

DOOMED.

By WILLARD MacKENZIE

CHAPTER VI.—(Continued.)

"Look there!" he said, in a whisper—"there he is!"

"Who?" inquired Arthur, directing his eyes to the spot indicated.

"Wylie and his wife!"

He was a tall, thin, bony man, with tow-colored hair cut close to his head; a low, narrow forehead, no eyebrows, greenish-grey eyes, a long, thin nose, turned upwards at the end, so as to disagreeably expose very wide nostrils; a long upper lip, over which the lower one protruded; a wide mouth, like a slit; an iron jaw, that looked as though the teeth were always clenched; and a pallid, clammy skin, with a carotid tinge in it, completed the portrait.

While Arthur was surveying him, he was handing a glass of lemonade to a lady whom he had just brought in from the ball room—a woman with black hair dressed in plain bands, and screwed up behind into a top-knot, secured with a Spanish comb; heavy black brows, that almost met over small, deeply sunken eyes, a sharply cut nose, thin mouth, long chin, lantern jaws, and a bilious complexion. A more repulsive pair it would have been difficult to find; and so thought Arthur, upon whom they produced a most disagreeable impression.

"I suppose," said Mr. Grierson doubtfully, "that I shall have to introduce you to them; but, as I've told you, they are violently opposed to your marriage with Constance—not that he'll show it to your face. Mr. Wylie," he said, advancing to that gentleman, "this is Mr. Arthur Penrhdyddyn—Sir Launce Penrhdyddyn's son; and as there seems to be some probability that he may be one of the family before long, I think you ought to know him."

"Delighted to make the acquaintance of Mr. Penrhdyddyn," answered Mr. Wylie, with a grin, that disclosed a row of sharp, white teeth, which looked as though they would devour him. "Allow me to introduce you to my wife, Mrs. Wylie—Mr. Arthur Penrhdyddyn."

The bilious complexion turned yet yellower, and the lips more bloodless, while a look of undisguised hatred flashed from underneath the heavy brows as she acknowledged the introduction by an almost imperceptible bend.

"I trust that you are enjoying yourself, Mr. Penrhdyddyn," he said. "Are you a volunteer?"

Arthur replied that he was not. "Ah, you should be. Every gentleman should enroll himself in the movement. If it were only to encourage the masses. Depend upon it that it is the grandest movement of modern times."

"Well, what do you think of him?" inquired Mr. Grierson, when Mr. Wylie and his spouse left them alone.

"I think him the most horrible man I ever encountered," answered Arthur. "He seems to be great upon volunteer subjects. What is he?"

"He cares no more about volunteers than I do," answered the old man, contemptuously. "But whatever's going on, he always pushes himself forward. As to what he is, that's more than I can tell. He's 'something in the city,' as the phrase goes; but whether it's law, or stock jobbing, or any other jobbing, he keeps to himself."

Constance, by her own wish, retired early from the ball. As Arthur conducted her to the carriage, Mr. Grierson invited him to dine at the Hall on the next day. "And then we can have a quiet chat together, and come to some understanding about the future," he whispered cordially pressing the young man's hand.

CHAPTER VII.

"Well, Con, what do you think of your future husband?" inquired Mr. Grierson, as they rolled homeward.

"I think Mr. Penrhdyddyn an extremely agreeable young man," she answered, evasively. There was a pause for some minutes. Then Constance, laying her hand upon his arm, said falteringly, "Uncle, dear, must this be? This marriage?"

"Why, have you any objection to it?" "I like Mr. Penrhdyddyn too much to become his wife without love," she answered, in a low voice.

"Without love!" reiterated Mr. Grierson. "Well, I should have thought he was a young fellow that any girl might fall in love with."

"True—any girl whose heart was free. Uncle," she said, drawing closer to him, and clasping one of his hands in both her own, "I should have told you all this before, but I had not the courage—not from fear of your anger, but from the fear of paining you; but the time has come when it must be told."

"Why, you don't mean to say that you've fallen in love with any of those bewhiskered swells or lispng ninnyes that's been after you—or, rather, your money?" cried the old man.

"Oh, dear, no, uncle," she answered, hastily; then, in a low, hesitating tone, she added, "Do you remember Mr. Stafford?"

"What the painter! Oh, that's it, is it?" he exclaimed. "Then my suspicions were true, and there was something between you and him. Well, if I were a woman, I know which would be my choice, and it wouldn't be the painter."

"But, uncle dear, I've often heard you say that although your wife was but homely looking, you would not, even in your youth, have given her up for the brightest lady in the land," she said, winningly.

"Confound it, Constance, it's no good trying to twist round me in this way!" burst out the old man. "Would you let all that splendid property go out of your hands for a mere fancy? Besides, if you refuse young Penrhdyddyn, it will be his ruin—it is the only hope Sir Launce has left."

At that moment, the carriage halted before the door of Hilborough Hall; the conversation was not renewed, and soon afterwards Constance and her uncle separated for the night, each one a prey to gloomy and uneasy reflections.

With the departure of the Griersons the ball lost all its attractions for Arthur Penrhdyddyn, who left almost immediately afterwards for his hotel. Constance had most agreeably impressed him; and for upwards of an hour he lay back in his easy chair, picturing her face, and recalling every word that had passed between them. With such visions was mingled a strange idea that he had seen her somewhere before—at least, there was something in her features that seemed familiar to him. He went to bed and dreamed of her—a weird, strange dream, which awoke him, and kept him awake with unpleasant thoughts until daybreak.

Although they did not arrive home until nearly four in the morning, Mr. and Mrs. Wylie did not retire to bed, but sat themselves down to an important discussion.

"If we are not careful, this girl will put an end to all our hopes by marrying that boy," said Mrs. Wylie.

"Not yet—not yet," answered her husband, viciously gnawing his nails. "I believe that old idiot Grierson has brought this about purposely to thwart me; but he shall not succeed, do what he will. In three months more Penrhdyddyn would have been ours. Ever since Matilda's death I have been toiling and scheming to scrape together money for that purpose. Sir Launce can do nothing to save it, and do you think I will be thrown over by an old idiot and a spoony boy and girl?"

"He is struck with her; but I do not believe she reciprocates the sentiment," remarked his better half. "If we could get her out of the way, what could he do?" "Get her out of the way. What do you mean?"

"Supposing we could marry her to some one else?"

"To whom?" "You remember Stafford, the drawing master; I firmly believe that she was infatuated with him; and, judging from her behavior to-night, I should say is so still; for a girl of 18 would scarcely have treated the advances of so handsome a man as young Penrhdyddyn with such marked coldness if she had not a fancy for some other in her mind. Now, if such be the case, and we could bring the match about, not only would Penrhdyddyn fall into our hands, but Constance would forfeit her fortune, which would be another clear gain of ten thousand pounds to us."

"That is well thought of," answered Wylie, meditatively. "Bah!" he went on after a pause; "is it likely that she'll forfeit a splendid fortune for the sake of a beggarly portrait painter?"

"Women have done as stupid things as that, for less attractive men than Stafford," answered his wife.

"I have made my proposition; find this man Stafford and use every means of bringing him and the girl together again. Sir Launce is a proud, stiff-necked man, who is only half reconciled to this match. Could but the slightest shadow of suspicion be cast upon her, he would break it off, were the act his instant destruction."

"Then the old story would suffice for that, and save the trouble of new complications."

"It might suffice as far as Penrhdyddyn is concerned, but it would do nothing towards the forfeiture of Constance's fortune. We must manage to kill the two birds with one stone. There are two things to be done; first, to bring about a meeting between the girl and this Stafford, to compromise her in the eyes of Arthur Penrhdyddyn, and thus render him averse to the match; and, secondly, to bring about a marriage between her and the painter."

"But it will not do for you or I to be directly mixed up in such a plot. You know that old Grierson has a long-standing grudge against us already; that he is suspicious of us; and were he to discover that we had been the concoctors and executors of such notable devices, he would proceed against me for conspiracy, and thus not only thwart all our schemes, but ruin me in society."

"Well, if you do not care to act yourself, surely, among your numerous shady connections in the city, you can find some tool to serve your purpose," said the woman.

Wylie thought for a moment, biting his finger nails fiercely. Suddenly his face lit up with a peculiar smile.

"You have thought of some one?" said his wife, who had been watching his face.

"Who is it?" "A woman, and a clever one, too; one who would wheedle his Satanic Majesty himself," was the reply.

CHAPTER VIII.

Hilborough Hall was an old-fashioned mansion, embowered in evergreens, approached by a winding carriage drive, and surrounded by a parklike lawn. It had formerly belonged to a good old country family, but its last descendant fell upon

evil days. The Hall was put up for sale, and Constance's father, being on the lookout, just then, for a handsome country residence, at the earnest persuasion of his wife, bought it.

At 4 o'clock in the afternoon upon the day after the ball, Uncle Robert was enjoying a nap in a snug little room upon the ground floor, which being plainly furnished, he had taken a fancy to; and it was here that he took his dose, and read his newspaper. Presently he was interrupted by the entrance of Constance, with an anxious look upon her countenance.

"Am I disturbing you, uncle dear?" she cried, with the door in her hand.

"No, my dear; come in, come in," answered the old gentleman, rousing himself with a shake. "What is the time? Four o'clock, eh! Mr. Penrhdyddyn will be here soon."

"It is about him that I have come to speak to you. I am more and more convinced that the union you propose is impossible," she answered, gently, but firmly.

"For goodness sake, child, don't say that!" he cried. "You know the worry I had through so many months, until I hit upon what I thought such a capital plan. Oh, dear! oh, dear! who would have the care of women? You never know how to take 'em, or what will please 'em, or what to do with 'em. But what am I to do about Sir Launce? What will he think of me after proposing the match?"

"But, uncle dear, it will be no fault of yours; it is not you who have promised to marry his son," she said, with a smile. "And Sir Launce will know enough of the world to be aware that it is very difficult to be responsible for a woman's actions."

"And so the poor gentleman is to lose his property?"

"Suppose we were to offer to lend the money to pay off the mortgage, upon the security of the estate?"

"I never thought of that," answered the old man. "But, no, that is out of the question. The estate is mortgaged for double its value; and as one of the trustees of your fortune I could not consent to such a large expenditure of money. If you won't marry young Arthur, Penrhdyddyn must go to the hammer, and there's an end of it."

Uncle Robert, although in domestic life an easy, good-natured man, was sharp and positive in all business transactions; and Constance knew that it was useless to argue with him, at least at the present time; and, with a sigh, she let the subject drop.

A few words of explanation relative to the connection between Constance and Stafford are here necessary. When he first met with her, it was in his capacity of portrait painter; she sat to him for her likeness. Being a man of free and engaging manners, Uncle Robert took a fancy to him, and when Constance's portrait was finished, he sat for his own. He then proposed that Stafford should give his niece some finishing lessons in painting. Thus these two were thrown much together.

Stafford was handsome, fascinating and thoroughly a gentleman. Constance was young, beautiful and romantic. They fell in love with each other.

After a time, Uncle Robert began to suspect how matters stood, and, roused to a sense of the dangerous position of his niece, at once dispensed with Stafford's services, and as politely as he could, intimated that all connection between them must end at once.

Her position in regard to Arthur was most delicate and difficult. That it was in the character of a suitor for her hand that he visited the Hall was so perfectly understood that the mere act of receiving those visits was at least a tacit encouragement of hopes which the promise she had given to Stafford and the state of her own heart rendered it dishonorable to foster.

These and a hundred other thoughts coursed in rapid and painful succession through Constance's mind as she was dressing for dinner. And it was with an aching heart and an embarrassed manner that she obeyed the summons of the dinner bell, and descended to the drawing room.

Arthur had arrived, and stepped forward eagerly to salute her. But her manner was cold and distant. He conducted her in to dinner—he endeavored to engage her in conversation, but could only obtain monosyllabic replies.

After dinner Constance gave them some music in the drawing room, or, rather, him, for Mr. Grierson fell asleep in an easy chair, and snored lustily all the time. Constance was an excellent pianist, had a sweet voice and sang with charming taste.

(To be continued.)

All Sleepers.

The old colored parson arose in his pulpit and addressed his flock.

"Bruddahs en sistahs, come on en git on de train foh Paradise. It lebes right away."

Then he glanced over his snoring congregation and shook his head sorrowfully.

"I reckon we betteh sidetrack dat train, deacon," he sighed.

"Why so, parson?" asked the deacon in surprise.

"Kase deh's altogeddeh too many sleepers foh one train heah."

The Queen.

"I'd like to speak to the boss," said the blind man at the door.

"Really," replied Mr. Hiram Offen, "she's out to-day. This is Thursday, you know. Anything my wife or I can do for you?"—Philadelphia Ledger.

Unkind.

"So you wouldn't take me to be 28?" giggled the fair widow.

"No, indeed," rejoined the inconsiderate old bachelor. "But if you had a daughter I might take her to be that old."

Substitute for Celluloid.

The many uses and inflammable character of celluloid have led to an active search for substitutes. The new material of C. Trocquet, a French inventor of celluloid, asbestos and the organic matter contained in oyster shells. The cellulose is obtained by treating seaweed successively with acid and alkali, and washing. The asbestos is ground with petroleum oil, while the ground oyster shells are treated with hydrochloric acid and the insoluble residue is boiled with water, washed with weak alkaline solution and collected on a filter. The mixtures contain from 25 to 65 parts of the cellulose, 2 to 12 parts of the oiled asbestos, and 20 to 45 parts of the oyster shell substances. The mass is treated with formaldehyde, suitably colored, and then pressed into any form or object for which celluloid can be used.

What a Doctor Is Good For.

Life is such a constant rush to a well-known physician that to secure a little recreation he has recourse to ruses. A visitor called one night and began a speech to the servant.

"I want the doctor to come as quickly as he can."

"He can't do it," the servant answered. "He left orders that he was so busy that, unless it was absolutely a matter of life and death, he couldn't go out at all this evening."

"But," said the caller, "it isn't illness at all."

"What then?"

"We want him to come over and take a hand in a game of whist."

"Oh, that's different."

The servant disappeared, and reappeared a moment later.

"The doctor says he'll be over in ten minutes, sir," he announced.—Tit-Bits.

Snow and Rain.

The first man to whom it ever occurred to find out how much rain was represented by a given fall of snow was Alexander Brice of Kirknewtown, who in March, 1763, made a simple experiment with the contents of a stone jug driven face downward into over six inches of snow. What he learned was that a greater or less degree of cold, or of wind, when the snow falls, and its "lying a longer or shorter time on the ground," will occasion a difference in the weight and in the quantity of water produced; "but if," he added, "I may trust to the above trials, which I endeavored to perform with care, snow, newly fallen, with a moderate gale of wind, freezing cold, will produce a quantity of water equal to one-tenth part of its bulk." So that a fall of snow of ten inches represents a rainfall of one inch.—London Chronicle.

Made on His Own Specifications.

Mrs. Jones—Mr. Jones sent these trousers back. He says they are not anywhere near long enough.

Snip (tailor)—That's funny. When I went to collect my bill from him he told me he was shorter than he ever was in his life and I made these trousers accordingly.—Toledo Blade.

A TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE.

How a Veteran Was Saved the Amputation of a Limb.

B. Frank Doremus, veteran, of Roosevelt Ave., Indianapolis, Ind., says: "I had been showing symptoms of kidney trouble from the time I was mustered out of the army, but in all my life I never suffered as in 1897. Headaches, dizziness and sleeplessness, first, and then dropsy. I was weak and helpless, having run down from



180 to 125 pounds. I was having terrible pain in the kidneys, and the secretions passed almost involuntarily. My left leg swelled until it was 34 inches around, and the doctor tapped it night and morning until I could no longer stand it, and then he advised amputation. I refused, and began using Doan's Kidney Pills. The swelling subsided gradually, the urine became natural, and all my pains and aches disappeared. I have been well now for nine years since using Doan's Kidney Pills.

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Good Tip.

"Do you think I can reach the heart of the haughty beauty?" sighed the sentimental youth with the guitar under his arm.

"Better try tunneling, old man," advised his friend.

"Tunneling?"

"Yes, I heard her say that you were a great bore."

Great Blow.

"What makes your uncle look so seedy, Harker?"

"Why, he blew in ten thousand last year."

"Blew in ten thousand? Why, I never knew your uncle to be dissipated."

"Oh, this wasn't dissipation. You see, he invented a patent bellows that turned out a failure."

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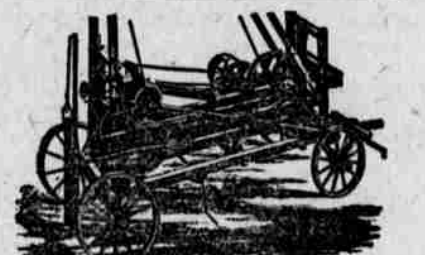
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