

THAT WOMAN'S SECRET.

CONTINUED.

"PARDON me, madam," Dr. Oakley interposed, "but why should the affair remain a secret. It seems to me that we ought at once to make the matter public, and institute a search for the perpetrator of this outrage."
"Dr. Oakley, returned Mrs. Clayton, "I fear, almost, to confess the fact to myself, but I believe I know who Walter's assailant was. I do not wish this man to know that his intended victim lives till I myself tell him, and confront him with proofs of this and other foul crimes. This is my reason for the request I made."
"Then, sir," said Dr. Oakley, turning to the boatman, "you will do as this lady wishes?"
"Certainly," the man replied, "and when the gentleman recovers, if he wants me to testify to what I know about the affair, let him send for me. My name's John Daniels, and I'm always to be found here."
"Thank you, Mr. Daniels," the doctor said; "and you may be sure that what you have done to-night will not be forgotten. Madam," he added, addressing Mrs. Clayton, "whom do you believe to be the perpetrator of this crime?"
"I will not mention his name now," the lady said, quietly; "but when Walter is able to bear the shock I have a strange revelation to make. In the meantime let the villain suppose that his murderous purpose was accomplished; let him, for a while, triumph in his guilt. A day of retribution is surely coming; a day when atonement shall be made for this crime, and for another, which for more than twenty years has embittered my life."
An hour later a carriage containing Mrs. Clayton, Dr. Oakley, and Walter Elmore, halted in front of a two-story cottage in Morristania.

girl face Mr. Leighton started, and an involuntary exclamation escaped his lips.
"Are you ill, sir?" Dr. Oakley asked, noticing the old gentleman's agitation.
Mr. Leighton did not, for a brief time, speak; but finally with an effort, he suppressed his emotion, and, addressing himself to Mara, said:
"Pardon me, young lady; but the striking resemblance you bear to one very dear to me—in fact, to my wife—was the cause of my apparent incivility. You are a living picture of her at your age."
With increasing agitation, he added, addressing Dr. Oakley:
"Did you not tell me, that there was some mystery surrounding Miss Sydney's birth? Pardon the abruptness of the question; I have the strongest reasons for asking this."
Mara herself replied, and in a few words, made known to Mr. Leighton all she had been told regarding her parentage by Mrs. Van Dyke.
"But I always doubted the truth of the woman's story," she said. "I had many reasons for believing that something was concealed from me. Oh! sir, can you give me any information on this subject? What do you suspect?—Why are you thus agitated?"
"My dear child," replied Mr. Leighton, with much emotion, "if my suspicions be confirmed by investigation—and my heart persuades me that they will—I shall soon be able to tell you all you desire to know."
"Listen, and I will tell you," the old man said. "One night, 18 years ago, my infant daughter was stolen from her cradle; by whom I know not and never could learn. Every effort was made to recover her; but, although the most skilled detectives were employed for many long months, no clue to her whereabouts was ever gained. The search was long since abandoned in despair. I never thought to penetrate the veil which enshrouds my daughter's fate; but the strange resemblance which you, my dear child (addressing Mara) bear to my wife, leads me to believe that Heaven, at length, smiles upon me; that the mystery is to be solved, and my lost child returned to these loving arms."
"Can this be possible?" Henry Oakley exclaimed, while Mara was unable to speak from emotion.
"Doctor," continued Mr. Leighton, "I must see this Mrs. Van Dyke at once, and wrest from her the guilty secret which I believe she possesses.—Will you, Dr. Oakley, accompany me to her house?"
The young physician assented; and the two gentlemen at once proceeded to Mrs. Van Dyke's residence. In a few minutes they were in the woman's presence.
"Madam," Mark Leighton exclaimed, abruptly, "I am here on business of the utmost importance. I wish to ask you a few questions, and I desire truthful answers."
"You introduce yourself in a strange manner, sir," Mrs. Van Dyke said.—"But proceed."

know, she remained with me until a few weeks ago."
"Was that the date of that night, 18 years ago?" Mr. Leighton asked, breathlessly.
"August the sixteenth," was the reply.
"I was not mistaken!" Mr. Leighton exclaimed. "Oakley, I have at last found my child! Madam," he added, addressing Mrs. Van Dyke, "of her whereabouts during the past few weeks and at present, I am aware, and now let me ask you, did you not know that the person with whom she left the house was not Dr. Oakley? Remember, it will be better for you to tell the truth; and as you have confessed so much, you may as well make a clean breast of the whole affair."
"I did know that the person was not Dr. Oakley," the woman answered.
"And you were hired to assist in the abduction?"
"I was."
"By whom?"
"By the person who brought the girl to me 18 years ago."
"By this Sydney! Good heaven!—who and what can this man be? I cannot recollect having ever heard his name until to-day; yet that he is a bitter enemy of mine he has plainly shown."
"He is known by another name now," Mrs. Van Dyke said.
"Ah! what is it?"
"Major Heith."
Five days have passed.
Major Heith and Edward Bentley sit together in the banker's luxurious library.
"18 years ago," said the major, "I was a month since young Elmore's disappearance," said the major. "Rely on it, my friend, we have seen the last of him."
"Would to Heaven," the banker cried, "the mystery of his fate might be solved."
"It never will be," said Major Heith. "Doubtless he was murdered for what money he had about his person, and then cast into the river. Such things have been done, as you know from your own experience, my dear Bentley, eh?"
An expression of keen agony swept across the banker's face. There was a short silence, presently it was broken by Major Heith.
"My son progresses capitably with his wooing," he said. "Since young Elmore's disappearance the field has been clear for him; and he has, I think, made a considerable impression upon your fair daughter's heart."
"Yet she is deeply troubled by the mystery surrounding Elmore's fate," Mr. Bentley said.
"True," was the response, "but do you know, Bentley, my son possesses, in an eminent degree, the power of animal magnetism—mesmerism, as it is called—and by its aid, has gained an immense influence over Miss Edith's mind. She will be his; no earthly power can prevent it. Your consent to the marriage will, I doubt not, be asked ere long."
"Just Heaven!" the banker exclaimed, with sudden fierceness, "this must not be! Man, Edith is dearer to me than my heart's blood; I will not see her wedded by fraud and violence to this wretched adventurer, your son, her life shall not be made miserable, though mine be sacrificed. I defy you! Do your worst!"
"Softly, friend Bentley," the major said, with unmovable countenance. "Unless you wish to proclaim this secret to every servant in the house you will speak in a lower tone. No fraud or violence will be used. Your daughter's consent to this marriage will be given of her own free will; and I know of no reason why she cannot be happy with my son. At all events I have determined upon this marriage, and it shall take place."
"Never!"
This exclamation was uttered by Edith Bentley, who, with flashing eyes and crimsoned cheeks, stood in the doorway. The major was for a moment disconcerted, but only for a moment.—Quickly recovering his wonted composure, he exclaimed:
"What do you say, young lady?"
"That I will never be the wife of the man you would force upon me, whom I detest, abhor! Father," she added, turning to the old banker, "I know not what power this man has over you, but whatever it is I trust soon to see it removed. This morning I received a visit from a person who has given me a considerably insight into the past life of this man you call Major Heith. The person I speak of, sir, is in the adjoining room, and with your permission will repeat her story to you."
"Admit her at once," said the old banker.
"Mrs. Clayton entered the room.
"You here!" the major exclaimed, his self-possession completely deserting him for a moment.
"Yes, Egbert Elmore, I am here, though I would gladly be spared this meeting."

The Major in a degree regained his accustomed audacity.
"Elmore, madam! That is not my name. I do not know you."
"Man, you do know me, as your lips but one moment ago confessed. Your true name is Elmore, though I do not wonder that you, who have so disgraced that honorable name, should resign it.—Sir," she added, addressing Mr. Bentley, who sat in a silent and amazed listener, "I will, in as few words as possible, recount my experience with this man, and then leave it with you whether he is a fit companion for a gentleman, or his confederate a proper mate for your daughter."
"Proceed, madam."
"Twenty-five years ago I became this man's wife. He was then called Egbert Elmore, and lived with, and was supported by his father, the late Mr. George Elmore, then a wealthy merchant.—Egbert was then, as now, a base, false-hearted villain, but he gained my love, and for a time I saw no imperfection in him.
"Then he met me I lived with my only relative, a widowed mother. We were very poor, and worked almost unceasingly for a scanty living. Many said I married him for his money; but heaven knows that's false, for I loved him with all the ardor of a first affection. I can scarcely realize to-day that this was so, for now I can feel for him but horror and loathing.
"Then we were married we made old Mr. Elmore's house our residence, such being his wish. I had been there but a few weeks when I learned a fact which dashed my cup of happiness to the ground. Egbert had married me in a fit of pique.
"it seems that his father had adopted a young girl, the daughter of a distant relative, several years before; and that Egbert, having been thrown in daily contact with her, had learned to love her madly. He asked her to be his wife—he was kindly but firmly refused. She was already engaged to be married to Mark Leighton, then a rising young merchant. Egbert besought of her to reconsider her decision—to break her engagement with Mark Leighton, and marry him. But all he could say was of no avail. At the end of a long and stormy interview, Egbert swore vengeance on his rival in the bitterest words his tongue could utter.
"A few weeks later Mark Leighton and Agnes Thorp were married. On their wedding day Egbert Elmore proposed marriage to me. He had been attentive to me for a long time, with, I suppose, the basest motives, though such an idea never occurred to me at the time; but in a fit of disappointed ambition and passion he married me, and brought me to his father's house.
"Though poor, I had received a liberal education, and I think he was satisfied that I compared well with the girl he had lost in personal appearance and mental acquirements; and he was not ashamed to introduce me into the society in which she moved.
"for a short time I was happy in the belief that he loved me; but soon I learned the story then current in society of Egbert's rejection by Agnes Thorp.
"I told my husband what I had heard. He did not deny it. 'It is true,' he said, 'I did and do love that woman; and I hate, with a bitterness which will never die, the man who has married her, upon whom I have sworn a terrible revenge.'
"Imagine with what feelings I listen to these words from the lips of the man who had sworn to love, cherish and protect me, whom I loved with a devotion which amounted almost to idolatry. From that hour I was a changed woman; and from that hour Egbert's conduct toward me underwent an alteration. He became utterly indifferent, nay he grew to hate me; often using the bitterest, harshest language to me, and treating me with heartless neglect and cruelty.
"His father, who was one of the truest, best friends I ever had, remonstrated with him; but all he could say was of no avail. Egbert became dissipated, sought the lowest company, and soon his habits became so notorious that even his honored family name, and his father's position could not procure his entrance to good society, though he was tolerated by his immediate relatives.
"so matters progressed until a blow fell which crushed what little hope remained to me; and blighted my whole after life. Mark Leighton and his wife were our guests at dinner one day.—Egbert was outwardly complaisant and polite, but I knew by a strange gleam in his eye that he assumed a calmness which he did not feel; that the sight of the woman he had loved and his successful rival had aroused a devil in his heart.
"I feared a scene and it came. In the midst of an animated conversation at the table Mrs. Leighton suddenly uttered a cry of pain; the most alarming symptoms manifested themselves, and she was soon seized with convulsions. A physician was called. 'She is poisoned,' he said, 'but I believe I can save her

life.' Soon he announced to us that she was out of danger, though terribly prostrated. And then the question arose; in what manner had she been poisoned? The physician said that she must have taken arsenic in her food at dinner. A careful examination of the dishes used followed; and in a wine-glass was found a small quantity of the deadly poison. But how came it there? could she have intended suicide? This seemed impossible. In the midst of an excited discussion of the matter Egbert arose and requested silence. He was evidently much agitated. Concluded next week.

VEGETINE

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Yours very truly,
A. ANDELIET.

OUR MINISTER'S WIFE.
Louisville, Ky., Feb. 16, 1877.
Dear Sir,—Three years ago I was suffering terribly with inflammation of the stomach. Our minister's wife advised me to take Vegetine. After taking one bottle, I was entirely relieved. This year, feeling a return of the disease, I again commenced taking it, and am benefited greatly. It also greatly improves my digestion. I respectfully,
MRS. A. BALLARD.
1011 West Jefferson street.

SAFE AND SURE.
Mr. N. R. Stevens,
In 1874 your Vegetine was recommended to me; and, yielding to the persuasions of a friend, I consented to try it. At the time I was suffering from general debility and nervous prostration, superinduced by overwork and irregular habits. Its wonderful strengthening and curative properties seemed to affect my debilitated system from the first dose; and under its persistent use I rapidly recovered, gaining more than usual health and good feelings. Since then I have not hesitated to give Vegetine my most unequalled indorsement as being a safe, sure, and powerful agent in promoting health and restoring the wasted system to new life and energy. Vegetine is the only medicine I use, and as long as I live I never expect to find a better.
Yours truly,
W. H. CLARK.
129 Monterey Street, Allegheny, Penn.

VEGETINE.

The following letter from Rev. G. W. Mansfield, formerly pastor of the M. E. Church, Hyde Park, and at present settled in the city of New York, will convince every one who reads his letter of the wonderful curative qualities of Vegetine as a thorough cleanser and purifier of the blood.
Hyde Park, Mass., Feb. 15, 1876.

Mr. H. R. Stevens,
Dear Sir,—About ten years ago my health failed through the debilitating effects of dyspepsia; nearly a year later I was attacked by typhoid fever in its worst form. It settled in my back, and took the form of a large deep-seated abscess, which was 15 months in gathering. I had two surgical operations by the best skill in the State, but received no permanent cure. I suffered great pain at times, and I was constantly in my bed, with a profuse discharge. I also lost small pieces of bone at different times.

Matters ran on thus about seven years, till May, 1874, when a friend recommended me to go to your office, and take the medicine of the virtues of Vegetine. I did so, and by your kindness passed through your manufactory, noting the ingredients, &c., by which your remedy is produced. By what I saw and heard I gained some confidence in Vegetine.
I commenced taking it soon after, but felt worse from its effects; still I persevered and soon felt it was benefiting me in other respects. You did not see the results I desired till I had taken it faithfully for a little more than a year, when the abscess in the back was cured; and for nine months I have enjoyed the best of health.
I have in that time gained twenty-five pounds of flesh, being heavier than ever before in my life, and I was never more able to perform labor than now.

During the past few weeks I had serofulous swellings as large as my fist on another part of my body.
I took Vegetine faithfully, and it removed it level with the surface in a month. I think I should have been cured in my main trouble sooner if I had taken larger doses, after having become accustomed to its effects.
Let your patrons troubled with scrofula or kidney disease understand that it takes time to cure chronic diseases; and if they will patiently take Vegetine, it will, in my judgment, cure them. With great obligation I am,
Yours very truly,
G. W. MANSFIELD.
Pastor of the M. E. Church.

VEGETINE

Prepare
H. R. STEVENS, Boston, Mass.

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