

HIS FLEETING IDEAL.

The Great Composite Novel.

The Joint Work of P. T. BARNUM, JOHN L. SULLIVAN, BILL NYE, ELLA WHEELER WILCOX, MAJ. ALFRED C. CALHOUN, HOWE & HUMMEL, INSPECTOR BYRNES, PAULINE HALL, MISS EASTLAKE, W. H. BALLOU, NELL NELSON and ALAN DALE.

CHAPTER 1.—By W. H. Ballou.—Henry Henshall, a young artist, while traveling in a parlor car, mentally sketches the personnel of his ideal wife. To his astonishment he sees this ideal reflected in the mirror, she being one of a party of four, consisting of an old man, presumably her father, a governess and a man with a villainous countenance. He makes a sketch of the party. During the night the girl plays entrancingly on her violin. He determines to make her acquaintance, but upon arising in the morning he finds that the train has been in the Grand Central depot some hours, and that the party of four has disappeared.

CHAPTER 2.—By Ella Wheeler Wilcox.—Mr. Crawford, his daughter Edna, Miss Brown, a governess, and Dr. Watson occupy a flat on West Thirty-eighth street. Their names are all assumed to hide some secret. Edna tells her father that she hates Dr. Watson and objects to his presence in the house, but Mr. Crawford insists that the doctor's presence is necessary to him. Watson possesses hypnotic influence over Edna, and is leagued with Miss Brown in a secret compact. As predicted by him, Edna plays on her violin at night. A month later Henshall recognizes Watson at a hypnotic exhibition. By means of the sketch made in the car a detective locates the doctor at the Thirty-eighth street flat, but upon calling finds the party has moved. The same day a strange woman calls at the flat seeking a Dr. Henshall, and leaves muttering threats against Dr. Watson or Henshall.

CHAPTER 3.—By Maj. Alfred C. Calhoun.—Tom Wogly, a detective, calls at Henshall's studio and says that he saw Dr. Watson talking to a woman on Union square. He showed the woman to a boarding house on Second avenue. Henshall's father calls and tells the young artist that he is in the power of Banker Hartman, who can ruin him. He implores his son to marry the banker's daughter and thus save him. Henry promises reluctantly to do so. Meanwhile the Crawfords have moved further up town. Edna's hatred of Dr. Watson increases, and finally packing up her violin and some effects she leaves the house. While writing an advertisement in The World office a man asks her to read his advertisement to see if it is spelled correctly. The advertisement is for a female violinist.

CHAPTER 4.—By Alan Dale.—Henshall in time becomes engaged to Lena Hartman, making a martyr of himself, as he terms it. Miss Hartman has a Mrs. Smith for a companion. The artist calls one day when Lena is out, and finds upon the floor a brooch containing a portrait of Dr. Watson.

The young artist was downhearted, and as the train sped up town he wondered what to do with himself to while away the evening.



He lifted his piercing eyes to Steinmetz's face.

He did not care to go to his club, he had no reason to go home and he had told Miss Hartman not to expect him until Saturday. When the guard yelled "Fourteenth street" he suddenly determined to leave the train and take a table d'hote dinner at one of the Italian restaurants in that portion of the city.

After his meal he enjoyed a good cigar, and then started to walk leisurely over toward Union Square, along the north side of Fourteenth street. Before he had taken many steps his artistic eye was attracted by the well rounded figure of a girl just ahead of him, who carried a leather music roll in her hand. There was something familiar in her appearance, and he quickened his pace to get a better look at her.

The next moment he knew that she was the ideal with whom his brain had been filled since he first caught a glimpse of her in the Wagner car.

His first impulse was to lift his hat and address her, but he restrained himself, knowing that she would undoubtedly resent his impertinence.

He resolved to find out where she went, however, and permitted her to get several feet in advance, but not very far, as he feared to lose sight of her in the crowd that was hurrying along the thoroughfare toward the places of amusement.

As the girl reached the corner of Irving place she came suddenly face to face with a man in whom Henshall recognized the younger of the two men who had been traveling with her on the New York Central railroad. She looked down and tried to pass him.

"I am very glad to meet you thus unexpectedly, Miss Crawford," sarcastically remarked the doctor, detaining her with his hand.

"Let me go; I have nothing to say to you," she exclaimed, looking up at him appealingly and shrinking from his grasp.

For a moment Henshall stood irresolute. He saw that the girl wished to escape from the man, who seemed determined not to let her go; but he could not tell what their relations had been or how his interference would be taken.

Again he heard her plead to be let alone, and she turned her eyes toward him as if to appeal for help. He saw that great, dewy tears were stealing out upon her long eyelashes, and he hesitated no longer.

"What do you mean, sir, by insulting an unprotected lady?" he cried, jumping forward and giving the doctor a shove with such violence as to nearly throw him over the iron fence around the Academy of Music. He pushed forward in front of the girl, who immediately left, and he shook his fist in the face of her astonished acquaintance.

"You deserve to be thrashed within an inch of your life," he continued, "and I feel very much inclined to give you a severe chastisement to teach you better manners."

"Come, get away from here. I will not stand any more of this nonsense," returned the physician. "I shall call a policeman if you interfere with me."

"I shall not allow any one to insult a lady in my presence," said the artist, who felt that he had to offer some justification for his conduct to the throng that had already collected around them.

"This is ridiculous! I spoke to an old friend of mine," was the final reply vouchsafed to the girl's champion, who allowed himself to be put aside as the furious doctor moved away.

Henshall followed, thinking that he might again have the opportunity of stepping between his ideal and one from whom she was evidently anxious to escape.

He was crossing Irving place when a carriage drove past. He recognized it immediately as Edward Hartman's. He hoped that the occupants would not notice him, but he was disappointed. He was walking ahead when he heard a familiar voice calling his name. He turned and saw Mr. Hartman beckoning to him. The carriage had stopped in front of the academy and the banker and his daughter were alighting.

"Lena thought she would like to go to the theatre this evening," said Mr. Hartman, after shaking hands with him, "so, as she never saw 'The Old Homestead,' I have brought her here. I have a box, and I want you to come in with us, unless you have some special engagement."

"I want to see a friend," said Henshall.

"You can go out between the acts and see him. I may want to see a man myself, and I know that Lena will ex-

cuse us," said the banker with a facetious wink to the young man.

The artist came to the conclusion that the young lady, in whom he felt a much more lively interest than he did in Lena Hartman, had probably gone too far for him to overtake her, and so he allowed his fiancée to persuade him to enter the academy. "I really have some business on hand, though," he remarked, "and I shall be obliged to leave before the end of the performance."

He had seen Denman Thompson's play before, and he was far too much engrossed in his own thoughts to take any interest in the quiet rustic scene on the stage.

In the meantime Dr. Watson, as the evil eyed one chose to style himself for the time being, had gone along Fourteenth street as quickly as his legs could walk.

When he reached Union square he looked around in the vain hope that he might catch sight of Miss Crawford. She had disappeared, and he did not know which way to turn. People surged around in every direction, and he knew that if the girl had tried to escape she might have taken a horse car, as long as she had reached the corner ahead of him.

"Curse the luck," he muttered; "if it hadn't been for that young idiot on the block above I should have had her in safe keeping before now."

He went over to the Morton House cafe, sat down at one of the tables and ordered a glass of absinthe.

"I thought I had time to catch her again before she reached Union square," he mused. "I wonder if she really walked that whole block. She couldn't have taken one of the green cross town cars, as I did not notice any pass there. Let's see, where could she have gone? Not to any of the places on the south side of the street, that's very sure. She might have entered Steinway hall. By jove she must have done it."

This idea impressed him as being very good, and he told the waiter to bring him some more absinthe. As he sipped the liqueur his mind was active.

"Of course that old fool Steinmetz is bringing out a new fiddler, and she would naturally want to attend the concert. Supposing—no, it is not possible—yes, it is, though—she might have sought work there herself. I do not know but that she is the new Camilla Urso herself. I'll find out."

He did not dream of going to the hall himself and seeing his old friends Steinmetz and Neuberger. He left the cafe, and as a first move bought an Evening World from a newsboy and turned immediately to the amusement column, where he saw the announcement that Miss Louise Neville, a talented young artiste, would make her first public appearance in the United States.

"Louise Neville may be Edna Lewis," he thought. "It is not probable that she would appear under her own name or under the alias adopted by her father."

To settle the question to his own satisfaction he walked around to the nearest florist and bought a large bouquet. Then upon a blank card he wrote:

"With the sincere regards of an old St. Louis friend who has often enjoyed in private the accomplishments that the public are now given an opportunity to applaud."
EDWIN ST. LEONARD.

He instructed a young man to deliver the flowers to Miss Neville off the stage, and to say that he had been sent by Mr. St. Leonard. Fifteen minutes later the messenger returned.

"When I handed her the flowers," he reported, "she said she was surprised to hear that Mr. St. Leonard was in New York, and she told me to thank him for her."

"I am glad to have that much settled. Now I can lay my hands on Edna," thought Dr. Watson. "Those infernal managers have hold of her; that's the only trouble. I can't very well take her by force, and I'm afraid it is too late to get the old gentleman down here before the concert closes. I'll try, though."

Returning to the Morton house he wrote this letter:

"MY DEAR MR. CRAWFORD: My efforts have at last been crowned with success. I have discovered your daughter. She is now at Steinway hall, and if you will come down here without a moment's delay you may be able to see her to-night. In haste,
G. L. WATSON."

He procured a messenger boy, and by aid of a liberal tip secured the promise that the note would be delivered in the shortest possible time at Kowenhaven place, near Sixty-seventh street.

He then stationed himself near the door of Steinway hall to await developments. Not long after this he saw his whilom assailant pass him and speak to a friend. Henshall had sat through two acts of "The Old Homestead" by the side of Miss Hartman, and, believing that he had done his full duty to her, he pleaded the engagement he had mentioned when he met her and bade her good night. In front of Steinway hall he met a brother artist whom he had known for years.

"Come in here with me," said his friend. "A musician who heard the new violinist play in private yesterday says she is simply a marvel, and that she is bound to create an immense sensation. I bought tickets" intended to come here in time, but was delayed. I hope we have not missed her entirely."

Dr. Watson did not lose sight of Henshall until the swinging doors closed behind him.

(Continued next week.)

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