

SHEEP'S CLOTHING

By
LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE

AUTHOR OF "THE LONE WOLF," "THE BRASS BOWL," ETC.
COPYRIGHT BY LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE

CALLED UPON SUDDENLY TO AID HER FATHER IN HIS SECRET SERVICE WORK, LYDIA IS ATTACKED IN THE DARK BY STRANGERS BUT IS RESCUED.

Synopsis—Lydia Craven, traveling under the name of Lucy Carter, runs away from her home in England to go to Thaddeus Craven, her father, in New York, whom she hasn't seen for five years. Three days out on board the steamer *Alsatia*, she runs plump into her father making love to Mrs. Merrilees, a young widow, engaged to marry him. There is some embarrassment, for Craven was known as a bachelor in America, but explanations clear the air of doubts. Craven tells Lydia he is a secret service agent of England in New York. The last installment told that Craven had asked Lydia to meet him outside her stateroom at midnight.

CHAPTER VII—Continued.

She had begged to be permitted to help him, and Craven promised to command her services, if ever need should arise; but his tone in promising had been mellow with an indulgence deprecating the implication that Downing Street's secret ambassador could ever need the aid of woman's hands and wits in his occult and momentous affairs.

Yet already that time had come! She was half wild with delight. After some minutes the quiet of the ship was made musical with the mellow and deliberate sounding of eight bells, midnight. She had still half an hour to wait—an almost insufferably protracted vigil, with every faculty tense in apprehension of the premature return of her Dowager Dragon.

But tonight nothing happened to change this custom; and the stroke of one bell of the midnight watch found Lydia, unhindered, leaving her door, a long cloak effectually disguising her light dinner gown.

Cautiously, with swift glances making sure that the alleyway was empty all down its darkened length, she stole forward, slipped quickly through the port doorway into the welcome blankness which closed round her like a magic garment of invisibility. At intervals electric bulbs incased in hemispheres of clouded glass blotted the obscurity overhead, but lent little aid to the girl's straining vision. And, now that most of the passengers were ashed, every port she passed was dark.

At the fifth stanchion, midway between two of the overhead lights, she found no one waiting; and, since she had encountered no one on the way, she groped on to the sixth, found it deserted, and, returning, settled down to wait.

Suddenly Craven stood before her—the effect as mysterious as his business; with no warning of any sort, he was there!

Without speaking, Lydia stretched forth a hand to his. He suffered her caress without apparent emotion, and, peering anxiously into his face, she saw it set in a mold of care and vigilance—even now, when they were utterly alone!

When he spoke it was in a preoccupied tone. "Hope I haven't kept you waiting."

"Only a moment."

He shook his head wearily. "I was detained." For several seconds he seemed deep in thought. Then his words came swiftly, "I'm suspected—watched! Did anyone see you?"

She thrilled deliciously. "I think not. I've been here some time, quite undisturbed."

"Good. But they nearly got me!"

"Who?"

He smiled faintly. "The other side."

Lydia's grasp tightened on his plump fingers. "You—you're not in danger?"

"Don't be alarmed. They'd never dare attempt anything aboard this vessel. But I've stolen a march on them—and something else, something more valuable." Straining a dramatic pause to the snapping point, he eased it with a word, "Evidence!"

At this the foghorn whooped like a demon of derision. Until it was quiet again Craven stood motionless, chin on bosom, eyes blank with abstraction.

"Yes," he affirmed, "devilish good evidence! Look here, I'll have to tell you something. We've been sold out—I mean there's a traitor in our corps."

"But can't you do something?"

"Rather!" Craven laughed shortly. "In fact, I have done something already. He won't go far; for his word—a squaler's word—won't have much weight with the other side, lacking

proofs, and I've got the evidence to discredit him," he paused again, touched his breast lightly but effectively, "here!"

Again interrupted by the foghorn, he started and frowned irritably, seeming to detect something sardonic in its accent.

"Well—that's all. You understand now. The point is, I'm known to have—ah—stolen this evidence. But don't worry. This is where you come in." From his coat pocket Craven produced a small, oblong box of inlaid wood, highly polished. "I've managed to pack the evidence in this, one of those Chinese puzzle boxes. If you don't know the combination, it needs an ax to open it. Put it away somewhere—your trunk till we land—but take it ashore in your handbag. A tip from the other side, you know, and the customs inspectors'll turn my luggage inside out; but you're perfectly safe, you see, coming in as an alien. They'll pass you on your declaration."

The girl slipped the box—it was about large enough to hold a deck of cards—into the lining pocket of her cloak. "I'll keep it safe," she said quietly.

"Dear child! It's so good to have you to count on!" Craven patted her cheek affectionately. "Nothing like one's own flesh and blood! I thought I could trust that man; he was my only aide this trip." He sighed profoundly, and shook a doleful head.



"There! I've Done Nothing—Just Happened Along at the Right Time!"

"Well—good-night again. I'll go aft again; you forward. We mustn't be seen confabulating out here at this hour."

He stepped back two paces and vanished like a shape of dream.

For a moment or two the girl lingered, listening keenly; but, hearing nothing, not even Craven's retreating footsteps, she finally took heart and moved quietly forward beside the rail.

But she had put barely eight paces behind her when she checked smartly, with an inarticulate gasp, just short of one whose burly figure, motionless, barred her path. And then, as she stepped back and turned in toward the superstructure, thinking in her panic to escape by a sudden dash for the companionway, some whim of chance caused the tenant of the nearest stateroom to turn on the lights, and two square windows leaped refugent out of the gloom, the nearer silhouetting the head and shoulders of another man into whose embrace, as well, she had been on the point of throwing herself.

Simultaneously strong hands fell upon her shoulders from behind, she

was whirled about into the hollow of a powerful arm, and an incipient scream was smothered on her lips by the impact of a heavy palm.

CHAPTER VIII.

Later she recalled that one of the foghorn's agonized squalls had seemed like a signal for the attack. It was reverberating in her ears, like the shriek of a damned soul, all the while she was struggling in that brutal embrace. It was still yammering even when she was released.

Throughout her consciousness was faithfully registering nightmare impressions—of the second man closing in to aid her first assailant; of a savage tearing of her cloak; of cynical accents breathed hatefully in her ear. "Easy now! Take it easy, little one. If you don't want to get hurt! Steady—so!" of someone swearing fretfully; of a third voice rapping out an oath of rage; of sounds like the crack of a pistol shot, the thud of a heavy fall, a grunt of pain, a vile expression from him who held her—

And then she was free—and the foghorn still screeching!

She staggered back to the rail, her brain reeling, no true coherence in her consciousness—only the struggle between instinctive desire to scream and the knowledge that for some reason she mustn't.

Then a friendly voice saluted faculties just beginning to comprehend that chance had sent a rescue. "You, Miss Craven? You?" Quoin was bending solicitously over her as she clung trembling to the rail.

Words came with difficulty from a throat parched with fright. "Oh!" she cried, one hand to her bosom. "Mr. Quoin!"

"You're quite safe now. But are you hurt, Miss Craven?"

"I'm all right, I think. Oh, thank you, Mr. Quoin!"

"There! I've done nothing—just happened along at the right time—thank God! But the first thing is to get you out of this confounded fog!"

"No—please—one moment—"

The girl was searching frantically for the lining pocket in her cloak. And then at last she found it, and it was empty.

She turned a vacant stare to Quoin's puzzled regard. A sense of suffocation oppressed her, and his voice sounded from a far distance:

"What's the matter? You're sure you're not hurt? Can I do anything?"

"I've been robbed!" she managed to articulate piteously.

"Then," he urged, "let me see you to your stateroom. Afterward I'll find the captain—"

"No, no! Oh, please, no! Don't tell anybody!"

He stared. "Let me get this straight." He said after a moment. "You've been subjected to a dastardly attack, and robbed, and don't want me to lodge a complaint with the officers?"

SHE IS MUCH-NAMED PEERESS

Widow of Sir McGarel-Hogg Has Changed Cognomen Oftener Than Any Other Person in England.

Appropos of a paragraph about "the late Sir McGarel-Hogg," a correspondent writes:

"His widow, Lady Magheramorne, is still living, age eighty-two. Although only once married, she has probably had more names than any other person in England. Born a Douglas, she became Douglas-Pennant when her father assumed the latter name.

"On marrying, she became Mrs. Hogg; then her father was raised to the peerage as Lord Penrhyn, and she added 'Hon.' to her name. Then her husband succeeded to the baronetcy, and she was the Hon. Lady Hogg.

"Then he added McGarel to his surname and afterward became Lord Magheramorne.

"When her husband died she was the Dowager Lady Magheramorne, but after her eldest son died and his widow remarried she again became Lady Magheramorne, as the present peer is a bachelor."—London News.

New Substitute for Sisal.

According to Farm and Fireside, Charles Christadoro has found that New Zealand flax yields a fiber nearly twice as tough as sisal and entirely adapted to binder twine manufacture. "This flax of which he has sent us a sample," says Farm and Fireside, "has been successfully grown as an ornamental plant in the West, thrives on ordinary soil and will withstand a temperature as low as 10 degrees Fahrenheit. It matures from roots in two years, and may be expected to yield about 15 tons of leaves per acre, equivalent to two tons of fiber."

Lost Again.

At a certain public school it was the custom for the teachers to write on the blackboard any instruction they desired the janitor to receive.

One evening, while cleaning a room the janitor saw written:

"Find the greatest common denominator."

"Hullo!" he exclaimed. "Is that darned thing lost again?"

"Yes, yes!" she nodded. "Yes, that's it—don't tell anybody. Promise me that—please promise!"

"If that's your wish," he said coolly. "I've no right to oppose it."

"I'm sorry," she faltered; "but it's something I can't explain. If I'd only myself to think of—"

She checked in consternation at that slip.

"I see," Quoin said gently. "It's another's secret—not all your own?"

She was silent.

"But," he persisted, "you've been robbed of something valuable—whether yours or another's. Do you mean to let it go without effort to regain it?"

"Oh, no—something must be done!"

She worked her hands together in helpless torment.

"Then you don't mean to let the matter drop? But can you accomplish anything unaided? I don't want to seem intrusive, but I'm really a bit experienced in such matters, you know. And of the many who have trusted me, none has ever regretted it."

"Oh, I know, I know, Mr. Quoin! But what can I tell you? That I don't know what it is I've lost?"

His brows lifted at this. "Is that possible, Miss Craven?"

"It's the truth," she protested. "It—something was given me to take care of, something—I don't know what—in a little wooden Chinese puzzle box, and that has been stolen from me."

Quoin nodded. "These men who attacked you—do you know them?"

"I haven't the slightest suspicion who they were."

There was honesty in her accents; Quoin believed her. "I think—possibly—I can find them for you, with your permission."

"You saw them?"

"No. But among our fellow passengers are two card sharps, one of whom at least is quite capable of more felonious work. I know both," he smiled gravely, "in a business way."

"But surely you couldn't have recognized either—"

"No. The fog was too thick. But I marked one of the brutes for future identification."

"Marked?"

"The sign of my fist on his face—a heavy blow, so heavy it bruised my own knuckles. Give me permission to do what I can, and I'll look up the quarters of my acquaintances, the card sharps, make them let me in—I know a way to coerce 'em—and see if either wears my brand. If so, you'll have the puzzle within fifteen minutes—and no questions asked!"

"You are very kind," the girl murmured in confusion.

Doesn't the suspicion grow in your mind that Quoin is using his reputation as a detective for some secret, illegal purpose? Do you fathom his game?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Wrote a Famous Song.

Annie McVicar Grant is a name that will always be honored by Scotchmen, as that of the author of "The Blue Bells of Scotland." She was born in Glasgow 162 years ago, and as a child was brought to America by her father, an officer of the British army. Her childhood was spent in Albany. At thirteen she was taken back to Scotland, and while still a girl became the wife of Rev. James Grant. Her husband died, leaving her with eight children to support, and she turned to literature as a means of earning a living.

She was a prolific writer of both verse and prose. Her "Letters from the Mountains," in three volumes, and "Memoirs of an American Lady," in two volumes, were widely read, and these and other literary works provided Mrs. Grant with an excellent income. Of all that she wrote, however, only her famous song, "The Blue Bells of Scotland," has survived to the present generation. Mrs. Grant died in 1833, at the age of eighty-three.

Derivation of "Germany."

"German" and "Germany" come from the Latin Germanicus and Germania, which were the Roman names for the Germans and their country. The words are supposed to be from a Celtic root which some say meant "shouters" and others say meant "neighbors." The Germans call themselves "Deutsch," which is from the same root as "Dutch" and "Teuton." The root meant "of the people" or "belonging to the people," and may have been the result of an effort to put into barbarian tongue the Greek word ethnikos, meaning the same thing, "of the people" or "racial." The relation between "Deutsch" and "Teuton" is more easily seen when we consider that "Deutsch" used to be spelled "Teutsch."

The Intensive Gardener.

"Are you going to raise vegetables?" "Yes. It's going to give me a great deal of pleasure to pull up the rubber tree my wife keeps in the hall and plant a potato in its place."

Economy of Wickedness.

Knicker—"Why don't you turn over a new leaf?" Locker—"With paper so expensive?"—New York Times.

SAGE TEA DANDY TO DARKEN HAIR

It's Grandmother's Recipe to Bring Back Color and Lustre to Hair.

You can turn gray, faded hair beautifully dark and lustrous almost overnight if you'll get a 50-cent bottle of "Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound" at any drug store. Millions of bottles of this old famous Sage Tea Recipe, improved by the addition of other ingredients, are sold annually, says a well-known druggist here, because it darkens the hair so naturally and evenly that no one can tell it has been applied.

Those whose hair is turning gray or becoming faded have a surprise awaiting them, because after one or two applications the gray hair vanishes and your locks become luxuriantly dark and beautiful.

This is the age of youth. Gray-haired, unattractive folks aren't wanted around, so get busy with Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound to-night and you'll be delighted with your dark, handsome hair and your youthful appearance within a few days.

This preparation is a toilet requisite and is not intended for the cure, mitigation or prevention of disease.

SKIN-TORTURED BABIES

Sleep, Mothers Rest After Treatment With Cuticura—Trial Free.

Send today for free samples of Cuticura Soap and Ointment and learn how quickly they relieve itching, burning skin troubles, and point to speedy healing of baby rashes, eczema and itchings. Having cleared baby's skin keep it clear by using Cuticura exclusively.

Free sample each by mail with Book. Address postcard, Cuticura, Dept. L, Boston. Sold everywhere.—Adv.

League to Enforce Peace Takes \$10,000 Liberty Bond

New York — A subscription by the League to Enforce Peace to \$10,000 worth of Liberty bonds was announced Wednesday by Herbert S. Houston, treasurer of that organization. Mr. Houston made this statement:

"President William H. Taft of the League to Enforce Peace has sent out a call to members to subscribe to the Liberty loan bonds and the league itself is at once entering its subscription for \$10,000.

"And what the league is doing nationally in response to President Taft's call, a number of the state branches are doing, in addition to practically the entire membership of the organization. Wilson H. Lee, the state treasurer of the Connecticut branch, has just sent word that of the \$5000 of available funds in his hands, \$4000 was being put into Liberty bonds.

"Our program calls for a league of nations to establish and maintain peace when this war is over. As that is the great object for which America and her allies are fighting the league's program becomes, not merely in effect but in fact, the purpose of the war. So the league to Enforce Peace, which has never believed in a dove-cote pacifism but has stood from the first for double-fisted, militant pacifism, is behind the war and in the war to the limit of its men and its money."

MOTHERHOOD WOMAN'S JOY

Suggestions to Childless Women.

Among the virtues of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is the ability to correct sterility in the cases of many women. This fact is well established as evidenced by the following letter and hundreds of others we have published in these columns.

Poplar Bluff, Mo.—"I want other women to know what a blessing Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has been to me. We had always wanted a baby in our home but I was in poor health and not able to do my work. My mother and husband both urged me to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I did so, my health improved and I am now the mother of a fine baby girl and do all my own house work."—Mrs. ALLIA B. TIMMONS, 216 Almond St., Poplar Bluff, Mo.



In many other homes, once childless, there are now children because of the fact that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound makes women normal, healthy and strong.

Write to the Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass., for advice—it will be confidential and helpful.