

A PRIZE WINNER BY FLORENCE WARDEN AUTHOR OF THE HOUSE ON THE MARSH



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IR ALEXANDER AUCHEAN had a first class carriage all to himself on the railway from Aberdeen to Ballator, but a gloomy day for his journey. He was a tall and stalwart Scotchman of about eight and thirty, not aggressively high as to cheekbone and long as to lip, but with a face more canny than kind, and a straight, cold mouth which had particular terrors for the people who displeased him.

As a general rule he loved the beautiful view which is to be seen on both sides of the line, the heather changing color on the hills, the peats at the rush-logs, the mosses and the ferns, and the long miles from Ballator, and it was to his seat among the Aberdeenshire hills, the house in which he was born and in which he hoped to die, that he was now returning, after a visit to the Royal Agricultural show down in the ungenial south.

He was entirely unattended, as it was his pleasure to be in a mood such as he was in at the time. When the train reached the Ballator terminal he sprang out on the platform with his bag in his hand, and his eye on his watch, and refusing all offers of assistance and snapping out that he had no "luggage," he strode through the little station and along the road towards Craigenlaroch, the "hill of the oaks," which dominates the highland village.

The cottage was kept in order by an old servant of the family, who had been known so long as "Jock" that he had almost forgotten any other name. He had been head gamekeeper in his time, and a general nuisance by reason of the liberties he took. So that when failing eyesight compelled him to give up his post, and he and his old wife settled, by their own choice, in a hut adjoining the cottage among the hills, nobody regretted his departure.

And he often spent an hour with the crabbled old fellow, going out of his way when shooting on the moors, to rest with his gun on a wooden chair beside the smoking, fragrant peat fire. It was months since he had been there last, and when Sir Alexander, wet through to the skin with the Scotch mist which was enshrouding all the hills, from Loch-near on the one side to Cullin on the other, knocked sharply at the locked door of the hut, it was opened by Jock with an air of dignified astonishment.

to looking upon her face in the new, horrible circumstances, had gripped him and held him like a vise. He struggled with himself, pulled himself together, and rushed at the door of the hut, which he pushed quickly open. Jock seemed to have been waiting for him. He stared at his master. By a great effort Sir Alexander, while he could not dissemble the pallor of his face, managed to control his voice.

"Lady Auchean has come—inside the cottage," he said in a perfectly dry, calm manner. "Tell her I am here, and will see her as soon as I have made myself presentable." "Yes, sir," said Jock, and he disappeared like a mechanical doll, leaving his master in doubt whether he ought not to have done at the man's throat.

Her husband was struck by her appearance, by her startling beauty, as if she had been a stranger. She had lit the candles, two on the table and two on the high, narrow shelf over the fireplace, and in the flickering light the diamonds in her ears sparkled, and her blue eyes shone, and her fair hair, disheveled, fell about her face.

And then for the divorce court, Auchean vs. Auchean, Sir Alexander, in a sort of walking nightmare, saw it all before him—scandal, worry, disgrace. Meanwhile, the hesitating manner in which he stood, his silence, his inquiring face, put ideas into her subtle feminine brain.

"Don't light up yet, my eyes ache," cried he, as Jock was preparing to light a couple of candles. "Vava weel, sir." Jock was less cantankerous, but more taciturn than usual that evening, his master thought, as he watched him out and then overcame by the drowsiness induced by fatigue and comfort and the sharp click of the latch as it was hurriedly raised, and opening his eyes with a start, he jumped up just as a woman's voice whispered at the other side of the screen, this one word: "Harry!"

And he recognized the voice as that of his wife. Starting, absolutely unexpected as this incident was, Sir Alexander realized in a moment what it meant, and even knew who the person was she believed she was addressing. A certain handsome, but impecunious young soldier, Captain Tenderden, to whom she had scarcely been allowed to speak in her maiden days, had become since her marriage, the tame cat of the household, despised by the husband as a mere trifler, and apparently looked upon by the wife only as a runner of errands, and filler-up of gaps at the dinner-table.

the plant, but leased the coal land. Both are now in the hands of the Delaware and Hudson company, which, it is said, will also mine through the shaft the tract of coal which formerly was mined from the Laurel Run shaft at Parsons, but which recently passed out of the hands of the Delaware and Hudson company.

The audit of Special Master Crawford, of the cash account of the Reading receivers for November shows receipts for the railroad of \$4,607,949, including a balance of \$1,475,126 carried forward. The payments were \$3,129,455, leaving a balance of \$1,478,494 carried forward to Dec. 1. The account of the Coal and Iron company shows total receipts of \$2,115,150, including a balance of \$420,239 carried forward. The payments were \$2,654,378, leaving a balance of \$469,771 carried forward to Dec. 1.

Philadelphia Inquirer: The establishment of peace in the anthracite trade would undoubtedly be followed by efforts to secure better results in the soft coal business. The demoralization in the tide-water bituminous coal trade exceeds anything ever seen before. One company, the Norfolk and Western, is already in receivers' hands; another, the Baltimore and Ohio, has had to be assisted; the Chesapeake and Ohio and the rest are doing badly. The Pennsylvania alone is doing well, and that is only because it is lined with manufacturing, which furnish an immense amount of finished products. The situation has become so bad that there is no money in the business for either the miner or the carrier.

Much interest is manifested in the call for a meeting of the anthracite coal carriers Thursday. The feeling of Wall street is that the matter is now in strong hands and little difficulty will be found in putting the trade on a substantial and permanent basis. The reason for the belief lies in the fact that the iron and steel industry has prevented an agreement as now in the hands of people who have interests in other coal roads as well as in the one which prevented a settlement last spring.

It is announced that the Waddell colliery at Mill Creek had been sold to the Delaware and Hudson Coal company, the transfer to take place at once. The Waddell Coal company owned the plant, but leased the coal land. Both are now in the hands of the Delaware and Hudson company, which, it is said, will also mine through the shaft the tract of coal which formerly was mined from the Laurel Run shaft at Parsons, but which recently passed out of the hands of the Delaware and Hudson company.

At the Theater Royal, Leeds, the practice has long obtained of imposing a tax of one penny on every complimentary seat given out, after plan suggested and followed in this country by A. M. Palmer. Walter Reynolds now goes Mr. Palmer one better and requests a penny on every complimentary seat given, and the plan seems to work admirably.

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