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THE MISSING JEWELS.

THE Baroness Rukavina-Eltz was the most splendid and dashing personage in the Er Valley. Her castle near Somlyo was the finest specimen of great residence in all that shadow of the Er Mellek, and she, Roumanian by birth and a Hungarian by marriage, seemed to unite all the brilliant characteristics of both these picturesque races.

She was a widow to begin with, and since the animal man has speculated upon the varieties of the angel woman, a widow has been pronounced the most amiable variety of the species. She was very beautiful, tall, graceful, blue-eyed, black-haired, piquant, red and white, with the most scornful little mouth and the most delicate profile; her hand and foot were models, although the latter were frequently stamped when she was not pleased. She was—in the third and last place, as the preachers say—very rich, and had fallen heir to two collections of jewels which were almost fabulously valuable. A brilliant creature the Baroness. She owned villages and vineyards, and made a large income every year from her sale of Ruster, a grand wine of a pale golden hue, which had as full and peculiar a flavor as she had herself. The Baroness sent her wine to Vienna, where it was considered almost equal to Tokay. Of course, she had suitors, the beautiful, sharp Baroness. They came from Transylvania and Russia, from Roumania and all Hungary, from Austria and from the German Principalities; and for the unlucky wretches about Pas Poki and the Behar Settlement, and the country gentlemen of Erdioszegh, they knelt and worshipped in vain as she dashed past them on her fleet thoroughbred, for she was Diana as a huntress and the Queen of the Amazons also. Her black horse Tetenyer was said to emit fire from his nostrils when he stopped to breathe.

This grand lady was afraid of nobody, loved nobody, had no friends, save the nuns at the foot of the Rez Gebirge and one old priest who seemed to be deeply in her confidence. Every year she made a grand visit somewhere—Vienna, Paris, Rome, London or St. Petersburg. She spent money like water, and made everybody talk, wonder and admire, and where her splendid jewels were the envy of all the Court ladies.

Yes, she was afraid of one man, and that was her steward, Neusiedler, he who for years had managed her vast estates, her vineyards and her wheat-fields, her fields and fisheries.

Neusiedler was a crouching, cross-eyed, mean-looking German Jew, married to a bold black-eyed large-nosed woman, who was twice his size, and who lived in the village, near the castle, and who spent her time envying and hating the Baroness. Madame Pasteur, the French maid, who never left the Baroness, thought that Neusiedler and his wife had the evil eye and that they would some day wilt the Baroness. But Rukavina-Eltz laughed at this fear, and kept on her course exultant. Still when the yearly pay day came round, and she had to look over accounts with Neusiedler, she did show what she had never shown before—fear.

Among her jewels was a splendid rope of pearl colored pearls, the rarest thing in the whole world, neither black nor white, but pearl color, with three great emerald pendants, each as large as a small pear. The Emperor always noticed this jewel with a smile and a compliment when the Baroness Rukavina-Eltz went to a Court ball at Vienna.

He told her that the Empress had nothing half as handsome, and it is to be feared that the Emperor spoke also of the white, firm neck on which the necklace rested, for Rukavina-Eltz was apt to blush and look magnificently well at such moments. Then she had great chains of sapphires, as blue as her eyes and some big rubies which the Baron had given her (the old Baron, who was twice her age, who went down into Rumania for her when she was 15), and she had diamonds, of course—every rich lady has diamonds—and a grand box full of engraved amethysts and antique gems, some that Cardinal Antonelli gave her in Rome, for he, too, had admired the wild Baroness.

Indeed, if the Baroness Rukavina-Eltz had ever written her memoirs, what a story she could have told! But the end of every woman's history is that she finally falls in love, and such was the beginning of the end of the story of Rukavina-Eltz. She went to England one summer, and there was a young Lord Ronald Somerset, or a Lord George Levenson Montague, or a young Lord Howard Plantagenet (they mix them up so, these English words, they are not half so individual as our Hungarian names), who could ride better than she could. This was a dreadful blow to the Baroness and she wished herself dead.

But when at dinner the soft-voiced, handsome, tall young Englishman, Sir Lyster Howard Lyster (that was his name after all), sat next to her and talked so well and was so complimentary to her seat, cross country, and noticed the pearl-colored pearls, and the emeralds, with his lips, and the neck underneath with his eyes, Rukavina-Eltz forgave him, and began to talk of her home near Somlyo, and it ended in a large English party coming into the Er Valley, under the shadow of the Er Mellek, for a long summer visit. And how they raved about everything—the wine, the horses, the scenery, the wild barbaric splendor of the Baroness' housekeeping, and how they all hated Neusiedler and his big, black-browed wife who were invited up to the balls.

There was an English lady with very long teeth, and very long nose, and very high eyebrows, and they called her lady Louisa. She was very grand and lofty, and Madame Pasteur heard her say one day—

"Do you know, dear Baroness, I think you are so very careless—don't you know?—about those beautiful jewels of yours—do you know?"

"But who could steal them?" said the Baroness laughing. "There are none like them in all Hungary, and no one would dare to wear them, they are so rare?"

"Ah! but some of these wild people of yours! they might swallow your emeralds, those fierce Croats, the Roumanians; and then you keep them in such open closets and boxes."—Madame Pasteur nodded her meek head, too. She had trembled for the jewels always.

But the Baroness and Sir Lyster began to think of other things than jewels; there were moonlight rides and walks, and there were long talks and many reveries. Lady Louisa went home, they all went, but Sir Lyster came back.

And then, one evening, Madame Pasteur said afterwards, that she saw Neusiedler come in and bully the Baroness, and she heard him hiss out the words—

"Remember, if you marry you lose all. Remember the Baron's will!"

And Rukavina-Eltz turned pale and said, "Bully, traitor, fiend," between her shut teeth. She went off to Paris for one of her long visits, and Neusiedler squeezed the tenants and made every one miserable. The castle was shut up and black Tetenyer grew thin in his stable.

When she came back she looked older and more sedate. She went often to see the nuns at the foot of Rez Gebirge.—She saw the priest also very often, and Madame Pasteur thought she was growing *devotee*. But she dressed in her usual dashing colors (for she was a very Roumanian at heart), and she wore one of those scarlet quilted petticoats that the English ladies wore so much; and very pretty it looked, with her dark habit and her dark dresses looped up over it. This with a scarlet feather in her hat,

looked as if the Baroness was thinking of England.

It was a miserable day, that, when Madame Pasteur and Matilde came screaming down the long corridor.

"The jewels are gone! gone! gone!"

The Baroness had the great bell of the castle rung, and Neusiedler was sent for at once. She was very pale, for she loved those pearls and emeralds.

Neusiedler was composed, every look was made to say, "I told you so;" he had always warned her about the jewels.

"What can be done?" asked the Baroness.

"Search, whip, imprison all who attempt to leave the province," said Neusiedler, calmly.

"Except women—I will have no women whipped," said the Baroness.

"I am glad to hear that," said Neusiedler, laughing his malicious laugh, "for Madame Neusiedler goes to Vienna tomorrow."

"Ah!" said the Baroness, "you know I could not mean, at any rate, that Madame Neusiedler should be disturbed; send her in my little carriage with the three ponies to Erdioszegh."

"Your excellence is very condescending," said Neusiedler, bowing to the ground.

The local police sought everywhere for the lost jewels, but no traces of them could be found. The Baroness sat in a sort of stupor and gazed out of the window.

"I will go to England," said she hastily one day. "Neusiedler, some money, and arrange for me to be gone three months."

"It is well, madame," said the steward.

It was a very roundabout rout that the Baroness took for England. When Matilda and Madame Pasteur reached the station at Erdioszegh they were astonished to see the Baroness dash into the ticket office and buy tickets for Vienna, and when they arrived, all of them, at her fine hotel at Vienna, who should step out to meet them but Sir Howard Lyster.

Nothing but the well-known eccentricity of the Baroness apologized to Madame Pasteur for what followed.—She commanded two dresses to be made, and that Madame Pasteur should go with her to a Jewish masked ball at the Opera House in Vienna.

"Sir Lyster Howard Lyster will go with us!" said she, as a shade passed over the pale face of her companion.

Oh! that a lady of sixteen quarterings should be seen in such a low place! No; she was *not* seen! She was masked; but that she should even go! What a sacrifice of pride and of decency, Madame Pasteur thought it, as she saw the Baroness take the arm of one masked man after the other, and then go into the supper-room with a party who followed a tall mask in a black domino.

A voice struck on Madame Pasteur's ear—was it that of Madame Neusiedler? Was it—could it be?

Yes! and as she threw back mask and hood there sparkled on her neck the pearl-colored pearls and the emerald pendants of the lost jewels. O Heaven! "The necklace of the Baroness," shouted the impulsive, the imprudent Madame Pasteur.

It nearly spoiled the plot, for Madame Neusiedler was among the friends and confederates. However, the tall Englishman stepped forward, and the two Viennese policemen arrested the woman.

She behaved with extraordinary coolness, and explained—

"It is indeed the necklace of the Baroness, given by her to my husband for moneys which he had advanced to her. Let her deny it if she dare. I have her written acknowledgment of the money, and I have come to Vienna to sell the necklace, where it is well-known."

The Jews gathered around the wonderful necklace, which the Chief of Police put in his breast pocket, removing the woman Neusiedler.

The Baroness went back to her hotel, and allowed Madame Pasteur to pass a wretched night. She would explain nothing.

All Vienna was alive when the great case came on, and not a few ladies were glad to hear that the Rukavina-Eltz jewels were in pawn—that envied necklace!

Neusiedler came to his wife's rescue, and told the story over again. The evidence against the Baroness was damning. She had, according to his story, lived far, far beyond her income and he had supplied her with money from the Jews. She had fabricated the story of the lost necklace to try and cheat him, but here were her signatures, and here was the Baron's will, which she was about to disregard—his will saying that she should never marry, or, if she did, that she lost all her vast estates.

"Baroness Rukavina-Eltz, what have you to say to this? What is your defense?" said the prosecuting counsel.

"Only this!" said the Baroness, holding up in her hand the pearl colored pearls and the emerald drops, the real necklace! On the Judge's desk lay a facsimile of the famous necklace. The two ornaments looked exactly alike.

"Let an expert be brought and say which is the real necklace and which the imitation one, made in Paris, and used by me to lure this wretched and dishonest thief of a steward to his destruction!" said the Baroness with a flash of Roumanian fire in her eyes.

It was true! Neusiedler had been fooled; he had stolen a false necklace, which the Baroness had had made in Rue de la Paix.

"He has been stealing from me for years; he has doubtless forged a false will of the Baron, for I have found the true one!" said Rukavina-Eltz. I could not unravel the net that he has thrown over me but for this happy thought of tempting him to steal some false jewels. Had he got the real ones, his story would have been plausible. Now, I trust, justice is convinced that it is a lie!"

A dreadful noise followed this speech of the spirited Baroness; Neusiedler had fallen down in a fit. Never more would he drink the yellow-tinted Ruster; never more would he return to the joys of crushing the peasantry of Somlyo—of cheating the Baroness. The Baroness had cheated him at last. Sold! sold! sold! with false pearls and emeralds!—Poor Jew! poor Jew!

It was a very grand wedding, that of the Baroness to Sir Lyster Howard Lyster, who though only an English country gentleman, proved to be richer than she, and who made her a loving and a hunting husband.

The Emperor gave her away, and she wore the pearl-colored pearls with the emerald drops, now become historical.

"Ah! Madame, dear Baroness, please tell me where you have kept the real jewels all these months?" said the pious Madame Pasteur, almost kissing the hem of her mistress' robes.

The Baroness was dressed for traveling, as her faithful adherent knelt and asked this question. She had on the quilted satin red petticoat; the scarlet of old England.

"Was it in the double-locked closet of the north tower?"

"Ah, no! faithful Pasteur, thou knowest Neusiedler had the key to that!"

"Was it in the jewel case of thy great ancestress, the Roumanian Princess?"

"No. Guess again!"

"Was it in the convent of the nuns of Rez Gibirge?"

"No! Pasteur, I never gave them anything to keep but my sins!"

"Was it in the Baron's strong box, in the cellar?"

"No, my dear Pasteur, no. You have the hiding place under your finger. They were quilted into the lining of this red satin petticoat. I owe the idea to that good Lady Louisa. See here!" and gently raising the edge of her traveling skirt, right over her left foot, the Baroness showed Madame Pasteur a neat little series of pockets, where the jewels had been safely hidden in a scarlet prison."

Had a Shock.

"Yes," Mr. Messenger replied, in an answer to the young lady's remark, "he was rather fond of bathing; very fond of it, in fact, but he received a terrible shock a few summers ago while in the water, and he has never recovered from it since."

"My!" she exclaimed, "did a snake bite him? Oh, dreadful!"

"No," Mr. Messenger said; "it wasn't that."

"Did he come near drowning then?" she wanted to know.

"No," he said, "it wasn't exactly that, but just as he was about ready to come out of the river he saw a tramp going up over the hill, about a quarter of a mile away, with his hat, his pocket-book, his vest, his watch, his handkerchief, his stockings, his cigar case, his shoes, his collar button, his suspenders, his cane, and, well, in fact, his trousseau. And there was a Sunday-school picnic only half a mile down the river, gradually coming nearer, and he lounged around among the willows all that day and walked home alone in the starlight. And the fact was he has never been able to enjoy a swim very much since that time."

An Incident in the Napoleonic Wars.

IN the memorable year 1814, when the allied armies were concentrated about Paris, a young lieutenant of dragoons was engaged with three or four Hungarians, who, after having received several smart strokes from his sabre, managed to send a ball into his shoulder, to pierce his chest with a thrust from a lance, and to leave him for dead on the bank of the river.

On the opposite side of the stream a boatman and his daughter had been watching this unequal fight with tears of desperation. But what could an old unarmed man do, or a pretty girl of sixteen? However the old soldier—for such the boatman was—had no sooner seen the officer fall from his horse than he and his daughter rowed most vigorously for the other side. Then when they had deposited the wounded man in their boat these worthy people crossed the river again, but with faint hopes of reaching the military hospital in time.

"You have been very hardly treated, my boy," said the old guardsman to him; "but here am I, who have gone farther still, and have come home."

The silent and fixed attitude of Lieutenant S— showed the extreme agony of his pains; and the hardy boatman soon discovered that the blood which was flowing internally from the wound on his left side would shortly terminate his existence. He turned to his youthful daughter.

"Mary," he said, "you have heard me tell of my brother; he died of just such a wound as this here. Well, now, had there been somebody by to suck the hurt, his life would have been saved."

The boatman then landed, and went to look for two or three soldiers to help him to carry the officer, leaving his daughter in charge of him. The girl looked at the sufferer for a moment or two. What was her emotion when she heard him sigh so deeply, not that he was resigning life in the first flower of his age, but that he should die without a mother's kiss.

"My mother! my dear mother!" said he, "I die without—"

Her woman's heart told her what he would have said. Her bosom heaved with sympathy, and her eyes ran over.

Then she remembered what her father had said; she thought how her uncle's life might have been saved. In an instant, quicker than thought, she tore open the officer's coat, and the generous girl recalled him to life with her lips.

Amid this holy occupation the sound of footsteps was heard, and the blushing heroine fled to the other end of the boat. Judge of her father's surprise, as he came up with two soldiers' when he saw Lieutenant S— whom he expected to find dead, open his eyes and ask for his deliverer.

The boatman looked at his child and saw it all. The poor girl came to him with her head bent down. She was about to excuse herself, when her father, embracing her with enthusiasm, raised her spirits, and the officer thanked her in these prophetic words:

"You have saved my life; it belongs to you."

After this she tended him and became his nurse; nothing would he take but from her hand. No wonder that with such a nurse he at length recovered. Mary was as pretty as she was good.

Meanwhile Master Cupid, who is very busy in such cases, gave him another wound, and there was only one way to cure it—so very deep it was.

The boatman's daughter became Madame S—.

Her husband rose to be a lieutenant-general, and the boatman's daughter became as elegant and graceful as any lady of the court of Louis Philippe.