

'TWIXT GOLD AND SINEW. *

BY C. J. MESSER.

BOOK TWO—PART IV.

NEXT day, at an earlier hour than expected by Mrs. Pattern, Hawkes arrived. Marie was dispatched to answer the ring at the door.

"Show whoever 'tis into the drawing room, an' tell 'em I'll be down directly," commanded the lady of the house.

Most unsuspectingly Marie opened the door, then, pale and trembling, ushered the young banker into the drawing room.

"I am fortunate," said Hawkes, eagerly, "I hoped to see you—"

Her evident distress checked him. Mrs. Pattern's entrance gave the girl an opportunity to withdraw, of which she immediately availed herself.

The examination of the securities lasted upwards of an hour, then, Hawkes pleading that he must return to the city, Mrs. Pattern exclaimed—

"Wel', now I'm drefful sorry you've gut to go. There's a lawn party over to Goldthurst's to-day, there's goin' to be a tea an' sech, an' I was hopin' you'd run over with me, 's long's you was here. Now do, you've met everybody that will be there, you'll enjoy yoursel'."

Being unable to resist such urgent solicitations from an investor, Hawkes concluded to stay. Mrs. Pattern fully realized the sensation the banker's appearance would create among the guests. Mr. Goldthurst received the young man with great cordiality, and without loss of time presented a number of business men who were present.

"Your judgment in selecting a financial adviser is, as in everything else, excellent," he said to Mrs. Pattern, with a courtly bow. "Shall I have the pleasure of conducting you in to tea? Mr. Hawkes, will you escort Miss Goldthurst?"

After tea there was music, then the party repaired to the lawn, where Hawkes again found himself with Alice.

"You have been wonderfully successful. I hear," she remarked, after they had talked over bygone days.

"Yes, in some things," he admitted.

"Then it is true one is never satisfied. You certainly appear to have everything, yet your tone intimates there is some object unattained."

"I haven't a wife as yet," laughed Hawkes.

"You undoubtedly find it difficult to choose from among so many who kneel to you." There was perceptible sarcasm in the tone.

"You're wrong," he responded, quietly. "I have not been serious about any one since you threw me over for Brigham."

The color came and went in her face, leaving it quite pale. Her quickness at repartee seemed to have deserted her, and she was vexed at her inability to chaff him further.

"It's growing chilly, hadn't we better go in?"

He placed her wrap about her carefully and they went toward the house. When they reached the piazza she said, with studied carelessness—

"Whenever you wish to recall old times, come and see me."

"Thank you," he answered. "As an old friend, I shall take the liberty of telling you that you have grown very beautiful." Touching his lips to the fingers he held he turned away.

"I wonder why I let her get the idea that I was dissatisfied," he mused, as he lighted a cigar and strolled toward the cliff. "She is certainly very handsome. Perhaps some time I may accept her invitation."



"HE HELD HER WRISTS FIRMLY BUT GENTLY."

His walk had taken him along the cliff path and through the gate to the Pattern grounds. Mechanically he approached the summer house, passing through the entrance before he became aware that the place was occupied. Even if he had the disposition to withdraw, he had not the time, for the occupant, whom he had immediately recognized as Marie, had seen him and attempted to pass out by him. Without being able to account for it, a feeling possessed him that this was an opportunity he had sought. A sense of power over her pervaded him. In another instant he held her wrists firmly, but gently, and led her back to her seat.

"I am the most unfortunate—" Marie began.

"That depends," interrupted Hawkes. "I have thought myself unfortunate, for I have unwillingly