

Continued from First page.

"It's a curious story, but it seems Khodia is somehow connected with the nurse, whose history Khodia knows a little. She is a half caste, and the Hindoo—I can't remember his name—had come from Lutia to find her, so Khodia has been with him since trying to find out where she had taken Mr. Hastings. He had only just found out that she was going too fast to tell the Hindoo."

"Oh, did you get the address?" cried Ruth, laying her hand on MacDonal's arm, her great, dark eyes wide open with eagerness.

"Yes, I did! Here it is," drawing out a bit of paper. "Mrs. Smithson, 14 Park Crescent, Newcross, but they'll not let a creature into the place unless this woman Somers, or Smithson, as she calls herself, gives permission. Somehow Khodia lighted on her and followed her for hours till he tracked her to the house. He says there are servants and seemingly every comfort in the place, but no one is allowed across the threshold."

"Oh, MacDonal, I must let Captain Carew know at once!" cried Ruth, wild with excitement.

"Khodia asked if he were in London, but I did not know his address, so I promised to tell you," returned MacDonal.

"I am dreadfully afraid he has gone to Leeds. I know he wanted to see the colonel of his regiment. What shall we do? I will go myself." She wringing her hands.

"Eh, Miss Ruth, is it that bad?" exclaimed MacDonal, struck with her gesture and expression.

"Bad," she repeated. "Nothing can be worse. Captain Carew is accused of sending my brother's signature to a schoolmaster to see that he disprove it, but Mr. Hastings, Captain Carew fancies the nurse, Mrs. Somers, wishes to prevent him from seeing my brother."

"God knows! Khodia says she is a real sea devil," said MacDonal.

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ever mind. Mr. Hastings, we'll not have you."

Here a dark, handsome, eastern looking man, though dressed in European fashion, appeared in the doorway and crossed her Hindoostanee, with a triumphant smile.

"Ay," she replied, still speaking the language of late most familiar to her, "my failure is due to you! Had you not insisted on my meeting you, had you not kept me late last night, I should have been at my post, and this audacious girl should never have gained admittance! What enemy sent that telegram? Who discovered me! Another look, and I should have been his wife, his bet! Come, let me leave this accursed place! You have destroyed me!"

The Oriental rapidly, in his own language, murmured something and shrilled as if scarcely conscious of what he said. "Yes, it is destiny! You are my fate!" and rushed from the room.

Ruth clasped her hands. "For heaven's sake," she exclaimed, "lose no more time! Even now we may be fated to save Captain Carew from this dreadful charge. Go, Brett! Go to the bank! Lose no time!"

But poor Ruth's incoherent directions were interrupted by the welcome appearance of Mr. Heartwell, who soon set matters in shape.

Having had a short and exceedingly lively interview with Mrs. Somers, he counselled Ruth to stay with her other till the arrival of Lady Hastings, who was expected in the afternoon. He managed to calm the invalid's misgivings and wrote out a short statement of the facts and gave it to Hastings, who signed it with an effort.

"Let Mr. Hastings's servant dress you," said Heartwell, "and prepare me to leave this. I don't think there really much the matter with him. I'll return to town immediately and telegraph to you the result of my interview with the manager."

He rang the bell as he spoke, and the servant who had admitted Ruth appeared instantly.

He received his orders and immediately uttered apologetic explanations of the delay. He only knew the nurse by the name of Smithson, how he was engaged to attend an invalid gentleman, and so he had begun to think things were to end on the square, etc.

Further delay is may be anticipated, Hastings's statement entirely cleared Ruth from the charge about to be preferred against him, and the weak but well meaning hypochondriac was soon established at the Grange, with his faithful nurse in attendance.

The distinguished specialist called to advise him declared that his nervous state had been much tampered with chloroform or some treatment of that nature, and it would be some time before he could completely recover from its effects.

It was decided to make no attempt to punish Mrs. Somers. The lawyers in examining the condition of Mr. Hastings's affairs found that his expenses had been well managed and no charge of embezzlement could be brought against her. She therefore, through the special protection supposed to be extended by satanic majesty to his most capable vassals, escaped where many a less indolent culprit would have suffered.

Before September had closed Val Carew was once more the guest of Lady Hastings. This time it was a parting act, for he had effected the exchange desired and was to sail for India in ten days.

"I can never thank you enough," he was saying, "for the pluck and promptness with which you acted

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He bent to fasten his lips on her
till, gently extricating herself, Rath-
said softly and solemnly, "Till death
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