

Continued from Tenth Page.

'Come, Lily,' he said, with tender playfulness. 'Come, and see me give this fellow a drubbing! I shall play all the better if your bright eyes are looking on! The play lasted until near midnight. The two players were keenly interested in it, and Lillian and Lady Ruth only a little less so.

In the end, Sir Gerald won. He rose from the table, flushed with triumph his old frank smile in his eyes as he turned to his friend.

'Shake hands, old fellow—just to show there's no malice!' he said, gaily.

Morewood grasped his hand with a hearty good will.

Little dreamed he under what circumstances he would again clasp that hand!

'Of course, you won't think of going home to night,' said Sir Gerald, as he raised the widow curtain. 'It's blowing a perfect hurricane, and raining, too!'

'It won't hurt me!'

'Nonsense! Of course, you'll stay here! Lily, will you give your orders to the servants, please?'

'I gave them some time ago,' said Lady Vere, smiling; 'while you were deep in game. Your old room is ready for you Mr. Morewood.'

She said 'your old room' advisedly, for, in Sir Gerald's bachelor days, Morewood had been wont to sleep at the Court almost as often as at his own house.

'Thank you! You are very good!' said Morewood, bending towards her in his pleasant courteous way, and thinking how beautiful she looked as she smiled happily into her husband's face.

Sir Gerald had drawn her close to him on the conclusion of the last game, and was playfully ruffling her hair.

'How happy they seem together!' thought Morewood; and, although there was no touch of envy in his nature, he thought it with a pang.

In the best of good humours all retired to rest.

Morewood was asleep in ten minutes; but his slumbers, as it proved, were not very sound outside his door—a light foot-fall, as of someone walking slowly through the corridor.

He knew the servants had no business in that part of the house, and his thoughts, as was only natural, immediately flew to the possibility of thieves.

Springing lightly out of bed, he hastily attired himself, and opening his door, very cautiously, looked out.

Great was his surprise to see, in the gloom of the corridor, a figure clad all in white.

The face he could not distinguish as yet, but the figure was certainly that of a female, tall and slender, and it was coming straight toward him with a slow, and steady motion.

The next moment, he all but uttered an audible exclamation in his surprise, for he saw that the mysterious white-robed form was that of Lady Vere.

He saw, also, that she was walking in her sleep.

Her eyes were wide open, but they had that strange, unseeing gaze which belongs only to somnambulism.

A low light was burning in his own room, and that kept the corridor in the immediate neighbourhood of his door from being in total gloom.

Whether that light, or some sound made by him startled her, he could not tell, but she gave a shudder, and flung out her arms, as though she feared she would fall.

She had awakened—awakened with what seemed a thrill of horror.

Without pausing to consider, Morewood did what was, perhaps the most natural, if not the very wisest, thing to do under the circumstances.

He stepped forward put his arm round her waist, to keep her from falling, and drew her inside his own room.

An easy chair was there; he placed her in it, and spoke in a quietly soothing tone.

He was not sure she was even yet fully awake, and was anxious to avoid startling her.

But she was awake.

'Oh where am I?' she exclaimed. And Morewood could tell by her voice, that she was terribly frightened.

'Dear Lady Vere, you are quite safe!' he said, gently. 'You have been walking in your sleep. That is all.'

'Walking—in—my—sleep!'

The horror in her voice amazed him. Her eyes, too, as he could see even in that dim light were dilated with terror.

'Where am I?' she asked again, almost wildly, and looked around her.

Morewood quietly turned up the light saying in as calm and easy a voice as he could command—

'You are in my room, Lady Vere. I heard a sound, and opened my door. You were just outside. You woke suddenly, and, to save you from falling, I led you into this room, and put you in that chair. If you fell well enough I will take you back to your own room.'

Before he had finished speaking, Lady Vere—trembling from head to foot with agitation, moved towards the door.

A wave of crimson overspread her face, from neck to brow.

She cast one hurried, startled glance around the room, then averted her eyes resolutely from his face.

The panic of fear which seemed to have overcome her, was not without its effect on Morewood.

He suddenly realized the strangeness, the terribly embarrassing nature of the situation.

His friend's wife to be in his room at that hour!

If any of the servants should come! Great Heavens! what would be said? Strangely enough, he never once thought of what might happen if Sir Gerald, missing his wife, should find her here.

'I must go back!' said Lillian, still in those terror-stricken accents, and the lovely roseate flush faded to a deathly whiteness. 'Thank you—thank you, Mr. Morewood!'

And in a moment she had left the room, and was in the corridor again.

'At least let me light you back to your

room!' said Morewood, sorely puzzled how to act.

As he spoke, he took up the little lamp, and prepared to follow.

She turned back, and stretched out her hands to him appealingly.

'No!—no!—no!' she breathed, in a low but passionately imploring whisper. 'Don't you come! Oh not for all the world!'

And then, swiftly and silently, she left him, and disappeared in the darkness of the corridor.

Her appeal to Morewood that he would not accompany her, had been so curiously impassioned, that he could not but comply with it; but, when he was quite sure she had regained her own apartments, he thought there could be no harm in standing outside the door for a minute or two, to try to hear whether Sir Gerald was awake.

Accordingly, he stepped quietly across the corridor, and standing outside the door which led to Sir Gerald and Lady Vere's apartments, listened.

To his amazement, he heard a voice which, at first, he could scarcely recognize as Sir Gerald's, so harsh and discordant was it, raised in passionate anger.

He could not believe it was his wife he was speaking to in such a tone; but, presently, he was, perforce, convinced of this, for he heard Lillian's voice replying in passionately beseeching accents, broken, he felt certain, by sobs and tears.

Although he could hear their voices, he could not catch their words.

The door, outside of which he stood, was not that of the bedroom, but of the dressing room, hence there was some distance between him and them.

Of one thing, however, he was confident. Sir Gerald was uttering furious reproaches and Lillian was entreating, imploring and explaining.

This he heard for himself; for, once, Lady Vere raised her sweet voice a little as though in an agony of grief, and he distinctly heard her say—

'Oh, Gerald, only let me explain!'

Seriously alarmed and concerned, Morewood turned the knob of the dressing room door, half resolved to beg Sir Gerald to come out and speak to him.

But the door was locked, and, at length finding he could hear nothing further—and indeed, greatly doubting whether he had any right even to try to hear, he went back to his own room.

To attempt to go to sleep again was he knew perfectly useless.

There would be no sleep for him that night.

Accordingly, he sat down in the easy chair which had been so recently occupied by Lady Vere.

His mind was in a very tumult of unrest, and, it must be admitted, not without some reason.

He could not but gravely fear that Sir Gerald's anger against his wife was caused by the fact that he had known she had been in his, Morewood's room.

How he had discovered this, Morewood could not tell, but it occurred to him that it was quite possible Sir Gerald had missed his wife, and, coming in search of her, had seen her emerge from his room.

He presumed Sir Gerald would be amenable to reason, and would, probably, be ready to laugh, in the course of a few hours, at the incident which was rousing his anger to such a furious height just now.

But let it end as it might, it was very painful for Lady Vere.

That was the thought uppermost in Morewood's mind.

The night wore on.

No further unwonted sounds came to disturb the stillness of the house, and Morewood, still feeling wholly disinclined for sleep, began to consider whether a brisk walk would not be refreshing.

He drew up his blind to take a look at the morning.

The storm of last night had wholly passed, and there was every promise of a fine day.

The eastern skies were pearly grey, with a few streaks of crimson, heralds of the approaching dawn.

'I'll go for a walk!' he decided. It will shake the cobwebs out of my brain.'

He made a hurried toilet, went very quietly downstairs, and out into the grounds, and after a momentary pause, struck out for the park-gate which was nearest the open country.

CHAPTER LXI.

A TERRIBLE FEAR.

After a brisk walk of some half dozen miles he returned to the Court, feeling invigorated by the exercise.

The dejection of mind which had oppressed him had now quite gone.

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Remember the name—Doan's—and refuse all others.

He felt quite cheerful and light of heart and almost inclined to laugh at the ridiculous circumstance which had, apparently roused his friend to such a high degree of marital displeasure.

'Lady Vere will explain. He's bound to believe her of course, and he and I will have many a hearty laugh over it,' he thought.

He had just arrived at this agreeable conclusion, when he suddenly realized, with a painful shock, that the troubles of that night were by no means at an end.

In a little labour, immediately in front of him, and not far from the house, he saw Lady Vere, seated at the rustic table, her face buried in her hands, her slender form convulsed with sobs.

Morewood stopped short, aghast, and at the same moments she, hearing a sound, raised her head, and looked round, wildly, as though anxious to escape, before she could be seen.

'Lady Vere!' exclaimed Morewood, stepping forward, in great concern, and speaking in a tone of the deepest sympathy. 'What is the matter? Can I be of any use?'

For answer, Lady Vere sank back into the chair beside the little rustic table, and again covering her face with her hands, sobbed as if her heart would break.

Alarmed and distressed, Morewood bent over her, and gently touched her hand.

Perhaps he would scarcely have been mortal if there had not been a little tenderness, as well as gentleness, in his touch at such a moment.

Looking at her with an anxiously inquiring glance, he saw she was fully attired.

She wore a serge dress, and dark blue cloak and hood.

The hood, however, had fallen back, revealing her pale, tear-stained cheek, and the lovely, shimmering masses of her hair.

When she felt his touch, she looked up into his face in an agony of grief.

'Oh, Mr. Morewood!' she exclaimed, clasping her hands convulsively. 'What shall I do?'

'Dear Lady Vere, do tell me what is amiss. Surely there is no trouble between you and Sir Gerald!'

He spoke on the impulse of the moment, scarcely knowing what it was he said.

'Trouble!' repeated Lillian, catching at the word, and speaking with a sort of subdued wildness. 'Mr. Morewood, I have met trouble before—yes, often in my life—but I have never dreamed of it in such a manner as this!'

'And you will not tell me what it is?'

She raised her hands to put back her lovely hair which fell in soft masses about her face then looked up at him with a calm, but intensely sorrowful gaze.

'Yes, I will tell you! You are my friend; you will, perhaps, help me, or, at any rate, will tell me what to do. Mr. Morewood, my husband is going mad!'

She spoke those words in a very low voice, and with a thrilling sadness and solemnity.

An icy chill ran through Morewood's veins.

A something, in her own mind, whispered that the wife's fear was but too fatally and horribly true.

The change in Sir Gerald, which had been so painfully obvious of late—his moodiness, his restlessness and irritability—what did all these things point to, if not to insanity?

And the taint was in the family! Swift as a flash of lightning, there darted into his mind a recollection of that ghastly tale concerning Judith Vere—the tale which Lady Ruth, dreading the taint, had so disliked to hear her nephew tell.

His thoughts might have communicated themselves to Lillian, for she continued, in a low strained voice—

'Mr. Morewood, you remember Judith Vere—you remember what she did? I verily believe Gerald has brooded over that frightful story until it has turned his brain. All his cry now is, that death is preferable to dishonor!'

'But what dishonor is there?' exclaimed Morewood, impulsively.

The moment he had asked the question, he regretted it.

A burning blush suffused Lillian's face. She dropped her lovely, graceful head, and did not speak.

A man of duller sense than Morewood must needs have interpreted these signs aright.

He leaned forward, and took her hand—again impulsively—again with a touch of tenderness.

At such a moment, was it likely he could forget that there had been a time when he had dreamed of winning the love of this most lovely woman?

He did not forget it.

He remembered it only too well.

Aloud, he said—

'I trust—I do most earnestly hope and trust—it is not that trivial incident of last night which has made the trouble!'

Lady Vere dropped her beautiful head lower, and still lower.

'He saw me,' she breathed, in a voice scarce higher than a whisper, 'coming out of your room!'

Morewood secretly cursed, not only his friend's mad folly, but also the contrariety of Fate.

'It only Vere would be open to reason!' he thought.

And then a feeling of something like despair oppressed his mind, as he remembered that, if Lady Vere's fear was not unfounded, there was little hope of finding amenability to calm reasoning in Sir Gerald.

If it was really true that he was going mad, it was useless to try to reason with him.

A moment or two he stood in silence, considering his own position, which was certainly a very painful one.

Then he said in a tone of grave gentleness—

'I am more grieved than I can say, at what you told me. I am sure you know that, Lady Vere. Naturally, I reproach myself now for having drawn you, even for a single moment, inside my room; but, at the time, it really seemed the only

reasonable thing to do. And Gerald ought, surely, to know me well enough to believe I had no evil thought.'

'If he was himself he would believe it! almost wailed Lillian. 'But he is not—he is not!'

Morewood's face grew graver.

He began to see that Lady Vere must have weighty cause for this awful fear which possessed her so completely.

He knew her temperament; he knew she was calm, self-possessed, and brave, and, knowing this, he could not but feel sure she would not weakly yield to alarm, as some women might have done.

Not without grave reason would she thus earnestly declare that her husband was tainted with that dreadful malady which had lain at the root of the tragedy of Judith Vere.

'Will you tell me how he is?' he questioned. 'Is he moody—violent—or how does the disease—it if be disease—manifest itself?'

She shuddered a little, as though at some dreadful memory.

The flush had faded from her face, leaving her very pale.

It made Morewood's heart ache to see her like this.

'I don't think I can quite remember when I first noticed a strangeness in Gerald's manner,' she began, in a low, sorrowful voice. 'I know that soon, very soon, after our marriage—and here she shuddered again, as though at some painful memory—he said and did things that frightened me. But he always seemed sorry for them, and begged my forgiveness so humbly, that I hoped the strangeness would, in time, altogether pass away. But, latterly, he has been worse—much worse. He broods over one thought so much, that it cannot but affect his brain.'

'What is it?' asked Morewood, intensely anxious.

Again Lady Vere's face was suffused with a painful flush; again she lowered her voice to a tremulous whisper.

'He thinks I care too much for you!' she said, simply. 'He thinks I care for you otherwise than as a friend!'

An indignant exclamation broke from Morewood's lips.

His heart swelled, and all the more passionately because he saw that tears were standing in her eyes.

'He must be mad!' he cried, pacing about the arbor in his emotion.

'He is mad!' said Lillian, in a voice of the most thrilling sadness and solemnity. 'Oh, Mr. Morewood, do you realize what that means—what it means to me—and to him—and to—'

She checked herself, swiftly, and in confusion, as though she had been in danger of letting slip some weighty secret.

Morewood stopped in his agitated walk, and coming to her side, took her hand again.

'My dear Lady Vere, I do realize it, and to the fullest extent; for, I verily believe no man living has a greater horror of insanity than I have. If it is as you fear, I readily admit that no greater affliction could possibly have befallen either you or Gerald; but, let us hope for the best. Medical men must be consulted. Perhaps they might be able to assure you that these fits of passion will certainly pass away.'

Lillian answered only with a deep-drawn sigh.

That sigh said, plainly, she had bidden farewell to hope.

'Where is he now?' questioned Morewood, anxiously.

'He is asleep. At first, he was terribly violent; but, after a time, he grew quieter. He generally sleeps very soundly after one of these outbursts. So I thought I might leave him, and I dressed and came out here.'

There were many questions Morewood longed to ask; but he felt, to the full, the delicacy of the situation, and restrained his tongue from uttering them.

The whole subject could not but be infinitely distressing to Lady Vere, and he wished to save her every unnecessary pang.

'I will have a talk with him this morning,' he said, in as cheerful a voice as he could command. 'If you will allow me, Lady Vere, I will go up to his room when he wakes.'

'No, no! Please don't do that. I am sure, quite sure, it would be better otherwise. Take no notice of all this, unless he himself mentions it to you.'

'If you really think that would be best,' he said, doubtfully.

'I am quite sure it would. It is possible he may not say a word on the subject. I implore you not to mention it yourself if he does not.'

'I will do whatever you wish. But, at any rate, let me advise you not to delay in getting the opinion of a medical man.'

'I had thought of speaking to Doctor Baker,' she said, hesitatingly. 'I shrink from it very much; but, if you think I ought—'

'Doctor Baker is of no use said! Morewood, with decision. 'You must consult some one from London—a specialist on brain diseases.'

'Aut how could that be managed?' exclaimed Lady Vere, with a frightened look. 'I dare not arouse Gerald's suspicion. He must not know for what purpose the doctor comes.'

'I think it might be arranged,' said Morewood thoughtfully. 'And now, Lady Vere, let me beseech you to get some rest. The grief and excitement have quite worn you out. Do go into the house, and try to sleep.'

'I couldn't sleep she said, with a faint, grateful smile; 'but I will try to rest.'

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Goodbye, Mr. Morewood and thanks for all your kindness to me.

She put her hand in his. He felt that it was icy-cold, and pressed it with a gentle, sympathetic pressure. Then he suffered her to leave the arbour and enter the house alone.

To be Continued.

EMINENT PHYSICIAN

Recommends Dodd's Kidney Pills
For Kidney Disease.

They Have Saved Thousands of Lives—New Brunswick People Need Dodd's Kidney Pills as Kidney Complaints are Common Among Them.

St. John, N. B., Nov. 21. Some startling statements were made, yesterday, by an eminent American physician, who is spending his vacation here.

The doctor was interviewed by a reporter, to obtain his views on sanitary matters.

'I cannot speak on local sanitary affairs,' said the doctor. 'But I shall give you, if you wish, some observations, from a medical standpoint, regarding the people of this province, and medical matters that deeply concern them.'

'I have been forcibly struck by the evidence of Kidney Diseases among your people. Nearly every adult that I meet on the streets, shows plainly to the medical eye, the symptoms of Kidney Disease in some form.'

'I am prepared to assert positively that such ailments as Bright's Disease, Diabetes, Dropsy, Gout, Rheumatism, Heart Failure, Lumbago, Gravel, Stone in the Bladder, Female Complaints, and other Kidney troubles are very prevalent here.'

'Looking over the records, I find that ninety per cent of the deaths are caused by these diseases.'

'What your people need most is a sterling Kidney medicine—one that will cure such complaints.'