

MASTER OF THE MINE

By Robert Buchanan.

CHAPTER XIII.

It seemed as if the days of my boyhood had come back to me. Never since then had I experienced such feelings as now filled my heart, for with Madeline's fading they had faded, and during the years of our separation I had passed my time with tolerable tranquillity; but now that she had been so miraculously restored to me, the old fire was rekindled in my soul, and I became another man. Her very presence in the house that night drove away all thoughts of sleep.

All that day, overcome by the fatigue through which she had passed, Madeline remained in her chamber; while I, utterly unable to work, hung like a restless spirit about the house. The next morning she awoke refreshed; and when we three sat at breakfast, she astonished us all by appearing amongst us, fully dressed, and looking bright and well.

As all her own clothes had been lost in the wreck, she wore a dress of my aunt; over it she had thrown the cloak which she had worn on the wreck. She came forward languidly, leaning on the shoulder of her black attendant, and sank down into the chair which my uncle had placed for her, while the native began crying and kissing her hands. They spoke together in the foreign tongue; then Madeline raised her eyes and looked quietly around. Her glance swept the room and finally rested with a look of recognition on my face. I felt the hot blood mount to my temples.

"Am I mistaken?" she asked, softly; "did you take me from the wreck?"

I bowed my head. In a moment all her languor disappeared, the old fire darted from her eyes, the old flush suffused her cheeks—she was the Madeline of my childhood once more. She looked at her hands, with one quick movement pulled off the most valuable of her rings, and held it toward me.

"Will you not take it?" she said, with a bright smile. "You saved my life."

Her whole manner was that of a lady speaking to an inferior. Under my excitement I hardly noticed it. Scarcely knowing what I did, I sprang forward and took the ring; then, eagerly kissing her hand, I placed it again upon her finger.

"Madeline," I said, "don't you know me? Madeline—Miss Graham?"

She looked at me more critically and shook her head.

"Have you forgotten Munster's?" I said, "and Hugh Trelawney?"

If I expected a wild outburst of pleasure at the mention of my own name, I was quickly disappointed. She only smiled; and, with her eyes fixed upon vacancy as if she was reviewing the past, said:

"Munster's? Hugh Trelawney? Oh, yes; of course I remember now! Hugh Trelawney was the nicest of those Munster boys, and we were friends; but," she added, fixing her eyes anxiously upon me, "surely you are not that boy?"

"Yes," I replied, "I am Hugh Trelawney!"

Her eyes opened wider, she glanced from me to my uncle and aunt, then round the kitchen, then she was silent. I felt that some explanation was due to her, and I gave it. I told her of my father's death—the kindness of my uncle and aunt, and of my subsequent life at St. Gurlott's.

"St. Gurlott's?" she said. "Is this St. Gurlott's, in Cornwall? I have an aunt living in a place of that name. Perhaps you may know her; her name is Mrs. Redruth."

"Wha, that be our master's mother!" broke in my aunt. But I added:

"Are you sure it's the same, Miss Graham? This Mrs. Redruth has a son who owns the mine."

"Yes, I know—my cousin George!" she answered; while my heart misgave me at the familiar manner in which she mentioned the name. "Oh, it must be the same," she continued, enthusiastically; "and to think I should be shipwrecked here, of all places in the world! Mr. Trelawney, are they far away? Would it be possible to let them know that I am here? Perhaps if you tell her the story and show her this," she continued, drawing a quaint signet ring from her finger, "my aunt will come to me. This was my dear father's ring, and she knew it well, for he always wore it—and he had it on even when he died!"

I started off on my mission. The events of the last few hours had made me a changed being. I began to wonder if it was all real. It was clear to me now that she thought little of the past. While I had been living upon the memory of those dear days, she had let other events obliterate it entirely from her mind. Well, it was clear I must do the same. I must deliver her up to the custody of her relations as coldly as if she were a stranger who had casually been cast in my path for a day.

Having made my decision, I became calmer, and walked with a steady step up to Redruth House. I inquired for the young master; learned that he had left for London two days before. I asked for the mistress, and she saw me. She listened to my story quietly enough; when I showed her the ring, her white face flushed, her hand trembled, and her eyes filled with tears.

"It is my brother's, my poor brother's," she said, more to herself than to me; then she added: "My niece is at your cottage, you say?"

"Yes, madame."

"Tell her I will come to her at once."

I left the house and, instead of returning to the cottage, walked straight down to the mine. Where was the use of my returning to Madeline; to stand by and see that grim and stonyhearted woman

bring to her queenly eyes the light of happiness, to her lips the cry of joy, which the sight of my face had failed to do?

All day I worked with a fierce persistence which alarmed me. I looked at myself in my mining suit, then recalled Madeline as I had seen her that morning—with her soft hands sparkling with gems, and the black servant crouching at her feet—and realized more than ever the distance that divided us from one another. I returned home in the evening and found the cottage much the same as it had always been. Madeline was gone.

"She be up at Redruth House, Hugh," said my aunt. "The awid missus came and took her away, and right glad she was to go, poor lass!"

She showed me a five-pound note which Madeline had given her, borrowing it from her aunt to do so. She put the note into an old work box where most of her treasures were kept, and set about getting the tea, imagining that the romance of last night's wreck had ended.

CHAPTER XIV.

For some days after that I saw nothing whatever of Madeline. One day, the seventh from that on which the lifeboat had brought her to shore, I made a minute inspection of the mine, which every day grew more dangerous, and came up from my work covered with filth from head to foot. I had passed the last ladder, and stood at the mouth of the mine, dazzled by the quick transformation from pitch darkness to broad daylight, when my ears were struck by the sound of a voice which passed like sudden music through my frame. I rubbed my eyes and looked about me, and there, not far from where I stood, was my old sweetheart. She was dressed now in an elegant costume of gray, which fitted her to perfection; a little hat with long plumes was on her head, and her face, looking lovelier than ever, glowed and sparkled in the light; with her rich brown skin and sparkling black eyes, her erect carriage, graceful tread, she looked like some Eastern princess! She was walking toward the spot where I stood; George Redruth was beside her; while behind followed the black girl, Anita, her dark eyes fixed upon her mistress. This sudden encounter unnerved me. Quickly recovering myself, however, I was about to move away, and so avoid embarrassment, when the master's voice arrested me.

"Trelawney," he said; "one moment. Miss Graham wishes to go down the mine. I tell her it is impossible. What do you say? Is it fit for a lady?"

"Don't worry about it, George," she said, "I've abandoned the idea." Then, stepping up to me, she held forth her little gloved hand. I bowed over it, but did not take it, giving as an excuse that I was not fit to approach her.

"I daresay you were in quite as forlorn a condition the other morning when you snatched me from the wreck," she said; "yet you did not hesitate then, when your own life was in peril. Mr. Trelawney, take my hand."

I did as she requested, I clasped the little hand in both of mine and raised it respectfully to my lips. In doing so, I caught a glimpse of George Redruth's face; it was black as the pit mouth.

"Now, my dear Madeline," he said, impatiently, "shall we go back?"

But Madeline was not ready, or perhaps she was too imperious to be so ordered by her cousin. She had abandoned all intention of descending the mine; but she was nevertheless anxious to inspect the outside of it.

"But you can go," she said. "Mr. Trelawney will escort me."

"Nonsense!" returned her cousin. "Trelawney has got his work to attend to. I will stay."

And he did stay for fully two hours; at the end of which time she allowed him to take her away.

Three other days passed without a sign from her; then I encountered her again. It was in the evening, when I was walking home. This time she was alone; except for the servant, who walked at a respectful distance behind her. She came up to me unreservedly, and again held forth her hand.

"I came to walk back with you," she said. "Do you mind?"

"I mind?" I repeated in amazement. "You forget, Miss Graham, it is an honor for me to walk beside you."

She gave a little impatient toss of her head, and we walked on together. For some time not a word was spoken, but I felt that she was watching me keenly. Presently she said:

"Do you know what I have been doing, Mr. Trelawney? I have been trying to find in you one trace of the boy I know, years ago, at Munster's—and I have failed."

"I don't understand."

"No? Well, I will explain. The boy I knew was kind to me; frank, open-hearted, generous. You are somewhat unfriendly, reserved, harsh, and, if I may say so, churlish. Why are you so changed?"

"I am not changed, Miss Graham; or, if I am, it is but with the tide of fortune, which has ebbed and not flowed with me since we met before. When we were at Munster's I believed we were equals, but now you are Miss Madeline Graham; I am overseer of your cousin's mine."

"Then you wish us to remain as strangers?"

"I think it would be better."

"Ah! you are crueler than I thought; if you will not accept my friendship for the sake of the old days when we were boy and girl together, you will, at least, have some pity upon me. I am lonely

and among strangers here. You seem like an old friend. If you will suffer me to talk to you sometimes it will make my stay here more pleasant."

Her pleading won the day, and we became friends. I never went to Redruth House, and she never came to the cottage. I never sought her, but quite innocently and frankly she sought me. We often went on the moor when, after my long day's work, I was making my way home, and I could not regard these meetings as purely accidental on her part. She was always accompanied by the black girl, until one evening, when she appeared alone.

"You are looking for Anita?" said Madeline, noting my glance. "She has gone to London with my aunt's maid, and will not return till close on midnight. My cousin counselled my staying at home to-night, or allowing him to accompany me. I knew I should not want for company, so refused to submit. I may not enjoy these walks much longer."

"What! are you going away?" I asked, in some alarm.

She shrugged her shoulders. "Perhaps! I do not know; certainly I shall have to go sooner or later, but I trust it may not be sooner. When I was shipwrecked here I was on my way to London, to take up my abode with some other relations. They are troubling me with questions, so I have sent Anita to satisfy them as to my safety. Yet I suppose I shall some day have to go."

She tried to speak carelessly, yet I fancied I detected a ring of regret in her voice, and I quailed before the feeling of desolation which her words brought to my heart.

In that one sentence she had unwittingly shown to me myself—revealed to me the terrible secret which I had been vainly trying to crush from my heart. Even as she had influenced my boyhood, she had influenced my manhood.

I loved her with the same unthinking love which had filled my soul as a boy—loved her even while I felt that such a love might be the means of blighting my life. I knew that no good could come of it, for was she not as far removed from me as the moon was removed from the sea? and yet I felt at that moment that to love her so, be it only for one hour, was worth whole centuries of pain.

(To be continued.)

WAGNER AS A HUMORIST.

How He Complied with the Suggestion of a London Newspaper.

Richard Wagner was not a man to whom one would naturally ascribe the faculty of ready joking. It is not from the creator of the serious, somber, "Flying Dutchman" or the composer of the half mystical, half religious opera "Parsifal," that one would expect cheerful pranks at the expense of other people. Nevertheless, an instance is on record of how the great tone-painter of Bayreuth played a very funny trick on a newspaper and probably a good many of the readers accustomed to relying on what it said.

It was in the '50's. Wagner, then still climbing the ladder of fame, was conducting the Philharmonic concerts in the British metropolis for a season. Being, as he remained to the end, a very ardent admirer of Beethoven, and, in fact, knowing that master's nine symphonies by heart, he selected several of them for performance in the said series of concerts. The first time, then, that Wagner conducted a Beethoven symphony in London, the public received the rendition kindly enough, but the next morning a certain newspaper with a very large circulation came out with a rather severe criticism. The author of "Lohengrin" was in cold print, but in unreserved terms, scolded for directing a symphony by the immortal Beethoven without a score in front of him. Such a proceeding, to which London was unaccustomed, was sheer presumption, so ran the criticism. And after further uncomplimentary remarks, the great and influential journal advised young Herr Wagner to use a score when he conducted a Beethoven symphony again. Well, soon Herr Wagner did, this time with a book of music open before him on his desk. He was seen to turn over the leaves with a certain amount of regularity, too. His reward came, next day, in the form of a commendatory article in the aforesaid newspaper, which praised him for a very much better interpretation of Beethoven than his last, due, of course, to the suggested use of the score. Whereupon Wagner (we think our pun is justified in this particular instance) announced the fact that the score in front of him the previous evening was that of Rossini's opera, "The Barber of Seville"—turned upside down.—Collier's Weekly.

WHYNESS OF THE WHEREFORE.

"I suppose," said the scanty haired man, "you have never given marriage a thought."

"Oh, yes I have," replied the bachelor.

"Then why are you still single?" asked the other.

"Because I gave marriage a thought," answered the advocate of single blessedness.

THE SKIN LIKE A SPONGE

Some of the most stubborn diseases enter into the system through the pores of the skin. Like a sponge, it absorbs poisons of various kinds, which are taken up by the little blood-vessels beneath the surface of the body, and emptied into the great current of the blood. The juices of **poison oak** and other noxious wild plants percolate through the skin like water through a sponge, are taken into the circulation, breaking out afresh each season, and lingering on for years unless antidoted and driven out of the system.

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It Wasn't Strange.
Old Jilson (in the hotel lobby)—Well, well; if there isn't young Slicker. I never expected to see him again on this earth, and here he is alive and well.
Jobkins—What's been the matter with him?
Old Jilson—Went to the hospital for an operation.—Cleveland Leader.

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