "this man's whole life has been a delusion, ever since he began to fancy, in the fever of an illness that he loved a certain woman. Is this clear to you, my Mind?"

"It is quite clear," answered the muffled voice.

"He was so utterly mad, that he even gave that woman a name—a name, when she had never existed, except in his imagination."

"Except in his imagination," repeated the sleeper, without resistance.

"He called her Beatrice. The name was suggested to him because he had fallen ill in a city of the South where a woman called Beatrice once lived and was loved by a great poet. That was the train of self-suggestion in his delirium. Mind, do you understand?"

"He suggested to himself the name in his illness."

"You understand, therefore, my Mind, that this Beatrice was entirely the creature of the man's imagination. Beatrice does not exist, because she never existed. Beatrice never had any real being. Do you understand?"

This time she waited for an answer, but none came.

"You are my Mind," she said, fiercely. "Obey me! There never was any Beatrice, there is no Beatrice now, and there never can be."

The lips twisted themselves, and the face was as gray as the gray snow.

"There is—no—Beatrice." The words came out slowly, and yet not distinctly, as though wrung from the heart by torture.

Unorna smiled at last, but the smile was growing dark.



BY MARION CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER IX.

HE PRINCIPAL room of Keyork Arabian's dwelling was in every way characteristic of the man. It received its distinctive character however, neither from its vaulted roof, nor from the deep embrasures of its windows, nor from its scanty furniture, but from the peculiar nature of the many curious objects, large and small, which hid the walls and filled almost all the available space on the floor. It was clear that every one of the specimens illustrated some point in the great question of life and death which formed the chief study of Keyork Arabian's latter years; for by far the greater number of the preparations were dead bodies, of men, or women, or children, or animals, to all of which the old man had endeavored to impart the appearance of life, and in treating some of which he had attained results of a startling nature. The osteology of man and beast was, indeed, represented, for a huge case, covering one whole wall, was filled to the top with a collection of many hundred skulls of all races of mankind, and where real specimens were missing, their place was supplied by admirable casts of craniums; but this reposed, so to call it, of bony heads, formed but a vast, grinning background for the bodies which stood and sat and lay in half-raised coffins and sarcophagi before them. In every condition produced by various known and lost methods of embalming.

On that evening when the Wanderer fell to the earth before the shadow of Beatrice, Keyork Arabian sat alone in his chamber house.

A heavy book lay open on the table by his side, and from time to time he glanced at a phrase which seemed to attract him. It was always the same phrase, and two words alone sufficed to bring him back to the contemplation of it. Those two words were "Immortality" and "Soul." He began to speak aloud to himself, being by nature fond of speech.

"Yes. The soul is immortal. I am quite willing to grant that. But it does not in any way follow that it is the source of life, or the seat of intelligence. It is not a condition of life, but life is one of its conditions. Does it leave the body when life is artificially prolonged in a state of unconsciousness—by hypnotism, for instance? Since its presence depends directly on life, so far as I know, it belongs to the body rather than to the brain. I once made a rabbit live an hour without its head. With a man that experiment would need careful manipulation—I would like to try it. Or is it all a question of that phantom, vitality? Take man at the very moment of death—have everything ready, do what you will—my artificial heart is a very perfect instrument, mechanically speaking—and how long does it take to start the artificial circulation through the carotid artery? Not a hundredth part so long a time as drowned people often lie before being brought back, without a pulsation, without a breath. Yet I never succeeded, though I have made the artificial heart work on a narcotized rabbit, and the rabbit died instantly when I stopped the machine, which proves that it was the machine that kept it alive. Perhaps, if one applied it to a man just before death, he might live on indefinitely, grow fat and flourish so long as the glass heart worked. Where would his soul be then? In

the glass heart, which would have become the seat of life? Everything, sensible or absurd which I can put into words makes the soul seem an impossibility—and yet there is something which I cannot put into words, which proves the soul's existence beyond all doubt. I wish I could buy somebody's soul and experiment with it."

He ceased and sat staring at his specimens, going over in his memory the fruitless experiments of a lifetime. A loud knocking roused him from his reverie. He hastened to open the door, and was confronted by Unorna. She was paler than usual, and he saw from her expression that there was something wrong.

"What is the matter?" he asked, almost roughly.

"He is in a carriage down stairs," she answered quickly. "Something has happened to him. I cannot wake him—you must take him in—"

"To die on my hands? Not I!" laughed Keyork, in his deepest voice. "My collection is complete enough."

She seized him suddenly by both arms, and brought her face near to his.

"If you dare to speak of death—"

She grew intensely white, with a fear she had not known before in her life. Keyork laughed again, and tried to shake himself free of her grip.

"You seem a little nervous," he observed, calmly. "What do you want of me?"

"Your help, man, and quickly. Call your people—have him carried upstairs—revive him—do something to bring him back."

Keyork's voice changed.

"Is he in real danger?" he asked. "What have you done to him?"

"Oh, I do not know what I have done!" cried Unorna, desperately. "I do not know what I fear—"

She let him go and leaned against the doorway, covering her face with her hands. Keyork stared at her. He had never seen her show so much emotion before. Then he made up his mind. He drew her into his room and left her standing and staring at him while he thrust a few objects into his pockets and threw his fur coat over him.

"Stay here till I come back," he said, authoritatively, as he went out.

"But you will bring him here?" she cried, suddenly conscious of his going.

The door was already closed. She tried to open it, in order to follow him, but she could not. The lock was of an unusual kind, and either intentionally or accidentally Keyork had shut her in. For a few moments she tried to force the springs, shaking the heavy woodwork a very little in the great effort she made. Then, seeing it was useless, she walked slowly to the table and sat down in Keyork's chair.

The reaction from the great physical efforts she had made overcame her. It seemed to her that Keyork's only reason for taking him away must be that he was dead. Her head throbbed and her eyes began to burn. The great passion had its will of her, and stabbed her through and through with such pain as she had never dreamed of. The horror of it all was too deep for tears, and tears were by nature very far from her eyes at all times. She pressed her hands to her breast and rocked herself gently backward and forward. There was no reason left in her. To her there was no reason left in anything, if he were gone. And if Keyork Arabian could not save him, who could?

The mechanical effort of rocking her body from side to side brought no rest, the blow she struck upon her breast in her frenzy she felt no more than the open door had felt those she had dealt it with the club.

Driven to desperation she sprang at last from her seat and cried aloud:

"I would give my soul to know that he is safe!"

The words had not died away, when a low groan passed, as it were, around the room. The sound was distinctly that of a human voice, but it seemed to come from all sides at once. Unorna stood still and listened.

"Who is in this room?" she asked in loud, clear tones.

Again that awful sound filled the room, and rose now almost to a wail and died away.

Unorna's brow flushed angrily. In the direct line of her vision stood the head of the Malayan woman, its soft, embalmed eyes fixed on hers.

"If there are people hidden here," cried Unorna fiercely, "let them show themselves, let them face me. I say it again—I would give my immortal soul!"

This time Unorna saw as well as heard. The groan came and the wail followed it and rose to a shriek that deafened her. And she saw how the face of the Malayan woman changed; she saw it move in the bright lamp-light, she saw the mouth open. Horrified she looked away. Her eyes fell upon the squatting savages—their heads were all turned toward her, she was sure that she could see their shrunken chests heave as took breath to utter that terrible cry again and again—even the fallen body of the African stirred on the floor, not five paces from her. Would their shrieking never stop? All of them—every one—even to the white skulls high up in the case—not one skeleton, not one dead body that did not mouth at her and scream and moan and scream again.

Unorna covered her ears with her hands to shut out the hideous, unearthly noise. She closed her eyes lest she should see those dead things move. Then came another noise. Were they descending from their pedestals and cases and marching upon her, a heavy footed company of corpses?

Fearless to the last, she dropped her hands and opened her eyes.

[To be continued.]

had not faded from her lips when the air was rent by a terrible cry.

"By the Eternal God of Heaven!" cried the ringing voice. "It is a lie—a lie—a lie!"

She who had never feared anything earthly or unearthly, shrank back. She felt her heavy hair rising bodily upon her head.

The Wanderer had sprung to his feet. The magnitude and horror of the falsehood spoken had stabbed the slumbering soul to sudden and terrible wakefulness.

"Beatrice!" he cried, in long-drawn agony.

Between him and Unorna something passed by, something dark and soft and noiseless, that took shape slowly—a woman in black, a veil thrown back from her forehead, her white face turned toward the Wanderer, her white hands hanging by her side. She stood still, and the face turned, and the eyes met Unorna's, and Unorna knew that it was Beatrice.

There she stood between them, motionless as a statue, impalpable as air, but real as life itself. The vision, if it was a vision, lasted fully a minute. Never, to the day of her death, was Unorna to forget that face, with its deathlike purity of outline, with its unspeakable nobility of features.

It vanished as suddenly as it had appeared. A low, broken sound of pain escaped from the Wanderer's lips, and with his arms extended he fell forward. The strong woman caught him and he sunk to the ground gently in her arms; his head supported upon her shoulder.

There was a sound of quick footsteps on the frozen snow. A Bohemian watchman, alarmed by the loud cry, was running to the spot.

"What has happened?" he asked, bending down to examine the couple.

"My friend has fainted," said Unorna, calmly. "He is subject to it. You must help me to get him home."

"Is it far?" asked the man.

"To the house of the Black Mother of God."