

THE OLD MAID.

Her eyes like quiet pools are clear, Her placid face is sweet and fair, The frost of many a vanished year Lies in her hair.



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ACROSS THE LINES

CHAPTER II.—Continued. "This bandage," said Brodnar, "seems to imply a doubt of you, Dick, but believe me it has its proper use."

"As man to man, then, and upon the honor of Richard Somers, I promise, lead on!" The chance passer-by who saw a blindfolded man led from the elegant apartments of Dr. Francis Brodnar was not surprised.

"For a man to note the direction of a journey," he said, "is a natural, almost automatic, action of the brain-cells—an inheritance from both animal and human ancestry. Therefore, Dick, if I have sought to confuse you by my queer route, it is only through distrust of the original and savage Somers, and to save all parties embarrassment. I trust few people, here we are at last."

How weak is human invention. Richard Somers gathered these facts without mental effort from small signs. The footfall upon the pavement, the search for the key, the clicking lock, the crowding, the gravel under foot, the touch of shrubbery, two steps at the door, and the indefinable air of every lady's room—the faint, blended odor of powders, toilet waters and pressed flowers. That it was the room of a refined woman he was sure in advance.

And it was plain that he had come into a garden from a side street, since no residence would have opened from a woman's room into a walk that led directly to a main street.

Here, then, was a woman who lived upon a first floor with a private garden at her disposal. He had heard the gentle plashing of water outside; there was a fountain in this garden. On the morrow he had but to walk the city until he found the premises, if he would. So much for the secrecy of his friend Brodnar!

By this time Richard Somers was a deeply interested man. Despite his resolution to carry off the affair lightly, he began to feel the presence of something like a tragedy. Where was the woman who was to make use of him blindly and go through the form of a marriage? Dimly at first, perhaps as a matter of logic, he was conscious that she was in the room and near him. Then without more reason he became certain of it.

emotion shook the little hand. Instantly his own hand closed above hers. "Be not afraid, my child," he said; "all will be well." His voice, low and sympathetic, was the first to break the silence of that room.

"We are ready," he said to a third person; "make the ceremony as brief as possible." The other began:

"Richard Somers, do you take this woman to be thy wedded wife, to live together after God's holy ordinance in the holy state of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor and keep her in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?"

There was silence, and then Richard Somers said gravely: "I take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife; and I shall comfort her, honor and keep her in sickness and in health, to the best of my ability, as long as I shall continue to be her wedded husband. Is that sufficient, sir, to answer all legal requirements?"

"That is sufficient," said the unknown speaker. "Frances, wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband—"

"To honor him at all times and in all hours while life shall last?" said Somers, interrupting. "I ask no more, no less."

Then upon his hearing fell a clear, musical voice, flawless as the note of a dove, plaintive as the wind-harp of the pines:

"Yes," it said, "to honor him at all times and in all hours while life shall last, whether in the days to come we meet again or we meet no more." He lifted his head quickly, his hand closed impulsively over hers, and a cry trembled upon his lips.

"That voice!" he said, deeply affected. "I have heard—but no!"—his chin sank upon his breast; "it cannot be!" He caught the words of the unknown speaker beginning the invocation.

"No! no!" he cried, almost fiercely, "it is a sacrilege!"

"Then," said the speaker, "it is sufficient to say that under authority vested in me by the state of Virginia I pronounce you man and wife." Somers stood silent and depressed. There was a whispered consultation; the inner door opened softly and some one passed out.

The scene and circumstances had powerfully affected the doctor. "There were difficulties I had not foreseen," he said, gravely, "but you have safely passed them, my friends. And now I must leave you. Dick, I have placed in your hands the honor of a woman—and my own. I will return for you before it is light. Remember! The gas is now extinguished and you may remove the bandage." He drew the girl towards him tenderly.

"You may trust him implicitly. For the rest, all is now safe. Good night, and God bless you both." He laid his hand reverently upon the girl's head, clasped his friend's hand and would have passed out, but the hand he clasped restrained him, and Somers spoke feelingly as he drew him aside:

"Is this necessary—this remaining? Think how—"

"Absolutely! I read a decision last week, and I must have a marriage that will stand the test of the highest court."

"You read a decision? Are you not acting under the advice of your lawyers?"

"Lawyers be hanged! I know Virginia law. A simple acknowledgment before a witness, with this addition, fixes everything. Don't sulk now, Dick; it won't be long."

"I was not thinking of myself," said Somers. "Good night." He stood a moment in thought, then turned to his companion. In the darkened but not dark room he saw a slender, girl's figure near him, the face bent forward and hidden in her hands.

"Come," he said, cheerfully, "let us sit down and talk it all over. It is true we are married, but that is no reason why we shouldn't be friends, I suppose. If you will find me a chair, I am sure you will confer a great favor. By the way, what shall I call you? 'Madam' or 'Mrs. Somers' sounds too awfully formal. Shall I say—"

"Call me Frances," she said, simply. She understood without analyzing that he was trying to make it easier for her, and was grateful.

"Frances! What a beautiful name! I like it already because it is the feminine of Francis. Yes, the arm-chair will do, and I shall sit here by the table. And you? Oh, I seem to see you snug in the rocker in front. This, I suppose, is the proper arrangement for a family party when the meter isn't working; but I know very little about it. I never was married before, and I suppose you are equally in the dark." It made him happy to hear her friendly little laugh, even though it was instantly checked.

"By the way," he continued, "do you know anything of me? I am to ask

no questions concerning you, but I suppose we may talk about me, may we not?"

"I know that you are a friend of Dr. Brodnar, and what he has told me. You are a stranger in Richmond and a gentleman. But I would have known that you are a gentleman anyway."

"Thank you, Miss Frances; that was nicely said."

"Frances!" he insisted. "I am sorry," said the girl, after a moment's silence, "but if you wish, let it remain that way."

"But I am curious to know how it was that you so quickly decided in my favor the question of gentility."

"My mother told me, when I was little, that any man in whose presence a girl or child feels at ease is a gentleman at heart, and somehow I trusted in you from the moment you spoke. But Dr. Brodnar told me—"

"Well?" "Told me such beautiful things—stories of your life; I seemed to feel, sir, that I had known you always."

"And what has Brodnar been saying of me?—I can blush unseen."

"He told me you were brave—"

"Most men are. And at times all animals."

"That you loved flowers, birds, horses, children and old people—"

"Objects that can't get away from me. Go on."

"That you are generous to a fault—"

"Especially my own—or his."

"And that no woman on God's green earth, those were his words, ever appealed to you for help in vain. He told me once he saw you get out of your carriage in Paris in your evening suit, pick up a drunken old woman who had fallen, and carry her to a house of refuge—and, oh, sir, you did it because you said the noblest, the most sacred image on earth to a man should be a woman's form, the form like unto that of his mother—too sacred for the laughter and jeers of a city's idlers—"

"I endorse the sentiment, whosoever it is. But what a sad gossip Brodnar is!"

"But you did do this, didn't you?" "Would it please you to think that I did?"

"Would it! Why, sir, it was that that made me trust you!"

"Trust me? You were crying!" "Because—because—this is a most strange position for you to find me in, Mr. Somers. I thought that I wouldn't care; and I did not, until you came. But I did then. And that is why I cried. Somehow, I felt that in spite of all at stake, it ought not to have happened this way."

"I understand. But in my estimation, my child, you have sacrificed nothing."

"You did not think so—but—but—" He took up the thought.

"But you are grieved because you are saying: 'Now here is a gentleman who, I have suddenly discovered, I wish to respect me for myself, and as a refined, modest girl; and what must be the think of one who is willing to be locked up here in a room with him all night!'—the girl caught her breath and half rose from her chair—"

"and for what? I cannot even tell him. I am bound not to tell him. I must sit by and see him sacrifice himself to friendship!"

"Oh, sir, do you think—" She bent forward suddenly and, hiding her face in her hands, rested them upon his knees. There are many actions that flow naturally from childish hearts which carry not the slightest flavor of immodesty; and yet a woman may not copy them. So in this, my young friend."

"Ah, you do not say 'my child' now!" "No, you have passed into womanhood with the consciousness of this error. I say error, because it is a situation that you should not have been placed in—no, not to save human life—even to save your own; for the unscarred whiteness of a woman's soul is the priceless pearl of eternity, and not to be staked on earth. But the thought behind it all was not your own. You yielded under the pressure of fear and advice. Your objections were overcome, and you obeyed an elder person in whom you had implicit confidence. That is all, and I understand."

"Then they did not tell you about me!" she whispered, breathlessly.

"No; you have told me all that I know of you, here in the dark. You are tender, modest, true and pure; and were you my wife in truth, I would not be ashamed to tell this story to the world myself and own you as such after." The words fell from his lips so tenderly, so kindly, she took his hand in both of hers, and laid her face upon it, crying silently.

"The blame of it all is on our friend, the doctor," he continued, deeply touched, and his voice a little unsteady. "What a tumultuous, headlong, hurricane sort of fellow he is! There is no blame for you; for look, if I am here, how could you have resisted him? And it is only his judgment that was at fault, after all—only his judgment. Why, a truer heart never beat than Brodnar's."

"Would it offend you if I ask a question?" She had waited for composure, and now did not lift her head.

girl. It might have been an experienced widow. Indeed—"

"But you are glad it wasn't, are you not?" she asked, anxiously.

"Yes, my child."

"Does my question then indicate that I am a child?" "Yes, my child."

"I don't see why."

"Because you are still—a child." She was not satisfied.

"Mr. Somers, I want you to think well of me always, and the thought that I may meet you sometime doesn't embarrass me now. It would not embarrass me if I did meet you—even if I should meet you to-morrow. But I wish you to know all about me, and I am going to tell you everything from the beginning."

"No, indeed, you shall not," he said, quickly. She lifted her head, startled.

"Why not—if I choose? I am not afraid to trust you."

"Not not Miss Frances."

"Ah, I am a woman again!" "Yes, a woman of a charm so sweet and a heart so true that Richard Somers must arm himself. Not your honor, but mine, the honor of your husband is at stake, and you promised to regard that always."

"And I shall, sir; only tell me how."

"Why, I have promised my friend not to seek to find out, or permit anyone to tell me anything about you. I may not let even you inform me. You must not."

She was silent, disturbed, and wondering at his intense earnestness.

Then she said, in awe at the mystery of it all: "When we part to-night we are to meet as friends no more? You may never take my hand in yours and speak kindly to me again? Oh, sir, you do not know, you do not know what your tenderness has done for the girl—no, the woman you call a child. You do not know what it is to have missed a father's care, a mother's—"

"Hush!" he cried, "not one word more. You are making it hard—hard for me to keep faith with my friend. You are betraying his secret." She threw off his hand and arose suddenly, with an abandon of passion that overwhelmed him.

"What a mockery! what a mockery! I am ashamed—ashamed! It is I who am betrayed!" He had arisen also, full of emotion and almost unmanly.

"Never—at my hands. I chose the words deliberately. I will honor and protect you—to the best of my ability; but my ability ends where my promise began. All is based upon my contract with Francis Brodnar, my friend."

"Friend—friend!" she said, bitterly; "in God's name, sir, what am I to you?" He was too deeply affected to answer at once. When he did his voice was unsteady.

(To Be Continued.)

OBEYING ORDERS.

How Horace Greeley Used to Amuse Himself at the Expense of His Good Wife.

Fun at the expense of his wife, provided he were the originator of it, gave Horace Greeley much innocent pleasure—wherein he was not unlike many another man of less distinguished character. Illustrative is this incident, found in Lippincott's:

Mr. Greeley enjoyed a holiday in the country with the enthusiasm of a boy. All his cares and troubles were left behind him, locked up in his desk in the Tribune office. Mrs. Greeley was different from her noted husband in this respect. She brought her cares along with her, and among them that of keeping Mr. Greeley within bounds. One day she kept at him till he said:

"All right, mother; whatever you tell me to do the rest of the day I'll do."

An hour or two later they were getting into a rowboat for a trip to Iona island, a rural paradise surrounded by the waters of the Hudson. Mrs. Greeley stepped in first, sat down, and placed her parasol with the handle resting on the seat and the other end on the bottom of the boat; then glancing up at Mr. Greeley, who was waiting to get into the boat, she called out:

"Now, Horace, be sure to step on my parasol and break it getting into the boat."

"All right, just as you say," responded Horace, cheerfully, and down came his foot on the parasol, and completely wrecked it.

Mrs. Greeley looked daggers at him all the way to the island. Horace himself was in the best of moods, often chuckling softly to himself, as if he had just thought of a good joke. He made matters right when they got back to the Peekskill side by buying Mrs. Greeley a new parasol, and handing it to her with the bantering remark:

"There, mother, is a brand-new sunshade for you, much finer than the old one; and now don't you ever tell me to step on it unless you expect me to do it. I always obey the orders of my superior officer."

Better Than a Deed.

When the Virginian who lived in the wretched log cabin with a family of seven had told me that 40 acres of his land was a solid coal bed, I asked him if his deed was all right.

"Never had no deed, sah," he rather proudly replied.

"But have you no papers at all?" "No paper 't all, sah. I jest squatted down on this yere land 30 years ago, and hev bin yere ever since."

"But if you have no papers won't the owner come along some day and bounce you?"

"Not skassy, sah—not skassy. That is to say, sah, that the real owner has come along three different times and tried it, and every time he got killed and had to give it up. Deeds and sich things are all right 'nuff in their way, but my old gun, with a bar' seven feet long, is a heap better right around yere."

Washington Post.

HUNDREDS OF FARMS

Owned by William Scully, Greatest of American Landlords.

His Largest Holdings Are in Central Illinois and in Bates County, Mo.—How He Makes His Land Pay Well.

William Scully owns a greater number of farms than any man in the United States. Their aggregate area is 300,000 acres. They are worth \$10,000,000. They are located in central Illinois, western Missouri and Kansas. They represent the accumulation of 50 years of the life of their owner.

He is the richest farmer in the richest agricultural section in the world. His wealth the New York World estimates at \$25,000,000.

William Scully came to this country shortly after the Mexican war for the purpose of investing his money. He chose to put it into farming lands.

At that time he was William Scully, gentleman, of Ballecohey, Ireland. Now he is William Scully, American citizen, owner of the John A. Logan residence in Washington, and multimillionaire.

Ever since he came to America he has been either Lord or Viscount Scully, although he never gave anybody reason to believe that he held a title. He is not a lord. Neither is he a viscount.

In 1897 the Illinois legislature modified the alien land-owner law. This law necessitated Mr. Scully's removal to the United States and his naturalization prior to 1903.

When the Scully agents went to Bates county, Mo., six years ago to purchase farm land there, people became alarmed lest Scully import an undesirable tenantry. This criticism of Mr. Scully has covered a period of more than 40 years. Not one word of



WILLIAM SCULLY. (Irish Landlord Who Owns Scores of Farms in the West.)

defense ever came from him. Criticism seemed never to touch the rich Irishman. His policy was silence.

Meanwhile the Scully acres continued to yield great crops. Nobody ever heard of a sale of Scully land except a farm purchased in Sangamon county, Ill., by former Gov. Richard J. Oglesby. Nobody ever heard of a mortgage on a Scully farm.

At Butler, in Bates county, Mo., there are 125 Scully tenants, and they lease their lands for cash, paying from \$1.25 to \$2 an acre, and make their own improvements.

The Scully agents are particular about leases. The farmer who applies for one of them must be a practical farmer. His stock must look well fed. His machinery must show good care. He must have a good reputation, be temperate and industrious and pay his debts. He must not quarrel with his neighbors.

Three years ago Mr. Scully increased his holdings in Bates county, Mo., to 43,000 acres, all purchased in cash at from \$27 to \$35 an acre. None of this land is encumbered. William Scully has visited Bates county several times. He has inspected his farms and carried away samples of their soil in little paper sacks, leading his tenants there to believe he must have at his home samples of every piece of the land he owns.

A year ago the people of Bates county voted on a proposition to build a new courthouse at Butler. Mr. Scully's agent wrote to him and inquired to know what he would advise his tenants to do. Mr. Scully answered that they ought to vote for it. The proposition carried.

This richest of American farmers is a modest man of simple tastes. He dresses simply in dark clothes, with an old-fashioned black bow tie. He does not drink or use tobacco. He is a member of the Episcopal church. He is slightly bald.

Mr. Scully spent several summers in Lincoln, Ill., on one occasion bringing his family. One of his sons married a Lincoln girl. The family lived very simply and became popular. Mr. Scully devoted his whole time to his lands and his books. He was never known to come to Lincoln or to depart from there without having with him an armful of books, principally devoted to agriculture.

Mr. Scully permits no detail of his business to escape him. He even sees that a new generation of scientific farmers will be on hand to take his place and the places of the men who work with him. He puts young men at work on the farms and then sends them to college at his own expense.

Trees in the Philippines.

In the Philippine islands there are about 400 species of trees. Of these only about 50 possess any commercial value.

VIRGINIA CHAIN GANG.

Obsolete System of Punishing Petty Offenders Still Obtains in Progressive Newport News.

Up to date in almost all things, Newport News, Va., clings to the obsolete idea of the chain gang. It is no uncommon sight to turn a street corner and come upon half a dozen negroes of all ages hobbling about with ten-pound bars attached to their ankles, their hands busy with brooms or shovels.

There is about a yard of chain attached to the ball at one end, and riveted to a cuff going around the prisoner's ankle at the other end. Some



PRISONERS IN CHAINS. (How Negro Jail Birds Are Employed at Newport News, Va.)

of the negroes cleverly "pocket" the ball in the angle formed by the handle of the dust cart and the circular rim that holds the can, and move along, blithely singing some ragtime air.

The chain gang is made up of men found guilty of petty offenses and sentenced to a few days' labor by the municipal magistrates. Usually the offense is drunkenness or disorderly conduct. The men do not seem to mind this form of punishment, though the citizens are divided into two camps—those who approve of this cheap method of getting the asphalt swept and the gutters cleaned daily, and those who do not approve of the spectacle afforded by tethered prisoners at large, and who maintain that the punishment is no deterrent.

The negro population living in Blood-town and the suburbs of Newport News is large, saloons are not scarce, rum is plentiful and disorderly scenes are consequently frequent. The local jail is rather small. If the prisoners were all kept there it would be congested, so the chain gang idea obtains in this otherwise beginning of the new century city, whose rapid advance has been one of the features of the census of 1900.

THE EARL OF CADOGAN.

Appointed to Retain His Post as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland for Another Parliamentary Term.

Earl Cadogan, lord lieutenant of Ireland, whom the new Salisbury ministry has decided to retain in his present position, was appointed to the place when the conservatives went into power in 1895. The earl is 61 years old, and has been prominent in British politics since he succeeded to the title on the death of his father in 1873. He has been parliamentary under secretary for state and for the colonies, and in 1878 he was made

chief secretary for Ireland. When the conservatives secured the government in 1886 the earl was appointed lord privy seal, without a seat in the cabinet. In the year of his ascension to the earldom he married Beatrix, the daughter of the second earl of Craven. As wife of the lord lieutenant her entertainments in Dublin have been notable, and her social sway the most brilliant of any vicereine of Ireland. Lord Cadogan's salary is \$100,000 per year.

Municipal Telephone System.

The municipal telephones established at Tunbridge Wells, England—the first in the country—have been warmly supported. The municipal telephones are cheaper by about ten dollars a year, and absolute secrecy is assured. The National Telephone company is now introducing the party system, under which subscribers are charged two pence a day, and is otherwise endeavoring to meet the opposition of the town council.

Noiseless Milk Delivery.

A dairyman in Indianapolis, Ind., supplies his patrons with what he calls "noiseless milk." His wagons have rubber tires, his milkmen wear rubber-soled shoes, and he has supplied each of his customers with a little rubber mat on which the vessels containing the milk are silently placed.

THE EARL OF CADOGAN. (Reappointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland for Another Term.)

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