

THE THREE KEYS

BY FREDERICK ORMOND.

(Continued)

CHAPTER IX.

In the week that followed, Lathrop did not once call at the Trevors', although he spent a portion of his time daily in the office of the financier. He could not bring himself to go to the house, for he felt that he could not look into the eyes of the earnest eyes of Carla Trevor without revealing within his own the guilt which weighed down his spirit. Moreover, he had been very busy. The plot hatched in the early hours of the morning when Jack Millington was called to Chicago, was beginning to unfold itself, and now Lathrop discovered, to his vast astonishment, that he possessed a real aptitude for business. A genuine zest for it thrilled in his blood; his brain grappled easily with all the problems offered, and mastered them. Cummings had snatched at the bait thrown out to him, and had swallowed it greedily, so that it was now but a matter of days ere the forecast made by Millington would become a fact. Yet, despite his devotion to the manoeuvres on behalf of his friend, Lathrop's mind held continually in its recess the hateful consciousness of his infamy in the matter of the stolen securities. His one dominant anxiety was to regain possession of these, in order that they might be replaced in the vaults of the safe-deposit company before the return of Millington.

Then, one morning, he received a note from Carla Trevor in which she requested him to call on her that afternoon, at four o'clock. At exactly that hour, he was ushered into the drawing-room of the financier's mansion. There, standing in the centre of the room, awaiting him, was Edna.

"Smith," she said composedly to the butler, "you need not take Mr. Lathrop's card to Miss Trevor just yet. I wish to talk with her for a few moments before my sister comes down."

"Why, Edna," Lathrop said, with an air of railway before the servant, "you seem very much the woman of business this afternoon." Then, when the butler had left the room, he continued curiously:

"How did you know that I was coming at this time?"

"I didn't know it. I saw you from the window. But I should have gone to your rooms again this evening, if you had not come here today."

"You must not do that, Edna," he replied. "It is not at all the proper thing to do."

"It is just as proper for me as it is for that black-eyed woman whom I found there."

"That is quite true, Edna," Lathrop admitted, "but you see, it is wrong for either of you."

"Morris," who—? the girl began, impatiently. But she checked herself. "No, I won't ask you who she is! I don't care who she is! I—I wanted to see you—before you saw Carla. You will think that I have told her, but, indeed, I have not. I never meant to tell her, at all. I told you I would, but I did not mean it when I said it."

"I never really thought that you would tell," Lathrop said gently, "unless you did it while you were very angry—and your anger never lasts long. It really would not have mattered if you had told her, however. You must not think ill of that girl, Edna, for she is as pure and sweet and good as you are, as Carla is, as any human being can be."

"Do you—love her—Morris?" Womanly curiosity forced from Edna's lips. She went closer to him as she asked the question, and her face was set and white. Her big eyes, wide-open and searching, looked earnestly into his own.

He replied without hesitation:

"Yes, Edna, I love her very dearly, just as I love you very dearly, but not at all in the sense you mean. It would please me more than I can say, if you would let me take you to call upon her some day. You know, I would not do that."

"Where does she live now?" Edna interrupted. "She has moved."

"Yes, she has moved," Lathrop said. "If I tell you her address, will you promise to keep it a secret?"

"Why?"

"Never mind why; will you promise?"

"Yes," Edna agreed, after a moment of reflection.

"She is at the Millington, Central Park, West. And now, Edna, had you not better send my card up to Carla? She is expecting me."

"Oh, Morris!" the girl exclaimed, in dismay. "I had forgotten the thing I meant to tell you. Carla knows."

"Knows what?" Lathrop questioned.

"That—that Miss Ortega goes to your rooms."

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rooms. Wait; let me tell you all about it. That man whom I hired to follow her—he was a cab-driver, and I gave him ten dollars for his dirty work—came here to report to me, as I told him to do. Carla was on the steps outside, and when I asked for Miss Trevor of course she said she was the one, and he, stupid! didn't know the difference. She heard his story and then she came to me, and naturally, I had to confess the whole thing. Then, the very next afternoon she received an anonymous letter written on the stationery of your club, and—oh, it was terrible!"

"Carla would pay no attention to an anonymous letter," Lathrop cried contemptuously.

"Not to an ordinary one; but this was different," Edna explained. It began by saying that the writer was a member of your club, and an intimate friend of yours. It gave, as an excuse for the letter, the statement that he was under great obligations to papa, and therefore regarded it as a duty to warn his daughter. It was beautifully written and perfectly told; it gave a thousand and one excuses for you, and begged Carla not to regard the matter too seriously. But underneath all that stuff and nonsense were the vilest insinuations."

"Is there anything more, Edna?" Lathrop demanded, quietly.

"Yes, there is," the girl faltered.

"Well, let's have it all," the young man urged; there was impatience in his tone.

"The evening before last, Mr. Chapman called here," Edna announced. "You know he has been here once or twice with Mr. Courtwright. Well, this time he came alone, and I only wished he had stayed away. I don't know how it happened, but, before he went, he mentioned having seen you at the Waldorf and other places several times this week, with a lady whom he described so perfectly that there was no mistaking her; Carla recognized her at once."

"How could she do that?" Lathrop was genuinely amazed.

"Oh!" Edna exclaimed. "Didn't I tell you that the anonymous letter contained a photograph of Miss Ortega? Well, it did, and a good one, too."

"What more, Edna?" Lathrop's voice came wearily now.

"Nothing more; only, Carla has been ill ever since. It was the last straw. I think, if you had come around sooner, it would have been all right, but you remained away so long that she had to send for you; you know."

She paused suddenly, staring in the direction of the door.

Lathrop, turning to discover what it was that had arrested her speech, perceived that Carla, who had entered the room unheeded, and now stood motionless, gazing upon her lover and her sister with scornful eyes. Even in his perturbation of the moment, Lathrop was stirred to wondering delight before the spell of her delicate loveliness. Her own mood of indignation caused her to assume unconsciously a pose of tense earnestness, which displayed the slender elegance of her form to its full perfection. Her angry pride was revealed in the haughty poise of her head, in the darkening violet of her eyes.

"It seems, Morris, that my sister has anticipated me," she said, coldly. "I heard only the last sentence of your conversation however. So, now, Edna, if you will excuse us, I should like to talk with Morris alone for a little."

She did not speak again, until Edna had followed her. Then she turned at once, and confronted her fiancé.

"Morris," she demanded resolutely, "why is it that, for more than a week, you have not been to see me? And she added, unfalteringly: "Is there a greater attraction somewhere else?"

"I am not, Morris," Lathrop replied, with some embarrassment. "With two exceptions, I have not been out of my rooms an evening since I was here."

"That is an answer to only one of my questions," Clara retorted. There was a hint of bitterness now in her voice.

"The other question needs no answer from me," he said, grimly. "You should not have asked it."

"Perhaps not," his betrothed admitted, with a wan smile. "Nevertheless, I have asked it. So, sighed heavily, and hesitated for a moment. Then, with straight-forward frankness, she demanded: "Will you tell me about Miss Ortega? There is such a person, I believe."

"Yes," Lathrop said. The reluctance in his voice was plainly manifest.

"Yes, she has moved," Lathrop said. "If I tell you her address, will you promise to keep it a secret?"

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"Yes," Edna agreed, after a moment of reflection.

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Palpitation of the Heart.

One of the first danger signals that announce something wrong with the heart is the irregular or violent throb. Often there is only a fluttering sensation, or an "all gone" sinking feeling; or, again, there may be a most violent beating, with flushings of the skin, and visible pulsations of the arteries.

There may also be experienced a smothering sensation, gasping for breath, and feeling as though about to die.

In all such cases the action of Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills in quieting the heart and restoring it to its normal beat, beyond all question, is marvelous, as our thousands of testimonials will show.

Mrs. Martha Mason, MacPhail, Ont., writes:—Just a few lines to let you know what Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills have done for me. I have been troubled with weakness and palpitation of the heart, would have severe choking spells and could scarcely lie down at all. I tried many remedies but got none to answer my case like your pills did. I can recommend them highly to all with heart or nerve trouble.

Price, 50 cents per box, or 3 boxes for \$1.25 at all dealers, or mailed direct on receipt of price by The T. Milburn Co., Limited, Toronto, Ont.

MME. STEINHEIL IS

ACQUITTED BY JURY

Wild Scene in Paris Court When Verdict is Announced Freeing Her

Paris, Nov. 14.—Mrs. Margherita Steinheil was acquitted by a jury at an early hour this morning of the murder of her husband, Adolf Steinheil, a noted painter, and her stepmother, Mme. Japy. The verdict was rendered at 12.55 a. m., after two and a half hours deliberation, during which the jury thrice summoned the president of the court for explanations, thus proving that the original majority was for conviction.

A dramatic scene followed. The red-robed judges and counsel filed in and took their places. Every eye was rivetted on the door through which the prisoner should enter, but she did not appear. M. Devalles, the presiding judge, turned to the jury and said: "Have you reached a verdict?"

The foreman arose and replied: "On our conscience we answer 'No' to every question."

A salvo of "bravo" followed this announcement and a perfect bedlam broke loose. M. Aubin, counsel for Mme. Steinheil, embraced his colleagues. Men and women in the rear of the hall jumped and screamed for joy. The judge threatened to clear the court room and when a semblance of order was restored, he called: "Bring in the accused."

Twenty minutes passed before the black-robed figure, with a white face bowed over her breast, appeared in the doorway, supported on either side by a gen-darme. The woman appeared and seemed to be fainting, but in response to a wild outburst of cheers she lifted her head in acknowledgment, then she tottered forward and sank on the floor beside the rail.

When the judge pronounced the verdict her faint murmur of thanks was hardly heard. An instant later, M. Aubin was over the rail lifting her in his arms.

After being tenderly assisted from the court room, Mme. Steinheil was conducted from the building by one of the numerous subterranean passages.

H. A. POWELL, K.C.

IN BRILLIANT TALK

AT EVERY DAY CLUB

An audience that crowded the Every Day Club consisted of a brilliant evening by H. A. Powell, K. C. He dealt in a general way with some of the obligations of citizenship in Canada. How, he asked, are we to fit ourselves to govern this great country? First there is the need of education. Knowledge is power. The rise of Germany to a great commercial rival of England is an illustration of the power of education. Mr. Powell touched upon the importance of education in the physical and moral as well as the intellectual sphere. Dealing then with moral progress he pointed out that it was influenced chiefly by environment and heredity. By environment is meant the influence of individual upon individual, and the speaker pointed out the need that each person exert a healthful moral influence. It is this rather than laws and judges and prisons that makes for the peace and safety of society. Dealing with heredity, he quoted Darwin's statement that given four generations of drunkards and the race would be extinguished. From this he drew the lesson that the drunkard wrongs his children as well as himself. After dealing generally with the law of heredity and the influence of environment, Mr. Powell urged his hearers to heed the lesson. "If you have a high ideal," he said, "work it out." Each, he reminded them, is in a sense his brother's keeper.

Referring to religious effort, he declared that there is too much of domination, alienism, and that the Protestant churches, which now have several separate organizations in communities scarcely large enough for one, should unite and make their work more effective. In conclusion, he spoke of the crowded Every Day Club hall, and expressed the opinion that if an appeal were made to the citizens they would see that the club was provided with larger quarters.

The musical programme was especially good last evening. Robert Seely sang the Canadian Ball Song, accompanied by the orchestra. This is a new Canadian song by Miss Katherine Hale, of Toronto, music by J. W. Garvin, B. A. It is tuneful and stirring, and was rendered by Mr. Seely with splendid effect. A clarinet solo by Mr. Wallace not only revealed his skill as a musician but the fine quality of the orchestra as a whole.

TO CURE A COLD IN ONE DAY

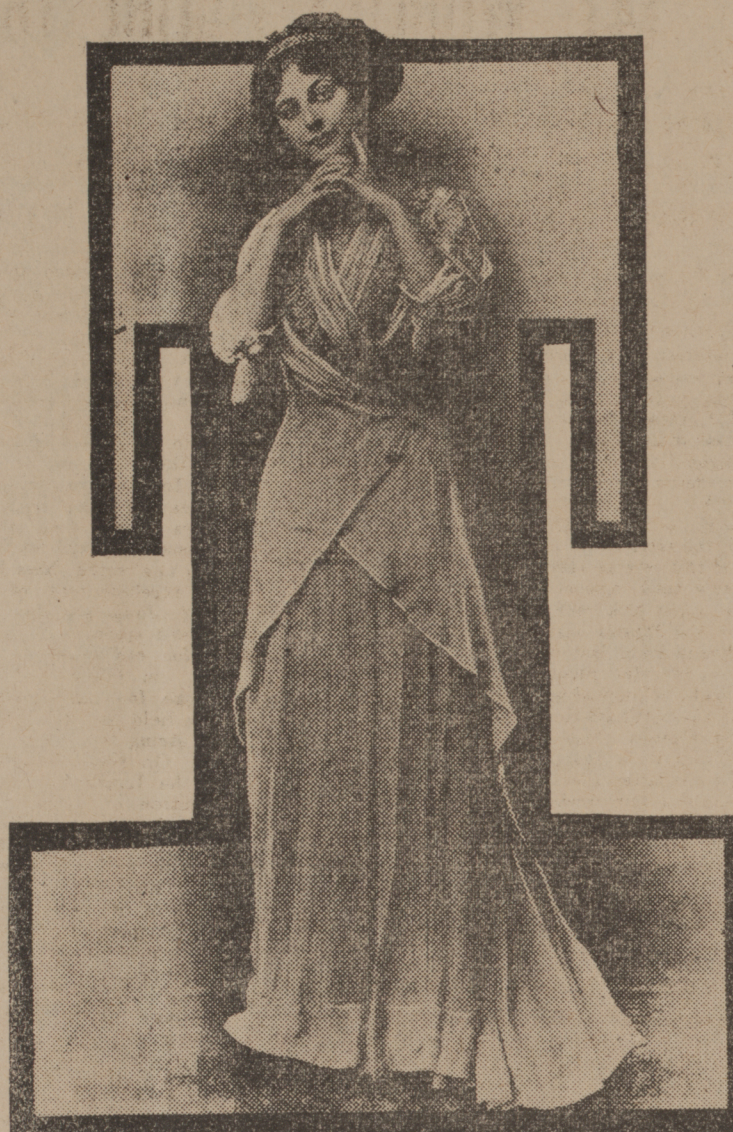
Take LAXATIVE BROMO Quinine Tablets. Druggists refund money if it fails to cure. E. W. GROVE'S signature is on each box. 25c.

Long hair and a short tongue seldom travel together.

A girl makes up with an admirer; a widow makes up for him.

Early to bed and early to rise, hustle him and advertise CATSPAW RUBBER HEELS does the business;—Used the heels we need the money. Both satisfied. All dealers.

Fashion Hint for Times Readers



INFORMAL AFTERNOON FROCK FOR A HOSTESS

The thrifty woman will see possibilities of rebuilding an old gown in this pretty costume, the upper part of which is of quite a different fabric from the skirt. The little coatlet, with its long skirts sloping backward in cutaway effect, is a modification of the Louis XVI. style, and this coatee opens over a petticoat of chiffon which veils a skirt trimmed with the bending which edges the surplised front of the coat. A lace yoke is set in the V of the surplice in this case, but the neck might be left bare if desired.

DISASTERS IN MINE AND ON SEA

TAKE TOLL OF NEARLY 500 LIVES

Fire and Explosion in Mine in Illinois Marked by Fearful Loss of Life—Steamers Collide and Nearly Hundred People are Drowned

Cherry, Ill., Nov. 13.—Four hundred men are dead in the St. Paul mine, where a fire and explosion occurred today, according to the figures given out by the mine officials tonight. Twelve corpses have been taken out. Six of these heroes, not employed in the mine, gave their lives in a futile effort to save the imprisoned men. Mine Superintendent James Steele declared five hours after the explosion that it was almost impossible that any of the miners still imprisoned could escape death.

The mine had a day shift of 484 men. Of these fifty left the mine at noon. Twenty-five or more escaped after the fire broke out. The others are believed to be dead.

The entrance to the mine has been sealed up in the hope of checking the flames. The building above the pit entrance was blown up to permit this.

The fire causing the explosion, which may prove one of the greatest tragedies in the list of mine horrors, had its origin in most trivial. A pile of hay allowed to smoulder too long finally ignited the timbers of the mine, and before the workers realized their danger the mine was filled with smoke, gases and flames, and all exit was impossible.

Terrorism, such as is rarely exhibited, was shown by officials of the mine and residents of the town of Cherry. These men, who were outside the mine when the fire originated, contributed five to the list of twelve known dead.

Alexander Neiberg, a pit man, gave his life unhesitatingly in a futile effort to save those of his comrades who risked their lives with him. Standing at the bottom of the shaft, he carried four dying men into the cage, their only way of escape. As the last was carried in he fell across the body. He was dead, as were all of his companions, when the cage reached the top.

Those who went into the pit with him were John Flood, the mine superintendent; John Flood and Isaac Lewis, a merchant of Cherry, and Dominic Fonnenti, Dr. E. Howe, a physician, of the city, who sought to go with the men when they descended in the cage, had been thrust out by Bundy, who exclaimed: "They will need you at the top if we get any one out. No risking your life down here."

The physician vainly sought to resuscitate the men when they were carried to him a few minutes later. He said they died of suffocation.

At the entrance hundreds of screaming women, weeping children and frantic but helpless men crowded around. A few survivors were surrounded by groups of the women and the answers of these men to loudly-shrieking inquiries only added to the terror. Almost to a man the survivors declared there was no hope for those still in the mine.

That those of the men who were able had retreated to the furthest end of the mine was the statement of the miners on the surface. There they might huddle together gasping what oxygen remained. The most hopeful of those seeking to aid the unfortunates, found that more than a few score would be doubt alive when that aid comes.

The only men to escape were those near the main shaft when the fire started. They declared that a careless miner threw a torch on a bundle of hay used to feed the mules stationed in the mine. No attention was given the smouldering hay for a few minutes. Then two miners threw the burning mass on a cart and started towards the main shaft about fifteen feet away. Before it was reached a small explosion occurred and in a few minutes the entire vein from the shaft was filled with smoke and flames.

Those nearest the cage hurried to them and were hoisted to the surface. After about four trips the cages ceased moving and no more miners came from the shaft.

What disaster took place in the few minutes following the escape of the men near the shaft is a futile effort at the head of the shaft, Mine Superintendent Bundy declared that a careless miner threw a torch on a bundle of hay used to feed the mules stationed in the mine. No attention was given the smouldering hay for a few minutes. Then two miners threw the burning mass on a cart and started towards the main shaft about fifteen feet away. Before it was reached a small explosion occurred and in a few minutes the entire vein from the shaft was filled with smoke and flames.

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