THAT WOMAN'S SECRET.

CONTINUED.

TWO days have elapsed since the occurrence of the events last related. Let us enter the work-room connected with Messrs. Marsden & Miller's large dry-goods establishment on Broadway.

It is six o'clock, and the girls, thirty or forty in number, are preparing to leave. Among them is Mara Sydney. She is in the act of putting on her shawl a smile upon her lips as she talks lightly with the forewoman, when a man's face is thrust into the open doorway, and a pair of handsome but sensual eyes for a moment gleam on her and then disap-

The smile fades from Mara's countenance; she grasps the forewoman's arm,

"Miss Davis, that was the man of whom'I have told you; who has so persistently followed me lately. His very glance terrifles me! Do you know who

" He is Mr. Marsden's son, Ralph!" replied the forewoman. "Beware of him, Mara; if ever a heartless being walked the earth he is one."

"I can readily believe you," said the girl, shuddering; "his face tells his character. Since the first time I saw him, a week ago, I have been in constant fear of him; he has followed me in the street until I have almost resolved to call upon a policeman for protection. Several times he has been on the point of addressing me; but I have managed to avoid him. And he is our employer's

"Yes," replied Miss Davis, "and be is as heartless and depraved as his father is noble and generous. He has no employment; but lives upon old Mr. Marsden's bounty; and the old gentleman loves him too well to cast him off, in spite of his dissipated habits."

When Mara Sydney descended to the street she was relieved to find that Ralph Marsden was not in sight. But she had proceeded only a short distance when she felt a light touch upon her shoulder, and turning, found herself face to face with her persecutor.

" Allow me to accompany you to your destination," he said, walking by her side and attempting to force her arm through his.

"Leave me, sir!" she cried, in terror, starting away from him; but he grasped her arm, saying:

"My dear young lady, I really cannot consent to your walking alone, and unprotected after dark. It is not safe, I assure you."

Mara's terror was so great that she trembled from head to foot. It was dark, and the street they were in was almost deserted. She saw no one to whom she could appeal for protection. With an effort she again spoke and begged him to leave her.

" Nay, my dear Miss Sydney-for you see I know your name-I positively must refuse to leave your side until I have seen you safely home. And, by Jove!" he exclaimed, putting his arm around her waist, "you look so lovely that I really must have one kiss before we proceed; and he bent forward until his face almost touched Mara's.

"At this moment a blow from a man's arm felled him to the sidewalk, while another arm received the fainting girl.

"Lie there, dog," exclaimed the new comer, "until you can learn the respect due your mother's sex."

"I thank you for your kindness, sir," she said, rising to her feet; "but I will not trouble you further. I am quite able to walk."

"At least you will allow me to accompany you," the young man said. Mara acquiesced and they left the store

into which he had taken her together.

I will not weary my reader with a re-

cital of their entire conversation. They were mutually pleased with each other. The stranger gave his name as Henry Oakley; he was no other than the young physician to whom the reader has already been introduced.

"I hope," said Henry, "that the nature of your employment is not such as to bring you in frequent contact with that seoundrel who was persecuting you with his attentions this evening.

"I am a dressmaker in Messrs. Marsden & Miller's establishment," Mara replied. "The man from whom you rescued me is Mr. Marsden's son. I have been employed there nearly four months; but I never saw him until within a week. I suppose he will in the future place himself in my way if I

remain there." "Ralph Marsden is an unprincipled scoundrel," said Dr. Oakley. "I have long known him by reputation, although I never met him until to-night. If you will allow me, Miss Sydney, I will accompany you from your employers' to your home every evening, and thus insure you against a repetition of tonight's adventure. I know I am a stranger to you, but you can learn all you wish to know of me from the forewoman, Miss Davis, who is my cousin."

"Miss Davis your cousin!" Mara exclaimed; "she has been very good to me; I believe she is the best friend I have in the world."

"Then you will have confidence in her word and will let me do as I propose ?"

A moment after Henry Oakley had left him, Ralph Marsden arose to his feet. Looking after the young man he shook his fist and muttered bitter curses; but he was too cowardly to follow him and risk the chances of another blow from that muscular arm.

"Curses on them both !" he exclaimed aloud, " I'd sell my soul to be revenged on that fellow and to possess that

"You shall be gratified in both wishes," said a voice behind him, and turning sharply around he beheld a dark, heavily-bearded man at his side.

" Who are you ?" Marsden exclaimed much startled.

"One who will assist you in accomplishing what you wish, and at less expense than the surrender of your soul. Don't be afraid, I am not the 'old gentleman in black' for whom you have perhaps mistaken me."

"Who are you, then, I again ask." "Merely a mortal like yourself who has motives of private revenge to gratify, and who is glad to find so willing a coadjutor as yourself. We will work to-

gether." "How do I know that I can trust you?" asked the young man, suspiciously.

"You can do as you please," the stranger answered, coldly.

"Say no more," exclaimed Marsden, impetuously. "I will agree to whatever you may propose, if by so doing I can gain my purpose."
"Enough," the stranger said, "your

hand on it."

The two men shook hands, and then the stranger continued?

"Give me your address, and when my plans are matured I will notify

Ralph Marsden handed him a delicately traced card. "Do not be impatient," the stranger

said, "if you do not hear from me for weeks, though perhaps I may be able to send you some word in a few days. Rest assured that whenever the proper time has come you will be notified."

"I will follow your directions implicitly," replied Marsden, "and now will you give me your own name?"

In reply, the stranger handed him a card upon which he read:

MAJOR GEORGE HEITH, U.S. A.

Two weeks passed and Rodney Heith was obliged to confess that he had not made such progress in his suit with Edith Bentley as he had expected. His fascinations had won many a woman's heart, and he had become perfectly confident of his power; but despite his every effort, Edith Rentley was no nearer to him than when they first met. He had expected to supplant Walter Elmore with but little trouble, but he found that although Edith was very kind and friendly to himself, her heart was still true to the young author. He was aware that she often met Walter on the street, and at balls and parties; and to these meetings he principally ascribed his want of success.

"If we could put this fellow out of the way," he said to the major, one Saturday morning while they were strolling together down Broadway, "I could win her. But while they see each other so often I have no chance. I depend considerably upon my power of mesmerism to gain her love; but while I can, in a measure, attract her to me, I know that Elmore's influence exercises so powerful a counter-attraction, that until he is removed I can do nothing."

"I expected you to cut him out at once," said the major, with a short laugh; "yet here, after a fortnight you are just where you commenced. Haha! I have some difficulty in recognizing in you the famous lady-killer of London."

"I am as much surprised as you can be at my poor success," replied the young man, somewhat angrily; "but Edith Bentley is not an ordinary girl, and ordinary means cannot win her. But of one thing I am certain, until Elmore is removed, I have no chance of success."

"And are you so willing to give up our scheme as to let this trifling obstacle discourage you?" asked the major fixing a piercing, suspicious glance upon the young man's face.

" Willing!" Rodney Heith exclaimed, I would never give it up. I must and will win Edith Bentley, for-" " For what?"

" For I love her passionately, and will never resign her to another."

"You are resolved upon this point?" " I am." "So much the better for our plan then;

there is now no danger of your turning "Has there ever been any such danger ?"

"Perhaps not. I should hope not, at

all events, for you gain far more if we succeed than I do. In regard to this young literateur, I agree with you that he must in some way be removed."

"Have you any plan in view ?" inquired Rodney.

' None; but trust to me for arranging a method by which he can be prevented from annoying you further. But," he added, abruptly, " here we are at the-Theater; suppose we go in and secure seats for to-night's performance. We are not otherwise engaged; and by Jove! you need recreation, my boy, you're getting thin."

The two men entered the theater. They were obliged to await their turn at the box office, for a gentleman was there selecting seats. He was chatting familiarly with the ticket-seller.

"So these are the best sents you can give me for Monday night?" he said.

"Yes," was the reply, "there has been quite a rush for them, Monday being the first night of the new play; and this is the best I can do for you. But, had I known you were coming, Oakley, I would have reserved a couple for you."

"Oakley!" whispered the major to Rodney; "my boy, this is Dr. Oakley, the bosom friend of your rival, whom we saw in the Union Square, you remember."

"Yes, I recognize him at once," replied the young man.

"Rodney, my boy," said the major, when he purchased his tickets and left the theater, "a brilliant thought has occurred to me. I think I shall make a profitable thing of this,"

"Of what ?" inquired the young

"Of the knowledge this little interview we have overheard has furnished me. It shall serve me a good purpose.' "In what way ?"

"I have told you of Ralph Marsden and his passion for this sewing-girl?" "Yes.

"What I have learned will, I think, enable me to put this girl in his power." "In what way will anything we have overheard assist you in doing this?"

"I will explain later in the day, when I have matured my plans. Ah! Rodney the memory of wrong inflicted years ago is as fresh as ever; and the thought of revenge is as delightful."

On the following Monday morning Major Heith had an interview with Ralph Marsden. The two men were eloseted together more than an hour, in which time they arranged the details of a plot suggested by the major and willingly assented to by his unscrupulous companion. What this scheme was the progrees of our story will reveal.

"I ean depend upon you ?" said Marsden, as they were about to part.

He scrutinized his companion's face closely.

"If you doubt me, say so," exclaimed the major, impatiently; "and we'll throw up the plan."

"No," hastily, "I do not doubt you. I merely asked a simple question." "It was not the question so much as

the manner in which it was put, with which I find fault "

"Say no more, major; if I have offended you I crave pardon."

"Which I freely grant. Rest assured Marsden, I have as strong reason as yourself for desiring the success of this plan of ours."

"Is your motive a secret?" the young man inquired, with some curiosity.

"Yes. Suffice it to say that I have the strongest of motives-a desire for revenge-revenge for wrongs inflicted upon me many years ago."

"And you are still so bitter?"

" Nothing but death could quench the fire of my hatred, and-but enough of this. We will meet this evening at the appointed time. Till then, au revoirt" "Good-bye, major; I will be on

hand."

They separated.

" Mysterious man!" Marsden exclaimed, " I cannot understand him. But no matter; if he assists me in gaining my purpose he may keep his secrets till doomsday for aught I care."

The major proceeded to the house of Mrs. Van Dyke. He had made several visits to that dwelling during the past fortnight, and the slatternly servant had became familiar with his face; so when she opened the door he was allowed to enter without a word, the girl being sure that her mistress would receive him.

"Ah, my dear Mrs. Van Dyke," the major exclaimed, when that lady presented herself, "charming as ever, I see. The same levely, bewitching creature, who, in the days of yore, won the heart of the late lamented Mr. Van Dyke!"

"Pshaw, major!" the woman cried her face actually relaxing into the semblance of a smile, "why need you talk such nonsense?"

"Nonsense? You call the genuine, irrepressible outpourings of a heart wholly your own, nonsense? Cruel Mrs. Van Dyke! But as you will not be agreeable, I suppose I must proceed to business.

" You had better."

"At once, my dear lady. In the first place, how does my charming daughter's little love affair progress ?"

Mrs. Van Dyke sneered.

"Mara's? The young fellow is very attentive. I think she likes him; I wish she had never seen him; she's a different girl since she made his acquaintance, major; I'm disgusted with the whole affair."

"With what, my dear Mrs. V?" "With their love-making and their

nonsense generally. I'm disgusted with "Ha-ha-ha!" The major was

greatly amused. "Make allowance for their youth, my dear lady-you were once young yourself. But," he added, significantly, and in a different tone. 'you need not be troubled much longer by these young people, Mrs. Van Dyke."

"What do you mean?" she asked,

giving him a searching glance.
"I'll proceed to explain. They are going to the-theater to-night ?"

" Yes he is to call for her at a quarter to eight o'clock. How did you know ?" "No matter; I'll explain that some other time. Well, my dear lady, I propose calling for her myself with a coach at a quarter past seven."

"And you think she will go with

" I think she will if you arrange matters as I direct."

"What do you wish me to do?" "I'll tell you in a few words. I shall, as I have already said, call with a coach at a quarter past seven o'clock this evening. I shall be accompanied by a friend of mine who resembles Dr. Oakley in height and build, though not otherwise. This person will call at the door for Miss Sydney. The coolness of the weather will afford him an excuse for muffling up his face so that his features cannot be seen. You, supposing him to be Dr. Oakley, you understand, will inform the young lady that he awalts at the door. She will go to him, he will escort her to the carriage, she will enter, and—they will drive off."

"What then ?"

"Your part will cease then."

"But where will the girl go?" "It does not matter to you."

"But It does matter to me," sharply

cried the woman. " Have you so strong an affection for this girl, Mrs. Van Dyke?" sneeringly. " Perhaps not; but I don't understand

this affair.' "It is not necessary that you should understand it."

"When will the girl return?"

"Probably never." "This is a serious matter, Major Heith, the abduction of a young girl in this manner."

"Really, madam," sneered the major, 'you are become quite scrupulous.' "I don't want to get into trouble."

"You will not get into trouble. You will be supposed to have been deceived by the resemblance of this friend of mine to Dr. Oakley. No one will suspect you of complicity in the affair.

You cannot possibly be harmed."

" I can't spare the girl." "I will make good any pecuniary loss her departure may occasion you.'

"If that is the case-"

"If that is the case," mimicking her tone. "My dear madam, do you think I could have been so insane as to expect any assistance from you without cash payment therefor? No-no; I am too well acquainted with you to think of such a thing. And now, Mrs. Van Dyke, will you do what I ask ?"

Yes."

"A sensible resolution."

"But what shall I say to the doctor when he comes?"

"Simply say that a person whom you supposed to be himself had already taken the girl away. If he asks you in what direction the carriage went, mislead him. You are a smart enough woman to arrange that all right if you choose."

'I will do my best." "I shall expect it."

"But what am I to have for my services ?" "Will two hundred dollars satisfy

you?" "You had better say five hundred. I am by no means anxious to part with

the girl." "But if I were to say the word, you would have to part with her whether you wished it or not. Am I not her

parent?" The woman gave a short, contemptuous laugh.

"Why do you laugh, Mrs. Van Dyke?" the major inquired. "You would have some difficulty in proving your relationship, I fancy,

was the reply. "Perhaps; but we will not waste words upon the matter. As I have a very easy banker, who don't grumble if I sometimes overdraw my account,

the five hundred dollars are yours."

" Very well; on those terms, I will do

as you wish." Evening came at last, and with it a severe storm. The rain poured in torrents, and the wind arose until it became almost a hurricane.

Mara had begun to fear that the visit to the theater would have to be postponed, when the door-bell rang. Mrs. Van Dyke answered the summons. A moment later she entered Mara's room, and announced that the doctor was at the door awaiting her.

The young girl could not help thinking it singular that he remained outside; but she gave the matter a passing thought only, and hastened her preparations, not wishing to keep him waiting in the storm.

In a few moments she was ready, hastened to the door, took the arm of the man who stood upon the steps, and was escorted to the carriage.

She entered the carriage and was followed by her companion.

The driver, immediately gave rein to his horses, and they proceeded at a rapid pace toward Broadway.

Mara perceived, to her surprise, that there was another in the coach beside herself and the supposed doctor.

Turning to the latter individual, for an explanation, she saw to her horror, the evil face of Ralph Marsden! She would have cried out, but a handkerchief, saturated with chloroform, was pressed to her face, and she became insensible.

"So far, our plan has succeeded," said Marsden.

"Everything has gone as well as we could have desired," responded the major; "and, now that you have the girl what do you propose doing with

"First of all, I shall carry her to Per-

cival's gaming-house." "I know; but what then ?"

"I shall then ask her to be my wife, and give her time for consideration of the proposal." "Ha! your wife! This does not suit

me, Marsden," " Major, you are dull; the ceremony will be performed by a particular friend of mine, who has a wonderful talent for

"I see; and if I can be of any assistance to you, do not fail to call upon me." Thanks; and of what you have al-

ready done, I will not be forgetful." " It was as much to gratify my own desire for revenge as for your sake; still, if you feel under any obligation, you can, if you like, liquidate Mrs. Van Dyke's little bill of five hundred dol-

lars."

personating the clergy."

" I will do it, major.". The coach finally stopped in front of a brown stone mansion in Twentieth street.

"Here we are at Jared Percival's," Marsden announced.

Mara was still insensible. Lifting her in his arms, Ralph Mars-

den bade the major good-night, agreeing to meet him on the morrow, and hastened up the steps of the mansion. He gave the door-bell a hasty pull. The summons was instantly answered

by a negro servant. Marsden entered the house, and the door was closed behind him. He had been observed by a woman, a

pale, wretched creature, who was passing on the opposite side of the street as e ascended the steps. When she saw his face, the girl-for she was yet young, though terribly worn

and faded-gave a start. She paused, and watched his entrance into the house; then took her station where she could see anyone who might enter and leave the mansion; and there she stood, waiting and watching, regardless of the furious storm that raged

around her.

That evening Walter Elmore was seated before a glowing fire in his apartment, a book in his hand and a cigar between his lips.

Arrayed in his dressing-robe and slippers, and seated in his favorite easy-chair he was preparing to enjoy a comfortable evening in solitude, when a knock sounded on his door.

Henry Oakley entered. "My dear boy!" Elmore exclaimed what is the matter? Your face is a perfect picture of alarm and distress! What has happened?"

"Come in!" he cried.

"Walter," said Cakley. "you know I expected to attend the theater in company with Miss Sydney this evening." " Yes."

"At the appointed time I called at her residence; but what was my dismay on learning that a man whom they supposed to be myself had taken her away

in a coach fifteen minutes before." " But how is it possible that any one could have deceived her in this man-

" Mrs. Van Dyke said that the man's face was muffied so that she could not see his features; and that he did not enter the house, but waited at the door. He resembled me, she said, in size and general appearance."

"This is very strange!" Walter ex-claimed, "what are you going to do?" "I searcely know; I am so disturbed by what has occurred that I am incapable of forming or arranging any plan.

What do you advise ?"-To be continued.