

# THE TANGLED WEB

By Ethel Watts Mumford Grant  
Author of "Dupes," "Whitewash," Etc.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

In his own room once more Wendham returned to the open casement. Already the miracle of dawn had become the miracle of day. The distant reaches of the plains no longer unfolded roll upon roll of gossamer—blue, opal, and rose. Over the newly illuminated earth a cloud of tinsel seemed to float, brilliantly outlining each fall and rise of the rolling plain with an edge of keenest crystal. The air seemed suddenly purified, sterilized of the dreams of night, new-breathed from the realms of the upper ether. Wendham drew long breaths of the elixir, refreshing body and mind for the day's struggle. For the present he felt things must take their course. The terrible suspicion that beset his heart must be verified, but sanely, calmly, for the best result, above all for the safety of the one woman. What to him was Mrs. Lawdon clamoring for the insignia of her vanity? Deep within himself he gave thanks for his old conviction—"crime is disease, and somewhere in the realm of science lies the cure." But had the enemy made inroads so far that conscience was dead? Would one woman sacrifice the other? Suppose the net of evidence drew too close about her?

He shuddered, but his royal spirit rose to the hazard. Some operations offend every aesthetic sense. Must the physician fail in his sympathy and attention? He was startled to discover how he had accepted the suggestion of his thought. That was beyond reason. He would consider how slight was the foundation upon which his imagination had reared his conviction—it was a deduction that he must verify before he might consider it anything but the shadow of conjecture. He scored himself roundly for his readiness to accept such a damnable solution of the problem. He must be wise, quick of thought, slow of action, and his time, his strength, the knowledge that had borne him to such strange deductions, all things must become subservient to her necessities—but he must know.

In the gun room Mrs. Lawdon, her husband, and their host were gathered in close formation about Collins, the local police potentate. By the fireplace two detectives from the city lounged, overobviously at ease. "Do you wish to swear out a warrant against this girl?" inquired Collins as Mrs. Lawdon savagely announced her suspicions. "Of course not," interposed her husband. "We have no evidence except what your man John reported to you, Mr. Evelyn. It is not sufficient."

"Beg your pardon," interrupted the sheriff; "it is good and plenty. It allows you to hold her for further investigation."

Mr. Evelyn interposed mildly. "I am responsible that no one leaves." "Excuse me," the thin, soft voice of Leavison, the younger detective, asserted itself. "But don't you think it might be well to face your man with the young woman?"

"Of course!" cried Mrs. Lawdon excitedly. "Why didn't we think of it before? Send for them at once."

Evelyn pressed the electric button. "Alfred, have Mrs. Gaynor's maid brought here. Ask Dr. Wendham to attend her. I fear hysterics and fainting fits," he added, as Mrs. Lawdon's face expressed unqualified disapproval. "And, Alfred, I want John at once. Now," he turned to Collins, who vacantly shifted official blanks from one hand to the other, "have you any theory?"

Collins h-m-m-ed heavily. "Well, sir, I couldn't say. With such a houseful there's always a dozen chances. You know 'tain't always what seems the most likely one that pulls off the melon—the ones that look likely, like as not a-e innocent as new-laid eggs."

Mr. Evelyn smiled, and Mrs. Lawdon turned with open scorn to the two plain-clothes men. "Haven't you any opinion?" she demanded belligerently.

"Not yet, ma'am," said Leavison slowly, his quick, sneaking eyes taking in every detail of the lady's person.

Mrs. Lawdon shrugged her shoulders and greeted Dr. Wendham's entrance frigidly.

Mr. Evelyn rose to meet his guest. "Dr. Wendham, this is Mr. Collins, our local sheriff. Mr. Leavison and Mr. Grayson are detectives sent up from the city. They have decided it would be wise to confront the girl with my servant."

"Yes, I see," acquiesced Wendham. "And in case of physical distress you wish me to be present."

A tap at the door, and Mrs. Gaynor, white and haggard, appeared,

followed by Adele. Wendham rose. "Mrs. Gaynor, I beg of you return to your room. You are in no condition to endure this. I protest, as a physician—he had turned to the others with barely repressed vehemence.

Evelyn crossed to Mrs. Gaynor's side. "Now, Nellie, go back. I promise you the girl will be dealt with as gently as possible. Mr. Collins, this is Mrs. Gaynor, this young woman's employer. She has not recovered from the shock of last evening. Can we not spare her these interviews, and take her testimony later?"

"Why, certainly, Mrs. Gaynor, of course"—overcome by the strange pallid beauty of the woman before him, the sheriff lost himself amid compliments and excuses.

Mrs. Gaynor bowed. "You will take care of her, doctor?" she asked anxiously. "If she should faint—bring her to me. I will rest—in the drawing-room, to be at hand if you call. Don't be frightened, Adele," she added; "we must help all we can to clear matters up." Again with a distant bow that comprehended the group she turned and left the room.

The maid, calm now and courageous, faced her inquisitors. Wendham observed her with strained attention. "The imaginative, concentrated type in its purest form," he commented inwardly. "Unusual resource and vitality combined with great devotion. If—if it is true, no better tool could have been chosen. With her conscious self in abeyance, one might allow her subconscious mind to deal with a situation by its own judgment. With the suggestion, 'this and that are your dangers, be prepared to meet them,'—one might rely on that mind as a staunch and gifted ally—but, no, it's ridiculous!" He shook himself free from his thoughts, and fixed attention upon the girl's story. It was the same; no contradictions, no wavering. She carried conviction even to the unwilling ears of Mrs. Lawdon.

Collins sniffed and glanced a question to the detectives.

"Nothin' doin' there," said Leavison under his breath.

"You have all been over the ground, gentlemen," said Mr. Evelyn; "you have this girl's story. It remains for you to hear my servant, John Dawson's, statement. Then it's up to you!"

Again he pressed the electric bell, but before his finger left the button a knock announced the butler.

"If you please, Mr. Evelyn, John has gone. We can't find him."

"Gone!" screamed Mrs. Lawdon.

"Gone!" gasped Mr. Evelyn.

"Gone!" growled Charlie Lawdon.

"Gone! The devil!" exclaimed the sheriff.

The two detectives glanced at each other.

A light of comprehension and relief broke over the face of the accused. "Oh, gone!" Her cry was one of gladness. "Then—then he—"

"It looks like it," nodded Wendham.

Evelyn was the first to act. "Tell all you know, Freeman," he ordered sharply.

"Well, sir, according to orders, the girl here was notified, and word sent to Dr. Wendham. Then Alfred went to John's room in the servants' wing. John wasn't there, so Alfred goes below, and—we've searched the place, sir, and he can't be found."

"How could he have left the house without being seen?" questioned Grayson, becoming energetic now that the chase was fairly open.

"A dozen ways, sir. But how he'd get by the crowd of reporters out there is more'n I know."

"How was he dressed?" asked Leavison.

"In his store clothes, sir. His livery we found chucked in the closet, sir."

"Leavison," said his associate, "you take the inside—I'll beat it out—I'm a reporter myself now—see?" He rose, nodded to the butler to follow, and left the room.

Leavison took out a notebook and turned to Evelyn. "From whom or what agency did you engage this man?—Savell's? Good. What were his references? Oh, the housekeeper's business! Will you describe the man? Short, stocky, round head, blue eyes; clean shaven, of course. Any scars that you recall? No? Too bad—useful things, scars. Now, if I may have a talk with your butler when Grayson gets through with him, and see your housekeeper, I'll do a little telephoning into town and trace this chap. My side partner ought to get a line on him inside of an hour or two. He can't have gone far, and the great American press has this house rounded up for fair—if you'll excuse me." He shut his notebook and slipped on noiseless feet to the door. There he turned. "Won't do," he admonished, "to relax discipline. You can't tell, you know."

"May I go?" asked Adele faintly.

"Yes, my girl," Collins answered with a show of importance; "but you're not to leave the house. And Mr. Evelyn, before these flatlies have the wire stuffed, I'd like to 'phone a bit; the railroad station and such needs watching."

## CHAPTER IX.

Wendham nodded to Adele. "If you will come with me," he said courteously, "we will find Mrs. Gaynor, and I will give you some instructions. She will need your assistance."

The woman's face brightened. "You can rely on me, doctor—and, thank you."

Mrs. Lawdon did not raise her

head, but Charlie advanced, his honest face aglow with kindness. "I'm awfully sorry if you've felt badly," he stammered, "but I hope you understand—it couldn't be helped, you know."

Tears stood in the girl's eyes. "No, sir—but I truly didn't, sir—" Her words were checked as the doctor's strong arm led her gently away.

"Listen," he spoke imperatively when they had entered the empty passage. "Mrs. Gaynor must rest—rest, do you understand? Give her plenty of fresh air, and keep her well covered. But it's sleep and rest, rest and sleep." He spoke in a low, steady voice, never raised above its first quiet pitch. "Sleep and rest, she would say that to you—she is saying that—she wants me to tell you to sleep and rest—sleep!" he insisted. Her whole weight fell upon his arm. In the white light of the corridor he turned and sought her eyes. They clung to his as to a magnet. "Are you sleepy? Answer me."

"Yes."

"Would you like to sleep?"

"Yes."

"But you must not." He spoke sharply, shaking her slightly and passing a soothing hand over her face. "You can't sleep now. You must take care of your mistress."

"Yes, sir," she answered, all trace of drowsiness gone from face and manner.

"What is the meaning of this?" Wendham puzzled. "She's not the culprit evidently, but she has been a hypnotic subject a thousand times. I'm a brute!" he exclaimed to himself. "Anyone might have seen me—Nellie might have surprised us. Whatever lies at the bottom of this, she must have no more emotions now. I'm a fool to take such chances. Wait here," he ordered. Rapidly traversing the intervening rooms, he reached the small reception den where Mrs. Gaynor waited.

She opened her tired eyes. "How did she stand it?" she asked anxiously.

"Her accuser wouldn't face her." "What!" A look of incredulity crossed her face and it was followed by an amazed expression of relief.

"Yes," he continued, "John has decamped."

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "But what—what do they think?"

"There seems only one thing to think for the present, anyway. But, come, I have given your maid instructions. She's to see you safe in bed, and if you fail to rest, she is to send for me."

"Oh," she assured him brightly, the color rising to her waxen cheeks. "I shall sleep—to-night at least. Where is Adele?"

Struggling with a dozen conjectures, but with his love fixed beyond the power of any hostile conviction,



"OH, CHARLIE!" SHE WAILED. "THEY'RE GONE—ALL GONE."

he followed her to the foot of the stairs, and smiled a farewell as mistress and maid mounted together. Then he turned and paced the wide hall like a caged animal. That the woman was, and had been for years, under recurrent hypnotic control there was no doubt, but in the face of the manservant's disappearance, why connect that with the robbery? A scientific interest and continual experiment were certainly permissible. Perhaps it was a kindly effort to ease the pain from which the woman suffered. Yes, that must be the reason. But had the operator sufficient medical knowledge and experience to make research safe for the subject? The subject should be a willing, intelligent assistant. This girl was obviously innocent of all complicity in the experiment. In whatever way the control had been gained, it was through some natural excuse, leaving the girl absolutely unsuspecting of her own condition. Her life had been divided into complete and unrealized duality—an end that could have been obtained only by the suggestion of forgetfulness prior to each awakening. Should he go to Nellie Gaynor when her strength should have returned, and ask her the answer to the riddle that confronted him? Perhaps. But for the present silence was preemptory.

"Look at that!" exclaimed Alice, as she held a newspaper at arm's length and indicated its glaring headline with a tragic-comic finger. "What did I tell you? There you are, my dear hostess, in a costume of the vintage of 1840, at least. I hadn't an idea you were alive when they wore those tall hats and bustles. Dear me! Never saw one out of the family album. Tell me, were you a dab at archery?" The whole

forty-eight hours of excitement and anxiety that had elapsed since the robbery had failed to ruffle Mrs. Evelyn's equanimity, but now she was roused to anger.

"It's perfectly disgraceful!" she gasped. "It ought not to be allowed!"

"Oh, look at the bangs!" jeered Alice. "Dr. Wendham, do you suppose she took ether when she had them removed? And look at me! It's the snap that Barney took at Hempstead. But wait! Stop! Look! Listen! Unfold the page and gaze! We fade into insignificance before the blaze of the Lawdon as she appeared when rivaling the Opera House chandelier."

"LIST OF STOLEN ARTICLES. Now, we'll really know, of course."

Diamond tiara, valued at	\$25,000
Sapphire set, valued at	20,000
Ruby and diamond pendant, valued at	30,000
Pearl and diamond collar, valued at	18,000
Diamond and pearl ring, valued at	3,000
Emerald necklace, valued at	60,000
"She's going strong!"	
Brown and yellow diamond ring	5,000
Brown, pear-shaped pearl earrings	5,000
Emerald and diamond dinner ring	2,000
Diamond bow knot	5,000

"Now, if that doesn't incite the starving East Side to riot it won't be the fault of the editorial writer and the police misinformation bureau. When the Lawdon reads that she'll forgive John for lifting her twinkles. She couldn't have had it better done if she'd been a prima donna with an expensive press agent."

Wendham turned from the window, his hands deep in his pockets. "Ever run down?" he inquired.

Alice laughed. "Are you asking as clock maker, a physician, or a foxhound?" She sobered suddenly, threw the paper upon the center table and leaned back with her feet crossed and her hands in her pockets. "But I'll tell you who is run down for sure—it's poor Nellie. I stepped into her room before I came down. She's done. Looks to me as if she was in for a good, big attack of something. Adele was putting compresses on her head."

(To be continued.)

## French "Tommies" and Their Bread.

The little loaves of bread supplied to the French soldier have from time immemorial been known by the name of "boules de son" (literally "bran balls"). Their origin dates back to the First Republic. In the Middle Ages the French "Tommy Atkins" received no rations, and had to depend on what he could get from the enemy. At a later date a commissariat department was created, and the soldier was allowed two loaves, of twelve ounces, per diem. In 1790 the troops received free rations of bread without any deduction from their pay. This bread contained a little flour, but bran predominated—hence the name, "bran balls." In 1870 it was decided to supply bread made of flour only, but the loaves continued to retain their old name. Now the "boule de son" is about to disappear absolutely, and the "braves soldats" will henceforth have bread lighter and more nourishing than hitherto.

## A Busy Joy.

The diminutive office boy had worked hard on a "salary" of three dollars a week. He was a subdued little chap, faithful and quiet. Finally, however, he plucked up courage enough to ask for an increase. A writer in the Kansas City Star tells the tale.

"How much more would you like?" inquired his employer.

"Well," answered the lad, "I don't think that two dollars more a week would be too much."

"You are a rather small boy to be earning five dollars a week."

"I suppose I am," he replied. "I know I'm small for my age, but to tell the truth, since I've worked here I've been so busy I haven't had time to grow."

## Sky Signs.

Whether clear or cloudy, a rosy sunset presages fine weather. A sickly looking, greenish hue, wind and rain. A dark or Indian red, rain. A red sky in the morning, bad weather or much wind; perhaps rain. A gray sky in the morning, fine weather. A high dawn, wind; a low dawn, fair weather. Remarkable clearness of atmosphere near the horizon, distant objects, such as hills, unusually visible or raised by refraction, and what is called a good "hearing day," may be mentioned among signs of wet, if not wind.

## OUR IMMUNE JUDGES.

If a general on the battlefield commits a grave strategical blunder which costs thousands of lives, the world is thrilled with horror; but a judge may so misapprehend a critical situation as to bring sorrow and suffering to unnumbered homes for generations, and we dumbly acquiesce, as if viewing a visitation from heaven.

## A Gruesome Paperweight.

On the writing-table of King Edward VII, in the palace of Sandringham, lies the mummified hand of an Egyptian princess who died three thousand or more years ago. It was presented to the king by a famous Egyptologist.

## HOME DRESSMAKING

By Charlotte Martin.

### GIRL'S NEAT FROCK.



Pattern No. 460.—This design is pretty made of plain or bordered materials, the picture showing it of bordered challis. The fullness in the waist is gathered under the revers in front and the dress opens all the way down in the back. The belt is slightly curved.

Cut in 4 sizes, 4, 6, 8 and 10 yrs. Size 6 requires 4 1-4 yds. of plain material 27 inches wide or 5 1-4 yds. of bordered material.

### STRAIGHT TOP CORSET COVER.



Pattern No. 446.—For embroidery on bordered lawn this design is excellent. The garment has a straight upper edge, which makes it very suitable for flouncing also. The edge is gathered by a ribbon and fitted by the underarm seams.

Cut in 5 sizes, 32 to 40 bust measure. Size 36 requires 1 5-8 yds. of material 16 inches wide.

### FRONT CLOSING WAIST.



Pattern No. 452.—One of the most popular designs of the season is shown in this shirtwaist. The collar is fastened to the waist and buttons in front. The cuffs are close to the wrist and button like the collar. Stitching and folded silk rectangles, in which the buttonholes are made, form the only decoration.

Cut in 5 sizes, 32 to 40 bust measure. Size 36 requires 3 1-3 yds. of 27 inch material.

### HOW TO ORDER PATTERNS.—

Send ten cents for each pattern desired to Charlotte Martin, 402 W. 23d Street, New York. Give No. of pattern and size wanted.

## HOME DRESSMAKING

By Charlotte Martin.

### LADIES' GORED SKIRT.



Pattern No. 431.—This four gored skirt is a practical design for any material, but is particularly good for the heavier varieties. The band is a plain bias strip sewed to the skirt on lines which are marked on the pattern and braided with a Greek design.

Cut in 5 sizes, 22 to 30 waist measure. Size 26 waist requires 5 3-4 yds. of 27 inch material.

### A PRETTY HOUSE DRESS.



Pattern No. 458.—For house wear a dress like this has many advantages over a waist and skirt. It is made in one piece and buttons all the way down the side front and has a band sewed on the bottom which extends all the way around except on the front panel.

Cut in 5 sizes, 32 to 40 bust measure. Size 36 requires 10 1-3 yds. of 27 inch material.

### PRETTY MORNING JACKET.



Pattern No. 448.—This new and dainty dressing sacque suggests very much the tailor made shirtwaist. The design shown is made of flannelette, but is suitable for any thin material.

Cut in 5 sizes, 32 to 40 bust measure. Size 36 requires 2 2-3 yds. of 27 inch material.

### HOW TO ORDER PATTERNS.—

Send ten cents for each pattern desired to Charlotte Martin, 402 W. 23d Street, New York. Give No. of pattern and size wanted.