CHAPTER XIL.

AN EVIL PLAN. As Pierre Turrian stood, like one spellbound, reading the slip of paper which Beryl had put into his hand his first struggle was to fight with the sense of paralyzing astonishment which the girl's words had produced.

Then he ransacked every nook and cranny of his memory to recall what had passed between them at the time of their first interview, while mixed up curiously with the whole mental effort was a recollection of his blunder, for which he cursed himself, in mistaking this calm, unimpassioned, quiet girl for

His first sign of a recovery from his surprise was a laugh, forced, short, unnatural and sneering, but still an advance from his silence of blank dismay. "How do you say you got this, Miss Leycester?" he asked, waving the paper toward her and speaking with a sneer

on his lip. "The question is not how I got it, but what it means," returned Beryl

"On the contrary, it has everything to do with it. It is the most extraordinary coincidence I have ever heard

"Is that your answer?" And Beryl looked more stern than before, every feature speaking her disbelief. "There is nothing to answer in such a thing as this. If you want an answer, all I can say is that either those who

gave you this have imposed upon you in the most monstrous fashion in the world, or for some purpose which I don't pretend to know you are trying when I want to know where you got this extraordinary document." aughed again now, as if the charge were beneath serious notice.

"You are recovering from your first surprise, and in your effort to find time in which to invent some sort of explanation you make it a kind of implied charge against me that I have been prying into your secrets. I understand you perfectly and have seen through your pretenses from the first. Please to appreciate that fact in whatever you say."

He looked at her viciously as she spoke, but he was almost frightened at the cold, implacable, resolute frankness of her gray eyes. He shrugged his shoulders and lifted his white hands and smiled till he showed his teeth as he replied in a tone of assumed carelessness:

"You are a delightful antagonist. Miss Leycester, so fair, so true, so straight. But tell me, if you have made up your mind beforehand that I have all sorts of pretenses to be seen through and that I am the villain your looks imply, what is the use of this conversa-

"I have said nothing about your being a villain, M. Turrian. I have asked you only what that entry in the St. Sulpice book means. That is all." "And in what capacity do you do me

the honor to catechise me? On whose behalf do you act? In what interest?" There was no mistaking the palpable sneer in the question. "There is no necessity to answer that

question. You are not compelled to answer what I have asked you unless you please." He was cunning enough of fence to see his advantage and to press it instantly.

"On the continent, Miss Leycester, we are not accustomed to meet with lady knights errant who take up the cause of men of the world whom they imagine to have been ill used. It may be quite usual in England, of course, but that is my reason for asking in whose interest you undertake this energetic detective work." His last words stung her, but she

showed no irritation. "The one question is what that paper means," she said firmly. "There is no other question of any importance."

"Well, that is quite my view." He had now recovered his customary impudent audacity and was beginning to enjoy the incident. "And in that view this paper means that a young lady of excellent family, unblemished character, great mental capacity and many personal charms," and he bowed and paused a moment, "who is not married to Sir Jaffray Walcote, much to the regret of that distinguished baronet's prying into matters which do not concern her at all, except, of course, in so far as they relate to that period of her life when-it was generally understood she would make that marriage."

"You will do no good by evading the question I have asked you in the attempt-a useless one, I assure you-to irritate me by insults into a forgetfulness of it," replied Beryl, seeing that he paused to notice what effect his words would have upon her.

"It looks-I do not say it is, but it looks—as if any such action were impelled by a desire to injure the woman who had taken the place of that young lady of excellent character as the wife of Sir Jaffray. The world is a harsh censor, Miss Leycester," he said, with an indescribable air of patronage and worldly wisdom, "and reads the motives which lie on the surface, especially when somebody's character is dirtied in the process. Had you not better be care-

"That is nonsense," replied Beryl curtly, "and you know it as well as I. What my motive may be is my own concern, and I am not likely to ask you or"- She checked herself, and in a flash he filled up the gap.

"Say Sir Jaffray's wife," he said, with a grin. "Or any one," she added, passing by the interruption, "to help me to take care of myself. If things are as that paper says, the motives of those who discover the truth are of no concern. I am not here to discuss motives, but facts. Is that true or not?" pointing to the paper,

"Certainly and emphatically it is not true in the sense in which you seem to imply it-that I ever married Lola Crawshay at the Church of St. Sulpice in Montreux. The thing is ridiculous." And he shrugged his shoulders again with his usual gesture.

"You make my part much more difficult," said the girl, and then she turned aside a moment in thought. "Do you understand that?" she asked after a moment of consideration.

"Miss Leycester, I understand nothing whatever of all of this," he an-

swered. "I have evidence which puts it beyond the shadow of a doubt that what that paper says is true, that you are the Pierre Turrian named on the face of it, and that on the date given you married the Lola Crawshay mentioned there, and that the Lola Crawshay is the same woman who is now my Cousin Jaffray's wife. Is that plain enough? If you wish to know how I found it out. I may tell you that your own conduct at the last interview we had set me told about your fiddle strings did not | plans, but when I got about again my for a moment deceive me, that your lady had flown, and, what was worse, confusion when I told you of the mar- her father was as dead as the tombstone riage made it as plain as day that your | they put over him in Neufchatel cemeinterest was infinitely greater than you tery. Well, I let her go. I let her feel pretended, while your own mention of her freedom. I am kind and gentle as Mentreux and your subsequent obvious | the morning when no one gets in my attempt to make me think there was | way. I let her go. I knew I could find nothing of importance in your connec- her, and being always an honest and tion with Montreux confirmed my opin- industrious soul I set to work whereby Jen, and that a subsequent chair of cir. I to live, but in a year I began to pine,

THE THE PARTY OF T

cumstances, all save one unsought by me, forced the full discovery upon me. That every fact is known to me please to recognize as absolutely certain."

He had listened to her statement almost breathlessly, yet showing outwardly no more than a sort of polite indifference, but he was revolving hastily in his thoughts a score of different courses of action.

There was no use in further conceal-

It was clear from the pitiless frankness of the deliberate statement that this girl was speaking the truth, and it seemed as though all the pleasant plans of an easy life were to be shattered in a moment, and he hated the woman who had done it just as he hated everything that came in the path of his enjoyment.

He glanced at her vindictively as she was saying the last words, and he felt that he would give half his life if he could have seen that cold, hard, merciless face lying dead before him at that

That thought started another and a grimmer one, so grim that involuntarily he glanced about him, as if the mere harboring of it might be dangerous, while his lips felt suddenly so parched that he moistened them with his tongue. The idea grew on him like the germ of a noisome plague, and instinctively his cunning prompted him to shape his course by it. What he had to find out was whether any one else knew of this

Now that his eyes had been so rudely opened to the real cleverness of the girl who had thus faced him his wits had know how best to deal with her. For that new plan of his he must

"I accept your conditions, Miss Leycester," he said when she finished. "I admit-for now it is useless to denythat what you have found out is true in every detail."

The suddenness of his change of manner and of the confession startled the girl more than anything that had yet passed, and she shrank back and slinched her hands tightly.

"Then what business have you here?" she cried in a voice filled with indigna-"I will tell you all, everything,"

he said. He paused a moment in indecision. He was doubtful even at the last moment whether for his purposes he would be wiser to put the blame on himself or on Lola, nor did he settle the point until he had begun to speak again. "You have learned much of the

truth," he said, "because you have learned the foundation fact of this most sad and terrible matter. Sir Jaffray Walcote and I are both married to the woman who is known as his wife, but by law and right she is my wife." The expression on Beryl's face deep-

ened to one of acute pain. "It is terrible!" she exclaimed, almost under her breath. She had been confident of it before, but this plain statement of it by the Frenchman

"You do not know all." "More than you seem to think," she nterposed. "I recognized that awful story which you told last night at din-

He looked very keenly at her for an instant, and something which he read in her face decided him so to tell the story as to make Lola appear the unwilling victim of his own villainy. "Ma foi, I told it well!" he ex-

claimed, with a boastful laugh. "And it was a devilish bit of revenge, and on my soul I was sorry for the poor girl. You know, Miss Leycester, I am not cast in the mold of common men. I can be as stanch and true and good as the rarest of men, but I can also be just as rough and hard—aye, and as merciless. Man that is born of woman is born sometimes with all a woman's qualities. My mother was a tigress. Let me smoke. It is long since I was in the confessional box, and I need tobacco to make the words come glibly."

He spoke with easy, fluent impudence, infinitely disgusting to Beryl, but chosen by him designedly to throw back the girl's pity on Lola, painting himself intentionally in the blackest colors.

"I married Lola Crawshay," he resumed after lighting a fresh cigarette. 'from no silly, sentimental notions, but because I had a hold over her on account of a trip of her long headed but somewhat irresponsible old father. To do the girl justice, she never did anything but hate me, but she was exceedingly useful, and-well, she was afraid to carry her hatred of me too far because I had a knack of using with excellent effect my knowledge of her fa-

ther's mistake. You understand?" He leered at her with repulsive assurance as he paused to take a couple of whiffs of the cigarette, which he did with great apparent enjoyment.

"You will make this as short as possible if you please," said Beryl, beginning to take the impression of the case

"Certainly. Well, I will pass over

our matrimonial life and hurry on to the end. There came the day when we had the scene on the Devil's rock. I colored the incident a little in my telling it last night, and the little episode of the stamping on my fingers was an effort of my own invention." He did not wish Beryl to think that Lola had done anything of the kind. "In the plain and uncolored version I had nothing but my own clumsy stupidity to blame for the whole affair. I had said things which did not please her ladyship-a man cannot always guard his tongue, you know, Miss Leycester, even to his wife-and when she retorted I tried force, and then when she resented it I started back, and, like a fool, fell over the edge of the cliff. How I was saved from instant death I cannot even guess, but I didn't die, as you can see for yourself, and when I found myself alive I had wit enough to hide the fact of my escape, seeing that in course of time I could probably make excellent use of it should she ever again

marry. I wasn't altogether a bad judge, as you will now admit. Was I?" "Have you anything else to tell me?" asked Beryl, with angry contempt. "Anything else?" And he laughed lightly and rolled the cigarette between his fingers and looked at it as he repeated the words with the air of one who repeats a good joke. "Anything else? I should think so, Why, I could fill up any number of your spare hours with the tale of any number of good things, but let me stick to this one while I am about it, I didn't get off scot free, of course. I sprained and bruised and strained and crushed myself in a goodly number of places, and

What was to be done? as soon as I could do so without that devoted wife of mine knowing anything about it I laid up and passed a month thinking, that the monstrous story you or two dismally in bed, maturing my for them all. She hated to think that must follow.

had thought of a means of escape from all the trouble, it had been merely that in her almost morbid eagerness to prevent scandal she meant that he must consent to go away at once and leave the future settlement of the difficulty

to droop, to fail, and I set out on my travels in search of her who had desertwith Lola, to be effected quietly in his ed me. In the course of time I tracked her to England, and-well, you know Her repugnance at his conduct made the rest." her even anxious to let the blow fall as

He stopped and waved his hand as though he had finished. "Go on-to the end," said Beryl.

"The end! Ma foi, the end is not yet! You gave me the news that my wife had done what I hoped she would, and act. Her own high sense of honor and you helped me to find her. I thank her deep religious feeling accentuated you. I found her, saw her, showed her in her thoughts the sense of bitter dewhat my power was and how she must spair which she imagined must overdo what I wished or be draggled in the | whelm Lola at being forced to admit dirt of scandal and calumny. Poor Lola! her crime and lose the man she loved I am sorry for her. She thought my so deeply or to go on living in what bones were bleaching at the foot of the was in truth a state of shame and sin. Devil's rock when they walked into her presence, covered with flesh and plothed in sprightly attire. Poor devil! But a man must live." And he laughed as if the thought tickled him.

Beryl looked at him with the deepest loathing and could scarce restrain the how to act in regard to Lola. words of scorn that rose to her lips. He read her looks.

"I see what you would say," he exclaimed, with his usual movement of down stairs the luncheon gong sounded. the shoulders as if to deprecate her and thus she had to pass through the opinion. "For the moment it is an ugly ordeal of seeing the man whom she looking part that I play, but Lola can knew on his own confession to be a well spare the little allowance which I require for my few wants. She made the mistake, not I, and man can't live without money. I am no Enoch Arden,



no risk. But now you have probably told half a dozen people, and the thing must end, and that's all about it. I'm

not sure that I'm sorry." "I have told no one as yet," said Beryl, and could she have seen the light that leaped into his eyes at the state. ment she would have been on her guard, but her head was turned from

him for the moment. "I don't mean told people outright, but you silly women do a hundred things which leave the trail of your movements such that a blind fool can see what you've been doing. It's the same thing.'

"No one has even a suspicion of this horrible secret except myself." said the girl. "There's but one paper which under any conceivable circumstances could suggest a clew to any one. I have been most scrupulous because I have had to think of the honor of the family. I have a plan"-

But at that moment the door of the conservatory was opened with a needless amount of noise, and some one came in coughing loudly and shuffling the feet on the tiled floor. The two turned and found Mrs. De Witt coming toward them.

"I hope I don't intrude, but upon my word I couldn't restrain myself any longer. I'm only a woman, you know, and when I'd seen you two here in such serious consultation for over an hourpositively, Beryl, over an hour, and nearly two-and as I was dying to know what it was all about I couldn't resist the temptation to make a noise and come in. M. Turrian, you interest me so much I can't bear to see you monopolized in this way, and by Beryl, too, of all people." And she looked from one to the other with curiosity in

"Madame, if the interest that you feel were only such as I could dare to hope I should feel that I had lived indeed." And he bowed with his exaggerated courtesy, while a mocking smile drew down the corners of his mouth.

"You Frenchmen are all equally insincere," she said. "But what on earth have you two been talking about, you

two of all others?" "You may not know, madame," replied Turrian gravely, "that Miss Leycester was the first person in England to whom I spoke on the great object of my presence here in England, that she then was able to throw most valuable light upon it, and now I have been explaining to her at great length all that is meant by the fifth string on a violin and all the part I have cast for myself. Is not that so, Miss Leycester?" He turned to her with unabashed impudence and smiled as he waited for her

Beryl passed over the question and spoke to Mrs. De Witt. "We had nearly finished. You did not interrupt. I want to think over what M. Turrian has said." And she

left them "She takes the interruption badly," said Mrs. De Witt when the two were alone. "I think she is a good deal changed-since this marriage," she added a little maliciously.

"I have heard about that," said M. Turrian significantly. "She is a very curious girl, I should think very close and secretive. Umph!" "She is as good as sterling gold," said Mrs. De Witt in a burst of enthu-

siasm, but, hedging her verdict instantly, "and, like all good people, sometimes very objectionable. As for closeness, she might be an iron safe." "I thought so," murmured the versation with a light compliment the

Frenchman, and as he turned the conthought was running in his head that Beryl aione knew the secret and that if by mischance she were to die it would die with her.

CHAPTER XIII. IN DEADLY PERIL.

Beryl went away from her interview with the Frenchman sorely perplexed as to what was best for her to do. She did not doubt a word of what had said against himself, and his callous confession of his villainous conduct had made her shudder with hate of him. She had never come into personal contact with any one who had a tithe of his rascality, and the experience was so strange and baffling that it confused and dazed her.

But the interview had changed her attitude toward Lola. It was clear to her now that, whatever might be Lola's faults, she was mere to be pitied than blamed in this matter, and Beryl thought with a shudder of loathing and disgust of the fate of any woman tied to such a scoundrel as Pierre Turrian and in his merciless power.

Beryl asked herself the question over and over again as she paced up and down her room, and there seemed no answer to it save one that spelled sorrow and misery and perhaps disgrace she had to bring all this trouble on those who were so dear to her, and she dreaded all the exposure and scandal that

When she had told the man that she The second of th

lightly as possible on Lola, who by this

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house. The mere sight of him sickened her, and when he turned and spoke to her and with his consummate audacity DUNLAP, COOKE & CO., rallied her upon her looks and hoped that all he had said about his scheme had AMHERST, N. S. not troubled her she could scarcely re-

WALLACE, N. S.

innuendoes as if challenging her to As soon as the lunch was over, however, she followed him and said she must speak to him alone. He turned willingly and instantly, with his false, mocking, ever ready

He perceived this, and with his dar-

ing effrontery dropped little hints and

time no doubt bitterly repented what

she had done, and Beryl's pity for her

grew every moment as she dwelt on the

man's cruel baseness in trading on her

Gradually a single resolve cleared it-

She would make the man go away at

once-that very day, indeed-under

pain of Sir Jaffray being told of every-

With this resolve she left her room

to seek M. Turrian and tell him what

she had decided. As she was going

treacherous scoundrel eating and drink-

ing and laughing and talking with the

chivalrous friend whom he was betray-

ing every moment that he staid in the

thing, and then she would determine

self in her thoughts.

main at the table.

smile on his face. "Shall we go to the conservatory again?" he asked. "It is an excellent place for these touching little confidences. I declare I am almost glad of them. They let me see so much of you." "Anywhere will do for the few words I have to say," returned Beryl angrily. "It is this: Unless you leave Walcote manor within an hour Sir Jaf-

fray will know all." "Yes?" he answered, raising his eyebrows. "Well, I am sorry for my poor friend, then. It will be a blow to him. and he will feel it. For I shall not go, Miss Leycester. I can't make any plausible excuse. But this I will do, if you like-I will go tomorrow morning." "I will give you till 12 o'clock tomorrow," said the girl, "and not one

hour longer.' "It shall be as you will!" he exclaimed, and when Beryl turned on her heel and left him without another word he looked after her and muttered between his teeth: "Twelve o'clock tomorrow. Between now and then there is a night, young lady, and for you a long one, or I am a fool and a coward." Then he sauntered on to the conservatory by himself and smoked thoughtfully for some minutes. Afterward he went out and walked round the house, looking at the position and height from the ground of the bedroom windows in the wing where he knew Beryl's room was. and he was pleased with what he saw. "It will do," he muttered. "And now there must be a word or two with Sir Jaffray's wife. She must take her part in this scene, and she will want very

He turned into a side path in the grounds and walked for some time. plunged in close, concentrated thought. When he returned to the house, he had his plan completed, and he went to and Lola. In the hall he met Mrs. De Witt. who assumed an air of disconsolate trouble.

careful handling. Let me think it out a

"Where is everybody?" she asked. "I am all alone. Won't you take pity on me, M. Turrian?" "Where is Sir Jaffray?" he asked. wishing the woman at the bottom of

"Sir Jaffray and Lola have gone out riding. Sir Jaffray had a sudden summons to a meeting of county folks about some political business or other, and Lola has ridden off with him. They're like a couple of ridiculous lovers in their first calf love, those two. Isn't it absurd? They must always be together." "Time will change all that," said the Frenchman. "It is not the sort of folly

of which you would be guilty, ma-

"Do you mean that nastily?" "No, indeed. But you know so well how to keep at a cool distance from your admirers, even from your husband." And he bowed. He felt vicious at Lola's absence, and Mrs. De Witt's pertness irritated him. "Men are like mites under the micro-

scope, requiring to be kept at a focus distance. "Possibly, but be careful. The microscope may serve as the burning glass of passion and warm them into life," he answered insolently, looking at her with an expression in his eyes which made her flush. "Come," he said, pass-

ing his arm through hers and leading her away to the music hall; "let me sing to you." "Anything to kill the time till tonight," was his thought. "What shall I sing to you?" he asked,

putting her close to him by the piano, so close that he could stop and touch her hand when he pleased. He ran his fingers over the keys with the touch of a master and broke into a long Italian love song, running through all the phases of emotional love and singing the softest, sweetest words in his wonderful voice that rose and fell in the cadences of the air, now wild, now rollicking, now joyous and again soft like the plaint of a dove, and ending with a strain that made even Mrs. De Witt herself forgetful and emotional and all but brought the tears to her eyes.

"You see what you can do with me." he said in a gentle, caressing tone, laving a hand on hers, which she did not shake off, while he looked right into

She made a movement then as if to take her hand from his, and quickly he turned to the piano.

"You are cruel," he said without looking at her, and then he burst again into a song in which his whole heart and soul seemed to be caught in a strong, irresistible swirl of emotion. He was like one beside himself till the end came suddenly and quickly, and then, as if obeying an irresistible impulse, he turned to her swiftly, and, catching her in his quick, lithe embrace. he held her close to him while he kissed her three times passionately right full on the lips.

She half screamed and struggled back, frightened at what she had deemed his sudden passion for her and yet not wholly displeased at having fired the man. Then she found her voice and cried; "How dare you?" And in a tumult of

mingled emotion she fled out of the To be Continued.

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