CASINCA.

[*Continued from 1st page*]

"It was just a week before the time fixed for my marriage with Casinca that a most strange incident occurred. I had sought my lodgings and retired early that night. I had been asleep but a short time when I had a most startling dream. In my dream, which was so intensely real as to make a deep impression upon me, I saw the interior of the Pinelli dwelling. It appeared that the moonlight was shinning in at an open window and falling upon a couch where reposed the form of Casinca Pinelli. She was fast asleep, one white bare arm, from which the loose flowing sleeve had fallen back, thrown across her breast, the intensely white moonlight seeming to glorify the beauty of her face.

"As I gazed entranced at the vision of loveliness, I seemed to hear a footstep in the room and the next instant the dark form of a strange man entered, a blood stained dagger in his hand. The sight gave me such a start that I rushed forward, a loud cry upon my lips. Then I awoke and sat bolt upright in my bed, hardly able to realize that it had all been a dream. So vivid and startling an impression did it make upon me that I got up and hastily drew on my clohtes and went out. The moonlight was flooding the town, rendering it almost as light as day. It was past 10 o'clock and few people were astir.

"I tried to shake off the effects of my strange dream, but could not do so, and moved by a sudden impulse I walked rapidly through the street and turned in the direction of the Pinelli home, filled with a vague, indefinable sense of danger that threatened the one I loved.

"I passed quickly through the town and was soon making my way up the pathlike road that led up the rugged hill. A few storm beaten larch trees grew along the rocky verge of a deep ravine upon my left, from which came the sound of waters leaping from precipitous rocks. Just a short distance ahead now, surrounded by a grove of rowan trees I could see the grey walls of the Pinelli house. It was wrapped in silence, and the black shadows of the trees which were flung across its walks gave it a weird and ghostly appearance. I stood for several moments gazing at the building as if to assure myself that no evil threatened the inmates; then as I was about to retrace my steps, convinced that my fears had only been imaginary, I saw the dark form of a man steal from the house and run swiftly down the path a few yards, then dart into the thick grove of trees.

"Alarmed at what I had seen, I hurried toward the building, a vague fear at my heart. As I drew near, a white robed figure emerged from the house and staggered down the path. It was Casinca Pinelli. As I hurried forward to meet her I saw her stagger forward and with a low, agonized cry sink in a heap upon the ground. In a moment I had reached her side and was bending over her. She was clothed only in her night garments, which looked deadly white in the light of the moon. As I stooped over her I saw that her face was as pale as death and that her garments were stained with blood.

CHAPTER II.

"A sickening deadly fear that she had been murdered came over me," continued the strange lodger after a slight pause. "I lifted her up and bore her into the house. As I entered the door a fearful sight met my gaze. Lying upon the floor by an open window I saw the girl's father, an awful knife wound in his breast, his eyes wide open and glazed in death.

"Half crazed at the awful sight, I hurriedly deposited my burden upon a couch. As I did so she showed signs of recovering, and opening her eyes sat up and stared vacantly about her. Then, seeming to realize what had happened, she uttered an agonizing cry and covered her face with her hands.

"'Oh, my poor father! They have murdered him!' She arose, and staggering across the room threw herself upon the dead body of her father, moaning piteously. Realizing now that a murder had been committed, I saw the necessity of immediate action if the escape of the criminal was to be prevented. I knelt quickly by the girl's side.

"'Who has done this deed? For heaven's sake, speak quickly!' I cried lifting the girl genly from the floor. She gazed at me in a bewildered manner.

"'It was the Balaccos,' she said. 'There is a terrible vendetta between that family and ours. They had sworn to kill my father, and they have kept their oath. It is now the house of Pinelli's turn to seek vengeance.'

"She spoke impulsively, lifting her hand to heaven, a vengeful light shining in her dark, lustrous eyes. She seemed oblivious to everything save the thoughts of vengeance which were plainly depicted upon her pallid face. Never till my dying day shall I forget the picture she made standing there in the moonlight, her thin, clinging garments, dabbled with blood, falling like the drapery of some splendid statue about her voluptuous form; her bare arm, matchless in its mold, uplifted to heaven; her pallid face, with lips apart, as if invoking vengeance from above upon the murderer of her father. I stood for a moment as if spell-bound, amazed, intoxicated at the splendid vision, half believing that I was only dreaming or was standing before some wondrous creation in marble that enriches the galleries of the Vatican.

"Presently her hand dropped to her side, and throwing a thin shawl about her she turned to me, seeming now for the first time to recognize my presence.

"'Ah, thank heaven, you are here to help me! she said. 'What is to be done?'

"'I shall raise the alarm—the authorities must be notified at once—the murderer must not escape,' I said. I hurried from the room and ran to the cabin of a peasant that stood on the road a short distance away. In responce to my loud and impatient knock the frightened face of a man was thrust out of the small window.

"'Go and bring the officers,' I said, speaking in the language of the island. 'A murder has been committed at the Pinelli house.' I thrust a piece of gold into his hand as I spoke and hurried away. I heard frightened exclamations come from the inmates of the hut and a few moments later saw the man running swiftly in the direction of the town. Fearing harm might befall Casinca in my absence, I hurried back to the house. I found her standing by the open window beside the body of her murdered father. I led her gently from the room to the porch, where the cool night wind came up from the sea, and forced her into a seat.

"'You are not hurt?' I asked.

"'No. I was only shocked at the tragedy. I heard the noise—I came in, but the work was done. I saw the assassin as he went out.'

"'Thank heaven you are not hurt', I replied.

"In a few minutes the man returned from the town, bringing with him a half dozen gendarmes, their blue frock coats and white epaulets looking as if they had been hastily donned. One of them remained on guard at the house while the others began to search the neighborhood for the missing murderer.

"In company with two of the gendarmes I hurried in the direction taken by the stranger whom I had seen coming from the house. The remainder of the night was spent in searching for the assassin, but no trace of him could be discovered, nor was any clew to his whereabouts obtained after weeks of search by the authorities.

"By the death of her father Casinca was left an orphan without a living relative, and knowing that she was now utterly alone in the world I urged upon her the necessity of an early marriage. She consented, and two weeks later we were married. Wishing to take her away from the scene of the shocking tragedy, which seemed to weigh heavily upon her, we sailed immediately for Marseilles and thence proceeded to Paris. Here we spent three months of such happiness as rarely falls to the lot of mortals.

"If Casinca had been beautiful before, now as a wife she seemed more than that term could ever imply. Wherever she appeared wealth and title hastened to pay her homage. She was indeed a glorious creature—the ideal of perfection in woman, superb in face and form beyond the sculptor's dream.

"In her I realized my brightest dreams of perfect happiness upon earth. Love and life were complete. She repaid my ardent love with all the passion of her soul, and I could ask no more.

"After remaining in Paris three months we came to America and took up our residence at a beautiful country seat I had purchased not far from the city of New York, and here it was I began upon a work of art that had long existed with me only as a dream. It had come to me that night as I saw Casinca standing over her murdered father, her hand uplifted as if to invoke vengeance from above upon the murderer. If my hand could only execute what that vision had created in my brain, I felt that the fame of a Phideas or a Michael Angelo would be mine.

"In my dreams I already saw the work completed—the marble figure of Casinca standing with uplifted hand above her murdered father, while in her passionate and resolute face was depicted the stern resolve for vengeance and retribution. In my imagination I pictured how the world of art would receive and praise my 'Vendetta,' and with these thoughts filling my soul I began work, with Casinca for my model. With the inspiration of her presence I had no fear of failure and worked as I had never worked before. Sometimes she would come to me, and throwing her arms about me would implore me to take more rest, but my very soul was absorbed in my work, and I labored almost ceaselessly till it was finished.

"How can I describe the feeling of pride and triumph that filled my breast as I at last looked upon the completed work! By a rare inspiration, for which I could never account, I had caught the very expression, the poise of head, the attitude—everything—and to me the cold, pulseless marble seemed imbued with life and thought. The very expression of the face seemed filled with a passionate resolve, and from the parted lips there seemed issuing a vow for vengeance! You may call me an egotist to speak thus, but I take no credit to myself for what I had accomplished. It was only an imitation of what I had already seen. But if it was a triumph for myself—oh, how bitterly I have repented that triumph!

"I have not told you yet how my wife sought to deter me from my purpose in the work I had attempted. She could not see how worldly fame could add to our already perfect happiness. The work was drawing my soul from hers, she told me more than once, and in seeking greater happiness than that which God had already lavished upon us, she feared that that which we enjoyed might be taken from us. In the simplicity and goodness of her soul she saw no pleasure in winning the plaudits or homage of the world, and she sometimes expressed a vague fear that the vengeance of God might be visited upon us, that we might be taught to be content with the good things he in his wise providence saw fit to bestow. But in my selfish ambition I gave no heed to her words or entreaties. She had not been endowed with the artist's soul—she could not see things as I saw them. Such were my thoughts.

"With what a feeling of ecstasy and exultation I hurried to her chamber when the great work of my life was finished. I threw open the door and rushed in. She was not there. Hurriedly I searched through the other rooms, but she was nowhere to be found! I roused the servants and searched everywhere, but without avail. She had disappeared as completely as if she had never lived. I grew frantic with suspense and grief as the vain search for my wife went on. At times I felt that my reason was deserting, but I felt that insanity would be welcome if it could but relieve me from the tortures I endured. At last they told me that she had gone away and I would never see her more—they pretended to have found a letter that she left bidding me goodby and saying we should never meet again, but I knew they were all lying. I think I should have killed them for that slander if I had not been prevented. Of the days of agony that followed I can give but little account. It all seems like some vague, troubled dream now from which I can never wake.

"I knew I should find my wife some day. Nothing could shake me in that belief. Be where she would, I should find her. From room to room I wandered, with a vague and indefinable feeling that I should find her. At last I entered my studio, for the first time since my wife had disappeared, and as I came in a cry of joy escaped me. I saw Casinca, my wife, standing by the high window looking just as she did on that fatal night when she stood above the dead body of her father. She stood in the same position she had then assumed, and there was the same look upon her pallid face. I ran to her and threw my arms about her form, but only cold, pulseless marble met my warm embrace. An awful horror stole over me. I called her name frantically, but no response came from the chill, lifeless stone. Then the dreadful truth came to me. An angry Providence had visited an awful vengeance upon me, and to punish me for my selfish ambition had transformed my wife into cold, pulseless stone. As I realized the awful calamity that had overtaken me my very soul seemed crushed into the earth. What was fame to me now when I had lost all that made life dear? Ah, how willingly would I then have exchanged all hopes of future worldly fame for just one word or one glance of love from the speechless, lifeless stone! My God! My God! How I have ever lived I cannot tell. For hours I remained with my arms about the lifeless figure, praying that death might come and give me relief from the dreadful agony and despair that weighed down my very soul

"At last they came and led me away, speaking in low tones and looking strangely at each other. They took me away that I might be benefitted by a change of scene, but well I knew that nothing could ever bring peace to my agonized soul. It was then that I began to search for some means of restoring my transformed wife to life, and that is now the only object I live for. I have consulted the most learned authorities, but find nothing to give me hope. From science I appealed to the new science of theosophy, but I am only mystified and bewildered, not knowing whether to hope or despair. My friends sought to deter me from my purpose, but I escaped from them, and returning to my home I packed my effects and came here, bringing with me that figure of pulseless marble that was once filled with warm life and passionate love that I might pursue my work uninterrupted. Ah, if you will only help me to restore her to life, all the wealth that I have shall be yours. Now that you know my story, surely you will pity and sympathize with my wretched lot."

Here the narrator paused and sat with head lowered as if in deepest dejection. I shall not deny that his strange story impressed me strangely, yet it had served to confirm my suspicions regarding his mental condition. I felt convinced that he was insane or was laboring under a most strange hallucination. How much, if any, of the story he had told was true? Until this problem was solved I felt that I should not be able to give a positive opinion of his case.

As this thought came to me I remembered, with something like a start, what the landlord had told me regarding a heavy box which the stranger had brought to the inn with him. Could it be that it contained the marble figure the stranger had spoken of in his story? No; I could not bring myself to think so. The whole story must be merely the production of a deceased brain and the marble statue a myth. But the unquestioned presence of the mysterious box in the stranger's room puzzled me not a little. My reflections over the matter were suddenly cut short by the strange lodger, who arose and said:

"Come with me to my room, that I may convince you of the truthfulness of what I have told."

As he spoke he turned and walked into the house. I arose and followed him, a strange sensation at my heart, for the mystery which surrounded the interior of the man's room had roused my curiosity to the highest pitch. But whatever that mystery was I felt that I should now soon have it unveiled to me. I followed Buford along the dark hall. We soon reached the door of his room. He unlocked it, and throwing it open we entered.

CAHPTER III.

As we entered the room Martin Buford turned and closed and locked the door. Night had now come and it was quite dark in the room. I glanced about me, but could distinguished nothing. Buford lit a lamp and placed it on a table. The first object that my eyes fell upon was a very large box which occupied a corner of the room near where I was standing. A single glance showed me that the lid had been taken off and the contents removed.

Letting my eyes wander to the center of the room, they encountered a sight that caused me to utter an exclamation of astonishment. There, with the lamp light falling upon its polished surface, was the marble statue of a women. It was of exquisite workmanship and marvellous in beauty. The passionate face was turned upward, the lips parted as if in speech, the perfectly molded arms uplifted the whole poise and attitude of the figure corresponding with the decription given by Buford of his "Vendetta." At the feet of the statue, lying and half reclining against the marble support, was the sculptured figure of a man, an ugly knife wound in his breast and his face rigid in death.

I stood spellbound—amazed at the marvelous production. I could not have been more impressed had the tragic scene which it was created to represent been enacted before my very eyes. As I looked upon the face of the murdered man I shuddered at its dreadful reality. And the figure of the woman—how shall I describe its immortal beauty? Never before had my eyes beheld its equal. Amazement and admiration filled my soul.

"You think it is beautiful?" said Buford in almost a whisper, his voice showing intense emotion.

I started as if I had been suddenly aroused from a deep sleep. So absorbed had I become in what I beheld that I was utterly oblivious to all else.

"Ah, it is more than beautiful!" I replied. "It is divine!"

"If you could have only seen her in life!" he cried in a voice hoarse with emotion. "Oh, my God! My poor Casinca! Why should you be punished, too, for my sins?" He threw his arms about the figure as he spoke, passionate sobs escaping his lips.

I drew him gently away, strangely moved at the solemn and pathetic scene.

"Come," I said. "Let us go out. You must not give way to your emotions in this way."

He turned, and unlocking the door followed me into the hall. After he had closed and locked the door we went out on the veranda. He implored me to assist him in the work of restoring his wife to life. I saw that it would be best for me to humor his strange whim and promised to lend him all the aid in my power. He thanked me warmly, and promising to see me on the morrow we separated for the night.

Despite the fact that I looked upon Buford as laboring under the effects of a serious mental malady, I must confess that his story made a strange impression me, and what I had just witnessed in his room served to deepen the feeling that already possessed me.

(*Continued next week.*)

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"19 No Spruce or Pine trees shall be cut by any Licensee under any License, not even for piling, which will not make a log at least 18 feet in length and ten inches at the small end; and if any such shall be cut, the Lumber shall be liable to double stumpage and the License be forfeited"

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All the above are stylish and fashionable, being the latest importations from London, Paris and New York. Mail orders promptly and carefully attend to.

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CHATHAM

SHERIFF'S SALE.

To be sold at Public Auction on Friday, the 10th, day of April next, in front of the Post Office in Chatham, between the hours of 12 noon and 5 o'clock p m.

All the right, title, interest and share of Charles A. McDougall in and to all those several lots or tracts of land situate lying and being on the easterly side of the south west branch of the Miramichi River, in the Parish of Blackville and County of Northumberland, and abutted and bounded as follows, viz:—All that lot or tract of land situate, lying and being on the easterly side of said river bounded northerly by lands occupied by Alex McDonald, southerly by lands owned and occupied by Alex Campbell, easterly by crown land and westerly or in front by the said branch of the Miramichi River, containing 400 acres more or less.

Also, all that other piece, lot or tract of land situate lying and being on the easterly side of said branch of the Miramichi River, bounded northerly by crown land, easterly by crown land and southerly by land owned or occupied by James Campbell; and in front or westerly by the rear boundary line of lands owned by Alex. Campbell, containing 200 acres more or less.

Also all other the lands, tenements, hereditaments and premises of the said Charles A. McDougall, whatsoever and wheresoever situate in the said County of Northumberland.

The same having been seized by me, under and by virtue of an Execution issued out of the County Court of Saint John, by Austin T. Foster against Thomas H. Prescott and the said Charles A. McDougall.

JOHN SHIRREFF,
Sheriff.

Sheriff's Office Newcastle, this 21st. day December, A. D. 1895.

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SHERIFF'S SALE!

To be sold at Public Auction, in front of the Registry Office, in Newcastle, on Friday the 6th day of March next between the hours of 12 noon and five o'clock p m:

All the estate, share, right, title and interest of James O Fish of, in, to or out of all the following described pieces or parcels of land situate lying and being in the Parish of Newcastle in the County of Northumberland, and Province of New Brunswick viz:

All that piece or parcel of land situate lying and being in the Town of Newcastle in the said County of Northumberland, and bounded southerly or in front by Water street, on the lower or easterly side by lands formerly owned and occupied by the late Moses M. Sargeant and by lands presently owned by Mrs. Mary Vondy Northerly or in rear by Mary Street, and on the upper or westerly side by the Masonic Hall property

Also, all that other piece of land situate in the said Town of Newcastle and County aforesaid, and bounded southerly or in front by Mitchell street, on the lower or easterly side by lands formerly owned and occupied by the late John Williamson northerly or in rear by land occupied by Mrs. Golightly, and on the upper or westerly side by a lane, being the land and premises formerly occupied by John Watters.

Also—All that piece of land situate in the Parish of Newcastle, in the county aforesaid, bounded southerly or in front by the Great road, on the lower or easterly side by lands formerly owned by the late John Atchison, on the upper or westerly side by lands owned and occupied by James Nevin, and extending northerly or in rear to the full extent of the original Grant,—being the land known and distinguished as "The Fish Farm" Which several pieces of land were conveyed to the said James O Fish by James Fish by deed dated the eleventh day of April A. D 1889.

Also, all other the lands tenements, hereditaments and premises of the said James O Fish, whatsoever and wheresoever situate in the said County of Northumberland.

The same having been seized by me under and by virtue of an Execution issued out of the Supreme Court, at the suit of William A. Hickson against the said James O. Fish.

JOHN SHIRREFF,
Sheriff.

Sheriff's Office Newcastle this 26th day of November, A. D. 1895.

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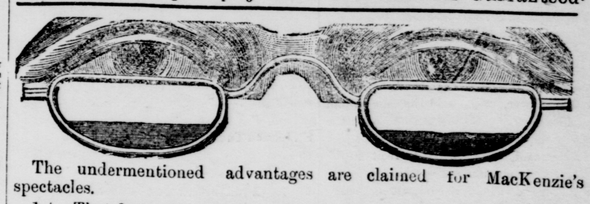

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