

# Shadowed for Life,

A SOLDIER'S STORY,  
BY GORDON STABLES, M. D., R. N.

Author of "The Rose of Allendale," "For Money or For Love," "The Cruise of the Land Yacht 'Wanderer,'" "Our Friend the Dog," etc., etc.,

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## SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

CHAPTERS I & II.—Major Jocelyn Lloyd is a kind-hearted soldier who wins the Victoria Cross in the Afghan War. He meets the author while on tour to Scotland, and they become fast friends. Major Lloyd proposes they go to a seaside place called Battlecombe. While there he meets Ella Lee, and learns to love her. One evening he invites his friend Gordon to accompany him to his room and practice and be introduced to Ella Lee. Gordon sees the real Ella Lee drops a telegram. Gordon sees this, picks it up, and puts it in his pocket. When he opens the message it is from a person named "Jack." Gordon wonders if "Jack" is a lover, and if his friend has given him a love letter.

CHAPTER III, IV, & V.—Gordon learns from Jack that Ella Lee has no other, so concludes that it must be a lover. He resolves to ask Ella Lee the meaning of the telegram, and who was the sender. He was unconsciously forewarned by the object, so the explanation that Ella Lee has accepted him as her true husband. Later, Gordon is introduced to Nellie, who he finds quite to his sister's liking.

## CHAPTER VI.—(Continued.)

Well, I daresay there are many who would have believed that the hand of fate in this way all things had turned out and were turning out. A fate in our going down to Battlecombe at all, a fate in my friend's meeting with Ella Lee, a fate in my picking up that tell-tale telegram, and a fate in all the rest of it.

Be this as it may, events went hurrying on now quickly enough to a climax—a climax so earnestly desired, so longingly looked forward to, by poor Jocelyn, and doubtless by Ella herself to a climax of marriage.

The marriage would take place at Battlecombe after Major Lloyd had arrived the necessary six weeks in the place. And who but the Rev. George St. Clair, rector of the parish, a man who had known Jocelyn from his boyhood, should perform the ceremony.

This was speedily arranged for; and after that my friend settled down to enjoy what was destined to be the happiest month in his lifetime. I cannot say that I positively envied him his happiness; I was busy, and what may be called selfishly engrossed in my literary work. At the same time I could not help noticing it, and feeling glad for his sake. Nay more, I prayed—yes, prayed, I mean it—in the good old Scottish fashion my father taught me, on my knees by a chair night after night, that all my fears, and doubts, and suspicions entertained might for his sake end in smoke, and that his happiness might continue throughout his life like the unclouded splendor of the sun that shines on the blue of the Indian Ocean when summer is in its prime and glory.

Jocelyn's happiness was doing him good. I could see that. It seemed to be making him healthier and stronger. His face grew rounder, though nothing could ever remove that red tan painted there over cheeks and brow by weather and winds in Afghan wilds.

It seemed to be making him younger, too, but this may have been more apparent than real, for although I may say of Major Lloyd as Burns says of the Newfoundland in his "Two Dogs"—

"The bent a pride, nae pride had he," still he paid much more heed to attention to dress of late, and looked most smart, even going to the extent of wearing rings, gloves, exceedingly smart neckties, and a bouquet in his button-hole.

Oh, they all do it when the springtime of love sheds its soft radiance over them; insects and birds, mice and moles, and men. And who shall blame them, is it not right they should try to look their best at such a time.

Jocelyn confessed to me that he was very, very happy, one evening as we smoked one last cigar lying on the cliff top among the wild thyme, just before turning in. With regard to smoking, by the way, I and I were as regular in our habits as service routine. Neither of us were slaves to tobacco, whether in the form of pipe, cigar or cigarette. We allowed ourselves no more than a day, and never deviated therefrom nor indulged in surreptitious whiffs at odd times. Joss had a name, too, for each smoke, and somewhat droll ones they were. Just after breakfast we indulged in "matutinal," after luncheon "tiffin," in the evening "veppers," after dinner "post prandials," and later on our "decumbent," or good-night pips. These were the most calm and peaceful camlets of the whole twenty-four hours. But in addition to these we happened to awaken during the night and felt restless we permitted ourselves to worship just once at the shrine of the goddess Nicotina. Once, and once only, and these extra smokes were called "nocturnals."

But that evening, out on the banks where the wild thyme grew, after being silent for some minutes, he turned to me.

"Gordon," he said, "you asked me a little ago if I felt very happy. I replied, but there was one thing I did not tell you. I tell you now. Can you understand anyone being so happy that their happiness is most terrible to them? It is that way with me. There is a fearfulness in my joy that at times makes me shudder. I saw yesterday, Gordon, a tiny and beautiful insect all at on a red rose leaf down in the dark pond yonder. The sun was shining very brightly and was reflected in the metallic lustre of the little beetle's back. But, O God, all around it were the black black water-lilies. I turned away with a sigh. How long I wonder would the rose leaf that supported the creature and its joy remain aloft. The sun would set, the night would fall, and darkness, grief, and storm be all around. Men, Gordon," he continued, "have no business to be so happy as I am. We, poor ephemeral sons of a day, have no right to steal the joys of heaven and try to transplant them in the heart soil of this black world below. Whither, I wonder, will this little happiness lead me?"

"Joss dear friend," I could not help saying, "Miss Lee, think you, as wildly happy as you?"

He did not look towards me as he answered. He simply took his cigar from his lips and held it a little way off and seemed to speak to the starlit sea.

"Ella Lee, my dear love, is happy, very, I believe. But think of the difference that exists between us in soul-character. I am no sanguine; she is non-demonstrative. Would I could borrow a portion of her nature, of her peacefulness of soul. Yes, yes, dear love is happy. She told me so."

I said no more. Yet I must say that I was by no means satisfied either with the wording of his reply nor the tone of its delivery. Did I tremble even then for my friend's future happiness? In very truth I did.

## CHAPTER VII.—LITTLE MOLLY MORRISON.

It was quite correct in me to say, in my first chapter, that Major Lloyd was guileless in nature. He was singularly so. It is difficult for a man so inclined to rub along against this not over-scrupulous world, with the perfect advantage to himself. Heaven forbid that I should counsel deceit or cultivation, as a protection against the wiles of wicked men or wicked women. But, on the other hand, one may keep a good deal of one's inner life and thoughts to one's self, and still be sinless. There really is such a thing as telling the devil to much of one's mind, and indeed one may talk too openly at times to an apparent angel.

There should be one little chamber in every heart sacred to self.

Major Lloyd came of a long line of soldier ancestors. He had been taught the meaning of the almost holy meaning of the word "duty," by sire and by grandfather, and in his regiment he had ever been looked upon not only as a brave man, but one who was the soul of honor.

Now that he was an engaged man, he felt it to be a portion of his duty to keep no portion of his past life back from his dear love Ella Lee. Moreover, I know that had he ever been guilty of heinous sin he would have confessed that also, leaving it to her choice either to forgive him, and thus permit his happiness to continue, or to go away and leave him to sadness and sorrow, for ever and for aye.

"And so," he said to me, in the glooming of a bright and beautiful day, while we lay as usual on the cliff-top permitting the fragrant smoke of our post-prandials to mingle with the sweet odours from the wild thyme. "I thought it but right to tell dear love of some of my old amours. Oh, I was charmingly frank, I do assure you."

He laughed aloud. "Would you believe it, Gordon," he continued, "that I felt half ashamed of myself for having nothing worse to tell her? My love affairs have been dreadfully tame and common-place, and you know soldiers are supposed to be terrible beings, and quite as well versed in the art of love, in all its bearings, as in the art of war. And I fear I have not succeeded in supporting their claim to be thus regarded. Besides, you know," he added, "dear love would forgive me for anything."

I made no reply. "I told her all about my courtship with my wife cousin, Molly Morrison, you know."

"No, I don't know, mon ami. You have not been so free with me. But it isn't too late."

"No, it isn't too late, Gordon. I was but a boy, she but a child. Then I advanced many years in my narrative, and told Ella candidly all about my connection with the Singletons."

"Ella, too, you must enlighten me on, Joss," he said, "this, first, how did she take it?"

"Quietly, Gordon. She sat with her hand in mine. Her beautiful eyes were rivetted on my face all the time I talked, as if to read my very soul. Do you know I almost think she could? And I was not sorry, for there was nothing, nothing there I desired her to remain in ignorance of. I desired her, however, a slight look of sadness in her eyes. But she never once interrupted me with a question. When I concluded she just sighed one sigh. 'Is there nothing more?' she asked, 'nothing?'"

"Nothing," I replied, and she must have known I spoke the truth."

"And you are mine now, mine only, all mine?" she murmured.

"I kissed her for reply, and for a good long hour after this silence alone was eloquent."

It was not that evening but the next that Jocelyn told me the tale of his amours, as he classically termed them. As the narrative has a good deal to do with our story I must briefly relate them.

"When I said I was a boy," he began, "I was not far wrong, Gordon, for I was only sixteen and a half when I first saw Molly Morrison. Molly had two sisters older than herself, and if I had wanted to make love to anyone it might have been better had I paid my adresses to one of them."

"But, my dear friend, love-making was not in all my thoughts then. Yet I could not help becoming greatly attached to dear little blue-eyed Molly Morrison. And I was to be her hero. Was I not about to become a hero and go away to the wild wars, and perform deeds of valour incredible, such as the soldiers and clansmen performed in the books and poetry of her favorite author Walter Scott? It may seem strange that a child of twelve summers should read so much, but she was a Scottish child and a child of the mountains."

For one long spring summer and autumn I stayed at her father's Highland home in the North, and little Molly was my lady of the lake. In those days, like Byron.

I roved a young Highlander o'er the dark heath. Yes, but never alone. That innocent and beautiful child was my constant companion. By the banks of many a lonely tarn or loch we fished, and by many a dark brown stream. Often we ventured far from shore on the broad bosom

of even the largest lakes in a mere cobbie, and more than one adventure had we, when squalls and storms swept suddenly down from the mountains, in the crevices of which snow lay white and deep even in summer. Storms that raised the waters of the loch into billows high, which dashing in-board, oftentimes swamped our boat. But Molly knew no fear. I think I see her now, her bonnie face flushed with excitement, and the water high up above her bare and shapely feet and ankles, as she hailed the boat, while oars in hand, I was doing my best to keep the craft head on to every wave. I don't remember that we ever lost anything in these wild squalls, or that we ever had to throw our well-laden fishing basket overboard, so well did we manage our boat.

"Then when we got on shore at last we thought no more about it. We simply sat down on the bank, wrung the water from our stockings, put them on again to dry on our legs, and, hand in hand, went singing home towards through the birken glen."

"In spring and early summer, with a joy it used to be to go wandering together over the hills. The heather, it is true, was green as yet, but there were the silver-stemmed weeping birch trees; there was the tassel of yellow broom, and the glorious golden furze that perfumed the air all around on the hills and moors on which it grew. There was bird music also everywhere. The wild lilling of the mairns in the coope, the melodious crooning of the wood pigeons, in thickets of spruce, the sweet wee song of the linnet on the thorn, and, dimly seen against the blue of the sky—a tiny fluttering dot—the lark or skylark, that filled the heavens with its glad-sounding music. O, often while crossing a bleak bare moorland—Molly and I—did we pause and gaze upwards holding our breath the while to listen to this song."

"Few Englishmen would believe that a little 'peat' like Molly would or could come to the moors with one, could follow the grouse and wild game. But such was indeed the case."

"On shooting days she used to be up long before I was, and I could hear her sweet childish voice out on the lawn, singing little songs to herself as she made ready for the hills. Then, when I peeped out, there she was on the grass right enough, her face very earnest, her long sunny hair flaring over her shoulders, and bare-footed as usual, with Dush, the Irish setter, intently watching her every movement. It was a charming little picture, Gordon. I have but to close my eyes to see it even now."

"Molly's gun was a small one that her father had given her, yet over the moor and across the blooming crimson heather she went to and fro, together and many a bird the old dog bag before the sun, sinking slowly behind the hills of the west, warned it was time to set out for home."

"Happy days they must have been," I put in.

"Yes, Gordon. Happy, happy days, and just as innocent as happy."

"Five years after, when I returned from the warpath in Africa, my sweet cousin was seventeen years of age. She now she was, though, and did not hold up her face to be kissed as in the dear old days when we were all in all to each other. I believe, however, she cared for me and I could have fallen in love with her. Yes, I believe I did, and I know I told her so over and over again."

"Oh, it was not like the love, though, that now I bear for Ella Lee. No, no, no, a man can only love once and truly in his lifetime. No, never-thinks I thought I loved Molly well enough to marry her, and I did not hesitate to propose to her."

"I was not long in discovering the true nature of the case. She had been priest-ridden so to speak. At all events entirely, under the sway and dominion of the minister who preached every week in the little kirk high up the glen. He was, truth to tell, an ugly little wretch, and half a hunchback. He must have been at least a dozen years older than Molly. And yet he dared to love her. She thought him one of God's own chosen people. Every word that fell from his pals blue lips was to her sweeter far than 'honey from the comb.' His recommendations had a terrible power over her, and often she would weep hysterically even in the church. This the minister, who his private interviews with her during the week told her was the Holy Spirit striving within her."

"But this creature knew of her attachment to me, and Sunday after Sunday he did not hesitate to preach and hold forth from the pulpit against what he termed the sin, the heinousness, and unchristianliness of marriages between cousins. Such marriages he alleged, as he banged his fist upon the Bible before him could not be blessed, and could only lead to early death, and to the soul's destruction for evermore."

"Then, when he had succeeded in poisoning her mind, he proposed to her himself. 'Well, and eloquently did he plead his cause, but she turned from him. I could never, never be his, said. As God's servant she loved and respected him, and revered him almost as a father, but—that was all."

"Even after I came back, and sat in the pew with poor Molly Morrison, he dared to preach to us."

"I wish spend to Molly that I felt very ill, and asked her to come out with me. We left the church together."

"Next morning I called upon him."

"I am ashamed, Gordon, to think of it now, but all my life I have hated cant and hypocrisy. Then, remember, I was very young, and had just returned from the wars."

"Young man," he said, "inoning his voice, 'You have doubtless come to consult me on your soul's salvation? Wouldst thou that I should pray with thee?'"

"My wrath was at the boiling point now; I must speak out or die."

"You centing little hump and Paairie," I cried, "I have come to tell you that if you ever dare to breathe another word of love to my cousin, or preach at her or me from the pulpit you disgrace me. I'll break every small bone in your wretched body. Good morning!"

"I flung out of the house and banged the door."

"But I am, Gordon, the town clock tells the hour of ten. I will tell you about the Singleton's to-morrow."

"And to-morrow," he added joyfully, "dear love and I am going to choose our wedding day. Good night and happy dreams."

CHAPTER VII.—"I SHOULD DEARLY LIKE TO KISS YOU."

"All that I am now going to tell you, Gordon," said my friend Lloyd next evening,

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I have already told dear love, if 'mon ami' you are like most medical men nowadays, a student of human nature, you may be able to explain the, to me, inexplicable fact that I felt half sorry, half-ashamed, that I had really nothing very dreadful to confess to my gentle Ella Lee. She would have forgiven me just the same."

"Did she seem sorry? I put this question quite as abruptly."

Jocelyn took his cigar from his lips and looked at me for a few moments, with a curious kind of smile playing over his face.

"Come to think of it, Gordon," he replied, "I believe she did."

"But what caused you to ask such a question?" he added.

"I did not reply directly."

"Did she?" I said musingly, "and you exchanged confidences? Were those innocent confessions mutual?"

"O, God bless my soul and body, Gordon," cried Jocelyn, almost impulsively, and throwing away the cigar he had newly lit, in order to light another.

"Women are not like men. What should they have to tell? What, at all events, could a pure-minded girl like Ella have to confess? Barely twenty, Gordon. No angel in heaven was never more innocent than she."

"I'm a blundering idiot," I said. "Forgive me old Joss."

While Joss had been speaking however, up before my mind's eye rose a picture of the wording of that little tell-tale telegram from the mysterious 'Jack.' But I dismissed all thoughts of it. My mentioning it could do no good—at present."

"Heave and Joss," I continued, in semi-sarcastic tone, "heave round with your yard about the Singletons."

"Oh, yes, the Singletons: a more delightful family I have never known. Cynthia, here, was little more than a puppy when I first made the acquaintance of the old man, Colonel Singleton himself. Cynthia introduced me to the Colonel, just as she introduced me to dear old love herself, and I believe it was through him I had my first picture hung and sold—well sold, too. But I happened to be living at Chichester for a few months, in order to be near some friends of mine. It was a lovely summer's morning when Cynthia and I left home one day for a ramble. We had not gone far in the outskirts, however, when black clouds rolling up in the west and the muttering of distant thunder warned us that a storm was brewing. So we retraced our steps. My own rooms were in the outskirts, and we returned through the city, as I carried no umbrella, and did not care to get wet to the skin."

"Presently the drops began to fall, it became very dark, and a flash or two of very vivid lightning served to remind me of an engraver's shop close at hand there some very nice etchings of seascapes or shore life, that I had not sufficiently studied."

"By the counter, looking at some water-color drawing, and making a few small purchases, was an elderly but very smart white-haired gentleman. There was soldier in his every movement, and soldier written in every lineament, of his fresh-colored and intellectual face."

"That huge cotton umbrella that leaned against the counter was evidently a borrowed one, for there was nothing smart or soldier-like about that."

"Well, Cynthia's method of introducing us was simplicity itself. She bent her head very much to one side, seized that umbrella, and coolly lay down at a little distance to dissect it."

"Bless my soul," I heard the elderly gentleman remark. "Bless my soul, and it isn't mine either. Good doggie, good doggie; give it up."

"Cynthia had no such intention, but my interference soon placed matters in 'starku quo.'"

"Then conversation followed, and two soldiers thrown thus together, albeit one was old, found plenty to talk about."

"But Colonel Singleton, for it was he, said also that he should never tire admiring Cynthia."

"Meanwhile the rain came down in streams, the lightning was reflected from every glittering thing in the shop, and the thunder was like salvos of field artillery."

"How delighted my nieces would be with that dog! He spoke more to himself than to me."

"The rain kept on."

"I must go, and risk it," I said.

"Then we found out that we both lived near each other, and it was speedily arranged that I should see him to his own door, and then have the use of the big umbrella to my own."

"He was so kind in manner and gentlemanly in conversation, this old soldier that my heart went out to him at once."

"After the storm the weather cleared, and when, at five o'clock, I presented myself at the colonel's door to return the umbrella, the sky was clear and blue, and the streets were dry. I am rather proud of Cynthia, and that forenoon I had got my man to wash her with perfume soap, of course, and now the white of her massive coat was as white as pipe-clay, and she wore around her neck her crimson collar and a ribbon of blue."

"The colonel was a bachelor. The little ancient and extremely polite lady who rose from the piano as I entered was his housekeeper and sister; and these three young ladies were his nieces."

"The eldest might have been twenty-two the second—a sweet-faced, sisterly-looking girl, with ruby lips and dark eyes—about nineteen, and the youngest certainly not more than seventeen."

"Miss Andrew," said the colonel, introducing them, "Miss Maggie Andrew, and Miss Lily."

"I confess I was attracted at once to Lily. It was not that her features were so regular, but they were full of expression, her eyes were wonderfully large, and her hair one golden mass."

"O, I said to myself, 'you must take care, or Lily will lead you captive.'"

"I wonder if the colonel could read the expression in my eyes, as they were fixed on Lily."

"Lily," he said, "is a terrible romp. I bid you beware, Major Lloyd, or she'll tear the life out of you."

"It would be a delightful way of dying, I could not help remarking, more to myself than to anyone else."

"But the elder girls laughed, and meanwhile Lily was seated on a bear's skin rug with Cynthia and evidently there were many sweet confidences being exchanged."

"For the next few months there was seldom a day I did not visit the Singletons. Lily grew on me, if I may so express it. I fear I was falling in love. Even my sweet Highland cousin was forgotten—for a time, at all events."

"Lily did not tease me. She romped with my dog Cynthia, but not with me. But we played together and sang together, and we used to have long, delightful walks—to exercise the dog, let us say—and on rustic seats in woodland shades we read Tennyson, Longfellow, and many another poet together."

"There was no harm in that, was there, Gordon?"

"None at all, Joss, you innocent."

"One evening, while seated near a wood, a spell of silence fell over us, broken at last by Lily herself."

"O, Major Lloyd," she sighed, "I do so love you dog."

"I took possession of the one who gloved hand that was near to me. I daresay I pressed it. I wanted very much to say."

"And I do so love you," Lily."

"But somehow shyness or awkwardness, call it what you please, sealed my lips."

"I did not speak, because I could not. I cannot explain why. Deeply though not aloud, however, I called myself most uncomplimentary names."

"I did find speech at last just as Cynthia got up and rested her enormous head on Lily's lap. What I had meant to say, you know, was, 'And I do so love you.' What I did say was this: 'And I'm sure, Lily, she loves you.'"

"Jocelyn," I said, interrupting him with a light laugh. "I must say you are an exceptional soldier. But heave round again."

"Well, Gordon, I could read it I could not talk, and Lily said she could never tire of having me read, a compliment which I think was intended for me as much as for the poet's I endeavored to interpret."

"The light died away at last, and I closed the book."

"I don't know how it was, Gordon, but when the evening star, with its silvery eye, looked down on us, we were still sitting there, with Cynthia at our feet."

"But when the moon rose higher and higher over the bonnie woods, and cast a glamour over the scenery, brighter than the dawn of a midsummer's day, Lily arose in some haste and repitiation."

"O, dear," she said, "it must be late, and we have still a long mile to walk."

"A very short mile it will be to me, Lily," I answered.

"My intellect was returning to me, and with it the gift of language."

"Lily had with her a soft, light, gauzy kind of a mantle—I do not know what it call it."

"Put this on," I said. "The dew is falling. Nay, permit me."

"I had to lift the masses of her glorious hair to arrange the collar of the mantle around her snow white neck."

"I did not hurry."

"I was by her side now—close by her side. Her gloved hand was in mine."

"Lily," I pleaded, "O, Lily, I—I should dearly like to kiss you."

"Her head was slightly averted. But, Gordon, my whole soul seemed to go forth towards her in that one kiss."

"I was not prepared for what followed."

"It was a broken sob from Lily; nay, but a series of sobs."

"Then she threw herself back upon the seat, and burst into a flood of hysterical tears."

(To be continued.)

## THE COMMON BLACK COAT.

Is Fanned That It May Be Superseded by One of Lighter Color.

It would appear from one of their trade organs that tailors are becoming a little anxious about the prospects of the black coat of civilization. They fear it is in danger of being superseded by a garment of lighter hue, it not of v.riegated pattern. Perhaps it they were to give voice to their deep apprehensions, they would say that there was more at stake than a black coat. There can, at any rate, be little doubt, whether the tailors are willing to admit it or not, that with the fate of the black coat is bound up that of the black waistcoat. Whether the two have been lovely and pleasant in their lives is a matter of opinion; but we feel sure that in death they would not be divided.

We mean no disrespect to the vest in describing it as a parasite of the coat. It

is an humble dependant which has only found its way into society under the wing of its influential patron, to whom it adheres with single breasted fidelity rewarded on the other side by an attachment which is rarely broken save for a short period during the summer months.

The trousers, it is true, are connected with the two upper garments by no such feudal tie; but their own union is complete and, except in very hot weather, indissoluble. Hence, the more far-sighted tailors no doubt perceive clearly enough that if the black coat goes we shall be within measurable distance of the "tweed suit." Nor are there wanting those who would do their best to accelerate the catastrophe.

Animated by the restless spirit of the age, its impatience of sobriety and its thirst for change and color in costume, as in life, there is a school of so-called reformers who are endeavoring to urge the wearers of black coats to revolt. Let them give free play, exclaim these anarchistic counselors, to "their taste in checks and stripes," and they will be able to cut a far more picturesque figure at a far smaller annual outlay. With the outlay of course the public is not concerned, though the matter, doubtless, is not without its interest for the tailors; but we own to some uneasiness at the idea of the entire community indulging its multifarious taste in checks as a headlong pursuit of the picturesque. We have all of us, indeed, seen the experiment tried under very favorable circumstances, but with more than dubious results, by those little bands of vocal and instrumental artists, generally six or eight in number, who are usually to be met with at race meetings or on the sands at popular seaside resorts at this time of the year. These pioneers of dress reform have entirely discarded the black coat preferring one of gayer color, with noticeably elongated tails, and the freedom with which they indulge their taste in checks and stripes may almost be said to border upon license. Yet the effect, even with the addition of an open shirt collar of Elizabethan proportions, a corked face, and a bun, can only be described