(Copyright, 1897, by Bret Harte.) Eddy just waltzin' in and takin' the chief seats in the synagogue. And you'll have a

free pass to the show." Either he was too intoxicated with his engeful vision or the shadows of the room had despened, but he did not see the quick flush that had risen to his wife's face with this allusion to Barker, nor the after settling of her handsome features into a dogged de termination equal to his own. His blind fury against the three partners did not touch curiosity; she was only struck with the evident depth of his emotion. He had never been a braggart; his hostility had always been lazy and cynical. Remembering this, she had a faint stirring of respect for the undoubted courage and consciousness of handed crusade against wealth and power: rather, prihaps, it seemed to her to condone her own weakness in her youthful and inexplicable passion for him. No wonder she in."

Then you have nothing more to tell me!"

"Then you have nothing more to tell me!"
she said, after a pause, rising and going toward the mantel.

"You needn't light up for me," he returned, rising also, "I am going. Unless," he added, with his coarse laugh, "you
think it wouldn't look well for Mrs. Horncantle to have been sitting in the dark with
—a stranger." He paused as she contemptuously put down the candlestick and
threw the unit match into the grate. No threw the unlit match into the grate. No. I've nothing more to tell. He's a fancy-looking pup. You'd take him for 21, though I've nothing more to take him for 21, though looking pup. You'd take him for 21, though he's only 16-clean-limbed and perfect—but for one thing—" He atopped. He met her quick look of interrogation, however, with a lowering silence that, nevertheless, changed again as he surveyed her erect figure by the faint light of the window with a sardonic smile. "He favors you, I think, a sardonic smile. "He favors you, I think, And that?" she queried, as he seemed to

"He ain't ashamed of me," he returned,

with a laugh.
The door closed behind him; she heard his heavy step descend the creaking stairs; he was gore. She went to the window and threw it open, as if to get rid of the atmosphere charged with his presence—a presence still so potent that she now knew that for the lest five minutes she had been, to her horror, struggling against its magnetism. She even recoiled now at the thought of her child, as if, in these new confidences over it thind revived the old intimacy in this link of their common flesh. She looked down from her window on the square shoulders, thick throat and crisp matted hair of her husband as he vanished in the darkness and lrew a breath of freedom-a freedom not so much from him as from her own weakness that he was bearing away with him into the xonerating night. She shut the window and sank down in

her chair again, but in the encompassing and compassionate obscurity of the room. And this was the man she had loved and for whom she had wrecked her young life! Or was it love? and if not, how was she better than he? Worse, for he was more loyal to that passion that had brought them together and its responsibilities than she was. She had suffered the perils and pangs of maternity, and yet had only the mere anima yearning for her offspring, while he had taken over the toll and duty and even the devotion of parentage himself. But then she remembered also how he had fascinated -a simple schoolgiri-by his sheer domincering strength, and how the objections of her parents to this coarse and common man had forced her into a clandestine intimacy that ended in her complete subjection infant whose concealment from her parents and friends was compassed by his low cun-ning; she remembered the late atonement marriage proffered by the man she had already begun to loathe and fear, and whom she now believed was eager only for her inheritance. She remembered her abject compliance through the greater fear of the world, of the stormy scenes that followed their ill-omened union, of her final abandonment of her husband, and the efforts of her friends and family who had rescued the last of her property from him.
She was glad she remembered it; she

She was glad she remembered it; she dwelt upon it, upon his cruelty, his coarseness and vulgarity, until she saw, as she honestly believed, the hidden springs of his affection for their child. It was his child in nature, however it might have favored her in looks; it was his own brutal self he vanity, or what you like, it can have but was worshiping in his brutal progeny. How one end—to put you in my place at last, to less could it have ignored her—its—own be considered the fair game afterward for else could it have ignored her—its own mother? She never doubted the truth of what he had told her—she had seen it in his own triumphant eyes. And yet she would have made a kind mother; she remem-bered with a smile and a slight rising of color the affection of Barker's baby for her; she remembered with a despening of that color the thrill of satisfaction she had felt her husband's fulminations against Mrs. Barker, and more than all, she felt in his blind and foolish hatred of Barker himself delicious condonation of the strange feel-



SHE RAN TO THE WINDOW

ing that had sprung up in her heart for Harker's simple, straightforward nature. How could be understand; how could they understand (by the plural she meant Mrs. Barker and Hornesstle) a character so innately noiorneastie) a character so innately no-in her strange attraction toward him she had felt a charming sense of what she believed was a superior and even matronly protection; in the utter isolation of her life ow-and with her husband's foolish abuse

sound of many voices from the street. Mrs. Horneastle new it was the "down coach" vehicle clattered and rolled into the darkness, trailing its burning lights across her walls and ceilings. But now she heard steps on the statement a pause before her room. whisper of vices, the opening of the door. of protest as a man apparently tried to follow the figure into the room. "No. no. I tell you no." remonstrated the woman's voice in a hurried whisper. "It won't do. Everybody knows me here. You must not

But the motionless woman in the coatr had "And when it does come you'll see me and recognized her voice and the voice of her

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Mrs. Barker drew back, but did not utter a cry. Mrs. Horncastle, with eyes even brighter than her companion's, smiled. The red suddenly returned to Mrs. Barker's

"This is my room," she said indignantly.

with a sweeping gesture around the walls.
"I should judge so," said Mrs. Horncastle following the gesture, "but," she added quietly, "they put me into it. It appears, however, they did not expect you."

Mrs. Barker saw her mistake. "No, no. Mrs. Harker saw her distant she raid apologetically, "of course not." Then she added, with nervous volubility, sitting flows and tugging at her gloves: "You see, just ran down from Marysville to take a ok at my father's old house on my way to Hymettus. I hope I haven't disturbe you. Perhaps," she said with sudden eager

'Some of these men are such idiots," said Mrs. Barker, with a half hystorical laugh. They seem to think if a woman accepts the least courtesy from them they've a right to be familiar. But I fancy that fellow was a little astonished when I shut the door in

ss, "you were asleep when I came in."
"No," said Mrs. Horncastle, "I was not

sleeping nor dreaming. I heard you come

'I fancy he was," returned Mrs. Horneas tle dryly. "But I shouldn't call Mr. Van Loo an idjot. He has the reputation of being a cautious business man." Mrs. Harker bit her lip. Her companion had been recognized. She rose with a slight flirt of her skirt. "I suppose I must go and get a room; there was nobody in the office when I came. Everything is badly managed here since my father took away the best servants to Hymettus." She moved with afected carelessness toward the door, when Mrs. Horneastle, without rising from her seat, said: "Why not stay here?"

Barker brightened for a moment, she said, with polite deprecation, "I couldn't think of turning you out."
"I don't intend you shall," said M said Mrs. Horneastle. "We will stay here together until you go with me to Hymettus or until Mr. Van Loo leaves the hotel. He will hardly ttempt to come in here again if I remain.

Mrs. Barker, with a half laugh, sat down presolutely. Mrs. Horneastle gazed at her curiously. She was evidently a novice in this sort of thing. But, strange to say-and I leave the ethics of this for the sex to settle-the fact did not soften Mrs. Horneasle's heart, nor in the least qualify her attitude toward the younger woman, After n awkward pause Mrs. Barker rese again Well, it's very good of you, and-and-I'll just run out and wash my hands and ge the dust off me and come back." "No, Mrs. Barker," said Mrs. Horncastle, rising and approaching her, "you will first wash your hands of this Mr. Van Loo, and

get some of the dust of the rendezvous off ou before you do anything else. You can lo it by simply telling him, should you neet him in the hall, that I was sitting here when he came in and heard everything. Depend upon it, he won't trouble you again." But Mrs. Barker, though inexperienced in ove, was a good fighter. The best of the ex are. She dropped into the rocking chair nd began rocking backward and forward and began rocking backward and forward while still tugging at her gloves, and said, in a gradually warming volce: "I certainly shall not magnify Mr. Van Loo's silliness to that importance. And I have yet to learn what you mean by talking about a rendezyous. And I want to know," she continued, uddenly stopping her rocking and tilting the rockers impertinently behind her, as, with her elbows squared on the chair arms, she tilted her own face defiantly up into Mrs. Horncastle's, "how a woman in your position—who don't live with her husband— dares to talk to me." There was a lull before the storm. Mrs.

There was a full before the storm. Also, Horncastle approached nearer, and, laying her hand on the back of the chair, leaned over her, and, with a white face, and a metallic ring in her voice, said: "It is just because I am a woman in my position that I do! It is because I don't live with my husband that I can tell you what it will be when you no longer live with yours-which will be the inevitable result of what you are now doing. It is because I was in this position that the very man who is pursuing you because he thinks you are discontented with your husband once thought he could pursue me because I had left mine. You are here with him alone, without the knowlany man who may succeed him. You can test him and the truth of what I say by telling him now that I heard ull."

m- "Suppose he doesn't care what you have of heard?" said Mrs. Barker sharply. "Suppose he says nobody would believe you, if 'tell-ing' is your game. Suppose he is a friend of my husband and he thinks him a much better guardian of my reputation than a woman like you. Suppose he should be the one to tell my husband of the foul slander invented by you?"

For an instant Mrs. Horncastle was taken aback by the audacity of the woman before her. She knew the simple confidence and boyish trust of Barker in his wife, in spite of their sometimes strained relations, and she knew how difficult it would be to shake And she had no idea of betraying Mrs. Barker's secret to him, though she had made this scene in his interest. She had wished to save Mrs. Barker from a compromising situation, even if there was a certain vindictiveness in her exposing her to herself. Yet she knew it was quite possible now, if Mrs. Barker had immediate access to her husband, that she would convince him of her peaceful innocence. Nevertheless, she had still great confidence in Van Loo's fear of scandal and his utter unmanliness. She knew he was not in love with Mrs. Barker, and this puzzled her when she considered face, however, betrayed nothing. She drew oack from Mrs. Barker and with an indifferent and graceful gesture toward the door, said, as she leaned against the mantel, "Go. hen, and see this much-abused gentleman and then go together with him and make peace with your husband-even on those erms. If I have saved you from the consequences of your folly I shall be willing to

bear even his blame."

"Whatever I do." said Mrs. Barker, rising hotly, "I shall not stay here any longer to be insulted."

She flounced out of the room be insulted."

She flounced out of the room be insulted."

But here the voice of the other man which be insulted." She flounced out of the foliate had not yet heard arose for the area and swept down the staircase into the office, and swept down the staircase into the office, she had not yet heard arose for the area time clear and distinct. "Are you quite sure? I didn't know she left San Francisco." now—and with her husband's foolish abuse of him ringing in her ears—it seemed a sacred duty. She had lost a son. Providence had sent her an ideal friend to replace him. And this was quite consistent, too, with a faint smile that began to play about her mouth as she recalled Barker's delightful and irresistible youthfulness.

There was the clatter of hoofs and the man who had kindly escorted her had evisound of many voices from the street. Why destrict her was the clatter of hoofs and the man who had kindly escorted her had evisound of many voices from the street. sound of many voices from the street. Mrs. dently been unable to procure her any as-Horncastle new it was the "down coach" sistance. She she said this in a somewhat changing here. It twould be off again in high voice, which might have reached the a few moments, and, no doubt, bearing her cars of that gentleman had he been in the husband away with it. A new feeling of vicinity. But he was not, and she was locked it behind her, and cast herself on relief came over her as she at last heard forced to meet the somewhat dazed apologies the warning, "All aboard!" and the great of the clerk alone, and to accompany the "My husband is here." she gasped. of the clerk alone, and to accompany the chambermaid to a room only a few paces distant from the one she had quitted. Here she hastily removed her outer duster and hat, and washed her hands and consulted her excited face in the mirror, with the door ajar and an ear sensitively attuned to any step in the corridor. But all this was effected so rapidly that she was at last to follow the figure into the room. "No. no. I tell you no." remonstrated the woman's voice in a hurried whisper. "It won't do Everybody knows me here. You must not come in now. You must wait to be announced by the servant. Hush. Go!"

There was a slight struggle, the sound of a kiss, and the woman succeeded in finally shutting the door. Then she walked slowly, but with a certain familiarity, toward the mantel, struck a match and lit the candle. The light shone upon the bright eyes and slightly flushed face of Mrs. Barker.

"O, no. He was gone," said the clerk.
"Gone," echoed Mrs. Barker, "Impos-ble. He was he was here only a moment

ago."
The clerk rang a bell sharply. The stable man appeared. "That tall, smooth-faced man, in a high hat, who came with the lady," said the clerk severely and concisely, "didn't you tell

me he was gone?"
"Yes, sir," said the stableman. "Yes, sir," said the stableman.
"Are you sure?" interrupted Mrs. Barker, with a dazzling smile that, however, masked a sudden tightening round her heart, "Quite sure, miss," said the stableman. "for he was in the yard when Steptoe came after missing the coach. He wanted a buggy to take him over the divide. We hadn't one, so he went over to the other stables, and he didn't come back, so I reckon he's and he didn't come back, so I reckon he's cone. I remember it because Steptoe came by a minute after he'd gone in another negy, and, as he was going to the divide too, I wondered why the gentleman hadn't gone with him."

"And he left no message for me? He "He said nothing to me but 'Isn't that steptoe over there?" when Steptoe came in. And I remember he said it kinder suddent—as if he was reminded o' suthin' he'd forbreathless, but still smiling, as if he was reminded o' suthin' he'd for-got, and then he asked for a buggy. Ye see, niss," added the man, with a certain rough ousideration for her disappointment, "that's nebbe why he clean forgot to leave a mes-

Mrs. Barker turned away and ascended Mrs. Barker turned away and ascended the stairs. Selfishness is quick to recognize selfishness, and she saw in a flash the reason of Van Loo's abandonment of her. Some fear of discovery had alarmed him; perhaps Steptoe knew her husband; perhaps he had heard of Mrs. Horneastle's possession of the sitting room; perhaps—for she had not seen him since their playful struggle at the door—he had recognized the woman the form which Mrs. Horneastle had just risen, he door-he had recognized the woman from which Mrs. Horncastle had just who was there, and the selfish coward had run away. Yes: Mrs. Horncastle was right;

exert the gentleman who came with her - clinging to her dress and looking fearfully her? A new and double consciousness frightened. What he saw there he never was possibly in the billiard room or the toward the door. I couldn't see bar?" him now. Say I'm sick, tired out, gone to But you'll have to see him Tater," said

"But you'll have to see him later," said Mrs. Horneastle, wonderingly, "Yes, but he may go first. I heard him tell them not to put up his horse."

"Good," said Mrs. Horneastle, suddenly, "Go to your room and lock the door, and I'll come to you later. Stop. Would Mr. Barker be likely to disturb you if I told him you would like to be alone?"

"No, he never does. I notes tell him that."

"I tokk is the feree loy at the idea of a climax that might separate him from his wife forever.

Luckly he did not notice it, but with a continued sense of relief threw himself back in his chair, and, glancing familiarly round to walls, broke into his youthful laugh.

"Lord! how I remember this room in the old days. It was Kitty's own private sitting room, you know, and I used to think it looked just as fresh and pretty as she.

that.

Mrs. Horncastle smiled faintly. "Come, quick, then," she said, "for he may come Opening the door she passed mao the half-dark and empty hall. "Now run!" She heard the quick rustle of Mrs. Barker's skirt die away in the distance, the opening and shutting of a door, silence, and then turned back into her own room. She was none too soon. Presently she

heard Barker's voice saying, "Thank you, I can find the way," his still buoyant step on the staircase, and then saw his brown curls rising above the railing. The light streaming through the open door of the sitting room into the half-lit hall had partially dazgled him, and already bewildered, he

"You have fairly caught us," she said with charming composure, "but I had half a mind to let you wander round the hotel a little longer. Come in." Barker followed her in mechanically and she closed the door, "Now sit down," she said gayly, "and tell me how you knew we were here, and what you mean by surprising us at this hour." Barker followed and finally at his wife's glove, which Mrs. Horncastle had a moment before ostentatiously thrown on the table. Seeing which, the had been only a miserable dupe.

Her cheeks blazed as she entered the room she pounced upon it with assumed archness, and just quitted, and threw herself in and pretended to conceal it.



fair gamblers to call at private offices with-out fear and without reproach? Mrs. Barker's vanity, Mrs. Barker's love of ceremony and form, Mrs. Barker's snobbishness, were flattered by the attentions of this pollshed gentleman with a foreign name, which even had the flavor of nobility, who never picked up her fan and handed it to her without bowing, and always rose when she entered

the room.

Mrs. Barker's scant schoolgirl knowledge was touched by this gentleman who spoke French fluently, and delicately explained to her the libretto of a risky opera bouffe. And now she had finally yielded to a meeting out of San Francisco—and an ostensible visit—still as a speculator—to one or two mining districts—with her broker. This was the boldest of her steps—an original idea of the boldest of her steps—an original idea of the fashionable Van Loo—which, no doubt, in time would become a craze, too. But it was a long step—and there was a streak of rustic decorum in Mrs. Barker's nature—the in-stinct that made Kitty Carter keep a perectly secluded and distinct sitting room in the days when she served her father's guests that now had impelled her to make it proviso that the first step of her journey should be from her old home in her father's hotel. It was this instinct of proprieties hat had revived in her suddenly at the door

of the old sitting room. Then a new phase of the situation flashed It was hard for her vanity to accept Van Loo's desertion as voluntary and What if that hateful woman had lured him away by some trick or artfully designed message? She was capable of such mean-uess to insure the fulfilment of her prophecy. Or, more dreadful thought, what if she had ome hold on his affections-she had said that he had pursued her-or, more infamous still, there was some secret understanding between them, and that she—Mrs. Barker—was the dupe of them both! What was she doing in the hotel at such a moment? What was her story of going to Hymettus but a lie as transparent as her own? The tortures of jealousy, which is as often the incentive as t is the result of passion, began to rack her. She had probably as yet known no real passion for this man, but with the thought of his abandoning her and the conception of Ms faithlessness came the wish to hold and keep him that was dangerously near it. What if he was even then in that room, the room where she said she would not stay to be insulted, and they, thus secure against her intrusion, were laughing at her now? She half rose at the thought, but a sound of horses' hoofs in the stable yard arrested her. She ran to the window which gave upon it, and crouching down beside it, listened eagerly. The clatter of hoofs ceased. the stableman was talking to some suddenly she heard the stableman say,

she had not yet heard arose for the first time clear and distinct. "Are you quite The room reeled around her. The voice was George Barker's, her husband! "Very well," he continued, 'you needn't put up my horse for the night I may take her

back a little later in the buggy. In another moment she had swept down the passage and burst into the other room. Mrs. Horncastle was sitting by the table

"My husband is here," she gasped.
"What shall I do? In heaven's name, help "Is Van Loo still here?" asked Mrs. Horn-

castle, quickly.
"No; gone. He went when I came." Mrs. Horncastle caught her hand and intently into her frightened face. Then what have you to fear from your husband?' she said abruptly.
"You don't understand. He didn't know was here. He thought me in San Fran-

"Does he know it now?" "Yes, I heard the stableman tell him. Couldn't you say I came here with you; that we were here together; that it was just a little freak of ours? Oh, no!" Mrs. Horncastle thought a moment. "Yes," she said, "we'll see him here together." "Oh, no! no!" said Mrs. Barker suddenly,

my journey would have gone for nothing, only that I now shall have the pleasure of going back with you and Kitty. It will be lovely drive by moonlight."

Relieved by this revelation, it was easy work for Mrs. Horncastle to launch out into playful, tantalizing, witty-but, I grieve to say, entirely imaginative-account of her escapade with Mrs. Barker. How, left alone at the San Francisco hotel while their genleman friends were enjoying themselves at lymettus, they resolved upon a little trip, partly for the purpose of looking into some small investments of their own and partly for the fun of the thing.

What funny experiences they had. How, in particular, one horridly inquisitive, vulgar wretch had been boring a European fel-low passenger who was going to Hymettus, finally asking him where he had come from ast, and when he answered "Hymettus," thought the man was insulting him-"But," interrupted the laughing Barker,

that passenger may have been Demorest who has just come from Greece, and surely Kitty would have recognized him. Mrs. Horncastle instantly saw her blunder, and not only retrieved it, but turned it to account. Ah, ves! But by that time poor Kitty, unused to long journeys and the was utterly fagged out, was asleep and per-

fectly unrecognizable in veils and dusters on the back seat of the coach. And this brought her to the point-which was that, she was sorry to say, on arriving the poor child was nearly wild with a headache from fatigue and had gone to bed, and she had promised not to disturb her. The undisguised amusement, mingled with

relief, that had overspread Barker's face during this lively recital might have pricked the conscience of Mrs. Horncastle, but for some reason I fear it didn't. But it em-boldened her to go on. "I said I promised her that I would see she wasn't disturbed, but, of course, now that you, her husband have come, if-" "Not for worlds," interrupted Barker earn-

estly. "I know poor Kitty's headaches, and I never disturb her, poor child, except when I'm thoughtless." And here one of the most thoughtful men in the world in his sensitive consideration of others beamed at her with such frank and wonderful eyes that the arch hypocrite before him with difficulty sup-pressed a hysterical desire to laugh and felt the conscious blood flush her to the roots of her hair. "You know," he went on with a sigh, half of relief and half of reminiscence, "that I often think I'm a great bother to a clear-headed, sensible girl like Kitty. She knows people so much better than I do. She's wonderfully equipped for the world, and, you see, I'm only 'lucky,' as everybody says, and I dare say part of my luck was to have got her. I'm very glad she's a friend of yours, you know, for somehow I always fancled that you were not interested in her. or that you didn't understand each other, until now. It's odd that nice women don't until now. It's old that mee women don't always like nice women, isn't it? I'm glad she was with you, for I was quite startled to hear she was here, and couldn't make it out. I thought at first she 'might have got anxious about our little 'Sta'," who is with me and the nurse at Hymettus. But I'm glad it was only a larkill shouldn't wonder," he added, with a laugh, "although she always declares she isn't one of those doting idiotic mothers, that she found it a little dull without the boy, for all she thought it better for me to take him somewhere for

a change of air."

The situation was becoming more difficult for Mrs. Horncastle than she had conceived. There had been a certain excitement in its first direct appeal to her tact and courage, and even, she believed, an unselfish desire to save the relations between husband and wife if she could. But she had not calculated upon his unconscious revelations, nor upon their effect upon herself. She had concluded to believe that Kitty had, in a moment of foily, lent herself to this hare-brained escapade, but it now might be possible that it had been deliberately planned. Kitty had sent her husband and child away three weeks before. Had she told the whole truth? How long had this been going on? And if the souliess Van Loo had deserted her now, was it not, perhaps, the miserable ending of an intrigue rather than its beginning? Had she been as great a dupe of this woman as the husband before first direct appeal to her tact and courage, and even, she believed, an unselfish desire

came over her that for a moment prevented clearly knew; but, whatever it was, seemed her from meeting his honest eyes. She to suddenly change his relations to her, to felt the shame of being an accomplice mingled with a flerce joy at the idea of a climax that might separate him from his wife for-

t looked just as fresh and pretty as she used to think her crayon drawing wonder ful, and still more wonderful that she should have that unnecessary talent when it was quite enough for her to be just 'Kitty.' You know, don't you, how you feel at these times when you're quite happy in being in-ferior—" He stopped a moment with a ferior-" marriage had been notoriously unhappy. "I mean," he went on with a shy little laugh and an innocent attempt at gallantry which the very directness of his ample nature made strociously obvious. "I mean what you have made lots of young fellows feel. There used to be a pleture of Colonel Brigg on the mantelpiece, in full uniform, and signed by himself 'for Kitty;' and, Lord! how jealous I was of it, for Kitty never took presents from gentlemen, and nobody, even, was allowed in here, though she helped her father all over the hotel. She was awfully strict in those days," he interpolated, with a thoughtful look and a half sigh; "but then a thoughtful look and a half sign, but then she wasn't married. I proposed to her in this very room! Lord! I remember how frightened I was." He stopped for an in-stant and then said with a certain timidity: 'Do you mind my telling you something

Mrs. Horncastle was hardly prepared to hear these ingenuous domestic details, but she smiled vaguely, aithough she could not suppress a somewhat impatient movement with her hands. Even Barker noticed it but to her surprise moved a little nearer to her, and in a half-entreatingly way, said; onfidential. Do you know that she first refused me?" Mrs. Horncastle smiled, but could not re-

sist a slight toss of her head. "I believe they all do when they are sure of a man. "No!" said Barker, eagerly, "you don't un-derstand. I proposed to her because I thought I was rich. In a feelish moment I thought I had discovered that some old stocks I had had acquired a fabulous value. She believed it, too, but because she thought was now a rich man and she only a poor girl-a mere servant to her father's guestsshe refused me. Refused me because she thought I might regret it in the future, because she would not have it said that she had taken advantage of my proposal only when I was rich enough to make it."
"Well," said Mrs. Horneastle, incredulously, looking straight before her, "and

"In about an hour I discovered my error, that my stocks were worthless; that I was still a poor man. I thought it only honest to return to her and tell her, even though I had no hope. Then she pitled me and cried and accepted me. I tell it to you as her friend." He drew a little nearer and quite fraternally laid his hand upon her "I know you won't betray me, though you may think it wrong for me to have told t; but I wanted you to know how good she was and true.'

moment Mrs. Horncastle was amazed and discomfited, although she saw, with the inscrutable instinct of her sex, no inconsistency between the Kitty of days and the Kitty now shamefully hiding from her husband in the same hotel. No doubt Kitty had some good reason for her chivalrous act. But she could see the un-mistakable effect of that act upon the more logically reasoning husband, and that it might lead him to be more merciful to the later wrong. And there was a keener rony that his first movement of unconscious kindliness toward her was the outcome of his affection for his undeserving wife "You said just now she was more practical

have business with a Frair van too, but the way by coach instead of by rall, and got ticularly as this fast craze permitted the off at the crossroad, and we must have judgment as her broker. I believe he is fair gamblers to call at private offices with passed each other on the different trails. So of his business insight is not high. perhaps I ought to say he—have been least so unlucky that they might h learned prudence. The loss of \$20,000 in

"Twenty thousand!" echoed Mrs. Horn-"Yes; why, you knew that; it was in the mine you and she visited; or, perhaps," he added hastily, as he flushed at his indiscre-

ion, "she didn't tell you that." But Mrs. Horncastle as hastily said, "Yes -yes-of course, only I had forgotten the nount," and he continued:
"That loss would have frightened any man

but you women are more daring. Only Van Loo ought to have withdrawn. Don't you oo ought to have withdrawn. think so? Of course I couldn't say anything o him without seeming to condemn my own vife; I couldn't say anything to her because 's her own money."
"I did not know that Mrs. Barker had any

money of her own," said Mrs. Horncastle.
"Well, I gave it to her," said Barker,
with sublime simplicity, "and that would
make it all the worse for me to speak Mrs. Horncastle was silent. A new theory flashed upon her which seemed to reconcile all the previous inconsistencies of the sit-

uation. Van Loo, under the guise of a lover was really possessing himself of Mrs. Bar-ker's money. This accounted for the risks he was running in this escapade, were so incongruous to the rascal's nature He was calculating that the scandal of an intrigue would relieve him of the perils of criminal defalcation. It was compatible with Kitty's innocence, though it did not relieve her vanity of the part it played in this despicable comedy of passion. All that Mrs. Horncastle thought of now was the effect of its eventful revelation upon man before her. Of course, he would overlook his wife's trustfulness and business ig norance—it would seem so like his own un selfish faith. That was the fault of all unelfish goodness; it even took the color of adjacent evil, without altering the nature either. Mrs. Horncastle set her teeth tightly together, but her beautiful mouth smiled upon Barker, though her eyes were bent upon the tablecloth before her.

"I shall do all I can to impress your views upon her," she said at last, "though I fear they will have little weight if given as m; And you overrate my general influence with her.'

Her handsome head drooped in such thoughtful humility that Barker instinct ively drew nearer to her. Besides she had not lifted her dark lashes for some moment and he had the still youthful habit of look ing frankly into the eyes of those he ad

dressed.
"No." he said eagerly; "how could I? She could not help but love you and do as you would wish. I can't tell you how glad and relieved I am to find that you and she hav become such friends. You know I always thought you beautiful. I always thought you so clever—I was even a little frightened of you, but I never until now knew you were so good. No, stop. Yes, I did know it. Do you remember once in San Francisco, when I found you with 'Sta' in your lap in the drawing room? I knew it then. You tried to make me think it was a whim—the fancy of a bored and worried woman. But I knew better. And I knew what you were thinking then. Shall I tell you?"

As her eyes were still cast down, although her mouth was still smiling, in his endeav-ors to look into them his face was quite near hers. He fancied that it bore the look she "You were thinking," he said in a voice

It was a glimpse of a world of which knew nothing. He had looked frankly he knew nothing. He had looked frankly and admiringly into the eyes of other pretty women; he had even gazed into her own before, but never with this feeling. sudden sense that what he had seen he had himself evoked, that it was an an swor to some question he had scarcely yel formulated, and that they were both now linked by an understanding and conscious-ness that was irretrievable, came over him. He rose awkwardly and went to the window. She rose also, but more leisurely and easily. moved one of the books on the table smoothed out her skirts, and changed her sest to a little sofa. It is the woman who always comes out of these crucial moments

unruffled.
"I suppose you will be glad to see your friend, Mr. Demorost, when you go back," she said, pleasantly. "For, of course, he will be at Hymetius awaiting you."
He turned cagerly as he always did at the name. But even then he felt that Demorest was no longer of such importance to He felt, too, that he was not yet quit sure of his voice, or even what to say. As he his tated, she went on, half playfully: seems hard that you had to come all the way here on such a bootless errand. You haven't even seen your wife yet."
The mention of his wife recalled him to

himself, oddly enough, when Demorest's name had failed. But very differently. Out of his whirling consciousness came the stinctive feeling that he could not see her now. He turned, crossed the room, sat down on the sofa beside Mrs. Horncastle, and without, however, looking at her, said, with his eyes on the floor, "No; and I've been think-ing that it's hardly worth while to disturb her so early tomorrow as I should have to go. So I think it's a good deal better to let her have a good night's rest, remain here quietly with you tomerrow until the stage leaves, and that both of you come over together. My horse is still saddled and I will be back at Hymettus before Demorest has gone to bed."

He was obliged to look up at her as he

rose. Mrs. Horncastle was sitting erect beautiful and dazzling as even he had neve seen her before. For his resolution had sud denly lifted a great weight from her shoul-ders—the dangerous meeting of husband and wife the next morning and its results, what-ever they might be, had been quietly averted. She felt too, a half-frightened joy ven in the constrained manner in which he had imparted his determination. That frank ness which even she had sometimes found so crushing was gone.
"I really think you are quite right," she

said, rising also, "and, besides, you see, it will give me a chance to talk to her as you "To talk to her as I wished," echoed Barker abstractedly.
"Yes, about Van Loo, you know," said

"Yes, about Van Loo, Mrs. Horncastle, smiling. "O, certainly, about Van Loo, of course," e returned, hurriedly.
"And then," said Mrs. Horncastle brightly, "I'll tell her. Stay," she interrupted herself burriedly. "Why need I say anything about your having been here at all? It might only annoy her, as you yourself suggest." She stopped breathlessly with parted lips, "Why, indeed?" said Barker vaguely. Yet all this was so unlike his usual truthfulness

that he slightly hesitated.
"Besides," continued Mrs. Horncastle, noticing it, "you know you can always tell her later if necessary. And," she added with a charming mischievousness, "as she dian" tell you she was coming, I really don't see why you are bound to tell her that you were

The sophistry pleased Barker, even though it put him into a certain retaliating attitude toward his wife which he was not aware of feeling. But, as Mrs. Horncastle put it, it was only a playful attitude. "Certainly," he said. "Don't say anything

He moved to the door, with his soft, broadbrimmed hat swinging between his fingers She noticed for the first time that he looked taller in his long black scrape and riding a chair by the window. She bit her lips as she remembered how for the last three as she remembered how for the last three months she had been slowly yielding to Van Loo's cautious out insinuating solicitation, from a filiration in the San Francisco hotel to a clandestine meeting in the street; from a ride in the suburbs to a supper in a fast restaurant after the theater. Other women did it who were fashionable and rich, as Van Loo had pointed out to her. Other women fashionable women also gambled in stocks of an added, "did I look for the pleasure" of meeting you. For I only came here to infashionable women also gambled in stocks of a "Charley" or a "lack." Why should not Mrs. Larker have business with a "Paul" Van Loo, particularly as this fast craze permitted the ticularly as this fast craze permitted the content of the mass was more practical than you," she said furly. "Apart from this charlet said than you," she said furly. "Apart from this charlet said than you," she said furly. "Apart from this charlet said than you," she said furly. "Apart from this charlet said than you," she said furly. "Apart from this charlet said than you," she said furly. "Apart from this charlet said than you," she said furly. "Apart from this charlet said than you," she said furly. "You are cager then to me a vout it." As his face was betrieved when the man told me, for she had not write the man told me, for she had not write the man told me, for she had not write the man told me, for she had not write said than you," she said furly. "Apart from this books, and oddly enough, much more like then to redeat than you," she said furly. "Apart from this books, and it last, "and I was quite surprised when the man told me, for she had not write the man told me, for she had not write the man told me, for she had not write the man told me, for she had not write the man told me, for she had not write the man told me, for she had not write the man told me, for she had not write the tere of an amorous tryst than Van Loo. "I know," for I do no

ne took it. Again their pulses seemed to leap together with one accord, and the same mysterious understanding. He could no tell if he had unconsciously pressed her hand, or if she had returned the pressure But when their hands unclasped it seeme as if it were the division of one flesh and

She remained standing by the open doo until his footsteps passed down the stair-case. Then she suddenly closed and locked the door with an instinct that Mrs. Barker might at once return now that he was gone and she wished to be a moment alone to re cover herself. But she presently opened i again and listened.

There was a noise in the courtyard, but

sounded like the rattle of wheels more han like the clatter of a horseman. she was overcome, a sudden sense of pity for the unfortunate woman still hiding from her husband, and felt a momentary chival rous exaltation of spirit. Certainly she had dong "good" to that wretched "Kitty;" per-haps she had earned he epithet that Barker had applied to her. Perhaps that was the meaning of all this happiness to her, and the result was to be only the happiness and reconciliation of the wife and husband. This was to be her reward. I grieve to say that tears had come into her beautiful eyes at this satisfactory conclusion, but she dashed them away and ran out into the hall. It was quite dark, but there was a faint glim-mer on the opposite wall, as if the door of Mrs. Barker's bedroom were ajar to an eager listener. She flew toward the glimmer and pushed the door open; the room was empty Empty of Mrs. Barker, empty of her dressing box, her reticule and shawl. She was gone. Still Mrs. Horncastle lingered; the woman might have got frightened and retreated to some further room at the opening of the door and the coming out of her husband. She walked along the passage, calling her name softly. She even penetrated the dreary half-lit public parlor, expecting to find her crouch-ing there. Then a sudden wild idea took possession of her; the miserable wife had reported of her act and of her concealment and had crept downstairs to await her husband in the office. She had told him some new He, had begged him to take arsented. Yes, she now knew why she ha heard the rattling wheels instead of the clat-tering hoofs she had listened for. They had gone together, as he first proposed, in th

She ran swiftly down the stairs and entered the office. The overworked clerk was busy and querulously curt. These women were always asking such idiotic questions "With Mrs. Barker in the buggy?" asked Mrs. Horncastle.
"No, as he came—on horseback. Mrs.

Barker left half an hour ago." "Alone?"

This was apparently too much for the long suffering clerk. Fig lifted his eyes to the ceiling, and then, with painful precision, and accenting every word with his pencil on the desk before him, said deliberately "Mrs. George Barker—left—here—with—he —escort — the — man — she — was — al-ways — asking — for — in — the—buggy—at exactly—9:35." And he plunged into his

work again.
Mrs. Horncastle turned, ran up the etair case, re-entered the sitting room, and, slam ming the door behind her, halted in the cen ter of the room, panting, erect, beautiful and menacing. And she was alone in this empty room, this deserted hotel. From this very room her own husband had left he with a brutality on his lips. From the room the fool and liar she tried to warn had gone to ner ruin with a swindling hypocrite And from this room the only man in the world she ever cared for had gone forth be wildered, wronged, and abused, and she knew now she could have kept and com

> (To Be Continued.) Bucklin's Arulea Salve.

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Some are in a drowsy, dull condition—feel

languid generally speaking, they say they feel pretty well, when accosted by some friends, yet they have not that bright, sharp, vigorous tone to their system as of yore. Unbeknown to them, poison from their kidneys (which are a little out of order) is gradually colecting in their system, and totally unconscious of the fact, they are slowly out surely being poisoned to death.

It may be a process of years, but the re-

sult of the kidneys working imperfectly means almost certain destruction at last. No man can feel vigorous and bright, and no woman has that healthful, rosy that to her cheeks that poets have paid homage to, since the creation of the world, where the kidneys are not performing their functions properly and regularly, day and night. A plant ecomonly known as a vegetable, but which in reality is one of the most valuable and active kidney medicines—asparagus— has, by the skill of medical science, been called upon to perform its duty as nature intended it should

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