

STORY OF THRILLING INTEREST... LAST WORK OF SIR WALTER BESANT.

(Copyright, 1901, by Dods, Mead & Co.) CHAPTER I.

The lady sat at the open window of her lodging in King street, Covent Garden. It was a lodging over a print shop, the sign of which, a silver quill, was a guide—dangled from the front of the house and creaked in the wind. The front room where she sat and lived commanded a fine view of the street, the back room in which she slept overlooked the churchyard of St. Paul's, where funerals all day long inclined the heart to wholesome meditation. Both in the front and at the back there was apparent to the senses the neighborhood of the market; since the time was late June and the season was warm and fine, one perceived in the mingled odors of the flowers, the crushed strawberry of yesterday, the decayed cherry of last week, the trampled peas and broken lettuce leaves, the pungent Spring onion, but year's the cabbage stalks which lay in heaps and all the things which are offered for sale in that great market. It is not, taken altogether, an exhilarating fragrance, but the residents of King street are accustomed to it; they have it with them all the year round at every season; they are more complacent of it than the people near Billingsgate complete of the smell of fish which hangs forever in the air.

of it—the thing that was due to her dressmaker—the fact that she was, at last, in the habit of wearing a dress which was not to be at work by the breathing, which in the engine of time is a ticking—yet consider dispassionately, and critically, yet with a certain sympathy and overtones which might be made—should such present themselves—of entering again upon the married state, which is consecrated by Holy Church, yet denounced by poet, painter, and offering fewer prizes than the state lottery.

to time, not as if to derive consolation for hope from their utterance, but as if to hear their reproaches, as if she could not choose but look upon them. The letters were, in truth, accusing voices; they accused the lady, yet not in words, of follies and extravagances; they warned her to be less, to be more, to be a woman left early in life without a guide and counselor; a woman who understands nothing—it is a common failing with women of the upper classes—the compound addition and subtraction, and therefore goes on spending without comprehension of what her expenditure means until the day comes when she finds herself at the end of her resources and with no means apparent of paying for her food and dress and lodging. These letters showed her that she was that materialist person—a cynic, as it were, who cannot pay her debts; or if she pays, is left destitute, and has no friends who will pay for her. The end of such a woman is clear; she must take shelter in a prison, where, in a short time, the manner, the language, the dress, the thoughts of the polite world drop off from the residents, and they all become plunged into a grim, where, in a short time, the physical suffering, and the sacrifice of all those scruples which, outside, raise men and women to a higher level.

It bitterness and self-reproach and imputation of sins which she had committed for the soul, even though they come too late to save from open shame, then, indeed, Isabel Weyland this morning was taking a sovereign remedy against I know not how many past sins, and the consciousness of the soul, such as vanity, conceit, complacency, pride of family, pride of rank, the self-reproach which is the worst of all, and the most innumerable tribe of cogitate ailments.

haggard coach rattled over the stones; the heavier dray, with its casks of beer dragged heavily grunting and groaning; ladies with dingle-dump hoops, fans hanging from their arms, and little caps tied modestly under their chins, slowly walked along the piazza, where they would meet their gallants; old gentlemen, their age betrayed by the shaky knees, stopped in front of the fruit shops, of which there are many in King street.

The lady's Christian name was Isabel. Her surname was Weyland. She was the widow of the late Honorable Ronald Weyland, one of the lords of the Exchequer, in the Scottish Peerage, and one of Her Majesty's High Commissioners for the Hanover, who died, unfortunately for his wife, when still no more than six and a half years before the morning when she had her first husband's death. She had lived her life in King street. She had been living the life of a lady of quality and had many admirers, but she had no present difficulties were the result.

your brains a little you will remember the promise of six months' credit, which only six weeks have expired. My answer, sir, is that I must take that credit. I want that credit, and I must have it.

When she had read this letter through for the tenth time, she laid it down upon the table, and she began to meditate. She fell into another meditation of a most unpleasant nature. She was interrupted by the servant of the house, who came to tell her that Mr. Fulton was waiting for her in the parlour. She went down, and she found Mr. Fulton sitting at the table, with a glass of wine in his hand, and a letter in his hand.

Madam, I am most sorry to trouble you or any of my customers. I can wait, as a rule, for a long time, but your bill is not paid, and I must have it. I have a large bill to run on any longer. The necessities of my business compel me to ask for payment as soon as is convenient to yourself. It is your bill for payment. I am most sorry to trouble you or any of my customers. I can wait, as a rule, for a long time, but your bill is not paid, and I must have it.

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What will she say when I confess the whole to her? She will turn pale. For there was a step on the stair—the sound of a step may be a sound of terror to a debtor. There was the step of her dressmaker—the creditor who was going to call at 12. What should she come for, but to beg, to accuse, to be frustrated?

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THE FIREBRAND A Story of the Early Carlist Uprising.

(Copyright, 1901, by S. R. Crockett.) CHAPTER XLIX.—(Continued.)

It was enough more than enough. From Sarria to Espinosa, in Franco's, Concha raged through the village like a storm through a burning forest. The Abbot's friars, the accumulated nature of centuries, the power of pit and gallows, of servitude and holy offices—all these were to end on the 30th of the month. Men, time, a man and a woman, a woman to death by guillotine—a friend of El Sarria, a friend of Jose Maria—may say of two Queens, and the beloved of Generals and Prime Ministers would be of help to save him? Ah, would they not!

But he was no match for his pursuer, and before he had gained the end of the gallery the giant's hand closed upon the neck of the man. Then Luis Fernandez, knowing his hour, screamed like a rabbit taken in a snare.

And through the manifold corridors of the abbey, and up from underground rang the dread word "Torture!" They have been torturing him to death in their accursed prisons. Kill! Kill! Death to the traitor! Had there been any young man present of reasonable feeling for the sex he would have cast himself at her feet, crying aloud that her face was made for happiness, and that she would herself, at any cost, take upon herself, with no other hope of reward than to see her once more freed from the shackles of her cruel fate, and the consequences, if any, of her follies, if there had been misfortunes. On her table lay two or three open letters. She glanced at them from time

kind and fraternal to take such things for a keepsake. I ever loved Luis. He was my favorite brother. He had been tortured slowly to the bed—for indeed he had been roughly used by the mob before they brought him to El Sarria, that the outlaw might do with him as with his brother. He was a man of a noble nature, and he would not have been able to pay his debts; he knew the thirst for revenge, that fills the breast of the tradesman, and he had a noble heart. Why, his business, his profits, his livelihood, all depend upon the payment of debts; nothing can be invented or allowed by the law, which can be too bad for the defrauding debtor, the victims are

In the place where the Abbot's great chair had been. Then looked I in his face and all at once I knew him. It was Don Baltasar, the Abbot of Montblanch. He was as old as well as I knew my old dame, Montblanch. For many years I had known him, and through his tears he also knew that I was his brother. He was a man of a noble nature, and he would not have been able to pay his debts; he knew the thirst for revenge, that fills the breast of the tradesman, and he had a noble heart. Why, his business, his profits, his livelihood, all depend upon the payment of debts; nothing can be invented or allowed by the law, which can be too bad for the defrauding debtor, the victims are

deep-bearded veteran, his chest blazoned with decorations. The younger man, whose hair gives promise of early threads of gray, enters with a look of anxiety, and a chance of a servant out of the way of opening the inner door as if a gust of wind had been blowing through the corridors.

Rollo took him to the window by the arm. "Do you see those fellows?" he demanded. "They spoke he pointed to a detail of the wily little Valencian soldiers, in their white undress blouses and breeches. "Now, John," he went on, "I can't get his back, but he is a good fellow. They do the goodest work of even a street tra hard. The contractors are thieves, every man Jack. What can you do for me? I have 30,000 of these fellows and lots more on hand, on down in the huertas and rice fields."

Given the ignorant prejudices of villagers, the hopes of plunder awakened by a lawless time and uncertain government, the prophets, volving threats and prophecies, and what was the result? In an hour or two a band of 1000 men was pouring through the gates of the great abbey, clambering over the tiles and with fierce oaths driving down the deepest cellars. But from gateway to gateway not a brother was found. All had departed, and the man knew.

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