

PAID IN FULL

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CHAPTER XXIV.

"MR. BROOKS would like to see you, sir. I told him you were in, but he would not come up and asked me to let you know he was downstairs." "Tell him it's all right. I'll see him." "You mean that he's to come up?" "Yes, if he doesn't mind."

The landlady went out, gathering from the visitor's unusual request and her boarder's reply that there had been trouble between them. Jimsy pushed away the book he had been reading

and leaned back in his chair to await his former friend's coming.

Brooks shuffled rather than walked in. He did not offer to shake hands, but, with a subdued "Hello, Jimsy," seated himself on the edge of the armchair that in former days he occupied as his own. Then he seemed to forget where he was, sank back, shrinking into his overcoat, and sat as though stupefied, twisting his hat in his hands slowly and mechanically.

Smith was shocked at the change in his appearance. His face was white and thin, and the eyes, which were almost expressionless, were deep sunk in the sockets. There was stubble on his chin; his formerly neatly plastered hair was disheveled.

"Boy, you're ill," said Jimsy with concern. "Let me get a brace for you."

He rose and produced a decanter of whisky, but his visitor declined, this time with a wan flickering smile of appreciation.

"No, thanks, Jimsy. I don't feel like it just now. I've been drinking too much of the stuff, and I haven't eaten since last night, I think."

"For heaven's sake!" exclaimed Jimsy.

Brooks would have restrained him, but he was out of the door and bounding downstairs three steps at a time.

Brooks sank back into the chair and relapsed into his condition of hebeteude. In a little while Smith returned, a plate heaped high with sandwiches in one hand and a bowl of hot bouillon in the other. Brooks refused the sandwiches, but he took the bowl, and, holding it in both hands—which trembled—sipped its grateful contents.

"Jimsy, you're awfully good," he sighed.

"Oh, no—none of that," protested Smith. "Tell me what brought you here. What can I do for you?"

"I don't know why I came, after—after the way I acted last time. I—"

"Never mind that. Let's forget about it."

"No, I have no right here, Jimsy. I'm done for."

"How done for?"

"I am, and you'll kick me out, as I deserve, when you know, Jimsy, I've done it again. I'm a thief a second time, and again for a woman."

Smith looked grave, but he said nothing.

"What! You don't get up and kick me? Well, well! I suppose it's just like you, but I rather hoped you would. You're the only man who wouldn't. But wait till you hear. I can tell it to you because you can't help me. Nobody can. I'm beyond helping."

"Better try a sandwich first," suggested Smith. "There's no hurry."

"Thanks; I think I will. That beef tea did me good."

He ate three sandwiches ravenously, washing them down with water.

"There isn't a whole lot to relate," he said. "You can fill in the details for yourself. I tried backing the ponies again; then I stole from the bank. There was an examination of the books at the bank four days ago. I didn't turn up there that day, and I haven't been there since; but, of course, the game is up. I wandered about, drinking to try to forget my troubles till all my money was gone. Then I sobered up, and here I am. This time there's no one to save me. The bank couldn't be fixed, even if I had the funds to make my stealings good. They'd get me wherever I hid myself, that's sure. They must be looking for me now. And, O God, I can't face it!"

Tears rained down his face—tears that he made no effort to hide or wipe away.

"I knew I was going headlong down to hell—knew what I was doing—saw the certain punishment—yet couldn't stop myself. And now I have reached the mouth of the pit!"

He shuddered and writhed in agony of torment, turning his pitiful, streaming eyes upon Smith.

"Oh, Jimsy, if you would only kill me and end it all," he moaned. "Oh, if I only had the courage to kill myself!"

Smith, greatly agitated, looked at the miserable man in perplexity.

"I wish I could help you, Joe," he said. "But this time I don't see how you can be helped."

"It isn't possible. There's nothing you could do. I'm done for. It's my own fault," he sobbed. "I brought it all on myself. I have been weak—oh, weak—and a fool. And now it's come to this. No; nobody's to blame but myself—unless it's Emma."

He rose to go.

"Shake hands with me, Jimsy," he begged. "It's the hand of a thief, a criminal's hand, but you were glad to take it in friendship once, when it was honest, and it's the last time I'll ever ask you to do anything for me. You'll never see me again."

Smith grasped the hand held out to him, and his pressure was more eloquent of his feelings than mere words could have been. He could find no phrases adequate to express them, so remained silent, but he slipped into the wretched man's pocket as Brooks passed out of the door a bundle of banknotes that he had taken without counting from a drawer.

Snow had begun to fall. A high wind, blowing apparently from all quarters, hardened the flakes and propelled them with stinging force into the faces of the people in the streets. Brooks had no umbrella, nor had he gloves, and the wind cut to the bone. Yet he paid scant heed to his discomfort and ambled away from Smith's abode. He turned up his coat collar and pulled his hat over his eyes. More than once when he thought he was being followed he went sick with fear. Every minute he expected to feel a hand on his shoulder.

Why should he lack the pluck to kill himself? A fugitive from justice, friendless and penniless, everything that was worth while in life gone forever, what had he to hope for living? The prison door from which he had shrunk with such dread before now was wide open to receive him, would receive him as inevitably as day would follow the night. He remembered having read that a man shot through the brain never felt the messenger which snuffed out his life. In the drawer of his bureau was a loaded revolver that he had long kept there for self protection in case of need. A movement of his finger would end all. A feeling almost of relief came with this thought, and he quickened his steps. There was only one thing to fear now—that he would be caught before he could reach his room. As he trudged along he found himself at the corner of the street in which the Harrises lived.

Emma! How different she had been from the other! She had not taken; she had given. Love had not been dependent upon the bringing of gifts; it had been lavished upon him. When he had been despondent she had comforted him; when things were going wrong she had encouraged him; when his head ached she had rested it on her bosom. And it had come to this—that he had lost her and, with her, all that he was an outcast at her door.

An insane desire to see her took possession of him. It grew, became overpowering, swept aside all the objections of reason. He was a dying man, and nothing was denied to the dying. He retraced his steps and rang the bell. The door opened, and he ascended the well remembered stairs. Mrs. Harris' fat was on the first landing. A maid who did not know him answered his ring.

"Is Mrs. Brooks at home?" he asked. The girl shook her head.

"Mrs. Brooks? No; no one of that name lives here. This is Mrs. Harris' apartments. Mrs. Harris and Miss Beth have gone out. Miss Emma is in."

Miss Emma! She had even discarded his name, then! The blow was hard.

"I would like to see her."

"Your card, sir, please."

"Tell her Mr. Smith is calling."

The name had flashed to him with the conviction that she would not receive him if he gave his own.

He followed on the heels of the maid.

"You needn't bother," he said and brushed past her at the door of the parlor.

Emma was arranging some ornaments on the mantelpiece. For a moment she did not recognize him. Then she recoiled, with a little cry, from the wild-eyed, disheveled specter who, hat in hand, stood before her.

"Yes, Emma, it's me, or what is left of me," he said.

"What brings you here? How did you get in?" she demanded, with frightened eyes.

"Don't be afraid. You have nothing to fear from me," he assured her. "I'm going on a long journey—yes, a long, long journey, and I've come to say goodby. You'll never see me again. I shall be no more trouble to anybody."

"There is no need to come here. I cannot receive you. You must go."

"Emma, I know how bad I was to you, how—"

"I cannot listen to your excuses. It is useless to recall the past. Please go!"

"I have no wish to recall it. I ask only your forgiveness—ask it as a dying man. You cannot refuse."

"You have been dead long years to me, and I have prayed God that I might never see you again. I paid you in full for my freedom. Why have you come to trouble me? Go, please, and leave me in peace."

"All right," he said sorrowfully. "I will go. Goodby, Emma."

With bowed head he went toward the door, stopped and turned to her with outstretched arms, pleading in his eyes.

"Emma, one kiss—my pardon and absolution before I die."

"No; oh, no!"

She retreated, shuddering, terrified. He followed her, desperate, resolved to take by force what she would not give, to feel once more in his arms the little form that once had nestled there fondly.

She read his purpose and shrieked.

Mrs. Harris, Beth and Captain Williams were just entering, and they rushed in with the maid.

Brooks turned to escape as Emma, almost hysterical with horror and fear, uttered a scream after scream. He ran right into Williams, who recognized him at once and dealt him a smashing blow that sent him to the floor. Then the captain grasped the half-stunned man and, pulling him to his feet, held him while he inquired what had happened.

Emma, calmed by her mother and sister, tremblingly explained. Williams looked at his prisoner, undecided what to do. Brooks did not open his mouth. The captain walked him out on the landing and, threatening to kill him if he ever dared to molest Emma again, threw him down the stairs.

CHAPTER XXV.

BRUISED and dazed, aching all over and very weak, Brooks picked himself up and made his way to the street. He had now reached the extreme of hopelessness and desperation. Everybody, the whole world, was against him, except Jimsy Smith, and he could do nothing for him. The only being who had loved him had shrunk from him with dread, refused him the sacrament of a last kiss, besought in charity.

He hardly knew how he got there, but he reached home without molestation and mounted by the stairway unperceived to his room. Once inside he locked the door and turned on the light. It was at least gratefully warm there, and he was at last safe from the clutches of the law. Escape lay at his hand. In a moment all would be over.

Nothing had been disturbed during his absence. The revolver was still in the drawer where he had left it. He took it and, gazing at himself in the bureau glass, raised the firearm to his right temple. He was appalled as he looked at the ghastly, haggard face before him and the eyes, fear haunted, that stared out of their dark and deeply sunken rims like the optics of an owl. The revolver shook in his numbed hand, and he could scarce bend his finger on the trigger.

What was his hurry? Why not wait until he had warned his hand and made the deed surer? If the police came for him death was at his beck and would cheat them at an instant's notice. His craven spirit inspired him with the desire to live a little longer.

He laid the revolver on the table and rubbed his hands to set the blood circulating. Then he held them over the heat radiator. He remembered that in the clothes closet was a full bottle of whisky. The stuff would soon warm him. He took off his overcoat to hang it up in the closet and felt in a pocket for his handkerchief. His hand encountered the roll of bills Smith had slipped in there. For a moment a gleam of hope flashed its cheering ray as he contemplated the money. Here was enough to enable him to get away.

But his despondency refused the comfort. What was the use? To attempt escape now would be to fall into the hands of the police sleuths who must be on the lookout for him. He surmised that the weather had driven the watchers to take shelter and had enabled him to slip into the house unnoticed or unrecognized. No, he had done with life and all its worries and disappointments. Better death than the consequences of living. He would have to die at some time or other anyhow.

He poured out a large glass of whisky and swallowed it. The fiery stuff warmed him all over. He sat down to think, and his thoughts took the shape of a review of his life. He had never been any good to himself or anybody else—never. Brought up by a maiden aunt, who had taken him in when as a young boy he had lost his widowed mother, he had repaid her with waywardness and indifference. In the declining years of her life when she needed aid and he was a young man he had kept his earnings selfishly for himself, doling out to her a few dollars at irregular intervals, and he was glad when she had ceased to be a burden by dying in a hospital. He had played his cards well, ingratiated himself into the favor of Mr. Harris, his employer, and by good acting had won the love of Emma. This had been the great coup of his career, but it had availed him little. Fortune, after smiling at him, had turned her back, and life had been a failure ever since.

As he summed it all up and contemplated himself as a pariah, a hunted man at bay amid the wreck of hope, love, life itself, driven to the alternative of a criminal's cell or self destruction, as he brooded over the way in which he had been spurned and cast out by those who might have loved and honored him, tears rolled from his eyes again.

"Yes," he groaned, repenting Emma's words, "yes, I have been paid in full, and I have paid in full."

Then he grasped the revolver and faced himself at the mirror again. This time his fingers were warm and supple. Once more he raised it to his temple. Once more pale fear obtained the ascendancy.

There was plenty of time. Why, since he was to die that night, should he be in such a hurry? Men who were dying or who were about to be speeded into eternity for transgression of the commandment that placed a ban on murder generally prayed, or prayers were said for them. He had not prayed since he could remember. What would happen after his leap into the unfathomable void? He had always derided the idea that anything would happen. Still, he did not know.

He went to the clothes closet, and from among some books, mostly novels, heaped in disorder on a shelf, he brought forth a Bible. It had belonged to his aunt, and he had kept it because it had looked well to have one in evidence in the parlor and because it was nicely bound in soft leather. He opened the book at hazard. Its pages divided at Ecclesiastes, and he began to read. Though the liquor was fast clouding his brain he became fascinated with the great immortal masterpiece of pessimism, the terrible monument of negation in which humanity's everlasting wounds are laid bare and overlying.

I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem—yes, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

And I gave my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

For in much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

"That's right," he assented, "that's dead right. Nothing's worth while; nothing matters."

What hath man of all his labor and of the vexation of his heart wherein he hath labored under the sun?

For all his days are sorrows and his travail grief—yes, his heart taketh no rest in the night. This is all vanity.

The verses succeeded each other with their recapitulation of the futility of earthly things. His head became



There was the crash of a report.

heavy and the letters indistinct. He began to have difficulty in grasping the meaning of the words.

That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts, even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath, so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast. All is vanity.

All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

A knock at the door roused him from his somnolence, and he looked up with bleared, bloodshot eyes.

He staggered to his feet, smiling vacantly, and his groping hand lurched toward the revolver. There was the crash of a report. The apartment house manager who had seen the light in the window, apprising him of the tenant's presence, and had knocked to inquire about the overdue rent, ran shouting for help.

When they forced the door they found Brooks sprawling across the table beside the overturned liquor bottle.

He was dead, with a bullet in his brain.

THE END.

American Goods in China.

Noticeable among the foreign articles in the shops at Shanghai, China, according to a British representative, were German and American clocks and watches; British, French and German medicines, provisions and wines; British and German cutlery, and everywhere the widely advertised British and American cigars.

Serfdom in Hungary.

In some parts of Hungary serfdom of the old Russian type still prevails. The peasant is obliged to work fifty days each year for his landlord without pay, the time to be chosen by the latter, who is almost sure to choose the season when the poor man can least afford to work for nothing. This system led to an insurrection in 1848.

From the Cotton Machine.

Ell Whitney's cotton gin was responsible for the immense strides taken by King Cotton, yet it has been asserted that this machine was but the practical application of an idea that found birth in the brain of the widow of General Nathaniel Greene of revolutionary fame.

Increasing Use of Glass.

A noticeable increase in the imports of glass at Nabaasaki, Japan, is reported by the British consul. It is due, he says to the growing use by the Japanese of window glass for the houses. Most of it is fourth quality and Belgium is the chief source of supply.

Paving Roads With Straw.

The experiment of paving the roads with straw has been tried with success by the farmers of Western America. Every autumn the roads are covered with dust, which, after the heavy rains, becomes thick mud, making travel hard for man and beast. After straw had been laid on the main thoroughfares to a depth of a foot or more traveling became easy.

Wedding Superstitions.

The Canadian Pacific Railway Company is boasting that it has accomplished the feat of landing British mails in Hongkong in 29 days from the dispatch from London, or nearly a week less than the previous records.

AND THIS WAS LOVE.

Great Drama Told in Just Two Thrilling Acts.

A young man and a young woman lean over the front gate. They are lovers. It is moonlight. He is loth to leave, as the parting is the last. He is about to go away. She is reluctant to see him depart. They swing on the gate.

"I shall never forget you," he says, "and if death should claim me, my last thoughts will be of you."

"I'll be true to you," she sobbs, "I'll never see anybody else or love them as long as I live!" They parted.

Six years later he returns. His sweetheart of former years has married. They meet at a party. She has changed greatly: between the dances the recognition takes place.

"Let me see," she muses, with her fan beating a tattoo on her pretty hand, "was it you or your brother who was my old sweetheart?"

"Really, I don't know," he says; "probably my father!"

Inconsovable.

The surges crashed mournfully in the darkness against the old pier.

"This blow," he said, "is one from which, alas, I shall not recover. Nevertheless I look upon the face of woman save in bitterness and sorrow."

The young girl, profoundly moved, said in gentle tones:

"Do not take my refusal so to heart, Mr. Mannerly, Harold. There are lots of nice girls left, I assure you. I know one at the Surf house who would suit you precisely. She is pretty, amiable, clever—"

"Has she got any money?" he interrupted.

Giving It Away.

"A woman just can't keep a secret," he declared, opposing a statement.

"Oh, I don't know, contradicted the fluttery lady. 'I've kept my age a secret ever since I was twenty-four.'"

"Yes," he replied, "but one of those days you will give it away. In time you will just simply have to tell it."

"Well," she replied with confidence, "I think that when a woman has kept a secret for twenty years she comes pretty near knowing how to keep it."

How It Happened.

Lady—Poor man! So you are just out of jail!

Tramp—Yes, mum. I was a victim of fortune-tellers back in 'ninty-nine.

Lady—Indeed?

Tramp—Yes, mum. The District Attorney told me where I'd ever been and what I'd ever done during my whole life, and the Judge predicted where I would be for the next ten years.

RECOMMENDATION.



"None; I can't take you back after having once discharged you."

"But the baseball season is over now, boss!"

Not Room Enough.

While riding on an electric car, during his first visit to the city, a farmer passed the yard of a monument company, where gravestones and monuments were displayed. Turning to his host, he remarked in an awe-stricken voice: "They dew bury 'em close in the city, don't they?"

"Nice dog, that," said the customer. "He is, sir," said the barber.

"He seems very fond of watching you cut hair."

"It ain't that, sir," explained the barber, smiling. "Sometimes I make a mistake and take a little piece off a customer's ear."

Somewhat Cheaper.

"Is it so, that you used to call regularly on that girl?"

"Yes; she always sang a song to me that I loved."

"Why didn't you marry her?"

"I found I could buy the song for 50 cents."

"Gentlemen of the jury," said the prosecuting barrister, "this prisoner is an unmitigated scoundrel; he acknowledges it. And yet, thanks to the wisdom of the common law, he has been given a fair trial by a jury of his peers."

A Memento of the Departed.

"I suppose you carry a memento of some sort in that locket of yours?"

"Yes; it is a lock of my husband's hair."

"But your husband is still alive!"

"Yes, but his hair is all gone."

His Indifference.

"What's your position in this polar controversy?"

"My position is that I ain't agoging to buy either book."

ACCOUNT E. W. BURNS,
GUARDIAN OF
Harley E. Fleming, a feeble minded person, late of Cherry Ridge Township, Wayne Co., Pa., deceased.
Notice is hereby given that the first and final account of the guardian above named has been filed in the Court of Common Pleas of Wayne county, and will be presented for confirmation nisi, June 17, 1910, and will be confirmed absolutely on June 23, 1910, unless exceptions thereto are previously filed.
M. J. HANLAN, Prothonotary.
Jan. 3, 1910.

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION,
ESTATE OF
JOHN KRANTZ,
Late of Honesdale, Pa.
All persons indebted to said estate are notified to make immediate payment to the undersigned; and those having claims against the said estate are notified to present them duly attested for settlement.
WM. H. KRANTZ,
PHILIP KRANTZ,
JOHN E. KRANTZ,
Administrators.
Honesdale, Pa., Dec. 8, 1909.

SHERIFF'S SALE OF VALUABLE REAL ESTATE.—By virtue of process issued out of the Court of Common Pleas of Wayne county, and State of Pennsylvania, and to me directed and delivered, I have levied on and will expose to public sale, at the Court House in Honesdale, on

FRIDAY, JAN. 21, 1910, 2 P. M.

All of defendant's right, title and interest in the following described property, viz:

All the right, title and interest of the defendant in and to those certain parcels of land lying in the township of Cherry Ridge, county of Wayne, State of Pennsylvania, bounded and described as follows:

FIRST—Beginning in the southern line of lot of land formerly owned by Peter Meglins, north Lawrence Weidner, being the north-western corner of lot No. 40 in the allotment of the Tilghman Cherry Ridge tract near the eastern water course of the Honesdale and Cherry Ridge Turnpike Road; thence by said Weidner's land and land formerly of Thomas Callaway, now Valentine Weidner, being also north line of said lot No. 40 east one hundred and sixty rods to a corner in the public road known as the east Cherry Ridge or Sandcock road; thence along said public road south one hundred and sixty rods to a corner in the north line of land late of Geo. Sandcock deed; thence by said Sandcock land, being the south line of said lot No. 40 west one hundred and sixty rods to a stone, formerly a beech corner; thence by lands conveyed by executors of John Torrey, de'd, to Mary Murray et al., north twelve and eighth-tenths rods to a stone's corner; thence by same land north eighty-seven degrees west eighty-seven rods to a corner in the middle of the Honesdale and Cherry Ridge road; thence along the center of said road northerly, one hundred eighty-five and three-tenths rods to place of beginning, containing 185 acres and 80 perches.

SECOND—Beginning at the south-west corner of land late of John Callaway; thence by land late of John Torrey and one Howe west one hundred and eight rods; thence north five degrees west sixteen and six-tenths rods to a corner of land of J. Greenfield; thence by last mentioned land east fifty-four and four-tenths rods to middle of the Honesdale and Cherry Ridge Turnpike Road; thence north on said road two degrees east one and three-fourths rods to a corner; thence by J. Greenfield east fifty-four and five-tenths rods to a stone's corner in the western line of said Callaway; thence by said line south eighteen and one-fourth rods to place of beginning, containing