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"The doctor!" he echoed, half-re-

proachfully. "Yes, dear," she said, in a calm and KID GLOVES, the side of a sofa, stroking the corrugated forehead of the invalid with a magnetic touch. "He will be here im-Ladies and Gentlemen's Sizes, mediately. Your last nervous crisis alarmed me. You may become seri-

cusly ill!" Mr. Preble bestowed an affectionate The Tourist or Grant Hat look upon his wife, but said despondently:

"The doctor! He cannot 'minister o a mind diseased !' Oh, if these long hours would only pass! If I only knew what the day has yet in store for

temple of fashion "Look up, Morton!" enjoined Mrs. Preble, with a reverently trustful glance upward through the open window at the blue sky, and as if looking beyond the azure clouds therein. "Let us appeal from the injustice and wickedness of earth to the goodness and

mercy of Heaven!" The banker gave a low, sobbing "I cannot look up, Helen," he an-

swered, with a passionate tremor in his voice-"only down, down at the grave that is opening before me!" Mrs. Proble continued to stroke his forehead softly, while she lifted her

pale face to the sunlight streaming into the apartment. "Look up, Morton-always look up!" me nothing." she again enjoined upon the invalid.

"Nor did it us, at first," said Mr. "During all these fourteen years of agony, I have not once doubted either the goodness or the justice of Heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.' I believe that we shall yet rejoice more keenly than we He thrust a second slip of paper, have mourned, and that we shall come to a glorious day of joy beyond all this identical in shape and appearance with den foe—a field in human form—who pers and magazines; but he prefers to

long night of sorrow !" The face of the invalid lighted up top, who read it aloud: with an answering glow, and he mur-

TERMS, \$2,00 a year in advance.

indeed a blessed comforter! Perhaps, after all, you are right!" A knock resounded on a side door at | "It convinced you that your daughter

this juncture, and the next moment was still living." In San Francisco, on the north side of Folsom street, overlooking Mission Dr. Hutton, the family physician, for The interior of this house is even the room. He was an old man, portly in figure, pearance of the child, myterious as it

of the invalid, feeling his pulse.

so long as your mind is in its present

ate-" "Not now, doctor," interposed the to the physician. banker. "I cannot-must not-sleep and luxuriant chairs had been gathered looking for the culmination of all my lows: years of anguish-for the crowning agonv of the whole. Perhaps even now - Ab, what was that?"

He started up wildly, and then, as the sound that had disturbed him was And the nextnot repeated, he sank back again on his cushions, pallid and panting. The doctor looked at Mrs. Preble

with an anxious, questioning glance. "It is the anniversary," she replied to his unspoken inquiry-"the anniversary of our loss." "Ah, yes," said the doctor. "I re

"Yes, it's another of those terrible he so noble and good! he so wealthy days," eried the banker, in a hollow whisper. "Sit down, doctor, and I And the next-As he moved restlessly upon his lux- will tell you the whole story. I can urious cushions the pretty clock on the think of nothing else to-day, and am

anxiety. Sit down."

"Avours 9, 1867. My reward is at hand !"

Dr. Hutton drew up a chair and And what shall we get to-day!

"You knew us fourteen years ago, octor," said Mr. Preble. "We lived then where we do now, in a cottage he was alone, he touched a bell upon a on the site of this great mansion. There were but the three of us-Helen and I, and our three year old Jessie. Before the echoes of his voice had And it was fourteen years ago to-day died out a step was heard, and his wife that our little Jessie was stolen from

"I remember it," said the doctor ton," she said, advancing to the bank- softly. "Yet might she not have been er's side. 'You were dozing, I think. lost, Mr. Preble? She went out to "and the time has come for another rightly, and was never seen by you 1868" six and thirty years, graceful, with again. She might have strayed away-"So we thought for a whole year, doctor," interrupted the banker. "We never dreamed that she had been sto- ceive to-day another of these strange len. We searched everywhere for her messages!"

poignant than that eviuced by her and offered immense rewards for her recovery. I employed detectives, but Proble's hand fluttered in its task, and all to no purpose. When our little her face grow very pale. The banker Jessie ran down the steps into that breathed gaspingly. The physician around. flower-garden," and be pointed to the regarded them both in friendly symcheerful voice, as she drew a chair to front of the house, "as if the earth had pathy. opened and swallowed her up, we never saw ber again."

"She must have found the gate open message be?" and wandered out," suggested Dr. down to the waters and been drowned. echoed in her soul. The banker fixed his burning eyes

upon the physician's face, and whis- questionably the abductor of your heavy foot steps resounded in the hall "I said we never saw the poor child again. I did not say we had not identity?" heard of her. She was lost on the 9th "Not the slightest," said Mrs. Pre-

thought ber dead. But on the anni lem for many years, but we cannot hall again opened. versary of our loss we received a writ- guess who he is." ten message concerning her.". "A message!" cried Dr. Hutton, "A mere scrawl-a single line in a

hand evidently disguised," said the banker. "Here it is." from a drawer in the table, and held whom you were called upon to testify it up to the view of the physician, who | -no one whom you possibly injurread as follows:

"August 9, 1855. Jessie, ha, ha! Jessie!" Dr. Hutton looked, with a puzzled had asked himself all of these quesair, from the scrap of paper, which he tions repeatedly. turned over and over, to the countenance of the banker.

"I can make nothing of this," he declared. "It is merely a date, with the name of your lost daughter. It tells

Proble." "Then that name and that home?" date, with the demon laugh connecting them, set us to thinking. A whole ried early. Morton was my first lovyear we agonized over the dreadful er !" problem, and then we received another message which you shall see."

"August 9, 1856. . Your Jessie still lives." The physician started, as if electri-

with white hair and beard, but with a is, does not seem to me halfso strange the mother. "Perhaps in San Franfresh and ruddy complexion, a pair of as that the villain who took her away cisco—perhaps in some rude but in the

"Ah! this is something definite-

NO. 20.

shrewd blue eyes, and with an exube- could contrive to communicate with interior with some obscure farmer,: rant boyishness of manner that sat us every year since, and always on a and under a name that is not hers!well upon him. He approached the particular day—the anniversary of I think her abductor would have carsofa, after greeting the husband and that on which she was stolen-with ried her to some lonely region of the wife, and lifted the thin, restless hand out our being able to discover who he interior, among the valleys and mounis. And a still greater wonder to me tains. Yet I never see anyoung girl

brief pause. "Worrying again, eb, incredible. If it was stated in a novel at her. I never hear a girlish voice Mr. Proble?" You are wearing your many people would not believe it. without listening eagerly, half fancy. self out. Medicine will do you no good But 'truth is stranger than fiction.'" ing that it may prove the voice of my Mrs. Preble drew from her husband's lost Jessie!" condition. I must give you an opi- breast-pocket his note-book, opened it to the proper page, and presented it Hutton, dashing a flood of tears from

Dr. Hutton adjusted his spectacles, er be over?" to-day! I need to be broad awake glanced over the page, and then slownow, for I cannot tell at any moment ly read the groupe of entries aloud .-what the next may bring forth. I am The entries for the first year is as fol-

> And the next year it is-August 9, 1856. Your Jesse still lives !" And the next-

August 9, 1855. Jessie, ha, ha ! Jesssie."

"August 9, 1858. She is well as ever i' And the next-"August 9, 1859. I saw

And the next-\*August 9, 1860. She's at

And the next-"Avgust 9, 1861. She contin And the next-

And the next-"August 9, 1863. She And the next-

"August 9, 1864. "August 9, 1865. She's

And the next-"Avoust 9, 1866. She's really charming !"

aroused himself, struggling feebly to seated himself, his face expressing the The physician looked up and fixed double solicitude of a friend and phys- his thoughtful gaze upon the bereaved at the front door followed. husband and wife.

"How did these messages come to banker. vou ?" he demanded "Invariably by post," replied Mr. Preble. "Usually to the house, but

sometimes to the office!" "And you have never seen their author ?"

"Never!" "The last of them is dated, I see a year ago to day !"

"Yes, yes," faltered the banker, play in the garden, if I remember message. This is the 9th of August,

> this is the secret of your terrible ex- physician. citement! You are expecting to re-

There was a brief silence. Mrs.

"We shall hear of her again to-day," said Mr. Preble; "and what will the

The mother averted her face. Her Hutton. "She might have strolled brave heart faltered as that question

"The writer of these letters is unchild !" said Dr. Hutton. "Have you any suspicion as to hi

of August, 1854. For a year we ble. "We have puzzled over the prob-

"Think," said the doctor. "Have you no enemy? I do not mean people with whom you are not friendlyevery stirring man has plenty of these -but a downright enemy! Is there no man whom you knew in the East

ed ?" The banker shook his head. He "I have no such enemy, doctor,"

manner. no rejected suitor who might be re-

"No," said the lady. "I was mar-

"This is strange-very strange!"muttered the doctor. "You are not conscious of having an enemy-a hid-

est suspicion as to whom he is?" "Not 'the slightest," 'declared 'the banker."

"Not the slighest !" echoed Mrs. Proble

"My husband had a step-brother who might have been capable of this infamy—but he is dead !" -

"The handwriting is not familiar?" "No. It is merely a rude scrawl, as you see," said the banker. "It suggests nothing-except that is evidently disguised!"

Again there was a profound si-"Our child is seventeen years old now," at length murmured Mrs. Preble, her voice trembling. "She is on the threshold of womanhood. No doubt, during all these years, she has yearned for us, wherever she may be,

something decisive," he muttered - as we have yearned for her!" "But where is she?" asked the physician-and now his voice was "Yes, doctor," said Mr. Preble, and broken by his deep sympathy with whom Mrs. Proble had sent, entered every anniversary of that day has the agonized parents. "Where can brought us some message. The disap- | she be?"

"Heaven only knows," answered "Quite a high fever," he said, after a is what can be his motive. It seems in the streets without turning to look

"Oh, pitying heaven!" sighed Dr. his eyes. "Will this long agony nev-

"We hope so, and even believe so.". answered Mrs. Preble, with the firmness of an unfaltering trust in God's mercy. "The last message we received from our enemy seems to point to some kind of a change."

"True," assented Dr. Hutton, looking at the message in question. "It is unlike the others. It says that his 'reward is at hand.' He means either that he intends to marry your daughter, or that he intends to demand money of you for bringing back-or both."

"We shall soon know," said Mrs. Preble, with forced calmness. "Today we shall have another message, no doubt. What will it be?"

The banker turned restlessly on his sofa, and his face grew paler. "Whatever it is let it come!" he

murmured. Anything can be borne. better than this awful suspense. Let it come!"

As if his impatient words had precipitated a crisis, a step was heard on the walk at this moment, and a ring "Another message!" breathed the

letter, which he extended to Mr. Preble, saving: "The bearer is in the hall."

With an eager gaze the banker glanced at the superscription of the missivo.

"It is from HIM!" he faitered.

He tore the envelope open. It contained a slip of paper, of wellknown shape and appearance, upon which was scrawled a single line, in an equally well-known hand-writing "I see," said Dr. Hutton. "And which the banker exhibited to the

This line was as follows: AUGUST 9, 1868. At six I will call!" A shock of wonder and horror shook the three simultaneously. "Will call !" cried Mr. Preble, start-

ing to her feet, and glaring wildly

"Is coming here?" cried Mrs. Preble, also arising. "It seems so," said Dr. Hutton, his

eyes again reverting to the message. He will be here at six o'clock, and see! it is six already!" Even as he spoke, the clock on tha

mantlepiece commenced striking the appointed hour, and at that instant approaching the library. " It is he!" cried the doctor, also

As the last stroke of the hour rasounded, the door leading from the

One long and horrified glance cast

the banker and his wife in that direc-

tion, and then she fell heavily to the Her senses had left her. The above we publish as a speci-

men chapter; but the continuation of He produced a dingy scrap of paper who hated you? No one against this story will be found only in the New York Ledger. Ask for the number dated December 4th, which can be had at any news office or book store. If you are not within reach of a news office, you can have the Ledger mailed to you for one year by sending three dollars to ROBERT BONNER, pubanswered with sincerity of voice and lisher, 182 William Street, New York. The Ledger pays more for original "And Mrs. Proble?" suggested the contributions than any other periodicdoctor, turning to her. "Have you al in the world. It will publish none but the very, very best. Its moral tone is the purest, and its circulation vengeful enough to desolate your the largest. Everybody who takes it is happier for having it. Leon Lewis, Mrs. Harriet Lewis, Mrs. Southworth,

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