

The Planter's Daughter

OR FATE'S REVENGE

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CHAPTER VI.—(Continued.)

"Well," she said, falteringly, "for the present it would be best for you not to try to see him; give him time to forget you. It is his only chance of never knowing of the cloud that shadows his life. So, when he no longer recognizes you, I see no reason why you should not approach him as a stranger, if that will satisfy you."

"Satisfy me!" cried Sylphide, slipping off the sofa and falling upon her knees; "oh, madam, think what you are asking of me! You, too, are a mother, you have also a son whom you fondly love—you ought to sympathize with me! Then, in mercy's name think! Is there no other hope for me? Could I not take my child and go away, abroad, anywhere—where we are not known? I am wealthy in my own right, I will rear my boy as nobly as any mother can. Oh, madam, say that I can do this, and I will bless you to my dying day!"

"Yes, you could do it," was the cold reply, "there is no law to prevent it. But I warn you that, in whatever part of the world you may be, your baleful secret will find you out again. Then, when your son is grown to man's estate, what will he say to his mother when he learns the truth? Will he not taunt you with his ruin? Will not blame from his lips be harder to bear than blame from mine?"

"Heaven have mercy upon me—yes, yes!"

"I think I perceive in him already signs of his father's pride; Lucian will be pitiless upon you when he learns that he has fallen an innocent dupe to your ambition."

Sylphide staggered to her feet and caught at a chair for support while a vivid flush mantled even her brow.

"Oh, madam," she murmured, "do not insult me; I have enough to bear. I love

Courtlandt with a tinge of genuine enthusiasm and relief; "I am aware that it is a terrible sacrifice I ask of you, but at the same time you cannot but consider the favor I—"

"Enough!" interposed Sylphide imperiously; "the important point now is that I be convinced that you will take my place in regard to my darling. Grant me until to-morrow to take my leave of him."

"So be it; I consent."

"I will send him to you by Diana, whom I wish ever to remain with him."

"There I must interpose an objection. I have never liked Diana; besides, I have a competent nurse engaged."

Sylphide turned away and bit her lip until the blood started.

"Very well," she said after a moment, with suppressed force; "have your own way. I will send my child to you to-morrow. Now leave me, madam. I cannot support your presence another instant."

Mrs. Courtlandt bowed and withdrew, silently congratulating herself that the most trying episode in her hitherto unruffled life was over. The instant the door was closed, Sylphide flung herself, face downwards, upon the floor in a very agony of despair.

"What have I done? What have I done?" she wailed; "I have given my child away, sold myself—and all for a wrong which is not of my own committing! Oh, father, why did you not tell me? Why have you left me to learn all from the lips of the man who hates me? Oh, blessed mother, I—who suffer as you must have! I have closed my ears to the tongue of evil gossip, but their portals have been forced open, and were I stone deaf I must have listened to this calamity!"

The sudden opening of the door aroused her to a realization of the fact that she was no longer alone in her misery.

"I know, and in my misery, I can only ask your forgiveness."

"You have it."

His acquiescence was too ready to satisfy her; it seemed like callous indifference; but she had no time to think of this new phase of her trouble.

"Lucian!" she cried, "what do you think of your mother's proposition concerning our child?"

"I think it is a wise one. At least, he had better be with her until the truth is proven."

"Then you mean to investigate the matter?" she gasped, fearfully.

"Certainly—in the interest of my child, if not in my own."

"Will it affect—affect our—our union?"

"It will cancel it."

She uttered no sound, but nerves and muscles seemed to refuse their office, and she sank into complete unconsciousness at his feet!

CHAPTER VII.

The last sad parting was over, and the poor young mother lay, more dead than alive, upon her bed at the hotel. Lucian had gone to take little Leon to his mother, and only the faithful Diana was left. As the hours sped on and night drew near, the comatose state into which Sylphide had fallen, when they dragged her child from her arms by main force, had deepened rather than lessened, and the mulatto woman became more and more anxious in her lonely vigil.

At last, when the twilight actually set in, she became so apprehensive for the safety of her mistress that she rang the bell and ordered the nearest physician summoned. He came at once—an elderly man, with an air of importance and respect about him. Diana waited with bated breath while he raised the eyelids of his patient, and made a thorough examination. Turning to the woman at last, he said:

"This lady has undergone some violent mental shock. Can you give me any of the facts of the case?" he asked.

"No, sir; I am not at liberty to speak. Indeed, I do not know the facts myself. All that I can say is that she has been separated from her child."

"Ah! Well, my good woman, if you are the lady's attendant, I must warn you that she is in a most critical condition. This syncope may last for hours, even for days, and it is of the utmost importance that she be kept extremely quiet. For the immediate present there is no danger of disturbing her; therefore, I should advise that she be removed at once to some place where she can be made comfortable, to some place where, when she revives, she will not recognize her surroundings."

And with these words he took his hat and departed, leaving Diana alone, in a state of dread and anxiety. What could she do by herself and unassisted? Where should she, a complete stranger in a great city, take her mistress?

There was nothing to be done but to patiently await the return of Lucian Courtlandt, if, indeed, he came at all that night. He returned, however, about ten o'clock, and five minutes later he was in possession of the doctor's commands.

He said nothing, though the expression of his haggard face spoke volumes of the inward agony he suffered. Leaving Diana in charge of the still unconscious sufferer, in less than an hour he returned with the information that a carriage was in waiting, and a place prepared for the reception of his wife.

Diana raised Sylphide as though she had been a mere child, wrapped her in a rich fur-lined cloak, and placed her in her husband's arms. He carried her down to the waiting carriage, and in half an hour a new scene surrounded them. Spacious and elegant rooms had been secured in a quiet neighborhood, and had she been in her own home, Sylphide Courtlandt could not have been made more comfortable. As she watched that night by the couch of her unconscious mistress, Diana experienced a certain relief at the thought that all had been done that could.

In the gray of the following morning Lucian Courtlandt entered the silent chamber and paused beside the bed whereon lay that beautiful form with its blank white face. He was haggard and pallid, almost beyond recognition, and Diana sat there, watching him, wondering in silence what awful secret could be pending between them. At last the painful silence was broken. It was Lucian Courtlandt who spoke.

"Diana," he said, in a low, harsh tone, "I am obliged to start for the South this morning. I am going to Louisiana, but I shall return at the earliest possible moment. If, in the meantime," he hesitated, and for the first time averted his fixed gaze from that marble-like face, "if, in the meantime, any change for the worse should occur in Mrs. Courtlandt, you will at once telegraph me; here is an address which will always reach me."

He handed the watcher a slip of paper, and with a long, last, lingering glance at Sylphide, which Diana dared not interrupt, he quitted the room as silently as he had entered it.

After this, long days and nights of anxious watching elapsed; and so the first week passed. The genial May weather had come, and at last, one balmy evening, ten days to the hour since she had entered that unknown land, Sylphide returned to herself, revived, sat up and looked about her.

"Lucian has not returned!"

Her first words were breathed as gently as the zephyr that stirred the muslin curtains at the half-open windows.

"No, missy, not yet," replied Diana. Sylphide smiled wanly, and lying back among her pillows, she murmured:

"Wake me as soon as he comes; he will have news for me."

And she lapsed into gentle, healthful slumber, the first that she had known for many a long day; and Diana slept also in her chair, a thankful prayer upon her lips and gratitude in her heart, little guessing that had her beautiful mistress passed away in the merciful unconsciousness to join her parents, she would have more reason for thanks.

(To be continued.)

Science AND Invention

Paper car wheels, made by pressure from rye straw paper, are usually in condition for a second set of steel tires after the first set is worn out by a run of three hundred thousand miles.

Radium constantly generates heat, and Wien has now shown that it may constantly generate electricity. It gives off both positive and negative electrons, and the former—several hundred times as large as the latter—may be held back by a sieve of glass or any other of a variety of substances.

Suggestive at least are the conclusions of Hon. R. J. Strutt, of Bath, England. Helium—which Sir William Ramsay has found to be slowly given off by radium—exists in the gases of the city's largest hot mineral spring, and at a test of the deposits in the spring has revealed a small proportion of radium. It is believed that these substances are brought up from a large deposit of radium deep in the earth.

All admirers as well as cultivators of carnations are much concerned about a new disease that the Department of Agriculture has recently detected affecting these plants in the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania. The disease is manifested by the appearance of ringed spots on the leaves and stems. The spots are shown by the microscope filled with bacteria, which are different from the micro-organisms causing previously known diseases in carnations. A careful study of the new disease is under way.

The German government is developing a plan to have its customs officials instructed in chemistry, physics and mechanical technology. At the most important custom houses in every province of the empire there is to be established a laboratory and a library of technical books for the use of the customs officials. The officers of high rank are to instruct the minor officials, and will themselves be trained in a great laboratory which it is proposed to erect in Berlin in connection with the chief customs office. Teachers for this institution will be drawn from the staffs of professors in technical colleges.

The Bureau of Forestry finds that sugar culture, the greatest industry of the Hawaiian Islands, depends upon the preservation of the native forests. These are mainly confined to the rainy east and northeast sides of the mountains, and they conserve the water that is needed to irrigate the dry plains where the sugar plantations exist. The value of these forests consists not in the trees, which are frequently low, crooked and sparsely scattered, but in the impenetrable undergrowth, composed of vines, ferns and mosses, and so thick that it holds water like a sponge. This undergrowth is, however, very delicate, and cattle and goats quickly destroy it. It is proposed to save the forests by fencing.

Condensed into a few words, these are the "Modern Views of Matter," as expounded by Sir Oliver Lodge: "Electricity is a substance, the only kind of substance, and all matter is merely an accumulation of electric charges. It appears probable that these electric charges are all of exactly the same amount, although some are positive and some negative, and that the atoms of the chemical elements are formed by varying numbers and arrangements of these charges, or electrons. There are about seven hundred electrons, 350 positive and 350 negative, in the hydrogen atom, which has been so long regarded as the final and indivisible unit of matter; there must be about sixteen times as many in an oxygen atom; and about 255 times as many, say 160,000, in a radium atom, the heaviest known."

HERE'S A HOMILY ON HUNTING.

Called Forth by a Dead Young Stag at the Market.

"Far be it from me," remarked the Coarse, Brutal Man, "to attempt to bring the blush of self-reproach to the bronzed cheek of our mighty Nimrods, high and low, particularly at this season of the year; but, walking down the street a couple of mornings ago I saw a dead young stag hanging head downward in front of a market store, and it didn't look to me like as if that young stag belonged there at all, with all of the life gone out of him, and his nice, honest, on-the-level brown eyes closed for good and all, and him tried up there in front of a butcher's shack. I stood off and looked at the clean young chap for a long while, and the longer I looked him over the more it puzzled me to understand how any civilized man could have it in his heart to kill a fellow like that. I wouldn't do it, boy, for a five thousand dollar note, and I need the money at that, and I'm no more of a slow-music-on-the-E-string, out-in-the-snow, sentimental Clarissa Harlowe than my neighbors, either. I couldn't help but think, as I stood leaning against an awning

pole, feeling sort o' sorry and gumpy about that young stag, that no man with the right kind of gravities of kindness in his system would do a thing like that, either in the name of 'sport' or commerce. The man who can let an unsuspecting deer, or elk, or, b'gee, even a bull moose—any wood roving, inoffensive horned beast—come 'down the wind' on him, with nary a care in life, and looking with interested curiosity around him—any man that can stuff a bullet into a gun and poke that bullet into the heart of such an animal, that's minding his own business, and only asking for a chance to roam unmolested and free under God's blue sky, is suffering from a kind of ossification of the heart and gizzard that I wouldn't have all me for a hull lot of minted money.

"There isn't anything much more square or honest or trustful in this world than the look that a deer gives you out of his two eyes, and that's a fact. He isn't looking for the worst of it, unless he's been hunted before. To his view you're just something alive that's moving around under the blue dome of heaven same as he is, and his clean nostrils crinkle as he sniffs curiously and probably wonders why you haven't got four legs, just like he has. He isn't trying to butt into and interfere with civilization. He's sticking to the environment in which he found himself when he came into the world. He isn't bothering anybody. And to plug a chap like that, so honest and four-square to all the winds as he is, and cut a gash in his neck when he falls in his tracks, seems to me to be about as low-down and ornery a piece of work as a white man could do. I've had a hull lot of preening chumps take me into their libraries or smoking-rooms and, pointing to antlers stuck up above the lintels of their doors, perkily, and with a foolish sort of vanity, say to me, 'I killed that fellow myself,' but I've never had a man say a thing like that to me that I didn't feel like replying, 'Yes, you abject ass, and if you got your deserts you'd have about a thousand years in purgatory for it.'—Washington Post.

CLIMATE IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Health on the Islands Depends Upon the Resident.

Secretary Taft has suggested that the newspapers can "help the American government in the Philippines by denying the lies circulated about the terrible climate there." In this good work we gladly offer our co-operation.

The climate of the Philippines is not at all terrible. Many people live there all the year round. As a climate the Philippine article has much to recommend it. The resident or visitor has no uneasiness regarding his raiment. He does not go to business in a linen "duster" and curse himself on his way home for not having carried an ulster. In its reliability the Philippine climate is endlessly the superior of our American brand. The absence of snow and frost is not necessarily a proof of either uncomfortable or unwholesome conditions. On the contrary, from time immemorial the great majority of world dwellers have been resident in either tropical or subtropical regions, and many have lived to a ripe old age.

Health in the Philippines, in Cuba, in Porto Rico and in all other similar regions, barring those having vast areas of low-lying and miasmatic marsh lands, depends primarily upon the resident, upon his ability and readiness to adjust himself and his habits to his environment. The same law holds in New York city with equal force. In no place on earth may nature's laws be violated or ignored with impunity. Due obedience to those laws in the Philippines or elsewhere, will insure a corresponding degree of health, comfort and longevity. Those to whom hot weather brings real physical suffering, and there are such, will do well to avoid the tropics or the edge of them. But there are many who find cold weather a cause of suffering and who find real delight in a mean temperature of 85 degrees. The question of heat and cold is largely a matter of individual preference.

So far as salubrity is concerned, Secretary Taft is entirely right and justified in decrying any attempt to malign the climate of our Philippine possessions. Those who have the desire to participate in the economic development of the islands may go there entirely fearless of any climate terrors, providing they will carry with them a modicum of common sense.—New York Sun.

He Didn't Know How.

"Charles, dear," said young Mrs. Torkins, "I have done you a great injustice."

"In what way?"

"I suspected you without reason. I asked several of your friends that you go out with of evenings whether you knew how to play poker and every one of them thought a minute and said you didn't."—Washington Star.

Civilization is making such rapid strides that some day we will hear of a missionary getting cooked in a chafing dish.

If a man wears three collars a week some people look upon him as stuck up.



SYLPHIDE CREEPT A STEP NEARER.

your son, have always loved him with a pure, honorable love. We drifted into each other's affections under the guidance of Fate. As heaven is my judge, I swear to you that at the time I married Lucian I was as ignorant of the stain upon me as he was!"

"Ah! But you learned the truth within an hour after you left the altar. Even then you should have been fair and noble enough to have released him from his vows. The folly of your guilty procrastination has come home to you in the birth of your child."

"Madam," cried the cruelly goaded creature, "who has informed you of all this?"

"I tell you I know not," replied Mrs. Courtlandt with ever-increasing irritation; "perhaps when you read the writing you will recognize your hidden enemy."

"Enemy! You are right there. I do not need to see the writing; I know who the fiend is already!"

"And who is it?"

"That is my secret!" replied Sylphide, proudly; "the knowledge can never touch you, even remotely, and I propose to be silent until the time comes for me to speak!"

The elder woman shuddered at the covert menace that these ominous words embodied.

"Well," she said, eager to change this train of thought, "what do you propose to do in regard to your child?"

"What can I do? I am helpless in the matter. I must give him to you!"

The words were pronounced with a cold, desperate calmness that was appalling.

"Bravely spoken!" exclaimed Mrs.

She did not rise, but she turned her head and saw her husband standing there in the noontide sunlight with folded arms, mute and severe as a supreme judge. She dragged herself a little way towards him and sank at his feet.

"Lucian," she breathed, "Lucian! speak to me! Have you seen your mother?"

"I have just left her."

"Then you know all?"

"Yes, I know all."

She shrank away from him and hid her face, fearing to look upon him. At last, when the dead silence remained unbroken, she raised her head and stole a fearful glance at him. He stood just as he had paused when he had entered, like one petrified, looking down upon her in infinite sorrow and perplexity, but without a shadow of anger in his look.

Taking a little heart, she crept a step nearer him and raising herself, she laid her cheek upon his pendent hand. He started at the soft contact, but did not shrink; only the touch brought with it a sense of the reality.

"Sylphide—Sylphide!" he exclaimed, "is this thing true?"

"Yes."

"How long have you known that this awful doubt hung over your birth?" he asked.

"Since the night we were married."

"And who informed you then?"

"My cousin, Oscar Couramont, the man who has sought to defraud me of my fortune."

It was too late for prevarication; therefore she spoke frankly, daring the consequences.

"Sylphide, you deceived me!"