THE MASTER OF MAN :-: By Sir Hall Caine

An Outspoken and Moving Study of a Deep Sex Problem by the Noted Author of "The Manxman," "The Deemster," "The Eternal City," "The Woman Thou Gavest Me," Etc.

THIS BEGINS THE STORY

Victor Stowell, son of the Deemster or Chief Judge of the Isle of Man, is handsome and of fine nature. He is in love with Fenella Stanley, daughter of the Governor, a beautiful girl and with advanced views on the rights of women. In a moment of mutual passion he has had illicit relations with Bessie Collister, a handsome peasant girl, stepdaughter of Dan Baldromma, a harsh firebrand. She is loved by Alick Gell, Victor's chum and fellow attorney. Victor feels he must marry her, especially when he learns she is trying to educate herself. Alick says he wishes to marry Bessie. With the burden of the wrong off him, Victor proposes to Fenella. Alick is driven from home by his choleric father. Victor and Fenella's marriage is set for six months hence. Gell presses Bessie to marry him soon.

AND HERE IT CONTINUES

At this Bessie broke down utterly and the witch-doctor had to stop for a moment

IT WAS a fine spring morning, with the sea lying still on either side of the uplands, and the sun, through clouds of broken crimson, peering over the shoulder of the Calf like a blood-shot eye.

HALL CAINE

Bessie had no need to ask her way to the witch-doctor's house, for troops of young girls were coming down from it, generally in pairs, whispering and laughing merrily. At length she came upon it—a one-story thatched cottage with a queue of girls outside.

When the last of the girls had gone, and Bessie still stood waiting on the opposite side of the rutted space which served for a road, a wisp of a woman, with hair and eyebrows as black as the trunk of the trammon tree, came to the door and said:

"Come in, my fine young woman. There's nothing to be freckened of."

It was Nan, the witch-doctor, and Bessie followed her into the house.

The inside was a single room with a fire at one end and a bed at the other. The floor was of hardened clay and the scrans of the roof were so low overhead that a tall man could scarcely have stood erect under them. Bundles of herbs hung from nails in the sooty rafters, and when the old woman closed the door Bessie saw that the Crosh cuirn (the cross of mountain ash) was standing at the back of it.

"I'm in trouble, ma'am," said Bessie, who was on the verge of tears, "and I'm wanting to know what to do and what is to happen to me."

The witch-doctor, whose quick eyes had taken in the situation at a glance, said:

"Aw yes, bogh, trouble enough. But knock that cat off the cheer in the choilagh and sit down and make yourself comfortable."

Bessie loosened her fur-lined cloak and sat in the ingle, with the fire at her feet and a peep of the blue sky coming down on her from the wide chimney.

"They were telling me a fine young woman was coming," said the witch-doctor (she meant the invisible powers), "and it was wondering and wondering I was would she have strength to climb the brews. But here you are, my chree, and now a cup o' tay will do no harm at all."

Bessie tried to refuse, but the old woman said:

"Chut! A cup o' tay is nothing and here's my taypot on the warm turf and the tay at the best, too."

While Bessie sipped at her cup the witch-doctor went on talking, but she took quick glances at the girl from time to time and sometimes asked a question.

At length she bolted the door, drew a thick blind over the window, knelt before the hearth, and called on Bessie to do the same, so that they were kneeling side by side, with no light in the darkened room except the red glow from the fire on their faces and the blue streak from the sky behind the smoke from the chimney.

After that the witch-doctor mumbled some rhymes about St. Patrick and the blessed St. Bridget, then put her ear to the ground, saying she was listening to the Sheean ny Feaynid, the invisible beings who were always wandering over the world. And then she began on the fortune, which Bessie, who was trembling, interrupted with involuntary cries.

"There's a fair young man in your life, my chree (Yes) and if you're not his equal you're the apple of his eye. There's a poor ould woman, too, and she praying and praying for her boghmillish to come home to her (Oh!) and the longing that's taking the woman at times is pitiful to see. 'Where is my wandering girl tonight?' she's singing when she's sitting by her fireside; and when she's going to bed she's saying, 'In Jesu's keeping naught can harm my erring child'."

At this Bessie broke down utterly, and the witch-doctor had to stop for a moment. Then she began again in a different strain:

"There's an ould man, too * * * yes * * * no * * * (Yes, yes!) as imperent as sin and as bould as a white stone, and with a vise at him as loud as a trambone. Aw, yes, woman-bogh, yes, there's trouble coming on you, but take heart, gel, for things will come out right before long, and it's a proud woman you're going to be some day. But you must go home to the mother, my chree, and never take rest till you're laying your head under the same roof with her."

"And will the young man be true to me whatever happens?"

"True as true, my chree, and his heart that warm to you at last that it will be like gorse and ling burning on the mountains."

"And will the old man be able to do him any injury?"

"Lough bless me, no! Neither to him nor you, gel. Roaring and tearing and mad as a wasp, maybe, but nothing to do no harm at all."

Bessie had crossed the old woman's palm with sixpence as she came into the house, but she emptied her purse into it going out, and then went down the hill with a light step and a lighter heart.

Alick Gell was at Derby Haven when she got back, having been waiting for more than an hour. Seeing her coming down the road with her face aglow, he dashed off to meet her, and broke into a flood of joyous words.

"Hellos! Here you are at last! Looking as fresh as a flower, too.

"What did I say? Didn't I tell you that you had only to get about and take exercise and you would be as right as rain in no time? But, look here, Bess" (he had drawn her arm through his), "you've kept me waiting all winter and now that you're getting better I'm going to stand no more nonsense."

Bessie was laughing.

"I'm not! Upon my soul, I'm not! You wouldn't let me put up the banns [illegible] thinking Dan Baldrochma [illegible] Dan Baldromma [illegible] a noise at Miss Brown's, though he has no more right over you than the Coroner, and no more power over me than a tomtit. But there are other ways of marrying besides being called in church, and one of them is by Bishop's license."

"Bishop's license?"

"Certainly! You just go up to the Registrar's in Douglas, sign your name in a book, pay a few pounds, get the Bishop's certificate, and then you can be married wherever you like and as quietly as you please. And that's what we're going to do now."

"Now? You mean today?"

"Well, no, not today. I have to go to the Castle this afternoon. They're unveiling a portrait of the old Deemster. And what do you think, Bess?"

"What?"

"There's a whisper that Stowell is to be made Deemster in succession to his father. Glorious, isn't it? Splendid chap! Straight as a die! Rather young, certainly, but there's not one of the old gang fit to hold a candle to him. He's to go up to London tomorrow, so I want to see the last of him. But I'll be down by the first train after the boat sails in the morning, and then we'll go back to Douglas together."

They had reached the gate of the old maid's house by this time and Gell was looking at his watch.

"Phew! I must be off! Ceremony begins at three and it's that already. Wouldn't miss it for worlds. By-by! * * * Another one! * * * Oh, but you must, though."

Bessie looked after him as he hurried down the road, swinging his arms and pitching his shoulders, as he always did when his heart was glad. Then she went indoors, ran upstairs and set herself to think things out.

She must go before Alick could get back. When he arrived tomorrow she must be on her way to her mother's. It was earlier than she had intended, but there was no help for that now. And then it would be all right in the end—the Sheean ny Feaynid (the Voices of Infinity) had said so.

After her child had been born her mother would take it and bring it up as her own—she had heard of such things happening in Manx houses, hadn't she? And when all was over and everything was covered up, she would come back, and then * * * then Alick and she would be married.

In the light of what the witch-doctor had said it seemed to her so natural, so simple, so sure. But later in the evening it tore her heart woefully to think of Alick coming from Douglas on the following day and finding her gone. So she wrote this note and stole out and posted it:

"Don't come tomorrow. I'll be writing again in the morning, telling you the reason why."

CHAPTER XX

Victor Stowell's Vow

The old courthouse at Castle Rushen was full to overflowing. Nearly all the great people of the island were there—the Legislative Council, the Keys, the leaders of the bar, the more prominent members of the clergy, the long line of insular officials, with their wives and daughters.

A pale shaft of spring sunshine from the lantern light was on the new portrait of the Deemster, which had been hung on the eastern wall and was still covered by a white sheet.

The time of waiting for the proceedings to begin was passed in a low buzz of conversation, chiefly on one subject. "Is it true that he is to follow his father?" "So they say. "So young and with so many before him—I call it shocking." "So do I, but then he's the son of the old Deemster, and is to marry the daughter of the Governor."

At the last moment Stowell and Fenella arrived and were shown into seats reserved for them at the end of the jury box. Then the conversation (among the women at least) took another turn. "Well, they're a lovely pair—I will say that for them."

The Governor, accompanied by the Bishop and the Attorney General, stepped on to the crimson-covered dais, and the proceedings commenced.

The Governor's own speech was a short one. They had gathered to do honor to the memory of one of the most honored of their countrymen. The memory of its great men was a nation's greatest inheritance. If that was true of the larger communities it was no less true of the little realm of Man.

"Hence the island," said the Governor, "is doing a service to itself in setting up in this courthouse, the scene of his principal activities, the memorial to its great Deemster which I have now the honor to unveil."

When the Governor pulled a cord and the white sheet fell from the face of the picture there was a gasp of astonishment. The impression of reality was startling. The Deemster had been painted in wig and gown and as if sitting on the bench in that very courthouse. The powerful yet melancholy eyes, the drawn yet firm set mouth, the suggestion of suffering yet strength—it was just as he had been seen there last, summing up after the trial of the woman who had killed her husband.

As soon as the spectators, who had risen, had resumed their seats the Governor called on the Attorney General.

The old man was deeply moved. The Deemster had been his oldest and dearest friend. It was difficult for him to remember a time when they had not been friends and impossible to recall an hour in which their friendship had been darkened by so much as a cloud. If it was true that the memory of its great men was a nation's greatest inheritage, the island had a great heritage in the memory of Deemster Stowell. He had been great as a lawyer, great as a judge, great as a gentleman, as a friend, as a lover, as a husband and (with a glance in the direction of the jury box) as a father also.

"I pray and believe," said the attorney, "that this memorial to our great Deemster may be a stimulus and an inspiration to all our young men whatsoever, particularly to such as are [illegible] at the bar, and especially to one who bears his name, [illegible] him. Have you ever seen men fill an ice house with ice they want to keep until summer?"

Yes, Jack and Janet both had seen men fill an ice house. The men had cut the ice from the lake and put it into a thick-walled house, packing it with sawdust. There the heat couldn't get in and the cold couldn't get out, so the ice didn't melt.

"This cave was nice and dry when Cold Nose made his bed there," giggled Perky Squirrel. "But in the winter when the creek was covered with ice there came a thaw. The rushing waters carried the ice into the cave and piled it beneath the shelf where the bear was asleep. Around the ice the current packed leaves and dirt. A freeze followed and then another thaw. The second thaw carried more ice into the cave. And so did a third thaw, and a fourth, until that cave was packed as solidly as an ice house. The ice keeps the air so cool Cold Nose doesn't know summer is here."

"Desn't he get hungry?" asked Jack.

"To be sure he does," giggled Perky Squirrel. "He has used up all the extra fat he had when he went into the cave. He is now as thin as the tail of a rat. Every once in a while his stomach tells him to wake up. But when he yawns and opens his eyes he finds the air chilly and the cave filled with ice. He thinks it is still January and goes right back to sleep. My, but he will be mad when he finds he has been tricked and it is June."

"Supposing he doesn't wake up," said Janet soberly. "Supposing he starves to death waiting for summer."

"Ek! I hadn't thought of that," barked Perky Squirrel, quitting his laughing. "We will have to wake him up!" With that Perky Squirrel began a loud chattering. "Ek! Ek! Wake up, Cold Nose! Wake up! Summer is here!"

But no answer came from the cave. Cold Nose was like a boy snoozing on a Saturday morning. He didn't stir.

"Hey! Hei! Cold Nose. Wake up! Wake up, or you will starve to death!" Jack and Janet added their shouts to the noise made by Perky Squirrel.

"We can't wake him up calling to him," said Perky Squirrel at last. "You children will have to go into the cave and shake him."

Jack and Janet didn't like that idea at all. Shaking a hungry bear would be like tickling the nose of an angry bull.

"Perhaps we can wake him up with a stone," said Jack. "He found a pebble for Janet and a small rock for himself."

Janet threw her pebble into the cave. There came a startled sniff.

"Ugh! Who hit me on the nose?" growled a bear voice.

Jack tried to hold back the small rock, but it was already leaving his hand. It sailed into the cave. Thump! It hit something.

"Waw!" grunted the bear voice. "Who hit me in the empty stomach?"

There was a scrambling within the cave, and out of the entrance staggered a very, very big bear. A very, very thin bear. A very, very angry bear! A very, very much surprised bear.

(What the bear does when he comes out of his cave and how Jack and Janet have to race to escape him will be told tomorrow.)

To be continued tomorrow

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DREAMLAND ADVENTURES

The Bear on Ice

By DADDY

Jack and Janet are fishing in the woods, when Perky Squirrel tells them of a bear on ice. He takes them to a cave where the bear is sleeping.

CHAPTER II

How They Awaken the Bear

JACK and Janet gazed in awe at the icy cave in the deep glen.

Inside on the ice, so Perky Squirrel said, was a sleeping bear—a bear whose name was now Cold Nose.

"How did the bear get in that cave?" whispered Jack.

"He went in there last fall for his winter's nap," chuckled Perky Squirrel. "Bears don't like cold weather or blizzards. So in the autumn each bear finds himself a snug cave and goes comfortably asleep. He snoozes until spring, living on his own fat and missing all the chilly storms."

"But that icy cave doesn't look snug," said Janet.

"It wasn't icy when Cold Nose went to sleep there," chuckled Perky Squirrel, "and that is how the joke is on

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