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Helping Hersey

BY BARONESS VON HUTTEN

Author of, "Pam," "Kingsmead," "The Black Patch," etc.

(Continued)

He smoked on. The quiet was unbroken save for the very semi-occasional passing of a taxi or a cab and the ticking of the clock served, as it often does, as a recorder of rather than a breaker of the silence.

A funny freak of the child's to go tearing off across London at that time of night to see old Lady Gussie. Possibly she was doing it as a penance. Girls have sometimes those strange little ideas and he knew that she did not like Lady Gussie. There was the strange sound again. It came from the door to his left.

A third time it came and this it was unmistakable; it was a sob. Some one in the bedroom was crying. Mrs. Frewen, of course.

He rose and made for the door on the landing. She probably did not know that he was there. He would escape at once. Then, as he took of the door-knob words reached his ear.

"Oh, God help me, God help me! I have done my best, and now—" The sobs broke out now in piteous abandon.

For one second Barnes was conscious of a suspicion that she was "up to something," that she knew of his presence. Then with a feeling of shame he knew that he was cruel and unjust in the thought.

"I have done my best. I have lied and lied, and schemed," went on the moaning voice, broken with sobs terrible to hear. "and I have failed. I have failed! Oh, God, let me die, let me die!"

Barnes stood still. What should he do? It would distress her, no doubt, to know that he had overheard her, and yet it seemed hardly human to go and leave her in such agony of mind. He turned and was about to go to the other door when he heard footsteps coming up the stairs, and instinctively went to meet them, closing the door behind him.

To his amazement it was Alfred Cox, dishevelled and excited looking.

"You!" cried Barnes stupidly.

Cox stopped. "You? This is the first bit of luck I've had for weeks. Look here, is Mrs. Frewen here?"

"Yes, but she is—unable to see anyone."

"Ill? Oh, my Lord!"

"She's not ill, but—she doesn't even know I am here. Is anything the matter, Sox?"

The young man leaned against the wall, his pleasant face haggard and anxious.

"You are sure she's in?"

"Of course I am."

"But—she may be dressing to go out—"

"She is not. If you must know, something has happened which distresses her very much. She—she is crying in her bedroom."

"Then she really isn't going out?"

"No, she certainly isn't. For God's sake Cox stop being mysterious and tell me what the trouble is!"

Cox swallowed hard and feebly arranged his tie.

Then he said with an odd little laugh: "The trouble is that Hersey is at that chap Humphrey's rooms in Cavendish Square."

X

Barnes stared at him as if he thought he had taken leave of his senses—which sentence may, owing to the peculiarities of our language, be eradicated in two ways, either of which suits the situation perfectly.)

"At Humphrey's rooms?" he repeated. "Nonsense! She is at Lady Gussie Calmady's, in Kensington Square, I saw her off in a taxi not twenty minutes ago."

"I don't care how many taxis you saw her off in. She is at Humphrey's rooms. I saw her go in myself." Cox spoke obstinately, but quite without resentment. "I—I thought that perhaps she was meeting her mother there—it might have been. It at least worth hoping. So I came to see."

Barnes had gone as pale as the other man.

"Yes, it was worth hoping. You say you yourself saw her—go in?"

"Yes. I was passing on my way to interview a man in Harley street, and I saw her pay her taxi fare and run up the steps."

"You—mightn't you have been mistaken?"

"No—is it likely?" asked Cox sharply. "She was dressed in white and had on her mother's black cloak with the chinchilla collar."

"Yes, that's right. Well, what's to be done? Wait a minute." He stopped speaking and stood for what seemed to the younger, more impatient man an absurdly long time, in deep thought. Then at last he said slowly, "Mrs. Frewen must come. I'll get her."

Cox nodded and Barnes left him, going into the sitting room without first knocking, and then rapping lightly at the bedroom door, from behind which no sounds now came.

"Who is there?"

"It is I—Michael. Violet, I must speak to you. Please don't stop to for anything. It—it is important."

For a second she was silent. "Is it about Hersey?"

"Yes. Come quickly."

She obeyed him, standing in the full light, her face red and swollen, her hair in wild disorder. "What is it?"

The extreme expressiveness of her anxiety failed for once to annoy him. She was always more expressive than was necessary, but he did not somehow this time doubt the reality of the terror that distended her eyes.

"Cox is here. He saw her—Hersey go into Sir William Humphrey's rooms. We must go and get her, you and I, Violet."

She turned away and did not speak. "Can you come at once?" he asked gently.

"Yes, I'll get my things."

(To be continued.)

Mr. G. E. Neville, of Montreal, is at the Queen.

-Woman's Column-

THE GOOD USES OF KEROSENE

Coal oil will help the housekeeper out of many difficulties. A spoonful of kerosene added to a kettle of very hot water will make windows, looking glasses, and picture glasses bright and clear. Use a small clean cloth, wring it dry and rub it over the glass, after wiping down the framework with an oiled cloth. Then proceed to the next window and treat it similarly on both sides. After that go back to the first one and wipe it dry with a large clean cloth. No real polishing is required and the windows or glass will look clear and shiny.

Kerosene will clean your hands better than anything else after blacking a range or stove. Pour a little in the water, wash your hands

in it, then wash them in tepid water and finally with plenty of soap and a stiff brush in hot water. Finish up by rubbing the hands with lemon and rosewater and glycerin.

When your kitchen sink is rusty, rub it over with kerosene. Squeaky shoes are cured by dipping the soles in kerosene. Enough to reach the top of the shoes without reaching the upper leather.

The white spots appearing in the spring on the lining of your refrigerator will disappear if you rub the zinc with kerosene. Leave the refrigerator open several hours, then wash with water, soap and some ammonia. The refrigerator will then be clean and sweet and all the spots will have disappeared.

GOOD USES OF SODA

When preparing old, dry beans for baking, a little soda in the water in which they are soaked will render them soft and tender.

A pinch of soda added to rhubarb, stewed for pies, helps to sweeten it and less sugar is required.

If dandelion greens are a little old and tough they can be made tender by adding a little soda to the water in which they are par-boiled.

If the cream for whipping or for berries is slightly soured it can be used if a pinch of soda is beaten in.

Tins can be made silver bright by rubbing with soda and old paper.

Tea and coffee stains are easily removed from cups by rubbing with damp soda.

A spoonful of soda in a basin of warm water will thoroughly clean brushes and combs. Rinse in clear water.

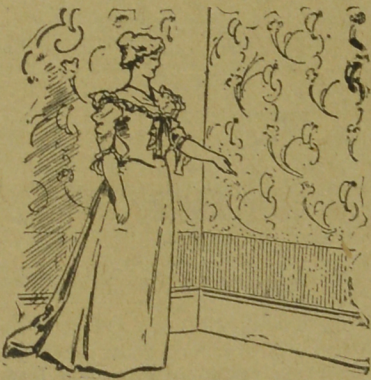
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