

His words had revealed to her with lightning vividness the full herror and hopelessness of her position.

The price of her sin had nearly been murder, and the thought overwhelmed her, yet she was helpless. Why was her fate linked with that of

this man of infamy, who held in his relentless hands the power to crush her life and dog her to ruin? Where could it all end save in greater misery for them all? And then she re-

proached herself bitterly for having sought to escape from the meshes of the net which fate had woven round her. For some time she could not regain her self command; but, recognizing at last how worse than useless with a man like Pierre Turrian was any attitude

but that of firmness, she made a great effort to show a bold front to him. "Better?" he sneered as soon as she raised her head. "It was rather a hard hit, I dare say, but you mustn't lose your nerve just now. There's work to be done."

"You are right," she answered steadily; "there is work, but it must not and shall not be murder."

"You'd be much wiser if you didn't use such ugly terms. You seem to forget that half the actions of the whole world depend for their respectability upon their description. Now, if you've enough pluck left to listen quietly, I'll soon show you which way your interest

"You can say what you like. It is immaterial. He glanced at her angrily and muttered an oath at her for the tone in

"There is no time now for losing our tempers, or else you'd make me do so with that infernal sneering manner," he cried angrily. "This is how things stand: You married me at Montreux at the Chapel of St. Sulpice, and you are now in law, if not in love, my wife. Being still my wife, you married the master of this place, and in doing that committed what your law calls bigamy. You did it, as you will say, in ignorance, hoping that you had seen the last of me when the stamp of that pretty but energetic foot of yours sent me rolling down into the gorge from the Devil's rock, but unfortunately for your plea of ignorance when I came here you went on pretending that you were Sir Jaffray's wife and continued to stay here, though you knew the marriage was bigamous and void. Do you see what that does? It just pricks the bubble of your innocence, and it puts you a deal deeper into the mud than you were before. That's all, and if it's any consolation

much as possible." He stopped and looked at her in triumph and as if expecting an outburst. but she had mastered her emotion by this time completely.

to you you may know that I saw that

from the first, and it suited my purpose

that you should be compromised as

"Go on," she said quietly. "That means that you can at any moment be put on your trial for bigamy and have to face the whole world from the prisoner's dock, and, what is more, that I can put you there and will if you drive me to it. Get that into your head clearly."

"I am waiting to know what you want. I have never doubted either your bullying cowardice or your cunning." "What I want is easily said. I want to clear away from your path the difficulties that threaten to ruin you."

"You are suddenly very solicitous on my account," she retorted. "And I mean to show you the only way in which it can be done," he continued, not heeding the interruption. "Sir Jaffray has settled on you a good many thousands of pounds, and, as I happen to know, he has in his will. like a loving husband should, left you everything that he could leave without touching the entailed estates. Now"he paused and looked very closely at

her and spoke very deliberately-"if Sir Jaffray were to die, say, by any accident or suddenly in any way you would as suddenly be freed from all your embarrassments.' She met his look and returned it with

one which seemed to hold his eyes fixed "Well?" She uttered the single sylla-

destion without allowing a sign or symptom of her feeling to be seen in "I mean," and is voice grew a trifle

hoarse and unsteady—"I mean that Sir Jaffray is the one obstacle in your path, and it is necessary for your sake and for mine that the obstacle should be removed." Lola elinched her hands till the nails

nearly ran into her palms, and she bit her lip hard in her agitation, and it was fully a minute before she trusted herself to speak.

The Frenchman filled up the interval by lighting a fresh cigarette and walking up and down the room. He was glad of the pause, for the strain of the moment told on him. He was very pale, and the perspiration came out in a line of beads on his forehead.

"I think I understand you," said Lola at length when she could trust herself to speak. "And what is to happen after-after what you mean?" He was by the door of the room when she spoke, and he turned and answered.

standing still. He tried to speak lightly. "What should happen?" he cried with a wave of the hands and a shrug of the shoulders. "You would be free,

and I would claim you as my wife." "You would claim me!" she repeated. "Certainly," he said masterfully. "You would be my wife"-

He stopped suddenly without finishing the sentence and turned toward the

"What's that?" he oried. He rushed to the door and tried to open it quickly, but in his haste fumbled with the

handle and then threw it open and looked out. There was no one there, though he thought he could hear the whisk of a

dress, but he said nothing of this to

"I was mistaken," he said, returning events. to the room and closing the door behind

"It must be a devil's plot indeed," said Lola, "when it makes even you imagine that there are eavesdroppers." He made no answer to this.

"Well, you know my plan now," he said. "It is the only one possible to get us out of this mess. What do you

"You don't expect me to reply offhand that I am ready to take part in a plot to murder my husband?' "Why not? You have already re-

hearsed the part with me." The malice in his tone and face made Lola clinch her teeth and flush with anger. But she did not let the hot words that rose to her lips escape them. Instead of this she asked as calmly as she could force herself to speak:

"How do you propose to carry the plan?" "Oh, there are 50 ways. Any one of a hundred drugs that can be got without difficulty will do all that we need, and any one of a hundred opportunities which can be as easily found

or made will let us, either you or I, do "And when would you propose that

you or I"-she paused on the words-"should do this?" "The sooner the better," he answered as coldly as if he had been discussing some trifling matter of everyday routine. "I can get you the drug, or you can get me the chance, and tomorrow should see you free from your troubles." "Even if I could bring myself to do what you ask," said Lola, "I could not

do it at once. I must have time to nerve myself." "You needed no time on the Devil's rock," he said hastily.

"I will not do this without consideration. Tomorrow I will give you an answer-yes or no." "You are a fool, Lola! Any hour may bring that girl Leycester back

knowledge. We dare not delay an unnecessary hour." "You know me, and that what I say

here, or she may write her cursed



Sir Jaffray, looking very white and stern, entered the room. not denounce you myself to Sir Jaffray and face all that may have to come. To be once more the acknowledged wife of a man like you is a hateful prospect."

"Better to be the wife of a man like me than the wanton of another." "You scoundrel!" cried Lola. All the passion that she had been holding in check blazed forth at this taunt, and, raising the riding whip which she held in her hand, she struck him with all her force right across the face, leaving a crimson wale on his livid cheek.

His rage was so violent that he trembled with the force of it, and, rushing forward, he tore the whip from her hand and flung it to the other end of the room. "You she devil!" he muttered, glar-

ing into her face with murder in his eyes while Lola faced him without flinching and smiled scornfully at the mark on his face. He watched her warily and cunningly for a moment, and then, darting forward.

seized her and commenced to struggle with her, striving to force her backward to a sofa, rage lending strength to his supple, sinewy form. She struggled on her side, putting forth all her strength, which was very great for a woman, and for a time she

resisted him and held him in check. She would not scream and did not utter But the struggle was an unequal one, and gradually she felt herself beginning

to lose way before him. Her riding habit hampered her, and she began to fear that he would overpower her. She strove hard to think how she could prevent him from hurting her without calling for assistance from the servants. Not for a moment did she lose her

presence of mind, though she knew well the desperate character of the man she had to deal with, and it was only in the last extremity, when she felt that she could not continue the struggle and that her life would be in danger if she did not have help, that she resolved to cry for assistance.

But there was no need. Just at that moment they both heard the sound of a horse's gallop and the stamping of its feet as the rider checked it, throwing it upon its haunches just outside of the window.

It was Sir Jaffray, and the sight brought the Frenchman to his senses. In another minute Sir Jaffray, looking very white and stern and carrying his heavy hunting crop in his hand, entered the room.

Lola, exhausted and breathless with her efforts, had sunk upon a low chair, while her late assailant stood upon the defensive.

> CHAPTER XVI. HORSEWHIPPED.

Sir Jaffray's first thought was naturally for Lola. "Are you hurt, my darling?" he asked, crossing to her and bending lovingly over her.

"No, it is nothing. Oh, I am so glad you have come!" And now that danger for herself and the excitement were over she was far more unsteady and unnerved than she had been before.

She began now to fear the effect of an encounter between the two men and felt that in a moment all that she had striven to gain might be lost. She clung to Sir Jaffray's arm and would not re-

"Let me go, dear one. And you-go to your room. Leave me to deal with this-gentleman.' But she would not and clung to him

"Come, Lola," in a voice that she knew must be obeyed. "I will stay," she said and then loosed his arm.

"I do not wish it," said the baronet firmly. But Lela would not yield.

"I would rather," she answered. "As you will, then," said Sir Jaffray Then he turned to Pierre Turrian,

who had been watching the pair closely and thinking rapidly what to do. The minute's breathing space which Sir Jaffray's hurried questioning of Lola had afforded had given time for reconsideration and had changed the

current of the Frenchman's thoughts

and the whole development of after At the moment of Sir Jaffray's entry Pierre Turrian's first instinct had been to save himself from an exceedingly awkward complication by throwing the baronet's anger on to Lola and exposing the true character of the relations be-

tween her and himself. But the minute's consideration caused him to change his intention completely. If he were to do anything of the kind,

all chance of benefiting by Lola's connection with the baronet would be gone. He would have lost his hold over her entirely, and the whole object which he had so long and so closely cherished would be sacrificed. On the other hand, all that there was

to fear was an unpleasant experience with Sir Jaffray's riding crop, a fight in which he might or might not get the worst, followed, of course, by expulsion from the house, but he would still have Lola in his power and still be able to reap the reward he was striving for, He measured up Sir Jaffray's strong,

well knit frame and recognized the certainty that he could not hope to escape without some hard blows, but the stake was worth winning. He had his tale ready, therefore, as soon as Sir Jaffray came toward him.

"This is no weapon," said the baronet angrily, "in any such sense as that. It is merely a horsewhip for the back of

a dastardly coward who dares to strike a woman!" Pierre Turrian made no reply, but he folded his arms across his chest and stood staring resolutely at his opponent, the mark of Lola's whip flaming like a brand of red shame on his face.

"Look out!" were Sir Jaffray's only words, and the next moment the long, strong lash of the hunting whip curled round the Frenchman's shoulders. It was like the first taste of blood to a wild animal mad with pent rage, and Sir Jaffray seized him by the collar of the coat and put his whole heart and strength into the swinging, cuts which he rained on the Frenchman's shoulders and back.

Then at the close he went to the door and threw it open.

"Now, go," he said hurriedly, "and let this be a lesson to you never to raise your hand against a woman again. Go, or by heaven I shan't be able to keep my hands from thrashing you again." To do the man justice, he had passed through the ordeal with as much composure as a man can hope to show un-

der a horsewhipping. He had neither winced nor flinched, though the hurt of the blows had seemed to strike right to the bone. "I will go, and, mark me, every blow that you have struck I will pay back a hundredfold. I swear it!" "Bah! Get out! This is not a theater."

growled Sir Jaffray. Then, seeing a couple of menservants in the hall, he said to them, "Turn that man out of the house, and if ever he comes here again you have my express permission to kick him right down to the lodge gates." With that he shut the door and turned

to Lola. "And now, sweetheart, that the room's clear of that brute, tell me what on earth does it all mean?" He sat down by her and first took her and in his, and then, seeing that she was greatly agitated, he ran his arm round her waist and held her close to

him and kissed her. She was inexpressibly glad to be in his arms, for she had grown to love him with a love to the full as passionate as that which she had formerly simulated, and his demonstrative movements were rare enough to make her prize them all the more.

She nestled close to him now, and twining her arms about his neck clung to him and drew down his face to hers, covering it with long, sweet kisses, while her eyes filled with tears, which he could not understand. She knew well enough, however, that they were drawn from a too certain foreknowledge that such moments in their lives were soon to cease entirely.

It was a growing pain to her, too, to have to lie to him, as now she must, to account for this extraordinary scene with Pierre Turrian, and for the moment her wits failed to suggest even an idea of the tale she should tell. She was completely unnerved and un-

strung in the moment of relapse from the excitement caused by the interview with the Frenchman and the struggle in which it had ended, the tension when she had expected the truth to be blurted out and the shock, half delight, half fear, of the horsewhipping.

Sir Jaffray on his side was very disquieted by the affair. In the moment of his arrival his thoughts had been too closely occupied with the burning desire to thrash the scoundrel whom he had seen with his own eyes molesting Lola to heed what had happened before he came. His blood was set on fire by what he saw, and he neither cared nor stopped to think.

When he had sated that desire and had lashed the man to his soul's delight and content and sat waiting for Lola to speak, he grew uneasy as to what could possibly have happened between Lola and the man whom he had regarded as his friend that could lead to such an

"How did this happen, child?" he said when Lola's agitation seemed to be

"I hardly know. I think he meant to try to kill me. He insulted me. You saw that mark on his face. I did it. I struck him with my riding whip. It was then he attacked me." She spoke in short sentences, like a child recovering from a fright.

"Did the man dare to make love to you?" asked Sir Jaffray, the thought driving his eyebrows together in a heavy frown and making him clinch his teeth. "I was always afraid of his coming here," said Lola evasively. "You know I said at the time I did not want him

Ugh! He is loathsome and dangerous." "Never mind, sweetheart. Plack up courage. He won't trouble us any said Sir Jaffray in a much lighter tone than he felt and wishing to cheer her up. "And if he doesn't clear out from the neighborhood of his own free will after today's business I'll find a way of making him; that's all."

His mood of demonstrative affection had passed, and Lola, with a sigh, let him go from her side. He got up and then lit a cigarette. "It'll be a lesson to me not to encourage traveling fiddlers again. To think that he should turn out such a brute! And I actually liked the fellow. By gad, but I'm glad I thrashed him,

and I'm only sorry I didn't lay it on a little longer and a good deal harder." He paused and looked at Lola and then said very kindly: "Do you feel better now, sweetheart?" "Yes, Jaffray; I'm all right now.

I'll run up to my room and get my habit off. It must be nearly lunchtime. Has the exercise made you hungry?" And she smiled. Her spirits had risen for the moment

at having got out of the work of explanation so easily, and she thought it best to appear as if she had shaken off the worst effects of the morning's events. But as soon as she was in her own

room and had locked the door and shut out the chance of being observed she looked the truth full in the face. The end had come. With Beryl Leycester in possession of

the secret on the one hand and with Pierre pressing her from the other there was no hope, no chance, no possibility of escape. What to do she could not resolve yet.

At the moment she had to go on playing the part that she had chosen, but whatever the result a few days must settle everything, perhaps a few hours. If she were to avoid utter shipwreck, she must | COOKING, HALL AND PARLOR STOVES be prepared with some definite course of action, and the sooner she could decide what that was to be the better. The very safety of the man she loved

demanded this. She knew Pierre well enough to feel quite confident that he would now have a double incentive to do Jaffray harm. She had listened to his devilish scheme in order to learn what it was, so that having learned it she might take measures to foil him. But she knew also that he was quite capable of acting by himself from the outside, and so long as there was a thought in his mind that not only could he have revenge for the horsewhipping, but also be, as he hoped, a gainer through Jaffray's death, the lat-

ter was not safe for a day. She had reached this point in her thoughts when the luncheon gong sounded and her maid knocked at the door. Lola let her in and then changed her dress and hurried down stairs. At luncheon Mrs. De Witt's curiosity had to be met and parried.

4 - Westernatives with the British

"How dare you lay your hands on my Turrian she had been for a long drive alone, and this had not improved her "I answer no man who speaks to me in that tone and backs his words with a weapon while I am defenseless," he replied, with a good assumption of boldannoyed consequently when he was not

at the table. "Where is your fiddler?" she asked of "He has had to go away, dear."

"Gone away?" exclaimed Mrs. De Witt in a tone of great surprise. "Why, he said nothing of it when I saw him this morning. It must have been very "Yes, it was very sudden and very

argent," said Lola. "Is he coming back?" "No," interposed the baronet. "The fact is, I had a row with him when I came home and told him pretty bluntly that his visit had better cease. I'd rather his name were not mentioned." "Oh, my dear Magog, that's simply

impossible!" cried Mrs. De Witt. "You excite my curiosity to the fever pitch and then say calmly you don't want me to mention his name. What's that but an incitement to go on mentioning it until my curiosity is satisfied? What has he done? He hasn't stolen anything, has he? It isn't anything to do with Beryl, is it? I saw them closeted together once, but that's all, though he is certainly a most original individual and I should think a very daring one." And she flushed slightly in discomfort at the recollection of the scene at the piano. "But you must tell me why he's

"I have told you enough. He went because I wished it. There is no more to be said." And the baronet spoke sharply and decidedly. we're alone; that's all," retorted Mrs.

"That means I am to ask Lola when De Witt. "You'd far better tell the



Lola threw herself in a long, low easy truth at once, because I shall only think there's some horrible scandal, and so will everybody else. Is it anything to do with you, Lola?'

Sir Jaffray looked at her and smiled. "It's no use, little woman," he said, "not a bit of use. You can't worm anything out in that sort of way. Besides there's nothing to worm out that can possibly concern you.'

"Thank you. I see you retain all the rudeness of old friendship while withholding the old confidences." And Mrs. De Witt sniffed angrily. "Just as you like," said Sir Jaffray, laughing, as he rose from the table. Soon afterward he went away, leav-

ing the other two alone. "I warned you, Lola," said Mrs. De Witt as soon as they were alone. "I told you there was mischief brewing, and that he was not hanging round you for nothing with that ale of possession of his. How did Magog find it out?" "There is really nothing to tell you." was the reply. "You are so ridiculous-

ly far away from the truth and are making so much of so little that you are almost willfully misleading yourself. Jaffray and M. Turrian had very high words, and then, to my great pleasure, the latter went away. I never liked having him here at all.' "No, possibly not," said Mrs. De Witt in a tone from which much might have been inferred, but Lola let it pass

without a retort. "And now I am going to ask you a favor," she said. "There are, as you know, a lot of people coming here in a couple of days, and I have no end of things to see to. Yet I am anxious to hear what is doing at Leycester Court with Mr. Leycester. I wish you'd drive over there this afternoon and ask for me how he is and how Beryl is and when

she can get back here. "You haven't the knack as yet, Lola, of making your house very attractive to your guests," said Mrs. De Witt ungraciously. She was cross, as a gossip monger usually is at being robbed of what she deemed a toothsome morsel of scandal. "But I'll go over to the Court, and I'll drive through Walcote to see if I can catch a glimpse of your Frenchman. I dare say he'll tell me the news." With no more than a smile at this

shot Lola rang the bell and ordered the carriage for her companion As soon as the latter had gone Lola went to her own sitting room to think out the rest of the problem. This had been her reason for wishing to get rid of Mrs. De Witt. She felt that she must

She had not been long in her room before a knock at the door disturbed her. She had locked it to prevent inter-

It was her maid, who brought a letter on a salver. "This has just come by hand, my lady, with a message for it to be delivered immediately to you. I thought it right to bring it." Lola took it, and, going into her room,

opened it. It was from Pierre Turrian, short, sharp and menacing:

You must be by the cottage at Ash Tree wood at the north end of the park at 9 o'clock tonight. Lola stood for a moment staring helplessly at the open letter when the maid

roused her. "Is there any answer, mum?" "No, none," returned Lola hurriedly. The girl withdrew, and Lola locked the door again behind her, and, throwing herself into a long, low easy chair, strove to fight her way through a mist of thought to a clear corrse of action.

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Orders filled at Factory Price, and a Freight Allowance made on lots of 10 kegs and upwards at one shipment. SAINT JOHN, N. B N. B.-IN STOCK AND TO ARRIVE 100 DOZEN K. & R. AXES.