

SECRET SOCIETIES.

U. W. - INDEPENDENCE Lodge, No. 22, meets every Monday...

LEY LODGE, No. 42, I. O. O. - Meets in Yanday's hall every evening...

N LODGE, No. 29, A. F. & A. M. - Stated communications Saturday...

MER LODGE, No. 45 K. of P. Meets every Wednesday evening...

HYSICIANS-DENTISTRY - R. S. A. MULKEY, DENTIST, practices the profession in all its branches...

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A REPORTER'S ROMANCE

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CHAPTER X. MANGAN AND RAYMOND MEET.

Mangan had written up the descriptive part of the story. He had another day's work to do in limiting up the history of the property in the deeds filed in the office of the county register, going away back to the Hollandais, the earliest settlers, on through the transfers under the English and Dutch charters.

He took the plots where the smaller pleasure grounds were to be located. Then he turned his attention to the large tract where the great park was to spring up like a section of fairy land in the metropolis, embellished with every beauty the best landscape artist could design.

"Great heavens!" was his ejaculation, and he drew up the heavy volume closer to his sight, while near by someone looked at him as he had gone crazy. "George Leland," he read, calling down, "George Leland! Strange! A coincidence; that's all in all!"

The lots were all owned by George Leland, purchased at about the same time from men whose names were known in the history of the county as those of people of quaint manners and methods. They were men who lived in the past. The encroachments of the city jarred up their country senses, and though they had not much faith in the greater development of the municipality they feared it enough to sell out their homesteads and move farther back from the march of peace destroying progress.

The price placed upon the land in the days when Leland bought it was not high. Even in the city people had no idea that this tract would form several wards in the course of time. This is not surprising to those who recall that when the city hall in New York was erected old material was used in the rear, because the building was on the outskirts of the town, and no one believed that the rear of traffic would ever be heard behind it.

In Brooklyn, which will yet form part of the greater New York, the city hall was built to meet the demands of the growth of 100 years. It failed to supply the needs of 10. The municipal building was erected later. Still the city strided out on Long Island, and more room was required in places of public business. There are eight large buildings in that city today occupied by governmental departments, and yet the pleasant little gentleman who has been deputy county treasurer for a quarter of a century, James Gardiner, remembers the time when if a claim was presented against the municipality the treasurer put his hands into his pockets to see if there was enough change in the treasury to pay the bill.

This letter will go a great way, but it cannot out Francis Raymond," continued Mangan. "Francis Raymond?" "Yes, he holds the certificate, and we have but a few months' time to circumvent him. I will keep this letter." "Francis Raymond, the great politician?" "The same Francis Raymond." "Isabel is saved! Thank God!" "Saved! Not yet. Didn't I say he was not likely to hand over the property easily? Mother St. Gertrude, this man is a bend incarnate, walking about with a fair face that draws his victims close to him and to ruin."

spans not of the past, if evil lurks there. Let the dead be buried, if the resurrection be not glorious. Bring out the spectral reminiscence of wrong to haunt the paths of virtue. Laurence, if you were not so dear to Isabel, discarding her as you do, I would ask you to leave. It is as I feared and told Isabel - the truth was not all told her.

"Truth not told her? Who says I did not always speak truly?" "Not you. I meant another." "Mother, do not be sarcastic with me. Another! What other but you has ever spoken to her of her parents? You mean me, but let me tell you now, before you launch into words that sound strangely to me from you, that when I said I would surrender my claim to her I meant to convey a sense of my unworthiness."

"No confession," she replied. "It may lead to another from me or Isabel that would not be to your good just now. A friend is watching over you." "The friend that watches over us all. Yes, but what is this confession? You are talking in riddles to me. But let me say a few words and then judge me. I would not press my suit with Isabel because it may come to pass that she is."

"What?" interrupted Mother St. Gertrude, whose eagerness to hear the statement delayed its own gratification. "What is she, Laurence, speak the truth!" "An heiress to millions." "An heiress?" "Do you know what you are saying, Laurence?" "Very well, but it is not sure. I may have for a time, but if the news is not good it may be long before you hear from me."

She walked to a corner of the room and sat down. As Mangan drew his chair close, he said: "Now, mother, you've been interrupting me ever since I came here and using queer phrases. You must promise to listen, now, for my story is a long one and to you will require many explanations." "I must promise, I suppose." "Well, not exactly, but make up your mind to listen."

He went over the story again. To make it intelligible to her, he had to give her a summary here and there of certain laws, mentioning not their origin or their originator. He concluded by asking her for the letter she held from George Leland. She went back into the convent and returned in a few minutes with it, and handed it to him. It was a letter of four lines, referring to an inclosure of check, and the signature caught his eye.

"It is the same, mother, the same! Isabel's father is the owner of these lands. This signature is identical with that on the deed! Isabel, as I said, is heiress to millions! She has gained much wealth, and I - I surrender her love!" "Do you know what relation you are to her?" asked the sister, feeling that now had come the time to unfold the secret.

"Nothing, now." "Yes, I want to tell you she loves you, and you will have an equal share with her in those millions when?" "Let me prove they are hers first. Her claim will be contested, and I must say we have not yet the evidence that would be accepted in a court of law." This interruption, intended to shut off what he considered to be a prelude to protestations of Isabel's gratitude, ended what Mother St. Gertrude would call her confession.



man as if they had always been the best of friends. "I might as well ask what are you doing here." "I don't mind telling you. The board of supervisors is supposed to visit sometime receiving support from the county. I thought Mother St. Gertrude might like to have that disagreeable visit dispensed with by the supervisors in their annual inspection. If so, I was going to send them word to pass the institution by."

"I'm sure it was very kind of you," said Mother St. Gertrude. "I will do so then. My business is done," he added, turning to Mangan. "Are you going down town, I have a cab outside?" "I'm going," said Mangan, "but I prefer to do a little walking."

This was no place for a scene. Mangan deemed it best to leave the convent with Raymond. He was satisfied that the politician had lied. What was his mission? Mother St. Gertrude would find that out. He could get no chance to give any sign of her wishes. The politician's keen eyes looked in everything, nothing could be done that they would not observe. She would not keep Mangan back, and in truth he did not want to stay. He wished to sound Raymond.

Both walked out together. The sun, sinking behind the chimney tops, cast a lurid glow on the vacant lots around the convent, burrowing the landscape with an iridescence in harmony with the fiery vindictiveness which Raymond felt and from which Mangan was not altogether free. It fed his anger, surcharging their temperaments with its vivid magnetism, strengthening the mood they were in and moving it onward to passion.

"If you're going to walk, Mangan," said Raymond, "I'll dismiss the cab and accompany you." "As you please," was the answer. "Now, look here, Mangan," remarked Raymond, after he had paid the cabman, "let us have an understanding. You are unjust to me, especially so since you know how far I would be willing to go for you." "You would go no farther for me than I suited you?" "Granted, but why not you go as far for me as suits you?" "I do."

"Yes, but if you cease to be my enemy and become my friend you can be rich." "At the expense of the orphan?" "What do you mean?" "Perhaps you are not aware that you are robbing the orphan of the heritage that is hers." "Whom do you mean?" "I will not say, since you do not confess, but let me add that I am not ambitious or envious of wealth that is acquired by dishonorable means." "You dare to taunt me?" "And to do more than that, if you please me to it." The two men stood and glowered at each other. Both were men of courage. Each was conscious of his own strength. Mangan was not anxious to avoid an encounter; in fact, he was aching for an opportunity to punish the man he so thoroughly hated and despised. Raymond's better judgment came to guide him, and he laughed as he walked on, saying: "Come on, Mangan, it doesn't pay me to quarrel with you. I wanted to talk to you about the story you are writing and concerning which you have indulged in some extravaganzas."

"I have, eh?" was the contemptuous comment. "How beautifully you phrase ideas that lift the weight of crime from your conscience!" "I will not argue the point. Are you going to write as rabidly as you have talked?" "What if I am?" "You'll get yourself and your paper into trouble." "Will it? You hold the leads the commission will select, and you think the rightful owner cannot reclaim them?" "There is no one to claim them. If there is, I don't know it." "I don't expect you to know much that is honest. You excel in knavery."

"You are unnecessarily bitter. Now do you know if any one can claim them?" "I can't say that I do." Raymond took this ambiguous reply as a confession of ignorance. He knew that Mother St. Gertrude had never spoken of Isabel's origin to outsiders, and he had never heard that Isabel had breathed her secret to any one. He felt safe. The name on the deeds would not suggest anything to Mangan, he argued. But the publication? That was his dread. "I couldn't expect a proofsheet of your article!" queried Raymond, affecting a gayety that was not his. "You can expect nothing but an exposure of your peculiar practices." "You are going into this matter thoroughly." "Well, I look at it this way: The publication of the story may lead to the discovery of the owners or heirs. If I can do good in that way, I will. At the same time, I will make known the fact that Francis Raymond is about to have all this property transferred to himself."

"It wouldn't do me any harm, and it wouldn't do the owners or heirs any good. The time is very short. Wouldn't you like to own some of these lots, Mangan?" "Your corrupt method may reach the business office of the paper, not me. Try it." "I will, and then where will you be?" "You will not try it." "Why not?" "You are too cunning to leave yourself open to perpetual blackmail by an unscrupulous publisher, even if you should find one in the Bugle office, which I do not believe. I made the suggestion sarcastically, because you have already adopted the practice of bribery and by it earned yourself the title of a good fellow."

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"You think fast and deep," said Raymond, his wily mind suggesting compliments as a change. "I would prefer dealing with you. Don't get mad"—as Mangan scowled at him—"I'm talking as a friend."

"Better end the conversation here and now." "Why are you so determined?" "Because justice must follow." "If there is any one you know who owns any of these lands, I will transfer my certificate in every case. Now, find a claimant." It was a bold stroke. It was a shrewd attempt to sound the depths of Mangan's knowledge, but Mangan read his purpose and calmly said: "I cannot accept your proposition. The claimants will turn up when the story is published. I will select one owner and run him or his heirs down. When I do, I will use that as an example that will draw more general attention to the system that makes men like you rich without the risk that attends common highway robbery. I'll print the story of the commission and of the parks. Later will come the sequel, and I hope that it will photograph you accurately. I have told you, or your intelligence, that you cannot escape this investigation, your first and your last. It will drive you out of town."

"Do not let your imagination run away with you." "Here's my car," said Mangan. "I've done enough walking." "So have I." They stood upon the corner awaiting the car. Mangan felt he could not hope to draw anything from Raymond, who was thoroughly familiar with reputational investigation. Raymond had also concluded that he could not avert the storm from his course. He had resolved, however, to outwit him in some way and prevent the publication of a second story. They boarded the car and sat down together.

"Mangan, I have something important to tell you. Where are you going now?" "To the office." "Will you meet me in the evening?" "On what business?" "The business we were discussing." "I will see you. Where?" "There's to be a little banquet to night in the warden's parlors in the penitentiary. You know every one who will be present. The last banquet of the nature was one you newspaper men will not soon forget. It was in the jail. A murderer committed suicide while the festivities were at their height, and you boys ran away from the pleasure to the duty of getting out an 'extra.' There will be no newspaper men but you there tonight. You may get a splendid exclusive story."

"I will go." The conversation by mutual endeavor, so to speak, drifted into the commonplace. Mangan jumped off the car as it passed The Bugle office and ran into the editorial rooms. "Got your story?" queried the managing editor. "I have and I haven't," was the reply. "I have a four column spread here on the park sites, the history of the land and so forth. I understand that Raymond holds the certificate to nearly all this property, principally as trustee. He can say he is trustee for the real owners and manage it as he pleases, escaping criticism, if not suspicion. Who can challenge his right?" "Print the facts. Let the people judge."

"I'm going to make a proposition to you. Leave out his name. I'm going to Denver on a mission which, if successful, will show he is not a trustee, but a thief whom the law protects. I am glad I took the assignment. My private business is so close to public business that I never would have suspected the relation. Use this story next Sunday. Then wait until you hear from me." "Your judgment goes, Mangan." "I've got an appointment for this evening. You may not have word from me for a couple of weeks. But you'll hear from me on time."

"Since your private business has taken a public turn, what are you going after?" "I prefer not to say." "Well, you are still working for The Bugle," said the managing editor. "I'll give you an order on the cashier for your expenses and a month's salary in advance. I'll talk to the publisher. Come in again tonight. You are not overburdened with wealth, I suppose?" "Hardly, but I must decline to take the money. I have enough of my own until I return."

"Very well, then." Mangan went to his lodgings, packed his trunk and after making ready for his trip to the west went to the penitentiary. He was admitted by the warden. No sooner was he inside than two strong keepers seized him. Mangan looked at the warden and asked, indignantly: "What is the meaning of this?" "You are sentenced to one year's imprisonment in the penitentiary."

"On what charge and by whom?" "Police Justice Lion's name is signed to the commitment." "Yes, one of the many he signs and leaves his clerk to fill out, while the clerk acts as judge and the judge himself is roistering among sports. I have been trapped, but they will suffer. There is no law by which I can come here except by conviction of an indictment resulting by a grand jury." "A police justice can send you here as a disorderly person."

"And is that the charge?" "Maybe it is and maybe it isn't. It's a valid commitment. It cites your offense, your plea and regularly declares you guilty. You can never prove you were not tried in open court." "The police justice knows."

"And he knows something else." "That he wants a second term and would perjure himself to get it?" "That's none of our business. Mr. Mangan, will you give us your pedigree for record on the books?" The keepers had led Mangan into the office. The warden had now behind the rail, opened the book where the record of each criminal is entered, held the pen and awaited Mangan's answer. "Never!" said the defiant prisoner. "You're not ashamed of it, Mr. Mangan, are you?" "No, but it will never be recorded with the history of criminals. I want to know the cause of this?" "It will keep you from making trouble for yourself and others, I suppose. You ought to know."

"I will know. Where is Raymond?" "Here!" said a voice behind him. "You cowardly cur!" said Mangan as he surveyed him scornfully. "This is your work." Mangan's pockets were being turned inside out. Next the keepers would take him out of the office to the bath and change his civilian dress to the garb of a felon. There was a pile of Mangan's letters on the desk before the warden, and Raymond stepped over and began to peruse them. "I'll make you pay for this!" said Mangan. "Indeed!" sarcastically retorted Raymond. "You will be here for a year. When you get out, no one will believe your story. If by accident your whereabouts should be discovered, the commitment papers are against you. Do you not know that you are doomed to solitary confinement? Don't bother me. Let me read."

He picked up another envelope. "This is an ancient epistle. And to the superior of the Convent of Mercy. So you have been thieving, eh? You professional moralists are practical ruffians. But I suppose your philo-physics springs from experience. We'll see what's inside. It may be of value to Mother St. Gertrude." He drew forth the inclosure. Mangan watched him to note the effect. Raymond's face flushed, the demon of evil seemed to possess him, and he shook the letter in Mangan's face. "The penitentiary is the place for you. You'll read the result of this at the end of the next three months, and I'll be more than then than now. Warden, give me a match."

The warden and keepers were surprised. The warden came from behind the railing, closed the doors leading to the corridors, a premonition of something dreadful making him cautious to limit the number of witnesses. After this he advanced to Raymond, handing him a box of matches. Raymond lit one, applied it to an end of the letter, which he held until it burned close to his fingers, and then, pressing the charred corner between his forefinger and thumb, threw it into Mangan's face. (To be continued)

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