Half a Chance

By FREDERIC S. ISHAM, Author of "The Strollers," "Un der the Rose," "The Lady of the Mount," Etc.

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CHAPTER I .- A party of titled passengers on a ship bound for Australia visit a section "below decks" where a gang of convicts sentenced convict after returning the girl to silk.

passed. Lord Ronsdale and other to draw the pins from her bair, but members of the party wrecked on soon desisted. Again she began to the Lord Nelson, including Jocelyn think, more clearly this time, more Wrny, go to the criminal courts in poignantly, of all she had experienced. that he didn't take along with him London to hear John Steele, a fa- listened to, that night. mous young lawyer, try a case. Steele and Jocelyn meet and form The breath of the roses outside was

Ronsdale, who would marry Jocelyn. small dark object on a handkerchief he might find himself for a brief periforms a violent dislike for Steels. on the table. What was it to her if od comparatively safe, could be reach Ronsdale had at the wreck of the they took him-what, indeed? Her fin it, turn in without being detected! Lord Nelson prevented the rescue of gers played with the object, closed This last he believed he had successthe "Frisco Pet" by a lifeboat.

CHAPTER VII.—Ronsdale is star- fessedtled at the sight of a tattoo mark on Steele's arm.

a detective, Gillett, on Steele's trail white marble, a small disk-a gold Who could have guessed that he would to establish his identity. He is cer- coin. Then slowly she took it as if tain Steele is the "Frisco Pet." asking herself how it came there on Steele, none other than the "Frisco her handkerchief, which, she dimly Pet," begins a hunt for Tom Rogers, floor. Some one, of course, must have the only man who can establish his picked up the handkerchief, but no one innocence of the murder for which had been in the room since she had nohe had been deported years before. | tieed it except-

CHAPTER IX and X .- Steele visits Strathorn House, where Jocelyn shining disk on her rosy palm. A King Wray, Lord Ronsdale and others are George gold piece! Above the monpresent. Steele, in love with the arch's face and head with its flowing girl, has recognized her as the one locks appeared a tiny hole, as if some one had once worn it. Beneath, just he rescued at the wreck of the Lord discernible, was the date, 1762. She

have Steele arrested at Strathorn had been wrapped in that carefully House. Steele reveals to Jocelyn -for what reason. Like something that he was once the "Frisco Pet," more than what it seemed-a mere

CHAPTER XIL AN ANSWER.

"What-what is it?"

but Mr. Gillett thinks the convict now Suddenly she started and might be concealing himself some sprang up. "A King George gold where in the house; indeed, that it is quite likely. So we are making a little her, below her waist. Her eyes, like tour of inspection.

"it is really quite unnecessary. I have ed. been through them myself."

we would make sure. Good night. then!" They went.

The man in the room stood motion-"The other way would have been softly on the coin. She seemed wrappreferable," he said.

"What were you"-she hesitated, emphasized oversharply the word-"transported for?"

True: What did it matter to her? He had been in prisons before, by his "Him?" Him?" she repeated. own words.

Steele? What was it'

child, her curis in disorder, moving with difficulty, yet clinging so steadfastly to a small cage. His name? darkness met ber gaze. It may be be heard again the loud pounding and knocking; held her once more to his breast, feit the confiding. soft arms.

did you come here-to Strathorn turned late in the night of the second ing for that quietood essential for lityou found yourself recognized why House-incur the daugery

straight before him. "Because you- quickly around him, paused before the I saw your ingrage" were here."

"I?" she trembled. "Oh, you need not fear," quickly

tense, and he stepped toward the bai- coming rapidly toward him he more appearance. But now-His words, the abrupt action, what

it portended, aroused her. from her involuntarily. "There-there later a dark form came slowly down

may be a safer way! Wait?" Bright spots of color now tinted her cheeks She went quickly toward the door she had left. She listened, turned the key then, opening the door, stepped hastly out into the hall.

Whatever her purpose, only the desire to act quickly, to have done with an intolerable situation, moved him Once more he looked toward the window through which be had entered First, however, before going, he bethought himself of something-an an swer to one of her questions. She when -should find the answer after he was small object wrapped in veivet. At the other, engaged to rete ting the \$20,000,000 scheme planned for side. instant his eyes rested upon it; then gate, did not appear to make. Ex stooping, he picked up the bit of lace welling handherehlef from the floor and, handherehlef floor and handherehlef f

the two on the table.

Would she understand-the debt he had felt be owed her long before tochild who had reached out her hand in a different life, a different world; you, sir, from Strathorn House?" No. She had of course forgotten, Still. he would leave it, that talisman so precious, which he had oberished at nost superstitiously.

on her arm a man's coat and hat. Her shabby looking shoes. appearance was feverish, her eyes wide and shining.

"Your clothes are tern-would atthem-stole them!"

She spoke quickly, with a little. The coat and hat slipped from her the shoulder. arm. She looked at the window. The to deportation are confined. II,— but recently touched it. She stared at The ship, the Lord Nelson, is it in redulensly. He had gone. He which burned low. wrecked. A convict, the "Frisco would have none of her assistance Pet." jumps overboard with Jocelyn then; preferred- She listened, but Wray, a pretty little girl. III.-The caught only the rustling of the heavy

her friends is himself cast away She became aware of a through the friends is himself cast away her head, a dull pain, and, mechanical-She became aware of a throbbing to CHAPTER IV. - Years have bles, she put up her hand and started

She, a Wray, sprung from a long line CHAPTERS V and VI.—Lord scoffing, rested without seeing on a cumstances as a haven, a refuge, where he paid the penalty-he, a self con

Something fell from the velvet cov ering in her hand. She was vaguely put to the servant of Captain For-CHAPTER VIII.-Ronsdale puts aware of it gleaming there on the cold

More closely she scrutinized it, the continued to regard it, then looked CHAPTER XI.—Ronsdale tries to again at the bit of velvet near by. It gold piece.

"1762." Why, even as she gazed at the cloth, felt it, did the figures seem to reiterate themselves in her brain? "1762." There could be nothing espe-THE girl made no motion to cially significant about the date. Yet obey, and the knocking was even as she concluded thus by some repeated. Mechanically she introspective process she saw herself moved toward the threshold bending over, studying those figures "Yes?" All the color had left her on another occasion. Herself, and

"Don't mean to alarm you, my dear, She was looking straight before her " Her hair, unb sapphires, gazed out from a veritable "I," she seemed to catch her breath- shimmer of gold. "Date"- She paus-"Why, this belonged to me once

as a child, and I"-'Might have known that!" with an The blue eyes seemed searchingattempt at Jocoseness. "But thought searching. Abruptly she found what she sought. "I gave it to the convict on the Lord Nelson." She almost whispered the words. "The brave less now, his face like that of a statue brave fellow who sacrificed his life save for the light and life of his eyes. for mine." Her warm fingers closed ped in the picture thus recalled.

"Then how"- Her brows knitted; she swept the shining bair from her face. "If he were drowned, how could It have been left here by"- Her eyes were dark now with excitement. less," her breast suddenly heaved, "he "Your name, of course, is not John was not drowned, after all. He"-

out. The coin fell from the girl's hand. lips. She stared off, but only the police?

. "Why?" He still continued to look Strathorn House a man who, looking the campaign on your book. So when closed gate of one of the dweilings "And now," his voice sounded harsh, end of the street he heard a vehicle ter to show pretext for his too abrupt firmly jerked at the handle of the bell This time his efforts were successful. A glimmer as from a candle appeared Steele listened; again a vehicle went "No. no." The exclamation broke at the front door, and a few minutes by; then another.

caller. The faint gleam of the candle The afraul I've interrupted your slum-This is rather a late hour at

which to arrive." "No unitier, sir. Sure and I sat up expecting con, Mr Steele, until after midnight and had only just turned in

"What?" The newcorner, now fairly within the garden could not suppress

"Although I'd given up thinkin

sir?" night, that sense of obligation to the in the manner of one tired and worn. "No; Captain Forsythe's gone on to

The servant's glance rested now in some surprise on the newcomer's gar-When a few minutes later the giri ments-a gamekeeper's well worn coat considering the servant's assumption hastily re-entered the room she carried and cap-and on the dusty, almost

Germany."

"A wager," said John Steele, noting the old orderly's expression. "From Strathorn House to London by foot tract attention! These were on the within a given time, don't you know. Fell in with some rough customers last rack. I don't know whose, but I stole night who thought my coat and hat better than these."

"I beg your pardon, sir, but"- The hard note of self mockery. Her voice nan's apprehensive look fastened itbroke suddenly. She looked about her | self on a dark stain on the cont near

curtain still moved as if a hand had John Steele, with an indifferent shrug. "Just winged me-a scratch." replied sinking into a chair near the fire.

"One moment, Dennis," John Steele leaned back. The dying embers revealed a haggard face. His eyes half closed as if from lack of sleep, but immediately opened again. spoke of expecting me. How," be said, stretching out his legs, "did you know"-

"Sure, sir. by your luggage. It arrived with my master's heavier boxes over the wather."

His luggage there - where no one knew-could have known-he was gowafted upward. Her eyes, deep, self what he had considered propitious cirhard on it. Why should she care it fully accomplished, and then to be told by the man- All John Steele's exous fashion that he had planned to. at his door, now slightly ajar, sythe were at the moment forgotten make his way straight hither-or had any one? An enemy, divining a lurking place for which he was bending.

ing the dark vervet against it, placed | you'd be here forthat," the latter went | conduct of a place was a front of on the former chamber. He carefully The other silently followed, walking closed the blinds and drew across the window the dark, heavy curtains. This "My master did not come back with | would answer very well. Excellent accommodations for a man whose own chambers in the city were now in the hands of renovators-the painters. the paperhangers, the plumbers. And the back room? He mused as if

might as well let the fellow think, variance with the beaviness, the weariness of his face. He, the old servant. had been a soldier, knew how to ful- the postman, whose special call at the fill, then, a request or an order. Something crinkled in the speaker's band. to close on the note.

Half an hour later John Steele, clad gate and not some onein his dressing gown, sat alone near ceased save at intervals a low creak- it is the postman?"

ing of old timber. John Steele smiled grimly, but soon said, departing, his thoughts seemed floating off bethrew himself on the bed.

Steele heard the rude Jingling of a ped out. bell. The loud and emphatic closing sat up. His head buzzed from a long needed sleep that had been oversound. "So it's the meter man you are?" voice as that of the caretaker, "Sure, you're a new one from the last that was bere."

"Yes; we change beats occasionally." was the careless answer. John Steele sprang from his bed and crept very softly toward the ball "A new man"cuses for coming in this unceremoni- few minutes. He remained listening

"There must be a leak somewhere from the quantity you've burned. I'll have a took around; might save your master a few shillings."

John Steele locked his door. The "meter man" crossed the upper hall would not have obligingly forwarded and stepped, one after the other, into



"THERE-THERE MAY BE A SAFER WAY! WAIT!" SHE EX-CLAIMED.

his belongings. What then? Had A sudden shot from the park rang Jocelyn Wray ordered them sent on with Captain Forsythe's boxes and storm tossed ship, a golden haired Other shots followed. She ran out bags in order that they might be less upon the balcony, a stifled ery on her likely to fall into the hands of the

"Here you are, sir." The servant had entered and re-entered, had set the ta-Not far from one of the entrances to ble without the man in the armchair Regent's park or the hum of Camden being conscious of his coming and go-Town's main artery of traffic lay a lit. ing. "Remembered my master invittie winding street, which because of ing you once when you were here to She spoke mechanically. "When its curving lines had long been known pitch your camp at Rosemary Villa as Spiral row. Into this byway there any time you should be after yearnday after that memorable evening at erary composition and to windin' up

"Exactly" It was curious the man After a moment's hesitation the man should have spoken thus, should have pulled the bell, waited for some time. voiced one of the very subterfuges but no response came. When from the Steele had had in mind himself to ut-

As he are mechanically, but with the zest of one who had long fasted, John

John Steele rose with an effort. No. there was nothing more be required "Good evening, Dennis," said the except rest! Which room would be prefer, he was asked when he found revealed the drowsy and unmistakably himself on the upper landing. The Celtic face of him he addressed, a man | man had put his things in a front past middle age, who regarded the chamber, but the back one was larger or with a look of recognition. John Steele forced himself to consider. He even inspected both of the rooms. That on the front floor had one window facing the row; the second chamber tooked out over a rear wall separating the vegetable garden of Rosemary Villa from the shrub adorned

The sum of \$2,500,000 is now to be spent on irrigation works west of leaned his neighbor's low conservagone. His fingers thrust themselves a start of surprice which however Bagdad, as a part of the stupendous tory, almost spanning it from side to into a breast pocket. He took out a

pole .- Addison,

the several rooms. Having apparent ly made there the necessary examination, he walked over and tried the door of John Steele's room, "This room's occupied by a visitor," interposed the servant, "and be's asleep

He wouldn't thank you for the disturbing of his repose "All right. I'll not wake him. Don't find the leak I was tooking for Will

trop in manin. John Steele, pushing back the blinds little, tooked out of his room. The man who had reached the front of the place glanced back. His gaze at that instant, meeting the other's, seemed to betray a momentary eagerness. Quickly Strete turned away. No doubt now called out. "To"-and mentioned a lingured in his mind as to the purpose street-"as fast as you can." The man of the visit

CHAPTER XIII. VLIGHT.

TEELE mounted the stairs to the attic. From the high winexamine from the windows the situation of the house in relation to adjoining grounds and neighboring dwell-

To the right the top of the high bits of glass; the rear defenses glistened also in formidable fashion. He noted, however, several places where this safeguard against unwonted invasion showed signs of deterioration In one or two spots the jagged fragments had been broken or had fallen off. These slight breaks in the continuity of irregular, menacing glass bits he fixed in mind by a certain shrub or tree. Against the rear wall, which was of considerable height.

"Sure, sir, I don't know whether it's Fou." Captain Forsythe's man had -St. Louis Globe-Dispatch.

reappeared and stood now at the top on. "But won't you be stepping in. the next street. The visitor decided of the landing looking in at him. "It's a sound sleep you've had." John Steele glanced at the clock.

The afternoon was waning. The servant was now eying the vis-Itor dubiously. John Steele wheeled, a perfunctory answer on his lips, and, going to the dining room, swallowed

bastily a few mouthfuls, He made up his mind as to his course then, the last desperate shift. of his purpose in coming hither. He Amid a turmell of thoughts a certain letter he had had in mind to send to No one must know where he was Captain Forsythe occurred to him. under any circumstances. His voice and, calling for paper and pen, he sounded almost jocular, at singular wrote there, facing the window, feverishly, hastily, several pages. Then he gave the letter to the servant for iron knocker without had just sounded. The letter would have served passed to the other, who was now John Steele iil had it fallen into his busying himself with the bath. The enemies' hands, but once in the care man's moist fingers did not hesitate of the royal mails it would be safe. If it were, indeed, that person at the

"One moment, Dennis!" The man the fire in his room. Every sound had paused, "Of course you will make sure

"As if I didn't know his knock!" he

John Steele's pulses now throbbed yond control, and, rising suddenly, he expectantly. He had obtained a key to the gate and moved toward the front The afternoon was well advanced door. By this time the darkness had when, as half through a dream, John deepened, and, key in hand, he step-

At first he walked toward the front of the front gate served yet more on the gravel that the servant might speedily to arouse him. Hastly be bear him, but near the entrance be paused, hesitating, to look out. As he remained thus some one who had been standing not far off drew near. John ing! The place be had selected under John Steele recognized the inquiring Steele stole around the place until be reached the back wall.

There he examined his position, felt he top, then placed his fingers on the wall It was about six feet high; but, selzing hold, he was about to spring into the air, when behind him, from the direction of the row, a low me He heard them talking again after a tallic sound caught his attention. The front gate to the Forsythe house had suddenly clicked. Some one had en-

John Steele looked back. Even as he did so a number of figures abruptly ran forward from the gate. He walted no longer, but drew himself up to a level with the top of the wall. The effort made him acutely aware of his wounded shoulder. He winced, but set his teeth hard and swung himself over until one foot came in contact with the iron frame of the greenhouse next to the masonry. To crawl to the end of the lean-to; bending to hold to the wall and then to let himself down, occupied but a brief interval.

He heard behind him an imperative knocking at the front door of Captain Forsythe's bouse, succeeded by the noise of feet hastening into the house.

For some time nothing save these sounds was wafted to the listener. Then a loud, disappointed voice, sounding above another voice, came from a half opened window. John Steele stood still no longer. Great hazard, almost certain capture, lay before him in the direction he was going-the street this garden led to would be watched-but he could not remain where he was. He moved quickly forward. As he neared the house, more imposing than Captain Forsythe's, a stream of light poured from a window. Through this bright space he darted quickly, catching a deeting view of people within, several with their faces turned toward bim house he paused, his heart beatla fast. To attempt to reach the gate, to get out to Surrey road, little doubt existed as to what a walted him there. He remained motionless. Sharp twinges again shot through his shoulder. Then on a sudden be became unmindful of physical discomfort. A plan of action that had flashed through his brain held him oblivious to all else. It offered only the remotest chance of escape but still a chance, which he weighed. determined to take! It had come to him while listening to the merry voices within the room near him miking of the gay dinner just ended, of the box party at the theater that was

to follow. Already cabs were at the door. A servant walked out and unlocked the gate, and with light badinage the company issued forth. As they did so John Steele, unobserved, stepped forward. In the semidarkness the party passed through the entrance into the street. Taking his place among the last of the laughing, dimiy seen figures, John Steele walked boldly on and found himself a moment later on the sidewalk of Surrey road. He was aware that some one, a woman, had touched his arm as if to take it, of a light feminine voice and an abrupt exclamation of surprise. Walking swiftly to one of the last cabs, he sprang

"A little errand first, driver," he straightened, touched his horse with his whip, and, wheeling quickly, they dashed away.

As they did so John Steele thought he heard exciamations behind. Lookdow there he could see, around | ing through the can window, he saw at a curve in the row, a loltering the gate the company gazing after figure. Quickly coming down to the him, obviously not yet recovered from second story, he began cautiously to their thrill of surprise following his unexpected action. He observed also two men on the other side of the street, who now run across and held a brief altercation with one of the cabmen. As they were about to enter wall shone with the customary broken the cab several persons in the party apparently intervened, expostulating vigorously. It was not difficult to surmise the resentment of the group at this attempted summary seizure of

a second one of their cabs. "Those men must not overtake us, cabby. Go where you will! You understand?"

The man did. His fingers closed

(To be Continued.)

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ftervescent, clear and bright

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