

A Defeated Conqueror

People said I was the luckiest fellow living, and I quite indorsed their opinion, for I had not only entered into possession of a decent little legacy left me by my uncle, but I had also won the hand and heart of Ada Miller, the prettiest and most charming young lady in the whole county.

People said her father was immensely rich and that she would come in for a handsome fortune at his death, but what cared I about that? For had I not sufficient for us both, even if she were penniless. And did I not love her with the whole strength of a pure and disinterested love?

I cannot begin to describe her to you, for the task is quite beyond me. Suffice it to say she was admired by all who knew her, and loved by not a few. The latter circumstances ceased to disturb me when once I became her accepted lover, though before that time it occasioned me a great deal of anxiety, and caused me to spend many a restless night.

Of one lover in particular had I been jealous, for to my excited and fear-laden imagination he seemed to possess everything that a young lady could desire. He was tall, broad-shouldered, handsome, with a pleasing manner and faultless dress, and in addition to all this, he was endowed with more than an average share of this world's goods.

He was madly in love with Ada, but conducted his wooing in a way which did not even his closest rival could find fault. Kind, considerate and gentlemanly, never obtruding his presence unnecessarily, he yet managed to pay her considerable attention, and many an anxious time did I spend, fearing that his superior attractions would put me in the shade.

Fate, however, decided otherwise, for when I summoned up courage to put my fortune to the test, Ada shyly accepted me, informing me in a most engaging manner that she had never loved anyone else. You may be sure that I was in ecstasies, and scarcely knew for the next few months whether I walked upon air or upon solid ground.

Our engagement was to last a year, at the end of that time our marriage was to take place. The time had almost elapsed, and nothing had occurred to mar the harmony of the scene, when, quite unexpectedly, something happened which filled me with the deepest horror, and which causes me to shudder even now as I recall it. It has partly to do with my rival, Horace Rishton, whose existence for the time I had almost forgotten.

He had received the news of our engagement in an apparently calm and quiet manner, and his subsequent behavior had not led us to regard him as being more than ordinarily affected by it, but in the event I am about to describe, I was enabled to see how deep and tragic the effect upon him really was.

The revelation came in this wise: It was but two days to our wedding, and I had occasion to go on a little business connected with it to a neighboring town, a place some four miles distant from my home. Having accomplished my errand, and finding that I had some considerable time to wait for a train, I resolved to walk back, so striking out, I soon left the town behind me.

I had gone some distance about two miles when the moon suddenly clouded over, and I was left in comparative darkness. As I knew the way, however, I thought nothing of it, but trudged cheerfully along, thinking only of Ada and our approaching union. Suddenly, and without a moment's warning, the ground gave way from under my feet and I felt myself falling headlong down, down into the depths of the earth. How far I fell I knew not at the time—I learned afterward that it was about thirty feet—but I expected instant death when I reached the bottom, and without doubt that would have been my fate had not the bottom of the hole been filled with water to a considerable depth. This broke my fall, and also by its coldness restored me to my senses.

I struck out on coming to the surface, and swam around to find something to which I could hold on. After a considerable time spent in searching, during which the full horror of the situation began to dawn upon me, I knew at once the place into which I had fallen, and as the knowledge flashed across my mind I cursed myself for having been so careless as to stumble into it. It was an old, disused shaft which had been there for generations. Not many people were aware of its existence, for it was in a wild and solitary spot scarcely ever visited by anyone. I, however, had seen it several times in my moorland wanderings, and had always regarded it as a dangerous place. It was partially fenced around, but I must have wandered in through one of the gaps. There was no footpath anywhere near it, so I must, in the darkness, have lost my way.

However, here I was, and the question confronted me how was I to get out? I tried to discover if it was possible to climb out, but the sides of the pit offered no hold of any kind, so I had to abandon that idea.

I next shouted, in the hope that some solitary wanderer might hear my cries, but no answering voice was heard, until, after I was obliged to sink back in silence and despair. My heart sickened as I thought of the loneliness of the place, and how

days, and even weeks might elapse before anyone passed that way.

I struck out frantically round the pit to seek again for some means of escape, but my search was as fruitless as before.

Despair took hold of me. I thought of Ada, of our approaching marriage, of the preparations which had been made, and the plans which had been formed. And now it was all over. I must think no more of entering again the bright region above and sharing in the joys that awaited me there. I was doomed to die—to die a lonely, horrible death, and to lie in a watery grave. As I held on to my feeble support, and thought of all this, my brain reeled within me, and I feared that my reason must give way.

Death instead of marriage! What a contrast! Just when I ought to be leading my bride to the altar and stepping across the portal of married life, to let go my hold here and fall into the cold, relentless arms of death! And what of Ada then? Surely she would sorrow and grieve and be inconsolable.

But Horace Rishton! What of him? Might he not become man and wife? But, no, the thought was torturing, and drove me in a fit of frenzy to shout again with all my might. But it was all in vain, for no one heard.

How the night passed I cannot tell, neither do I know how the morning hours dragged on, for I was numb with cold and faint with hunger and fatigue. I only know that after what seemed to me to be ages, footsteps drew near, and a voice called out from above:

"Are you there, Fred?"

My heart leaped into my mouth, and for a moment I was unable to utter a sound. At last I murmured, in a faint voice:

"In Heaven's name, get me out! I'm dying."

"Can you hold on another minute?" the voice asked. "I've got a rope here. Keep up till I fasten it to this stake. Can you slip a loop round your body, or shall I come down to you?"

"Send the rope down. I'll manage to pass it round," I shouted eagerly.

In another minute it was dangling before my eyes, and was soon passed under my arms; after which I gave the word to draw up. Slowly I ascended, and at last emerged into the light and freedom of the upper air.

It was Horace Rishton who had saved me, and if ever my heart went out to my rival it was then.

"I cannot sufficiently thank you," I began.

"Give me no thanks," he interrupted harshly. "Thank Heaven instead. Heaven and hades have been fighting over you, and heaven has won. But you little know how near you have been to death."

I looked up in wonderment at him, for his words were unintelligible to me. He took no notice of my look, but continued:

"I guessed where you were, call it instinct or whatever you like. No one else did. They will seek everywhere but here. But I seemed to know, and—well the Devil tempted me, nay, he fought with me. Don't you know why? You love Ada Miller, do you not? Then so do I. Yes, with a love which gives me no rest night or day, a love which makes it impossible for me to live without her. You have won her hand, but don't you think I envy you? Don't you think I even hate you at times? And when I guessed you were here, don't you see the Devil tempted me to leave you here and to say nothing whatever about it? But Ada has chosen you, she loves you. Your wedding day draws near. Go—take her and be happy. But for me happiness in this life is over."

He turned away to unloosen the rope which he had made fast to one of the stakes of the fence.

I watched him wonderingly with a dazed mind, when all in a moment, before I could think or speak, he reeled, fell over, and toppled headlong into the pit from whence he had drawn me, carrying the rope with him.

"He's gone!" I shrieked, and springing to my feet—for the numbness left me for a moment—I rushed to the mouth of the shaft crying frantically, "Horace! Horace!"

But no answer came to my cries. A loud splash succeeded his fall, then all was still and silent, as the grave.

I looked around for help, but no help was near, and overcome with weakness, fatigue and horror, I fell senseless to the ground.

When I came to I found myself in the same position, and knowing that it was extremely improbable that anyone would pass that way, I put forth all my strength, and dragged myself with great difficulty in the direction of home. When I had gone a mile or so I entered upon a more frequented road, and soon fell in with those who rendered me all the assistance I required.

My story caused a great sensation, as you may be sure, and for a time was the one object of interest in the place. Ada looked upon me as one given back from the dead, and rejoiced over me accordingly. Her joy would have been complete had it not been for the unfortunate death of Horace Rishton, for that naturally cast a gloom over us all.

Of course, his death was put down to accident, and much regret expressed at the painful occurrence, but I, who had seen the whole thing, knew it was no accident, though, rightly or wrongly, I kept the knowledge to myself.

Every year we pay a visit to his grave, and as we gaze upon the silent tomb, we think with gratitude, and yet with regret, of a rival's love.—Household Words.

THE MERE MAN'S VIEWPOINT

THE MESSAGE WITHHELD

By BYRON WILLIAMS

ONCE upon a time there came into the garden of Agapemone two lovers. Her form was as lithe and as graceful as the weeping willow, her eyes like the brown depths of an autumn tinted pool, her lips as red as the sun kissed side of a Twig apple and her voice as silvery sweet as the tinkle of a waterfall caressing the stones at the ford.

He was stalwart, clear of eye, strong of limb, his hair like spun silk, his teeth white and regular. In his face there glowed the enthusiasm of love and youth, the determination to do or die.

And they loved each other.

Men and women like this have loved since from the cosmos creation sprang into being. Men and women like this have stood before Hymen and have taken the vows that have made them one in purpose, one in union, one in affection. And these two, like their progenitors, stood at the altar and pledged their troth.

Days came and went, the honeymoon was passed and the realities of life set



H. MEYER

THE MESSAGE WITHHELD.

led upon them. Gladly they took up the duties, the joys and the hopes of married life, and for a time they were very happy. But after awhile the man, picking up bright pebbles on the shore of the lake of paradise, became intensely interested in his hunt. From early morning until late at night the man scoured the shelving sands for corallines and brilliants and diamonds and rubies. As time sped his pastime became a passion and not only his waking hours but his dreams were filled with this mad desire to hoard pretty stones.

His wife, sorrowful, noted his pre-dilection for garnering heaps of treasure. Day by day she saw his heart go out from her to the things he sought. At times she almost cried out in the agony of her yearning for a single word from him—a little word of sympathy and love.

This went on month after month, year after year, until the strain upon the woman had stolen the freshness from her cheeks and the luster from her eye, until she was a mere echo of the beautiful creature he had won in Agapemone. To the woman's horror the man seemed sometimes to realize that her beauty had fled, but still he did not seem to understand that her very soul cried out for a single word of love, a little embrace of affection.

One day the man came home from his hunt, his pockets bulging with the pebbles of the lake shore, his mind full of avarice, to find the woman stricken with a disease that left her speechless. Her limbs were paralyzed, her face as white as the linen of the bed on to which she had fallen.

As though awakened from a great stupor the man attempted to restore her, but his efforts, though half frantic, were futile, and from her lips could come no sound to direct or assure him that what he did helped to alleviate her suffering.

Only her eyes spoke to him, appealing with a strange language he could not fathom. His heart was wrung by the appeal in the orbs that once were as beautiful as the depths of the fountain, an appeal he could not sense.

And with this look of hunger, with this steadfast gaze upon him, she died. The man hardly realized his loss at first. Out under a beautiful scarlet maple he dug a grave and heaped a mound above the mortal remnant of the once beautiful and graceful woman who had been so much to him in the golden honeymoon days.

And then the great lonely, loveless life swooped down upon him, making him helpless, nervous, broken. Everything he touched reminded him of her. Everywhere he went he saw something to speak to his heart of her loving care and solicitude. At last in utter woe he threw himself upon the cold soil of the mound and cried out:

"Oh, Mary, Mary, how I miss you! How I loved you!"

Daybreak found him by her grave repeating his love, and in the moon light he sat beside her grave and repeated his assurances of undying affection, but from the grave came no answer. The pile of pebbles mocked him; the waves and the wind and the sunbeams scoffed at him. Broken and spent, he wasted away until a merciful God took him home.

In the light of heavenly understanding let us hope that the man learned his lesson and that in the union above her heart no longer hungered unto death for a little word of love.

Indict Railroads and Officials.

The United States grand jury in Cleveland, Ohio, has returned indictments against the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad company, charging it with conspiracy to violate the Elkins act.

Indictments also were returned against the Pennsylvania, the Lake Shore & Lake Erie and the New York, Chicago & St. Louis railroads, charging them with rebating.

The indictments will be followed immediately by suits, the United States district attorney, W. L. Day, who, with John H. Marble, attorney of the interstate commerce commission, and C. R. Marshall, attorney of the department of justice, has been conducting the case, said. The fines in the case of conviction may aggregate millions of dollars.

Indictments affecting several high railroad officials were also returned, but names and the nature of the indictments were withheld pending arrests.

In each case the indictments were for conspiracy to violate the Elkins act and for rebating on the transportation of iron ore. Mr. Day stated that the federal grand jury's report would form the basis for "large and important suits."

Bloomer Woman Is Dead.

Miss Susan P. Fowler, the bloomer woman, died at her home in Vineland, N. J. She was eighty-seven years old and she donned the bloomer costume sixty-nine years ago, when it bid fair to become popular under the advocacy of such women as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others in the Oneida community of New York, although she never accepted any of the doctrines of that community.

Marriage and motherhood as known today she contended are a farce, and all because the young men art not taught the basic laws of life. For over forty years she conducted a farm on the outskirts of Vineland and never would have a man around.

Miss Fowler was highly educated and was the author of several books.

Widow and Seven Children Burn.

Mrs. J. H. Nunn and seven children, ranging in age from adults to an infant, were burned to death in a fire which destroyed their home in South-west Roanoke, Va.

Three other children escaped by leaping from windows. Mrs. Nunn was a widow, her husband having died a year ago.

The dead: Mrs. J. H. Nunn, Georgia Nunn, aged twenty-two years; Stafford, aged thirteen; Dillard, eleven; Lucille, aged six; Helen, aged five; another child, under five, name not learned, and an infant.

Very little property damage resulted from the blaze, which was extinguished soon after the arrival of the fire department.

Gibbons to Head Naval Academy.

Captain John H. Gibbons, who is now on duty in Washington as a member of the general board of the navy, will be detailed by Secretary Meyer as superintendent of the naval academy at Annapolis on May 15, succeeding Captain John M. Bowyer, who will be relieved because of ill health. Captain Bowyer has written a letter to Secretary Meyer saying that he wishes to be relieved on that date.

Secretary Meyer denied that the relief of Captain Bowyer was an outcome of the recent affront to Miss Mary H. Beers, daughter of Professor H. A. Beers, of Yale university, for which Captain Bowyer apologized to Miss Beers and her father.

Find Missing Man's Bones.

Four years ago on April 8 George Michael Fetzer mysteriously disappeared from his home in Boggs township, near Bellefonte, Pa., and all efforts to locate him proved futile.

Monday the whitened bones of his body were found by some boys behind a clump of bushes not a half mile from his home.

His discharged gun by his side and a bullet hole through the skull told the manner of his death, but whether accidental or suicide will probably never be known.

Dr. Hyde Released on Bail.

Dr. B. C. Hyde, under a life sentence of imprisonment for the murder of Colonel Thomas H. Swope, was released from the county jail on a writ of habeas corpus granted by the seven judges of the circuit court in Kansas City, Mo.

In the opinion of the court on banc the majority of the evidence on which the physician was convicted was circumstantial and there was a reasonable doubt of the prisoner's guilt.

Plow Unearths Body.

For the second time within two weeks Coverdale Reynolds, a farmer, living between Seaford and Bridgeville, Del., has plowed up in his field a human body.

This time it was the body of a small child, securely nailed in a coffin, and quite a distance from the first one plowed up. The authorities will make an investigation.

Had to Pay Duty on Drowned Boy.

Roberto and Thomas Rodrigas, two boys, were drowned in the Rio Grande river at Laredo, Tex., and their bodies swept away. The bodies were recovered, that of Roberto on the Mexican side of the river. To bring the corpse out of Mexico an export duty of \$120 Mexican money was exacted.

Man, 119 Pounds, Takes Bride of 639.

Difference in weight, like differences in social positions, can be overcome by that great equalizer—love. Miss Gertrude May Davis, weight 639 pounds, was married in Wayne, Va., to M. C. McGorry, who weighs 119 pounds.

Begging the Price.

The man whose doctor had advised him to walk downtown in the morning looked scornfully at the panhandler who had held him up.

"You say you want money for your starving wife and children," he repeated. "Well, I don't believe you have any."

"Well, wot of it?" asked the beggar brazenly. "Wot if I am lyin'?"

The pedestrian gasped, but held to his purpose.

"I think you want this money only to buy liquor," he said.

"Wot if I do?"

"In that case you show yourself to be a liar, a vagabond and a drunkard—a man who is scarcely worth saving. But listen. Do you know that the liquor evil is, to a certain extent, its own corrective?"

"Wotcha drivin' at?"

"Just this. Scientists tell us that liquor is killing off the weak and inferior class. In that way you may be said to be doing some good. Do you?"

The beggar held out his hand.

"Stop right dere, mister," he said, "and help de good work along before you 'tink o' somepin' else."—Boston Traveler.

Indict Woman in Poisoned Candy Case.

The federal grand jury in Harrisburg, Pa., has returned a true bill in the case of Helen Barnhart, of Shiremanstown, charged with sending candy, sprinkled with strychnine, through the mails to Buelah Mountz, of Mechanicsburg. A family quarrel is said to have been the cause of the alleged action. The case will be tried during the present term of court.

Wants \$10,000 For Initiation Injury.

A suit for \$10,000 damages was filed in Newark, N. J., by John A. Hetzel, of Bloomfield, N. J., against the Bloomfield Camp, Modern Woodmen of America. Hetzel alleges that while he was being initiated into the order he was struck, while in a stooping position, with a "slap-stick" containing a cartridge. The cartridge exploded and entered his body near the spine.

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HOGS lower; prime heavies, \$5.95 @ 6.05; mediums, \$5.25 @ 6.30; heavy Yorkers, \$6.30 @ 6.35; light Yorkers, \$6.35 @ 6.40; pigs, \$6.35 @ 6.40; roughs, \$5 @ 5.25.

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