

more reasons than one, that I shall ever Synopsis of Preceding Chapters. vertice from her-I seemed to feel as never first a half at the Batherland many ranks word and hir servant are before what I had done to blast your two before what I had done to blast your two lives. For the first time I realized to the d te discovered assers at the direct. being on Like elsever hude, murderer, Miss Page, Nutherland housekeept, the one grand woman to be found in Port-ing shout the Weth is making about the Webb of discovers blood on the grand discovers blood on the grand discovers blood on the grand myself came back to me in reproach and the added to the mystery. Frederick a wayward yourn, calls his blame had fallen where it was not deserved been and promises not to marry Miss by where he has been facturated. Miss will be referred that she followed him whit of the number and knew where he erriced it so. He gives him a week 11.07.00 That arrived the form the given bins a work of dealles whather to marry her of he pro-claimed as the marrierer of Agains Wohl. It is learned that the money was in new hills and the keeper of a small store pro-duces one that a strange money are fin late the night of the marrier for a load of bread. A detective arrives from Beston and re-ports "Hungle case Murdered for money." Find the man with the flowing beard." Hungfood fails upon one of the 20kel brath-ers. Frederick visits the hollow tree. The money is none. Wattles, a Dosim munifier, arrives and demands 160 of Frederick. In payment of a gambing debt, Friderick in paymont of a gambing debt, Friderick in paymont of a gambing debt, Striderick in paymont of the other a blood-stained for is read, the other a blood-stained kuts. The Eached brothers are found dead of stars the other a blood-stained kuts. The blooten detective dealarse the money worked, but young Sweetwalter as tonieles the company by a niw chain of widewe, nothing to another property of his presence. He was lying on the sitting room lounge, looking very weak and exhausted, while on one side of him stood Agatha and on the other Philemon, both contemplating him with ill-concealed anxiety. I had not expected to find Philemon there, and for moment I suffered the extreme agony of a man who has not measured the depth of the plunge he is about to take, but the sight of Agatha trembiling under the shock of my unexpected presence restored me to myself and gave me firmness to proceed. had of bread, the other is blood-stained with The Instead detective doubling to another perpendication of the company by a new chars of evidence, politic to another perpendication of the terrible crime. This time. Another of the terrible crime. The terrible crime the second dise. Predecide second more that the saw the signt of the money here of the company here here the second dise. The terrible crime the second dise what a later company where here the second dise. The terrible crime the terrible crime of the terrible crime the terrible crime of the terrible crime the terrible of the terrible of the terrible of the terrible crime the terrible of the Advancing with a bow, I spoke quickly the one word I had come there to say. 'Agatha, I have done you a great wrong. and I am here to undo it. For months have felt driven to confession, but not till today have I possessed the necessary couragn. said this because I saw in both Mr. Gilchrist and Philemon a disposition to stop me where I was. Indeed, Mr. Gilebriat had risen on his elbow, and Philemon was making that pleading geature of his which we know so well. Agatha alone looked eager. "What is it?" she cried. "I have a right to know." I went to the door, shut it and stood with my back against it, a figuresof. shame and despair. Suddenly the confession burst from me. "Agatha," said I, why dld you break with my brother James? Because you thought him guilty of theft; because you believed he took the \$5,000 out of the sum entrusted to him by Mr. Orr, for your father? Agatha, It was not James who did this, it was I, and James knew it and bore the blame of my misdoings, because he was always a loval soul and took account of my weakness and knew alas, too well that open shame would kill It was a weak plea and merited no reply,

The letter that followed this was very

"bort Dear Jamea: The package of letters has pang of utter self-abasement with which been received. God help me to bear this I succumbed before it. It was so terrible shock to all my hopes and the death of all that I seemed to hear her utter words, my girlish beliefs. I am not angry. Only though I am sure she did not speak; and those who have semething left to hold to in 1 with some wild idea of stemming the torlife can be angry.

| rent of her reproaches, I made an effort at My father tells me he has received a explanation and impetuously cried: "It packet, too. It contained \$5,000 in ten \$500 was not for my own good, Agatha, not alnotes. James! James! was not my love together for self, 1 did this. I loved you enough that you should want my father's also madly, despairingly, and good brother

a great cry, and, staggering tack, ayed both | other's pain. My load I can bear, but his - | nine miles is shough to estrange people. head in his hands, ventured to look up and a scorpful finger at Amabel, now shrinking a great cry, and, staggering book, syed both ber father and himself in a frenky of in-dignation that was all the more uncon-trollable from the superhuman effort which when is open to him. We have all done the hitherto made to suppress the act it make us friende again. Cool" and obey you! Love you! Henner you! the unconscionable wrench who—" That here Mr. Glichrist row, weak, for-trollable as a he is, she has feit that this matriage day, unhapply known to you, and

iaid his finger on her lips. "Be quiet:" he said. "Philemon is not to blame. A month ago he came to see me and prayed that, as a relief to his mind, I would tell him why you had separated your-seif from James. He had always thought the natural character may gradually make her the sector had always thought.
Fortunately, no other ears were open to her cry. I alone way her misery. I alons her cry. I alone way her misery. I alons her d her take. The child had been pola-ther d her take. The child had been pola-the result had is suffering in the suffering out from her the suffering in the suffering in the suffering in the suffering in the suffering out from her (To be the suffering in the suffering out from her

the match had failed through on account of forget. If so, come, like old neighbors, and in a spoon just before setting out from her decision, till this woman here — he pointed is the had feared that there was some that we have buried the past and are thing more than he suspected in this break, ready to forgive each other the faults of the faults of the fault cup was just like the other and the other and the time what is the suspected in this break, ready to forgive each other the faults of the fault of the fault of the time what is the the other and the time what is the suspected in this break. omething that he should know. So I told our youth, perhaps He will further spare that the two stood very near together. O, Im why you dismissed James, and this good woman. I think she will be able her innovent child, and O, her husband! It whether he knew James better than we did, to bear it. She has great strength, except seemed as if the latter thought would drive or whether he had seen comething in his where a little child is concerned. That slope her wild. "He has so wished for a child," ong acquaintance with these brothers which can henceforth stir the deepest recesses of she moaned. "We have been married ten years and this baby seemed to have been advenced his judgment, he said at once, her heart. This cannot be true of James. It is not in After this a gap of years. One, two, sent from heaven. He will curse me, he

his nature to defraud any man, but John- three, four, five children were laid away to will hate me, he will never be able after might believe it of John. Isn't there rest in Portchester churchyard, then Phile-ome complication here?" I had never mon and whe came to Sutherlandtown, but thought of John, and did not see how John not till after a certain event had occurred, less to argue with her. Instead of attemptcould be mixed up with an affair I had sup- best made known by this last letter to ing it I took another way to stop her ravpored to be a secret between James and my-self, but when Philemon laid the matter Dearest Husband-Our habe is born, our first listened at its heart and then finding Mr. Glichrist's house and was usheed into

before James he did not deny that John was sisth and our dearest, and the reproach of it was really dead-I have seen too many guilty, but asked that you be not told before its first look had to be met by me alone. your marriage. He knew that you were en- 0, why did I leave you and come to this to undress it. "What are you doing?" she gaged to a good man, a man that your great Boston, where I have no frienda but cried, "Mrs. Webb! Mrs. Webb! What are you doing?" she cried, a man that could and Mrs. Sutherland? Did I think I could break you doing!" For reply I pointed to the bed father approved, a man that could and are submeriand? Did turner by giving you doing!" For reply I pointed to the bed where two little arms could be seen feebly is birth to my last darling among strangers? It besides, and this, I think, was at the bat-beat the bar is build be arms the battom of the stand he took, for James Zabel that, if I would save this child to our old was always the proudest man f ever knew, age. It is borne in upon me like fate that he never could bear, he said, to give to one never will a child prosper at my breast of like Agatha a name not entirely free from survive the clasp of my arms. If it is to reproach. It would stand in the way of live it must be reared by others. Some his happiness and ultimately hers; his woman who has not brought down the curse brother's dishonor was his. So while he of heaven upon her by her own blasoved you still, his only prayer was that phemics, must nourish the tender frame and after you were safely married and Philemon receive the blessing of its growing love. was sure of your affection, he should tell Neither I nor you can hope to see recogniyou that the man you once regarded so tion in our babe's eye. Before it can turn favorably was not unworthy of that re- upon us with love, it will close in its last gard. To obey him Philemon has kept sleep and we will be left desolate. What silent, while I-Agatha, what are you doing? shall we do, then, with this little son? To dren had been exchanged she took our whose guardianship can we entrust it? Do Are you mad, my child?" She looked so for the moment. (Tearing you know a man good enough or a woman

off the ring she had worn but an hour, the sufficiently tender? I do not, but if God flung it on the floor. Then she threw her wills that our little Frederick should live, arms high up over her head and burst out in he will raise up some one by the pang of an awful voice: "Curses on the father! Curses on the hus- heart; I believe that he will raise up some

band who have combined to make me rue the day I was born! The father I cannot disown, but the husband-" "Hush!"

It was Mr. Glichrist who dared her fiery five. nger. Philemon said nothing. has just been in with her five-weeks' old "Hush! He may be the father of your infant. His father is away too, and has "God make him an honor-" But here she bildren. Don't curse-" not yet seen his boy; and this is their first But she only towered the higher and her

after ten years of marriage. heauty, from being simply majestic, became appalling. "Children!" she cried; "If ever I car children to this man, may the blight of Philemont Come to me, I have made have done what I threatened; I have made the sacrifice. Our child is no longer ours will keep my secret and never, never re-veal to my husband, to the boy or to the

heaven strike them as it has struck me this but the slience was so dreadful and lasted day. May they die as my hopes have died, so long that I felt first crushed and then or if they live, may they bruise his heart as terrifled. Raising my head, for I had not mine is bruised and curse their faither as-" dared to look any of them in the face, I cast Here I fled the house. I was shaking as if one glance at the group before me and this awful denunciation had fallen on my dropped my head again, startled. Only one own head. But before the door closed beof the three was looking at me and that was hind me a different cry called me back. Mr. Agatha. The others had their heads turned Gilchrist was lying lifeless on the floor, and aside and I thought, or rather the passing Philemon, the patient, tender Philemon, had fancy took me, that they shrank from meettaken Agatha to his breast and was soothing ing her gaze with something of the same her there as if the words she had showered shame and dread I was myself suffering upon him had been blessings instead of the from. But she! Can I ever hope to make most fearful curses which had ever left the you realize her look or comprehend the lips of mortal woman.

> The next letter was in Agatha's handwriting. It was dated some months later and was stained and crumpled more than any others in the whole packet. Could Philemon once have told why? Were these blotted lines the result of his tears falling fast upon them, tears of forty years ago, when he and he were young and love had been doubtful?

| to the tomb to dare risk bringing up an-

other." And catching her poor wandering

spirit with my eye, I held her while I told

her my story, Philemon, I saved that

woman. Before I had finished speaking I saw

the reason return to her eye and the dawn-

ing of a pitiful hope in her passion-drawn

face. She looked at the child in my arms

and then she looked at the one in the bed,

and the long-drawn sigh with which she

finally bent down and wept over our darling

told me that my cause won. The rest was

easy. When the clothes of the two chil-

baby in her arms and prepared to leave.

Then I stopped her. "Swear," I cried,

holding her by the arm and lifting my

other hand to heaven, "swear you will

be a mother to this child! Swear you will

love it as your own and rear it in the path

of truth and righteousness!" The con-

vulsive clasp with which she drew the

baby to her breast told more plainly than

her shuddering "I swear!" that her heart

had already opened to it. I dropped her

arm and covered my face with my hands.

I could not see my darling go; it was worse

than death. "O, God, save him," I groaned.

caught me by the arm; her clutch was

answered. "Tell him!" The hair seemed

"Bi

tering, quivering with something more than marriage day, unhapply known to you, and, i hear the shrick yet with which she fell and his daughter and as I take it, to James also, have been re-ind his finger on her lips. That alternoon before the inquest broke with it still in her arms to the floor. That alternoon before the jury brought in their verdict. It was:

upon herself in a moment of terror and it was all his fellow-townsmen could do

(To be Continued.)

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money, too? I have begged my father and he has promlaed me to keep the cause of this rupture

No one shall know from either of us that James Zabel has any flaw in his mature.

The next letter was dated some months Inter. It was to Philemon:

Dear Philemon: The gloves are to small, besides I never wear gloves. I hate YOU. their restraint and do not feel there is any good reason for filding my hands in this little country town, where everybody knows Why not give them to Hattle Weller; me, she likes such things, while I have had my fill of finery. A girl whose one duty is to care for a dying father has not heart for

vaulties,

Dear Philemon: You will have my hand, though I have told you that my heart does not go with it. It is hard to understand such persistence, but if you are satisfied to take a woman of my strength against her will, then God have mercy upon you, for I will be your wife.

But do not ask me to go to Sutherlandtown. I shall live here. And do not expeet to keep up your intimacy with th There is no tie of affection re Zabels. maining between James and myself, but if 1 am to shed that half light over your home, which is all 1 can promise and all that you can hope to receive, then keep me from all influence but your own. That this in time may grow sweet and dear to me is my letter. carnest prayer today, for you are worthy of a truo wife. AGATHA.

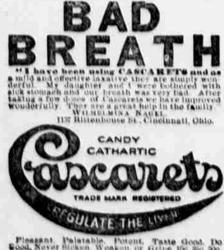
Dear John: I am going to be married. My father exacts it and there is no good reason why I should not give him this final satisfaction. At least, I do not think there is, but if you or your brother differ from 100

Say goodby to James for me. I pray that his life may be peaceful. I know that It will be honest. AGATHA.

Dear Philemon: My father is worse. H fears that if we wait till Tuesday he will tience. Soming that she was better able to not be able to see us married. Decide, then, what our duty is; I am ready to abide by your pleasure. AGATHA. The following is from John Zabel to his

brother James and is dated one day after the above:

Dear Jamos: When you read this I will be far away, never to look in your face again unless you bid me. Brother, brother, I meant it for the best, but God was not with me and I have made four hearts misprable without giving help to any one When I road Agatha's letter-the last, for



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as I seemed, I was jealous of James and Was the sheet so yellowed and so seamed hoped to take his place in your regard if I because it had been worn on his breast and could show a greater prosperity and obtain folded and unfolded so often? Philemon, for you those things his limited prospects hou art in thy grave, sleeping sweetly at denied him. You enjoy money, beauty, case; last by the side of the one so idolized, but could see that by your letters, and if those marks of feeling still remain indissol-James could not give them to you and I ubly connected with the words that gave

could-O, do not look at me like that! I them birth. ee now that millions could not have bought

Now, nothing shall hinder me."

Dear Philemon-You are gone for a "Despicable!" was all that came from day and a night only, but it seems a lengthher lips, at which I shuddered and groped ened absence to me, moriting a little letter. about for the handle of the door. But she You have been so good to me, Philemon, would not let me go. Subduing with grand ever since that dreadful hour following self-restarint the emotions which had hithour marriage. I feel that I am beginning erto swelled too high in her breast for to love you and that God did not deal with look at it. "O, he is fair like my baby," either speech or action, she thrust out one me so harshly when he cast me into your arm to stay me and said in short, commandarms. Yesterday I tried to tell you this

ing tones: "How was this thing done. You say you took the money, yet it was James I was afraid it was a momentary sentimenwho was sent to collect it; or so my father says." Here she tore her looks from me and warm well-spring of joy rises in my heart cast one glance at her father. What she when I think that tomorrow the house saw I cannot say, but her manner changed will be bright again, and that in place of and henceforth she glanced his way as much as mine, and with nearly as much emotion. 'I am waiting to hear what you have to know that the heart 1 had thought im say," she exclaimed, laying her hand on the prognable has begun to yield, and that door so as to leave me no opportunity for daily gentleness and a boundless considerascape. I bowed and attempted an explanation from one who had excuse for bitter tion. "Agatha," said I, "the commission thoughts and recrimination is doing what was given to James and he rode to Sutherall of us thought impossible a few short landtown to perform it, but it was on the months ago. day when he was accustomed to write to

O, I am so happy, Philomon, so happy to ou and he was not easy in his mind, for he love where it is now my duty to love, and feared he would miss sending you his usual if it were not for that dreadful memory of

a father dying with harsh words in his ears And then I told the story you know so and the knowledge that you, my husband well; how I took the money and how after yet not my husband, are bearing ever about Mr. Gilchrist had accused you of the theft with you echoes of words that in another you found out my guilty secret and told me nature would have turned tenderness into that you had taken my crime on yourself, gall, I could be merry also, and sing as I and how afterwards my virtue was not equal go about the house, making it pleasant and o assuming the responsibility for the crime. comfortable against your speedy return. "John," she said-she was under violent As it is, I can but lay my hand softly on my heart, as its beatings grow too im-I cast my eyes at Philemon. He was

petuous and say, God bless my absent Phile-mon and help him to forgive me! I forgive him and love him as I never thought could. That you may see that these are not the weak outpourings of a lonely woman, I will

here write that I heard today that John and James Zabel have gone into partnership in the shipbuilding business, John's uncle having left him a legacy of several thousand dollars. I hope they will do well. Jamics, they may, is to all appearance per-

fectly cheerful and full of business, and this relieves me from too much worry in his regard. God certainly know what kind of husband I needed. May you find yourself equally blessed in your wife.

"Father, you knew this thing!" Keen, Another letter to Philemon a year later: sharp, incisive, the words rang out. "I saw Dear Philemon-Hasten home, Philemon do not like these absences. I am just now A in your face when he began to speak." Mr. Gildrist drooped slightly; he was a too weak and fearful. Since we knew the

very sick man, and the scene had been a great hope before us I have looked often in your face for a sign that you remembered trying one "If I did," was his low response, "it what this hope cannot but recall to my

cestraint-"why do you come now?"

standing just as before with his eyes turned

away. There was discouragement in his

attitude, mingled with a certain grand pa-

bear her loss than either James or myself, I

said to her very low: "I thought you ought

to know the truth before you gave your final

word. I am late, but I would have been too

Her hand fell from the door, but her eyes

remained fixed on my face. "It is too late now," she murmured. "The

dergyman has just gone who united me to

The next minute she had faced her father

late a week from now."

and her new-made husband.

Philemon

van but lately. You were engaged then shuddering memory. Philemon, Philemon, was I mad? When I think what I said in o Philemon. Why break up this second my rage and then feel the little life stirring match?

She eyed him as if she found it difficult about my heart I wonder that God did not o credit her ears. Such indifference to the strike me dead rather than bestow upon me claims of innocence was incredible to her. the greatest blessing that can come to woman. Philemon, Philemon, if anything saw her grand profile quiver, then the should happen the child! I think of it by slow obbing from her check of every drop of blood indignation had summoned there. "And you, Philemon?" she suggested, day. I think of it by night. I know you think of it too, though you show me such a with a somewhat softened aspect, "you cheerful countenance and make such great plans for the future. Will God remember ommitted this wrong ignorantly, never having heard of this crime; you could not my words, or will He forget? It seen know on what false grounds I had been my reason hung upon this question. my words, or will He forget? It seems as if A note this time in answer to one from separated from James."

I had started to escape, but stopped just John Zabel: beyond the threshold of the poor as she Dear John-Thank you for words which uttered these words. Philemon was not as could have come from nobody else. My timorant as she supposed. This was evident child is dead. Could I expect anything diffrom his attitude and expression. ferent? If I did. God has rebuked me.

"Agatha." he began, but at this first Philemon thinks only of me. We underword, and before he could clasp the hands stand each other perfectly, now that our held helplessly out before her, she gave greatest suffering comes in seeing each

little innocent has thus won. What do I mean and how was it all? Philemon it was God's work, all but the de-ception, and that is for the good of all, and to make four braken hearts Liston: Yessave four broken hearte. Listen: Yesslowly towards the door, I heard her hand terday, only yesterday-it seems a month fall on the knob, heard it turnago-Mrs. Sutherland came again to see uttered one cry-and then. They found me me with her baby in her arms! The baby an hour after lying along the floor claspin was looking well, and she was the happiest the dead infant in my arms. I was in a of women, for the one wish of her heart swoon and they all think I fell with the had been fulfilled and she was soon going child, as perhaps I did, and that its little to have the blies of showing the child to life went out during my insensibility. Of its

possible separation already tearing my

Meanwhile I do not dare to kiss the child

lest I should blight it. He is so sturdy,

Philemon, so different from all the other

I open this to add that Mrs. Sutherland

s it? Ah, that is the wonder of it. Near

The next letter opens with a cry:

little innocent has thus won.

his father. My own babe was on the bed little features, like and yet unlike our boy's, asleep, and I, who am feeling wonderfully no one seems to take heed. The nurse who strong, was sitting up in a little chair as cared for it is gone, and who else would far away from him as possible, not out of know that little face but me. They are very hatred or indifference, O, no, but because hatred or indifference, O, no, but because good to me and are full of self-reproaches he seemed to rest better when left entirely for leaving me so long in my part of the by himself and not under the hungry look building alone. But though they watch me of my eyes. Mrs. Sutherland went over to now, I have contrived to write this letter, which you will get with the one telling o she said, "and almost as sturdy, though the baby's death and my own dangerous mine is a month older." And she stooped condition.

fter ten years of marriage. The next letter opens with a cry: Philemon! Come to me, Philemon! I philemon! the provided in t

and now perhaps he may live. But, O my world that you have any claims upon him."

breaking heart, my empty arms. Help me It was like tearing the heart from my

to bear my desolution, for it is for life. We will never have another child. And where will never have another child. Near

is it? Ah, that is the wonder of it. Near you Philemon, yet not too near. Mrs. Sutherland has it and you may have seen she whispered. "Can you keep such a

its little face through the car window if you were in the station last night when the express passed through to Sutherland-

town. Ah! but she has her burden to bear, to rise on her head and she shock so that

own, only she will have the child—for Phile-mon, she has taken it in lieu of her own which died last night in my sight. And Mr. Sutherland does not know what she has have have her own babe. My husband has but one heart with me. What I do he will subscribe to. Do not fear Philemon. So I promised in your

Sotherland does not know when the secret name. Gradually she grew calmer. When name. I shall, for the sake of the life our I saw she was steady again, I motioned

too. An awful, secret burden like my to rise on her head and she shook s own, only she will have the child-for Phile-

when you almost kissed me at parting, but down and kissed him. Philemon, he smiled Under it these words: "Though bidden to for her, though he never had for me. I saw destroy this, I have never dared to do so tality and so kept still. But today such a it with a greedy longing that almost made Some day it may be of inestimable value to me cry out. Then I turned to her, and we us or to our boy. PHILEMON WEBB." talked. Of what? I cannot remember now. This was the last fetter found in the At home we had never been intimate packet. As it was laid down sobs were the empty wall opposite me at table I shall friende. She is from Sutherlandtown, and heard all over the room and Frederick, who see your kindly and forbearing face. I I am from Portchester, and the distance of for some time now had been sitting with his



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