

Redeemed Pledges.

By J. LUDLUM LEE.

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Solomon Isaacs had been counted a prosperous pawnbroker for years. His little shop, located on the corner of a busy thoroughfare, showed a big profit, while large concerns in the neighborhood had failed during the hard times.

Real estate sharks had made tempting offers to Solomon for his precious corner, but he assured them all that he was doing very well and did not care to sell. Indeed, Solomon boasted of many fashionable customers, and his showcases often displayed gorgeous gems, offered for sale at temptingly low prices.

Business seldom started in until after 10 in the morning, so Solomon was standing in the open doorway smoking a cigar when his attention was attracted to a fashionably dressed young woman looking in his window. Suddenly she caught his glance and darted in the doorway.

"I want to get this watch out of pawn," she said as Mr. Isaacs followed her into the shop. She handed him the ticket.

"Out early, ain't you?" suggested Isaacs as he glanced her over, wondering how she had happened to pawn a watch for \$5. Clearly some one had arranged the matter for her. Isaacs never forgot a business face.

He took the ticket and went to the back of the store in search of the pledged article, and Nita Norcross spent the time in looking into a tempting case of old jewelry. One old locket attracted her and on his return she asked its price.

Isaacs took out the locket slowly, still searching the girl's face. The price seemed reasonable, and she bought it. Turning to leave the shop,



"WHY, I BOUGHT IT," SHE FINALLY ANSWERED.

she met face to face a huge policeman and a lithe youth. Nita's heart went out to the latter. In her imagination she pictured the young man as wayward and pawning, perhaps stealing jewelry. Surely he must be a thief, or why his police escort? The suspected youth looked at her sharply as he passed into the shop, and Nita hurried home with her purchase. Once in her room, she told her maid to send the laundress upstairs. She wished to speak to her privately.

"Here is your watch, Mrs. Berry," said Nita as she handed the timepiece to her washerwoman, who began to weep copiously on a gingham apron. "I hope you will never have to part with it again. The next time you need money for sickness or any serious trouble come to me. Never pawn anything again. It is a terrible habit," continued Nita. Then, recalling the picture of the handsome youth, she added: "It teaches young men where they can get extra money and often gets them into trouble than out of it. Now run along to your work and never think of it again." And Mrs. Berry, clasping the cheap yet precious watch of her dead husband to her heart, went back to her tubs.

Several weeks later Nita Norcross was invited to the clambake given at Oak Ridge by her old friends the Clydes. Mrs. Clyde introduced her to the many new friends they had met since moving to Oak Ridge, and soon supper was in full swing.

Encircling the round table were thirty men and girls, and Nita casually looked them over. Directly opposite she recognized a new face strangely familiar. Where had she seen that man before? He had an almost imperceptible smile, and, look where she would, their glances seemed always to cross.

Supper was over, and the guests were strolling about the grounds. The man with the familiar-strange face came up to Nita as she stood beneath a clump of lanterns.

"This is Miss Norcross, I believe," he said. "I am Mr. Hildreth. We were introduced early in the evening, but no doubt you did not catch my name. Have you seen the sunken lake of which Clyde is so proud?"

Once away from the crowd, they found a comfortable little seat along the water's edge, and the moonlight fell clear upon them.

"Gorgeous night, isn't it?" suggested Nita. She could not explain why she had this uncommon constrained feeling when with this man.

"Bully," he replied. "May I light a cigarette just to keep the bugs away?"

"You certainly may," agreed Nita.

"I wonder if you would think me frightfully rude," began Mr. Hildreth, "if I were to ask you where you ran against the locket you have on your neck, Miss Norcross. It's a perfect beauty. I have seen but one other like it, and that belonged to my mother."

Nita blushed and nervously twirled the locket which hung on a fine chain about her neck.

"Why, I bought it," she finally answered.

"Yes, of course, but where?"

The silence which followed was painful, and Hildreth continued:

"You see, my mother's locket was stolen along with a lot of other jewelry that my valet relieved me of about a year ago, and I've spent hundreds of dollars and a world of time trying to locate the stuff. What he took of mine I don't care a rap about, but my mother's keepsakes—well, you could understand that would be a different thing. In my mother's locket there is a picture of a child—a picture of me. Whom do you carry in yours, Miss Norcross?"

Hildreth waited several minutes for his answer. Slowly the girl took the locket from her throat and reached it to him.

"Open it," she almost whispered.

He did so and revealed the picture of a curly headed child of about six, and while Hildreth looked long at the picture the girl told the story of how she came by it.

"And isn't it absurd," she was saying, "I thought you were a thief that day when I saw you with the policeman?"

"And I," said Hildreth, "though you were a society girl getting extra money to play the races or go to fortune tellers or some equally wicked dissipation." Then, changing his tone entirely, he continued: "I hate to ask the return of this, but mother valued it above price. But as she is now abroad I want you to show you hold me no ill will by putting it back on your throat and wearing it while you are at Oak Ridge. When we part—"

He extended the trinket to her, and his hand touched hers. Without argument she clasped the fine chain once more about her neck. Nothing was said by either, but Lawrence lighted another cigarette and bit hard.

"I think we had better join the crowd," said Nita, "or they'll be instituting a searching party for us."

The next days and for many days after during Nita's stay at Oak Ridge, Lawrence Hildreth found an excuse to run over in his motor or to sail over in his boat to the Clyde lodge. The last evening of Nita's visit had come, and she and Lawrence were once more sitting by the water's edge. Nearly a month had passed, and another moon had come to shed its rays upon Oak Ridge.

"Tomorrow I am going home," Nita said, "so I will give you back the locket tonight. Your mother will be home soon, too, I hear."

He took it from her with reluctant hand.

"Nita," Lawrence's voice was tenderness itself. "There is just one woman to whom my mother would give that locket—my wife. Will you take me, Nita? Take my locket and my love? Tell me, Nita, that you love me."

Nita looked straight into his eyes.

"Larrie, dear, I do love you, and I always will."

He clasped the locket about her throat again, pledging it to her for life, and the kiss he received in payment seemed priceless.

From Welsh to Spanish.

A very long time ago the British government ordered that English should be taught in Welsh schools. As a result, a colony of persecuted Welsh miners fled from the British tyranny and settled in the deserts of Patagonia. These men were heroes, and with most magnificent courage they dared to live in a desert where not a plant would grow, where the water was brackish and the heat intolerable. They were surrounded by wild tribes of hostile savages and made them warm friends; they were ruled by a foreign government and became loyal citizens.

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They left Wales to escape the tyranny of the English language and now, rather than talk Welsh, they converse largely of their freedom in excellent Spanish.

Germs, Their Friends and Foes.

Germs are powerless to affect a healthy body in which the vital resistance is maintained by good habits of living. Alcohol, tobacco and other such drugs, whether narcotic or stimulative in their effects, are aids and comforts to our invisible enemies. Too much food, especially hearty food such as meat and beans, forms supplies for the commissary department of the enemy instead of for the brigades of white corpuscles. On the other hand, every

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