

"SHREWSBURY"

By STANLEY J. WEYMAN.

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Chapter XXXIII-Continued. He was so right ously indignant at the presumption of which I had been guilty in attacking the family, that though it was his own indiscretion that had led me to the point, I made haste to mutter an apology, and doing this with the better grace for the remembrance that Smith was now powerless, and his wicked plans abortive, I contrived presently to appease him. But the ferment which the discovery I had made wrought in my spirits moved me to escape as quickly as possible to my room, there to consider at leisure the miserable position in

must have found myself. A suspicion of the truth I had entertained before, but this certainty that the man I was to be trepanned into personating was my benefactor, and that in the plot his own mother was engaged, filled me with as much horror, when I considered the necessity of complying, under which I might have lain. as thankfulness when I reflected on the escape I had had. Nor did these two considerations, overwholming as they may well appear, account for all the agitation I was experiencing. Mr. Martin, in speaking of Mme. Montercy's origin, bad mentioned Hertfordshire, and the name, bringing together two sets of facts, hitherto so distant in my mind, that I had never undertaken to connect them, had in a flash presented Smith and madam in their true colors. Why I had before associated the Smith I now remembered as Jenny's accomplice in my early trouble, why I had not recognized in the charms that thirteen years before had fired my boy's blood and brought me to the foot of the gallows, is not more difficult to explain than why this one mention of Hertfordshire sufficed to raise the curtain; ay, and not only to raise it, but to set the whole drama so plainly before me that I could be no wiser had I followed every scene in madam's life, and a witness of her shameful debut under Smith's protection, her seduction of my lord and her period of splendor, had attended her in her final declension, when a discarded mistress she saw no better alternative than a marriage

with her former protector. How greatly the identification of the two spirators increased the loathing in which I held their schemes, as well as my relief upon the reflection that those schemes were futile, I will not say. Suffice it, that the knowledge that but for Smith's arrest must have chosen between playing the another. basest part in the world and running a risk whereat I shuddered, filled me with thankfulness immeasurable; a thankfulness which I did not fail to pour out on my knees, and which was in no degree lessened by a shuddering consciousciess, that in that dilemma, had Providence not averted it, I might, aye, should have played the baser No wonder that a hundred harrowing

recollections crowded on my mind; or that under the presence of these the tumult of became so powerful that I presently seized my hat, and hastily escaping from the house, sought in rapid move-ment some relief from the unpleasant retrospect. Crossing the green park, I chose a field path that led by the Pimlico marshes to Fulham; and gradually the songs of the larks and the spring sunshine-for the day was calm and serene-leading my mind into more cheerful groove, I began to dwell rather on the fact of my escape than on the crime from which I had escaped; and, contemplating the secure career that now lay in view before me, I was not long in seeing feeling. Turning my back on Smith and his like, I began to build my house again; saw a smiling wife and babes and days spent between my home and my lord's papers; and then a green old age and slippered feet tottering through the quiet shades of a library. Before I turned, I had roofed the house with an honorable headstone, and with the village assembled to do the old man

In a word, tasting the full relief of emancipation, I became so gay and lightsome that even the smoke and din of London, when



"NO," I MUTTERED, "I SHALL NOT GO. I re-entered it, failed to subdue the unusual humor. I could have sung; I could have laughed alound. Let the dead past bury its For Ferguson, Smith, the Monterey-Who had come off best after all? And of their fine plottings and contrivings what had been the upshot? They had failed and I had triumphed; they were prisoners;

I was free and safe. Near the garden wall of Buckingham house there was a bear dancing, and a press of people round it. I stayed to watch, mood found the fun so much to taste that I threw the man a penny and nt on laughing. A little farther, by went on laughing. A little farther, by the edge of the lake, was a man with a barrow and dice—then a novelty, though now so prevalent that at the last sessions I am told the thing was presented for a n disance. I stood here and saw a man lose, and in the exaltation of my spirits pushed him aside and laid down a shilling and won and won again—and again; whether the co-failed or the truckster who owned the bar row thought me a good bait. Either way I took up my winnings with an air and hectored away as good a bully as another placed for the moment so far above myself common modesty that I wondered ether I should ever sink back into the timid citizen or feel my eyes drop before

a moment, quantum mutatus ab At the corner of the Cockpit, toward Sion house, I met Matthew Smith.

I had no doubt, I knew all in an instant and turned sick. He was free, alone, walking with his head high and an easy gait. Worse, he saw me; saw how I cowered and shrank into myself and became

another man at sight of him.

Slackening his pace as he came up he halted before me, with that quiet devil's grin on his face. "Well," he said, "How are you, Mr. Price? I was looking for

"For me," I muttered. "I thought—I heard—that you were arrested."
"A mistake!" he answered, continuing to smile. "A mistake! Some other Smith."
"And you were not arrested?" I whis-

ly, "And taken to the secretary. And course released. There! You have it

uttered an exclamation; two words I uttered an exclamation; two words wrung from me by despair.

Thereat, and pretending to misunderstand me, "You thank God? Very kind of you. Mr. Price," said he, grinning, "Like master, like man, I see. The duke was kindness itself. But I must be going." And then arresting himself in the act of leaving a "You have heard he continued. ing me, "You have heard, he continued, "that the poor devil Charnock stands his trial tomorrow? Porter is an evidence, and Monday the parson will swing. It should a warning to us." he continued, shaking his head with a smile that chilled the mar row in my bones, "what company we keep.
A rascal like Porter might see you or me in
the street and swear to us. Ha! Ha!. It
sounds monstrous odd, but so it might be.
But by-by, Mr. Price. I must not keep which, but for Smith's timely capture, I

CHAPTER XXXIV. The state in which I crawled back to the house after this encounter may be conceived, but not described. From an exaltaion of mind to which the epithet delirious might be applied with propriety, I fell to depth of abjectness as monstrous as my late felicity, but more real and reasonable. All the things on my escape from which I had the things on my scape from lay before been congratulating myself now lay before me, and formed a vista as gloomy as the point to which it tended was dreadful. To be a slave to the woman and man who had ruined my youth; to live outwardly at ease. while inwardly devoured by daily and hourly with that T mplar Smith, whom I darkly terror; to hang between the choice of danger remembered as Jenny's accomplice in my or baseness, comfort or treachery; to discern in my own destruction or my patron's the inevitable ending; beyond all, to foresee that I should choose the evil and eschew the good and to wish it otherwise and be power-less to change it—these things, and particu-larly the last, filled me with anticipations of misery so great that I rolled on my beed and cursed Providence and my fate; and next day went down so pale and ill and woe begone that the servants took note of it.
"Pheugh, Mr. Price," said Martin, "you
might be Charnock himself, or Keyes, poor
devil! You could not look more like hang-

ng! What is it?"
I muttered that I was not well. "It is Keyes I am sorry for!" continued the steward, who was taking his morning draught, "if so be they go to the end with him. I have heard of a master given up him. I have heard of a master given up by his servant, but never before of a servant hung on his master's evidence, and his master the one that drew him into it! Hang Captain Porter, say I! A fine captain! O, they will let the poor devil live," said

"Keyer?"

"Not they!" said Mr. Martin, with a great appearance of wisdom, "He was in the Blues, do you see, my man, and if it spread there? No, he will swing. He will swing for the example. Don't you think so, Mr. Price? You are in there with my lord and

bould know."
But I muttered something and escaped, finding solitude and my own reflections as paraphernalia of gentlewomen and negro tolerable as their gossip. A little later my pages, outriders and running footmen as lord, sending for me, kept me close at work until evening, which was so far fortunate, as the employment, by diverting my thoughts. Charles days. As the great coach, which helped to lift me out of the panic into which held six inside, swung and lumbered to a I had fallen. True, the news that the three conspirators were found guilty and were to die the following Monday, exactly as Smith had foretold, threw me again into the cold fit, and heralded another night of misery. But as it is not possible for mortals to lie long under the same peril without the sense making no sign, and nothing occurring indicate that he meant to keep his word or summon me to fulfil mine, I lulled myself into the belief that all was a dream. Yet I was very far from being happy;

Yet I was very far from being happy, to be that, with such apprehensions as never quite left me, was beyond my philosophy. And I had rude awakenings. One day, it was the execution of Charnock, King and Keyes at Tyburn, followed by the hawking of their last dying speeches and confessions in the streets, that jogged me ou of my fancied security and sent me sick and white-faced from the windows. Another, it was the sentence on Sir John Friend and Sir William Perkins, the two elderly citizens whom I had twice seen among the plotters and never without wondering how they came to be of the gang. A little later three more suffered and again the square rang with the shrill cries of the chapmen who peddled their last speeches from door to door. Against all these Captain Porter and a man commonly called "Scum Good-man." both particeps criminis and persons of the most infamous character, bore wit ness, their evidence being corroborated by that of a man of higher standing, Mr. Prendergast. Whether they could not prove against Cassels and Ferguson, or reasons of state intervened, these, with several of their fellows, lay in prison untried, a course which in other circumstances might have in-volved the government in obloquy. But so keen at this time was the general feeling against the plotters, and so high the king s popularity, that he might have shed more blood had he chosen. Here, however, the executions stopped, and his majesty showing mercy if not indulgence, the hue and cry, despite the popular indignation, gradually slackened until it was restricted to Sir John Fenwick, who was believed to be still in hiding in the country, and on whose punish-ment the king was reported to be firmly set. How deeply these events and rumors which formed the staple of conversation during the ummer of '96 troubled my existence, I leave to the imagination, prevising only that in proportion to the outward quiet of my life was the power to agitate which they ex-

Moreover, there were times when a terror more substantial trespassed on my peace. One day, going hastily into the hall, I found the servants all peeping, Mr. Martin holding open the door, a dozen faces staring cur-iously in from the sunshine of the square, and my lord standing very stiff, on the threshold of his room, where, in the middle of the floor, stood a scowling man, flashily

The duke was speaking when I appeared "At the office, sir," I heard him say. misunderstood me. I can see you there

Your grace is hard on me," the man muttered with a glance that would be re-bellious and was hang-dog. "I have done the king good service and this is the way I am requited. It is enough—" "It is more than enough, Captain Porter,"

my lord said, quietly taking him up. "At the office, if you please. This house is for

"The king is served in many ways," my whose heart is in his boots, because I want lord answered, with a fine air of contempt. him to carry a message." And she pointed "Martin, the door! And remember, another to me with her long cane, while he time I am not within to Captain Porter. At at the office, sir, if you please,"

The man slunk away at that, but as he passed through the doorway I heard him mutter that when Sir John Fenwick was taken he would see, and that, proud as the would see, and that proud as the would see that would s some people were now, they might be glad to save their necks when the time came. My He passed out of sight then, and, hearing my lord speak, I turned and saw Matthew Smith, whom I had not before noticed, waiting on him with a letter. The duke, pausing on the threshold of the library, broke the seal and ran his eye over the paper.

"I will send him an answer." he raid, "later in the day. Or—" and he looked up quickly. "Are you returning, sir?" your grace pleases." shall be ready, then, by 2 o'clock,

my lord answered stiffly. "Good morning."
"Good morning, your grace."

And my lord went in. The colloquy had been of the slightest, but I had noted that my patron's tone, when he spoke to Smith.

was guarded and civil, if distant and the colloquy had been of the slightest, but I had noted that my patron's tone, when he spoke to Smith.

CHAPTER XXXV pered. "O. I was arrested!" he answered jaun- was guarded and civil, if distant, and that

through the few formal words that they had dura ilia of the Pates; who either resistless slipped it into his pocket. "Good," he said, the man answered, drily. "And so would **在在水水水水水水水水水水水水水水水水水水水水水水水** exchanged peered a sort of understanding. This shook me, and when Smith turned to me, a faint sneer on his lips, and told me that I was a bold man, my heart was water. He was at home here as everywhere; what could I do against him?

"Do you understand, Mr. Price?" he re-cated. "Or are you a bigger fool that I

"Why?" I stammered.
"Why?" I stammered.
"Why? Why, to push in on Porter after
that fashion," he muttered under his breath
for Martin was making toward us. "Lucky ho did not recognize you and denounce you! For a great he would do it—or to spite the duke! Take care, man, he continued, seriously, "if you do not want to join Char-nock, whose head is in airy quarters tonight." This left me to the prey of a new terror; for remembering that I had once seen Porer at l'erguson's lodging, I could not shut my eyes to the reasonableness of the warn-I saw myself beset by dangers on that also, went for a time on eggs, and rembled at every sound; indeed for a full fortnight I never passed the threshold-ex-cusing myself on the ground of vertigo, f ordered to go on errands. In the course f that fortnight I had a thousand oppor unities of contrasting the quiet in which lived, behind the dull windows of the treat house, with the dangers into which might at any moment be flung; and if any man ever repented of anything, I repented of my lack of candor respecting Smith. From time to time I saw him pass, grim, eserved, with a walking menace. When he coked up at the windows I read mastery and a secret knowledge in his eye; while the way in which he went and came, free and unquestioned, was itself a monition, was it to be wondered that I feared this man who, while Charnock's head mouldered the game, she gradually—and more and more on a spike on Temple Bar, and Friend and on a spike of reining but and with the mall, as safe in sion, where it did not terrify, moved to deri-I knew that at any moment he might call upon me to fulfill my word. Whether in that case, the demand being such as to allow Madame was about it now, letting the state of the

Madame was about it now, letting her win 'A MISTAKE,

ne leisure to forecast the consequences, I hould have complied, or taking my coraage in my hands have thrown myself on my lord's indulgence, I cannot now say; for in the issue a sudden and unforseen shifting of scene prevented my calculations and hurried me onwards whether I would or no. It happened, I have said, suddenly, One afternoon there came a great bustle in the squar: and who should it be but the ountess, my lord's mother, come to visit him in her coach and six, with such a

pages, outriders and running footmen as mews, and fairly brought back Charles' days. As the great coach, which stand at the door, I saw a painted face with bold black eyes glare from the window, cheek by jowl with a parot and three or four spaniels; and I waited to see little a single glance sufficing to certify me that this was the same woman to whose for that matter by their mistress, I made haste to retire behind the flock of servants whom Martin had marshalled in the hall o do the honors My lord went out to the coach and

brought the counters in, with a great show of reverence; and for three-quarters of an hour they were closeted together in his room. I took advantage of this to retire upstairs, and had been wiser had I stayed there, or better still, slipped out at the But a craving came to me to Montercy again, and with the knowledge now had, ascertain if she really was my old mistress. This drew me to the hall again; where the crowd being great, and the servants taken up with teasing the countess' parrot and blackmoors. I managed o avoid observation, and at the same time see what I wanted. The woman who had ence been all the world to me-and of whom could not now think without a tender regret, directed, not to her, but to the state blissful dawning passion, of which she had been the cause, and whereof no man is capable-was still handsome in a coarse fashion and when seen at a distance I could not deny that. But if I desired revenge I had it; for not only was her complexion gone, so that her good looks vanished when the viewer approached, but her lips had grown thin and her face hard the indescribable hardness which speaks of past sin long grown bitter-and an hourly, daily recognition that the wages of sin is death.

Presently, while Mr. Martin was pressing his civilities on her, and I from a corner, near the door through which I had let Mary curiously reading her counевсаре, war tenance, the door of my lord's room opened and the countess came out, supported on the one side by the duke's arm, on the ther by her great ebony cane. The servants burried to form two-lines and I suppose curiority led me to press nearer than was prudent, or her eyes were of peculiar sharpess, or perhaps she looked for me, and had not been there would have called for me-At any rate, she had not moved three steps oward her coach before her gaze, roving ilong the line of servants, alighted on me

"I'll have that rascal!" she cried, in her high, shrill voice, and she pointed at me with her cane and stood. "He looks as if butter would not melt in his mouth, but if e is not a lad of wax call me a street slut! Hark you, my men, you come with me. Bid him. Shrewsbury!"

My lord, his face flushed, spoke low and ed to make demur, but she persisted "Odd's life, you make me sick!" she cried. irritably. "You will not this and you fancy that! The servants-Go to for a fool! In my time master was master, and if any blabbed, man or maid, it was strip and whip! But now-do you quarrel with me or do you

The duke shrugged his shoulders and smiled uneasily. "Times are somewhat changed madam," he said. my friends."

"And the king's friends? They may shift for themselves?" the wretch—who even then wore fliery bought with blood—cried bitterly.

"The large are no men nowadays, but mealy-mouthed Josephs. like that trembler vonder. to me with her long cane, while her head him out, sort him out and send him with

> My lord bowed reluctantly, "Go," he said, looking at me.

"Ay, sure!" she cried. "After that he may go to the devil for me!"

speak until she had closed the door behind her. Then, "Is it right?" he whispered.

She nodded.

Rightly has the Latin poet sung of the

HE ANSWERED and again getting a slight advantage, mingling hinis at old vanities and conquests (whereat my lady grew garrulous) with new scandals, coarse and spiteful; winning a little when my lady, it a fury caused by a bad hand, struck her across the face with a fan to teach her to be awkward, but cheering up at once when the countess' mood changed with the cards. In a word, as she had betraved me young, she cozened my lady old; but, seeing her features grown hard with time, and her eyes grown lifeless, and the devil grinning more plainly from behind the mask, that had once been so fair, it was a wonder to me that even the countess

completely, as I watched—sank into a queru-lous, feeble, flerce old woman, whose pas-

sion, and whose fads and fancies, as patent as the day, placed her at the mercy of all

was deceived.

Presently my lady threw down her cards in a rage, and calling her opponent a cheating slut, proceeded to turn her anger on me. "What is the gaby doing, standing there like a hawk?" she shrieked. "Why is was deceived. he not about his business?

Montercy whispered her that I had not had my instructions. "Then give them and let him go!" she ried. "Where is the ring? Here, you house Smith had taken me. Smith was in cried. "Where is the ring? Here, you attendance on her, and a gentleman in a daw in peacock's feathers—like my son, inof danger losing it's edge, in three days I began to find life bearable. The stateliness of the household, the silence and books that priest if I ever saw one, and Montercy, and Villiers is to a beauty! Take that and ride of the household, the stellar hours and steady two or three other gentlewomen, and as I with Matthew Smith and give it to the employment soothed my nerves, and Smith, had no mind to be recognized by these, or gentleman you will meet at the inn at Ashford, and say-Montercy tell him what to

say. "Say, 'Colonel Talbot sends this ring and his services.' And if the gentleman asks 'whither?' or this or that, to whatever he asks, answer thus: 'I am not here, Sir John, to answer questions. Favor me by conveying that ring and my services whither you are going. I do not talk, but when the time comes I shall act." 'C'est tout!" said the countess, nodding

approval. "If you are not man enough to repeat that, whip you for a noodle! Say it. man.

But when I went to say it first I could not remember it, and broke down; and then when my lady, storming at me for a fool and an embecile, I had got the sentences icto my head, I but whimpered them, bringing no heart to the task. My lady she saw that flew out at me afresh, and threw first the vapours bottle and then her cane at me; which latter, breaking a piece of china, put her fairly beside herself

'Come here!" she shricked, swaying to and fro to her chair. "Do you hear, you puling, psalm-singing canter, Come here, I say!" And when trembling and scared I had anproached, she leant forward, and seizing hold of my ear, as Ferguson had once seized it, she twisted it with such unexpected strength and spite that I reared with pain,

and fairly fell on my knees beside her. "There is for you, gros cochon!" she cried. "So you can speak up when you like! Now go to the end of the room, my man, and play your part again, and play it better! Or, by — I will have up those who shall lash your back to the bone. Holty-toity! These are fine times, when scum like you, my lad, put on airs!"

This was not the discipline, nor were these the threats, to give an actor courage; but in sheer desperation I spoke up and, this time, had the good fortune to please her; and, Montercy mocking me and pushing me this way and that I went through my part a dozen times. At length the countess expressed herself satisfied and with a grim nod, and an "Odd's very life, he is not so I stooped, shaking all over, to take up the

obeyed, she sat awhile, glowering at me in silence. At last, "No," she said irritably, "It's too late!" And she struck on the floor with her stick. "It's too late to turn back! The cross devil did nothing but thwart me today, and what he will not do bon gre, he shall do by perforce. He has brought it on shall do by perforce. He has brought it on himself, and he must bide his destiny! Yet -Monterey!

The woman was at her side in a monient "I suppose that there is no danger of a contratemps," she said, stirring restlessly in her chair. "Sir John will get away? They will not take him and find the ring—and

On that, if I had been quick, and had had both wits and courage at command. I should have thrown myself at her feet; and so I might have opened herses. But I wavered, and before I had found heart to do it, the waiting woman, smooth and watchful, was

Ashford, my lady, is only three hours' "Ashford, my lady, if only three hours whose heart is in his boots, because I want tim to carry a message." And she pointed to me with her long cane, while her head divered with excitement and age "Sort tim out, sort him out and send him with one or we courrel, my lord."

"Well madam, your will is law in this course." the duke said, "but—"

"Port no lies!" she cried. "D'ye send im?" gued with me, and argued with me today but let him go. Let him go!"

The woman lost no time in taking her at "And bid him do as I tell him." she cried her word and hurrying me out; not by the barply. But he had better, or—still, tell main entrance through which I had come him tell him."

"Price." my lord said scherly, "the countess is good enough to wish you to do an errand for her. Be good chough to consider yourself at her disposal, and go with stood Matthew Smith, wearing a cloak, riding bleasantly. It was impossible for me to hide my apprehensions. "Her lady, log in the close to the woman, his eyes shin-

> "You have got the ring?" She gave it to him with a smile of triumph. he sent anybody "" He looked at it, and with a grim face

rout all human resolutions, or where the 'and now, my friend, the sonner we are mind has been bardened to meet the attack, away the better."

turn the poor wretch's flank, and lo! while But my gorge rose. On the table beside silent.

Smith swore again, and sat gloomily turn the poor wretch's flank, and lo! while But my gorge rose. On the table beside silent.

'He says if you can stead it off for twentomeet the occasion, habet he has it under cloak and holsters, a mask, sword and riding ty-four hours," the man continued, "he will to meet the occasion, habet—he has it under the fifth rib.

So it is with me. While I dreamed of resistance, and would harden my heart and set fast my feet, fate trees-buttocked me; and I fell, not knowing. The counters coach and I fell, not knowing. The counters coach is under the prospect of the plurge into the dark night, of the Journey and the perils of the unknown road, I cried out that and do the job."

Smith did not answer for a time, but at I would not go! I would not go! And I least in a curt, include the lark in the lark night, of the Journey and the perils of the unknown road, I cried out that I would not go! I would not go! And I least in a curt, include the lark night, in a curt, include the lark night. and I fell, not knowing. The counters' coach bore me away unresisting and Smith, whom I hated as I never hated even Ferguson, gave me the word. From my plain clothes, to the long curied peruke; the cravat, ruffles and fine suit in which I had once before paraded myself, was but a later; I took it perforce, and, being conducted, when I was ready, into the counters' chamber, to wait her pleasure, could have fancied the last work. Captain Barciay longer on the brink of which I stood. "You fool!" I crted, beside myself with rage and with apprehensions of the conspirators still at work. Captain Barciay plunge on the brink of which I stood. "You

conspirators still at work, Captain Barclay plunge on the brink of which I stood. "You still pacing the piazza, my lord still a have cursed me from the first day I saw stranger to me, the library a vision; in a you at Ware. You have been the curse of word, I could have fancied all those events, which had filled half a year, to be no more "Are you mad?" he said again, and threat-

countess sat, now grumbling and now swearing, or now, while the cards were dealing, thumpling the floor impatiently with her stick. She had so perfectly the grand air "O, it matters very much," she said

"O. it matters very much," she said affecting to ogle me in an exaggerated fashion. "He is an old flame of mine. His face always brought something to my mind-but I thought that it was his like-

ness to the duke. He cursed her old flames, and the duke. And then, "What does it mean?" he said. "Who is he?"

old woman's room," she answered, her voice sinking and growing almost soft. "Lord, it seems so long ago, it might have happened in another life! You remember him, Matt? You saw him with me at the Rose on night? The first night I saw you." He looked at me long and strangely. "And what does it mean?" he said at last, scowiing between wonder and suspicion.

"He is the lad we left at Ware-in the

She shrugged her shoulders. "Sais pas!" she answered. "Ask him."
"You have ruined me once." I cried. "And he saved me! And now you would have me ruin him. You are devils, you are! Devils!

But I defy you!"

He did not answer, but continued to stare at me, as if he discerned or suspected that there was more in this than appeared on the surface. At length the woman laughed and he turned to her, rage in his face. "I see nothing to laugh at," he said. "But I do," she answered pertly. "You

three all mixed up! It would make a cat laugh, my lad." He cursed her. "Have done with that!" he said flercely. "And say what is to be

"Done?" she answered briskly and in tone of genuine surprise. "Why, that which was to be done. What difference does this make?"

But he looked at her, pondering darkly, as if it did make a difference. I suppose that somewhere, deep down in his nature, there lurked a grain of superstition, which ound in this singular coincidence, udden stringing together of persons long parted, an evil omen.

Or it may be that he had still some seraof conscience infi, that, seared and deadened as it was, stirred and smarted at this strange upheaval of an old crime. At any rate, don't know," he growled at last. "I don'tlke it, and that is flat. There is some pracice in this."

"There is a fool in it," she answere aively. "And there are like to be two." naively. I thought to back him up, and I bruce nvself against the wall to which I had re "I won't go!" I said doggedly. tired. will call for help in the streets first

You will do as you are told," she answered coolly, "And you," she continued to Smith n a voice if stinging scorn, "are you going o give it up now, when all is safe? ou stand to my lord as this poor, stands to you? Have you waited fo years for your revenge-to move aside now Why, my G-d, the duke is worth ten of you. He is a man at any rate. He is-"Peace, girl," he cried, with I know no what of menace in his tone.

"Then will you go?"
"Yes, I will go!" he answered between
his teeth. "But by heaven, you slut, if ill
comes of it I will wring your neck! I his teeth. will, so help me heaven! You shall deceive no other man! If there is practice of your in this, if this tool is here by your con "He is not!" she answered. "Be sath

Apparently he was satisfied, for he drew a deep breath and stood silent. She turned to me. "Get ready," she said sharply.
"No," I muttered, summoning all my resolution. "I shall not go. I—I have not—" Smith turned to me and the refusal died on my lips. The struggle with the woman had roused the man's passions; and I read in his eyes such a glare of ferocity as chille my blood and unstrung my knees. Nor was that all, for when I went, trembling, to take

the cloak "One moment." he said grimly "not so fast, my friend. Let us understand one another before we start. Mr. Price or Mr. Taylor, or whatever your name is, take note, do you hear me, of three things. One, that the business we are on is life or death Do you grasp that?" I muttered a shuddering assent

"Secondly," he continued, with the same grueseme civility, "My hand will never be more than six inches from the butt of a pistol, until I see this home again. Do you grasp that?" I nodded.

"Thirdly," at the least sign of treachery or disobedience on your part, I blow out your brains-first; my own afterward, if that be necessary. Do you grasp that?"
"I nodded. "That is especially well," he said. "Because the last item is important to you. On the other hand, Mr. Price, play honest John with me, and in forty-eight

hours you shall be back in your master's house, free and safe; and I shall trouble you no more. Do you understand that?" I said I did; my teeth chattering and my eyes seeking to evade his.
"Then now, you may get into those things" he said. "And do you ride when I

bid you, and halt when I bid you, and speak when I say speak, and be silent when I say be silent-do those four things. I say. I stooped, shaking all over, to take up the

unlike after all!" gave me leave to go.

But when I was half way to the door she called me back; and after I had timidly a sort of quaver. "It is clear that you are not born to be hanged. And for the "Peace, peace, wench," said Sn patiently. "And dress him!"

CHAPTER XXXVI. said Smith, im-

It wanted two hours of midnight on a fire

night when we two rode over London bridge, and through a gap in the houses saw the river flowing below a ripple of silver framed n blackness, and so cold to the eye that nvoluntarily I shivered, feeling a return of all the vague fears and apprehensions which, originally awakered by the prospect of the journey had been set at rest for the time by the awe in which I held my com-panion. I began to recall a dozen stories of footpads and highwaymen, outrage mid robbery, which I had read, and found but cold comfort in the reflection that the Kent ead, from the amount of traffic that it, was accounted one of the safest in England. It was not wonderful that, with nerves so disordered, I went in front of danger, or that when-opposite the Marshal-sea, where the chain crosses the road near the entrance to White Horse yard-a mi ame suddenly out of a passage and caugh hold of my companion's rein, I cried out and all but turned my horse to fly.
Smith himself appeared to be taken off his guard; and after bldding me beware what I did, he called, with the same harshness, to the man to release the rein, or take

"O. I am all right," the fellow answered roughly, peering at him ness, "You are Mr. Smith?" peering at him through the dark-

"Fairholt sent me-to stop you." "Fairholt!"

"Ay; he is here."
"Here" my companion cried in a tone of rage and surprise. "What the ——! Why, he should be—you know where—by this time!"
"Aye, but his horse threw him this morning and he light the white here." ng, and he is lying at the White Horse here, with a broken leg." Smith cursed the absent man for a fool

I wish he had broken his neck!" he said. savagely. And then, after an interval: "Has He has had something else to think about,"

you, master, with his leg!"
Smlth swore again, and sat gloomily

Well, that-some one shall take his place

Smith did not answer for a time, but at length, in a curt, incisive tone: "Tell him yes," he said. "I will see to it. And you— keep a still tongue, will you? You were going with him, I suppose?" "Aye."
"And you will come with the other?" "Maybe. And if not, I shall not blab."
Smith by a nod showed that the man had taken his meaning, after which, bidding him good night, he pricked up his horse "Come on," he said, addressing me with impatience. "I thought to have had compan-

ions, and so ridden more securely. But we must make the best of it." Heaven knows that I, too, would have liked companions, and took the road again. which had filled half a year, to be no more than creatures of the imagination, so unchanged was the great silent room, where, my lady, while i waited, played plquet with Montercy, amid the gorgeousness of her rose-and-silver suite.

The monkey gibbered as of old, and the parrot vied with the broidered parrots on the wall, and now, as then, the air was heavy with scent and musk, while the light, cunningly arranged, fell on the part where the counters sat, now grumbling and now and Price, and half a dozen other names for many large and half a dozen other names for meeting the said again, and threat ened me with his band.

Heaven knows that I, too, would have liked companions, and took the road again, dolefully enough. Nor was that the worst of it; Smith, in speaking to the stranger, had mentioned Fairboil. Now, I knew the name, and the transportant that the worst of it; Smith, in speaking to the stranger, had mentioned Fairboil. Now, I knew the name, and the transportant that the worst of it; Smith, in speaking to the stranger, had mentioned Fairboil. Now, I knew the name, and then, putting the lamp back on the table, she fell to laughing. "He is right." she said. "I know him now. But you told me that his name was Taylor."

"Taylor?" he said again, and threatened me with his band.

Heaven knows that I, too, would have liked companions, and took the road again, dolefully enough. Nor was that the worst of it; Smith, in speaking to the stranger, had mentioned Fairboil. Now, I knew the name, and then, putting the lamp back on the table, she fell to laughing. "He is right." whose business it was to execute warrants and arrest political prisoners. But what had Smith, riding to a secret interview with a man outlawed and in hiding to do with meeting the countered for it. The said was the countered for its meeting t messengers? With Fairholt?

And then, as if this were not enough to disturb me with a view of treachery, black as guif seen by traveler through a rift in the mist—if this glimpse, I say were not enough, how was I going to reconcile Smith's statement that he had expected companions with his first cry, uttered in wrath and sur-prise—that Fairholt ought to be by this time -well, at some distant point?
(To Be Continued.)

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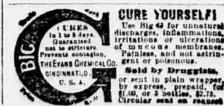


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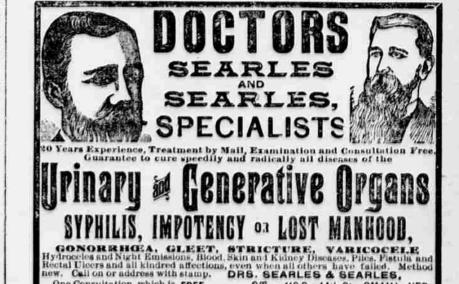
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