

FOR HONOR'S SAKE.

BY B. L. PARSONS.

Out of "Street Porter Square," "The Bright Star of 1879," etc.

Ida White purchased a first class ticket for Epsom Downs, and we did the same. I had followed the former custom I should have avoided the carriage in which Miss White traveled, but Fowler pushed me in before him, and got in afterward, and being under his command, I did not hesitate. He had purchased a number of newspapers, and shortly after we started he surprised me by opening a conversation with a stranger. He spoke with a Lancashire accent, and I should have been deceived by his voice and he not being sitting by my side. The subject, of course, was the Derby, and he appeared to be eager to obtain information as to the merits and chances of the various runners.

Meanwhile, Miss White, who had also purchased every sporting paper she saw, had taken from her pocket a racing guide, in which the performances of the horses were recorded. She studied this guide with great seriousness, and was continually consulting the newspapers to ascertain how the opinions of the sporting prophets agreed with the information of the authority with which she had provided herself. "So," thought I, "this young woman, whose whole soul seems wrapped up in racing matters, is the same young woman who in our declared that she hated races and betting men." Before we were half an hour on our journey I felt perfectly at ease in her presence. It was clear that she considered herself safe, and among strangers. The conversation between Fowler and the gentleman became more animated; others joined in, and I observed that Miss White's attention was attracted to the utterances of every now and then she made a memorandum in a small metallic book, and before we arrived at Epsom Downs she allowed herself to be drawn into conversation, and freely expressed her opinions upon the horses that were to run for the blue ribbon of the turf. I did not venture to address her, but Fowler had no fear, and carried on the names of the horses she believed to have the best chances. He slapped his thigh, and declared that he should back her.

We alighted at Epsom Downs and rode to the race course. The grand stand of the day had not yet set in, but, although the grand stand was scarcely a third part filled, there were already many there who had taken up their positions from which to see the principal races of the day. Fowler improved upon his acquaintance with Miss White, and I obeyed the instructions he managed to convey to me not to stick too close to him. I did not lose sight of him, however, and presently he came and said to me, in an undertone: "It's all right, sir; I'm making headway. I've told her where I came from in my acquaintance, and she has taken with a goodish bit of property which has just fallen to me through the death of my father. I've given her my card—I had some printed yesterday in case they might be wanted, and she has promised to have a bit of luncheon before the race commences."

Up stairs we went to the luncheon room, where Fowler called for a bottle of dry champagne, in which he dipped his hand to each other. It was only by great exertions that we managed, after lunch, to squeeze ourselves into the grand stand. The crush was not so bad as the narrow stairs, and Miss Ida White would have stared badly had it not been for Fowler's gallant attentions. I have no intention to describe the race. I presented the features of the Derby, to which I paid little heed, my attention being concentrated upon Miss Ida White. She was greatly excited. There were some bookmakers on the grand stand, and she was seen to have a must have invested at least a dozen sovereigns on different horses, the odds against which ranged from 40 to 60 to 1. The race was over. Melton was hailed the winner. I knew that the narrow stairs did not buckled Melton for a shilling, and I watched the effect the result of the race had upon her. Her lips quivered, her eyes glistened, and she said, "It is an angel, by she!" thought I. "Ah! not much of the angel there."

A stampede commenced to the lower ground. The grand stand was half empty. Then it was that she turned to me, and she must have invested at least a dozen sovereigns on different horses, the odds against which ranged from 40 to 60 to 1. The race was over. Melton was hailed the winner. I knew that the narrow stairs did not buckled Melton for a shilling, and I watched the effect the result of the race had upon her. Her lips quivered, her eyes glistened, and she said, "It is an angel, by she!" thought I. "Ah! not much of the angel there."

"I am very sorry you lost," he said to Miss White, and she said, "I am sorry that I must wish you good by." He took her aside and had a brief conversation with her, in the course of which she slipped something into her palm, upon which her fingers were seen to be playing. Her hands with her, he beckoned to me, and we left the grand stand.

"What did you give her?" I asked. "Only a card," he said, "with an address in London, which she could write to me if she felt inclined. I told her that I had never seen a lady I admired so much, and that I hoped she would give me the opportunity of becoming friends with her. In a happy way—quite in an honorable way," he added, with a laugh.

"And what are you leaving her for now?" I inquired. "Because I know where Mr. Eustace Rutland is to be found," he replied. "It will take two or three hours to get to the place, and I suppose it is best to lose no time." "Decidedly the best," I said, "but how about Ida White?" "She is safe enough. My men are all around her. She won't be left for an instant, whether she will or no. The gentleman I entered into conversation with in the train was one of my fellows. You are a great lawyer, sir, but I think I could teach you something."

"I have no doubt you could. Where does Eustace Rutland live?" "In Crofton, at some distance from the station." "We did not reach Crofton until past 9 and it was nearly an hour before we arrived at the address which Fowler had received." "That is the house, sir," he said, pointing to it. "It doesn't look very flourishing."

It was one of a terrace of eight sad looking tenements, two stories in height, and evidently occupied by people in a humble station of life. "Before we go, sir," said Fowler, "I must put you in possession of the information I have gained. Mr. Eustace Rutland does not live there"—I started—"but Mr. Fenwick does. The young gentleman has thought it to change his name; that is suspicious. He has lived there the last two weeks, having come probably from some better known locality, the whereabouts of which I shall think you may know. When I say he came from some better known locality I am not quite exact; it will be more correct to say he was brought from some better known locality. He was very ill, scarcely able to walk, and it is a very weak, I am given to understand. Now, sir, what do you propose to do? Do you wish me to go in with you, or will you see this young gentleman alone, without witnesses?"

"You are the soul of discretion, Fowler," I said, "and of shrewdness. I must see the young gentleman alone, and without witnesses. Meanwhile you can remain in the house, ready at my call, if I should require you. Keep all strangers from the room while I am closeted with him."

As he spoke he pushed his way into the passage, and I followed. The woman looked helplessly at us, and when Fowler said, with foreboding uplifted warning, "Take care what you are about," she replied, "I don't know what to do, I am only following out my instructions."

"Your instructions," said Fowler, "were not to prevent Mr. Fenwick's friends from seeing him." "I was told to admit no one," the woman said. "And pray who told you?" demanded Fowler. "The lady?" "Yes, sir," said the woman. "Miss Porter."

"Oh, Miss Porter," exclaimed Fowler. "A friend of ours also. Dark skinned. Black hair. Blue eyes. Red lips. White hair. Rather slim. About five foot four."

"Yes, sir," said the woman. Fowler had given a pretty faithful description of Miss Ida White. "Well, then," said Fowler, whose ready wit compelled my admiration, "there is no occasion to announce us to Mr. Fenwick. Show this gentleman the room, and while they're chatting together I will have a little chat with you."

"It is on the first floor," said the woman. "Of course it is," said Fowler, "the first floor, the room with the blind pulled down. Do you think I don't know it? How is the young gentleman?" "Not at all well, sir."

I heard the reply as I ascended the stairs, in compliance with a motion of Fowler's head. When I arrived at the door of the room occupied by Fenwick, otherwise Eustace Rutland, I did not knock, but I turned the handle and entered. A young gentleman who had been lying on the sofa jumped up upon my entrance, and cried: "Who are you? What do you want?" I closed the door and turned the key in the lock.

"What do you do that for?" he exclaimed. "I will tell you," I said. "The time for evasion and concealment is past. Your sister—"

"My sister?" interrupted Eustace. "I do not understand you."

"You do understand me. You have a name, a twin sister—whose name is Mabel. She lies at the point of death, and you have brought her to it."

He covered his face with his hands, and I judged intuitively that there sat before me the young man who had been so easily led for evil as he might be, and who was devoid of the true instincts of affection.

"Did you know of her condition?" I asked. "No," he replied, in a trembling voice. "Is it true? Is it true?" "It is unhappily true, and it may be that it lies in your power to rescue from the grave the innocent young girl who has died of her life's unhappiness to you."

"My God! my God!" "I will not deceive you. Such happiness cannot come to pass if you are guilty."

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