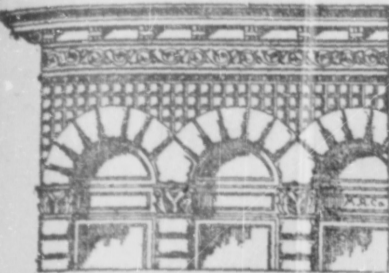


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RIGHTED AT LAST

BY MARY CECIL HAY

Author of "The Arundel Motto," "Nora's Love Test," "Back to the Old Home," Etc.

Mrs. Murray was a little surprised at the question, and a little surprised that Mr. Slimp still stood on the chilly bricks in the little hall, and did not take his own seat in the bar, and light his pipe. But she was not sorry for an excuse to tell him about those two guests who were drinking tea together now from her best china, and she did so at large. The lawyer's clerk listened smilingly, nor did he attempt to speak himself until the narration was over. Then he asked her coaxingly to mix him a glass of whiskey punch, and enumerated the different ingredients he required with a cultivated taste which would have done no discredit to a Yankee.

"Just mix it so, Mrs. Murray, if you please; and do it yourself, to give it its proper flavor. You are quite sure you have Angostura bitters in the house?" Mrs. Murray stepped within the bar, and left the lawyer's clerk still standing beside the parlor door. The mixing of the punch, even with all its requisites, would not take more than two minutes, so he had no time to spare. With a loud, demonstrative carelessness, he opened the parlor door and entered the room, stood a moment transfixed with astonishment when he found it occupied, uttered a meek and very elaborate apology to the lady for having assumed the room to be empty, and backed from it with slow—very slow—deference.

"I just opened the door to see what time it was," he explained, as he entered the bar and took up the glass with a beaming smile upon his face; "I knew my watch was wrong, but did not know how much. I cannot depend upon your kitchen clock; but that time-piece upon the parlor chimney I depend upon implicitly, and always did."

"Were they at tea?" inquired the hostess, her curiosity stronger than her pride.

"Not—exactly," Mr. Slimp answered the question with unctious, but whether this was the effect of the whiskey, or of what he had seen, was not evident.

"Not—exactly; they were standing together on the hearth, Mrs. Murray, looking very interesting, indeed."

"Why, they are strangers?"

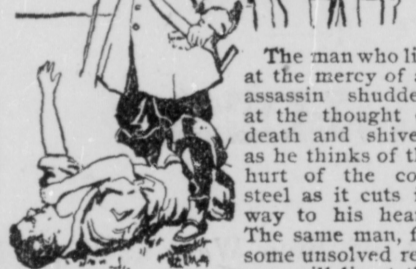
"Ahem! So we are given to understand, if we choose."

"But"—Mrs. Murray's breath was taken away by the covert insinuation—"but you say they were standing together on the rug. Were they talking, or shaking hands, or anything?"

"Not—exactly," Mr. Slimp answered again, as deliberately as before. "In fact they were standing there in utter silence, which is the suspicious part of it all. Do you think that if they were strangers to each other they would stand so, without speaking? No, my good friend; they would have been seated at table, and talking amiably."

Mrs. Murray put on an air of world ly wisdom equal to Mr. Slimp's, and not to be behindhand in other qualities, remarked with more vivacity than veracity, that she had "suspected so all along."

"The next moment she had left the bar."



The man who lies at the mercy of an assassin shudders at the thought of death and shivers as he thinks of the hurt of the cold steel as it cuts its way to his heart.

The same man, for some unexplained reason, will lie at the mercy of that most deadly of assassins, consumption, and apparently not experience a tremor. Of all the human beings that go down each year to premature graves, one-seventh are the victims of this relentless enemy.

There is a prompt and practically unailing cure for this awful disease within the means of the poorest. It is Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. It cures 90 per cent of all cases of consumption. It cures bronchitis, asthma, laryngitis, lingering cough, spitting of blood, weak lungs, throat and nasal troubles and all diseases of the air-passages. It acts directly on the lungs and mucous membranes of the air-passages through the blood, allaying inflammation, building up healthy tissues and driving out all impurities and disease germs. It whets the appetite, makes the digestion perfect and the liver active. It is the great blood-maker and flesh-builder. A sufferer does not have to take these assertions on trust. Thousands have testified to their recovery under this marvelous medicine after all hope was gone. Copies of their letters, with names and addresses, may be had by writing for them. Address World's Dispensary Medical Association, Buffalo, N. Y.

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for the parlor bell had rung, and she always liked—as she expressed it—to answer her own bells.

"It's for the carriage, Mr. Slimp," she whispered, looking in at the bar on her return. "I must go and tell the servants; they are having supper in the kitchen. I left the girl to see to them."

"Wait, Mrs. Murray," called Slimp, in a subdued, eager voice; "I will go round to the yard myself, and order the horses to be put out."

It was almost dark in the yard now and, although it impeded his examination, it certainly afforded Mr. Slimp the opportunity of conducting it unperceived. The hostler of the "Myddelton Arms" was glad to see Mr. Slimp, and to converse with him; but the position, when he came briskly out and took his seat, and the gentleman's gentleman who stood quietly by until the horses moved, and then followed them to the front door of the inn, exhibited a little more surprise at the effort he made to enter into conversation with them, and discouraged those efforts with cool civility.

The carriage lamps were lighted, the horses fresh and restive. The breath of the near horse actually fanned the cheek of Mr. Slimp when he leaned against the house looking on. The lady for whom the beautiful carriage waited came slowly and timidly from the parlor, while the gentleman, who was indebted to her for his accommodation, followed her leisurely. It was natural, of course, that he should see her to her carriage. She bade good-evening to the landlady, wrapped her cloak tightly about her, drew a soft wool veil down over her face, and took her seat. One of her hands was full of flowers and of cultivated blossoms run to seed; the other she offered to the gentleman; and he, standing at the carriage-door, took it, and quietly wished her good-night.

After a moment's pause, he went back into the inn parlor. Mrs. Murray had performed her last courtesy, and the horses had made a few steps forward, when he came out again and spoke up to the servant on the box-seat, while the postilion drew in his eager horses.

"Your lady left this purse behind her in the tavern."

The servant stooped with a touch of his hat and took the purse; the gentleman stepped back, and the carriage went on its way. But Mrs. Murray had not regained her breath yet. In her official business at something having been left behind, she had gone close up to the lamps, and so she saw that the purse he handed to the lady's servant was the purse she had last seen in his hands when he took his card from it, the worn crimson purse, with the many pockets and the name stamped in gold.

"Don't you think that she seems very nervous and delicate, sir?"

Mrs. Murray made this inquiry merely out of curiosity for his reply; but felt very little enlightened when that was given.

"I do, indeed."

For nearly an hour he stayed at the inn, and for this hour Mr. Slimp's life was a burden to him. The cool, half-quizzical eyes of this man who had thrashed him, seemed following him everywhere, for the sole purpose of making him uncomfortable and ill at ease.

Once or twice the embryo attorney became so seriously depressed that he resolved to start at once for Kinbury, but he never carried out that resolution. He had a plan to work out with which a sudden departure might have interfered, and, besides that, it might almost have looked like fear—strange and unnatural hypothesis after that scene among the trees at Abbotsmoor.

It was quite an idle hour which the stranger spent at the roadside tavern, but he did not apparently object to wasting it. Wherever he stood or sat; to whomsoever he talked; with whomsoever he laughed; lounging and loitering there with utter indolence, yet with a grace which had no listlessness or su pineness in it—he pursued the luckless clerk with this cool, amused gaze of his. It was never angry; it was far from insolent; it was only a gaze of quiet amusement. But perhaps the contempt which Mr. Slimp read in it was not all born of his imagination only, though certainly the threat he read there was. The handsome, amused eyes held no threat for such a pitiable object as the man who had cringed and fawned under an upraised arm.

CHAPTER II.

The "Myddelton Arms" stood on the highway about a mile and a half from Kinbury, and at about the same distance on the other side the town lay the small estate of Deergrove, sheltered at the back by the grove which originally gave it its name, and against which the yalls of the house stood out with dazzling whiteness, but unsheltered in the front, where its windows glistened in the noonday sun, unbroken and unrelieved by any leaf or blossom, and where the flower-beds, so perfect in their outline, started thirstily up in summer days, and watched for the cool, coy shadows of the passing clouds.

"But it does not signify much," as one of Mrs. Trent's visitors said to herself.

walking slowly up the smooth and well-kept lawn; "they grow no flowers here but those that love the glare."

The summer had passed its middle age, yet the round beds were gay in their scarlet and yellow robes. It was still quite warm and pleasant in the dusk of the September evening, so the young girl sauntered slowly up the drive, thinking how beautiful it would be in the grove behind the house, where the twilight was so dim and silent.

Within the house a man-servant had shut the daylight from one room, and was lighting it, as he had been skillfully trained to do, to show off at their best the son-white damask, the glittering plate, and, above all, the faces and figures of the ladies of the house. In the drawing-room on the opposite side of the small, paved hall, the daylight was still allowed to linger.

A moderate-sized and modernly furnished drawing-room, suggestive of ample means and luxurious taste, but with one vague, inexplicable want. This deficiency might not have been felt by many of those who met here, but, to those who recognized it at all, it was evident in everything the handsome room contained, or rather it was so ever-present there that it made itself felt in spite of all those attributes of ease and luxury, or of art and literature, which this drawing-room at Deergrove held. It peeped from the glistening blue curtains, and lay on the deep white rug. It nestled among the silken cushions, and lingered about the laden tables. It stared back from the vivid, well-framed pictures on the walls, and echoed even from the gleaming keys of the grand piano.

(To be continued.)

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It would be difficult to conceive of anything more dreadful, and yet this is the goal to which every case of neglected kidney disease must lead.

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