

The Daredevil

By
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Author of "The Melting of Molly"

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CHAPTER III.

The Impossible Uncle Robert.

AFTER many months, in which came to me cruel pain and a long, hard fight for the honor of my beloved, I cannot but remember that feeling of gratitude that came over me as I went into sleep on that narrow shelf under which lay the beauty of that Madam Patricia Whitworth.

In the eight years that I had become all of life to my father we had made many travels into distant lands and had seen all of beauty that the old world had to offer seekers after it, but nowhere had I seen the majestic wonder of this own land that I beheld pass by like a series of great pictures wrought by a master. All of the morning I could but sit and gaze with eyes that sometimes dimmed with tears for him as faster and faster I was carried down into his own land of the valley of Harpeth, which he had given up for love of my mother and from the cruelness of my wicked uncle, who would not welcome her to his home. When the great Harpeth hills, in their spring flush from the rosiessness of what I afterward learned was their honeysuckle and laurel, shot with the iridescent fire of the pale yellow and green and purple of red and dogwood and maple leaf, all veiled in a creamy mist over their radiance, came into view as we arrived nearer and nearer to Hayesville my hand went forth and grasped closely the hand of Madam Whitworth.

"And the small homes in the valley, madam," I said, "with the sheep and cattle and grain and children surrounded, they need never fear the fire of shell and the roar of the cruel guns. This valley is a fold in the garment across the breast of the good God himself, and it has his cherishing. Is it that there will be a home for me in its peace and for the small Pierre and the old and faithful Nannette?"

"A home and—and other things, boy, when you ask for them," she answered me, with a very beautiful look of affection that, while it pleased me greatly, also made for me an unreasonable embarrassment.

"Is it that you think I will obtain the affection of my uncle, the General Robert Carruthers, Madam Whit-



"Thank you for much graciousness!" worth?" I asked of her, with a great wishfulness, for I had told her of his summons to me, and she knew already the story of his hardness of heart against my mother.

"The general is a very difficult person," she made answer to me, and I saw that softness of her beautiful mouth become as steel as she spoke of him. "To a woman he is impossible, as I have found to my cost, but all men adore him and follow him madly, so I suppose his attitude toward them is different from his attitude toward women. My husband and I disagree utterly about the general. In fact, the old gentleman and I are at daggers' points just now, and I am afraid—afraid that he will make it difficult for you to be—be friends with me, as I—I want you to be."

"Neither the General Carruthers nor any man, madam, dictates in matters of the heart to the Marquise de—that is, to Robert Carruthers of Grez and Bye. If that is the way I must so name myself now," I answered in the manner of the old Marquis of Flanders, tinged with the grande dame manner of the beautiful young Marquise of Grez and Bye whom I had murdered and left in that room of the great hotel in New York.

"It will be delicious to watch his face as you and I alight from this train together, boy. It will be worth the trouble of this hurried trip to New York to be introduced to a person who disappeared suddenly in a tugboat in the open ocean when he should have landed at the docks with the propriety that would have been expected of him." And as she spoke I could see that something had happened in New York which had brought much irritation to the beautiful Madam Whitworth.

"It would seem that it is one of the customs of these great shits to send

out passengers from them in those very funny small tugboats." I remarked as I leaned forward to catch a last fleeting glimpse of a lovely girl standing in the doorway of an ancient farmhouse, giving food to chickens so near the course of the railroad train that it would seem we should disperse them



"Is it that you are also a friend of my captain?"

with fright. "I wept when I must see my good friend, Capitaine, the Count de Lasselles, depart from our ship in one of those tugboats. It was a pain in my breast that he must leave me to go into the wilderness of Canada."

"Oh, then he went to Canada first?" exclaimed that Madam Whitworth as she leaned back on her seat as if relieved from some form of a great anxiety about the departure of that Capitaine, the Count de Lasselles.

"Is it that you are also a friend of my captain?" I demanded, with a great eagerness of pleasure if it should be so.

"Oh, no, no, indeed!" exclaimed the beautiful Madam Whitworth. "I was speaking of my own friend, who might have taken a Canadian line instead of the American. She is so careless about instructions. Now look, we are beginning to wind down into the very heart of the Harpeth valley, and by the time you make very tidy that mop of hair you have on your head and I powder my nose we will be in Hayesville to face the general in all of his glory. Mind, you kiss my hand so he can see you. I want to give him that sensation in payment of a debt I owe him. Now, do go and smooth the mop if it takes a pint of water to do it. That New York tailor has turned you out wonderfully, but even those very square English tweeds do not entirely disguise the French cavalier. You're a beautiful boy, and the girls in Hayesville will eat you up—if the general ever lets them get a sight of you, which he probably won't. Now go to the mop!"

For many years, since the lonely day just after the death of my mother, when my father took me into the furthest depths of his sad heart and told me of his exile from the place in which he had been born and about the elder brother who had hated my beautiful mother, who hated all women, I had spent much time erecting in my mind a statue that would be the semblance of that wicked and cruel uncle. I had taken every disagreeable feature of face and body that I had beheld in another human or in a picture or had read of in the tales of that remarkable Mr. Dickens, who could so paint in words a monstrous person to come when the lights are out to haunt the darkness, and had carefully patched them one upon another so as to make them into an ideal of an old uncle of great wickedness. On that very ship itself I had beheld a man, who came upon the lower deck from the engine, who had but one eye and a great scar where that other eye should have been placed. Immediately my image of the General Robert Carruthers lost one of the wicked eyes I had given him from out the head of the stepfather who did so cruelly stare at the poor young David Copperfield and became a man with only one eye which still held the malevolence that was hurled at that small David. And with this squat, crooked, evil image of the General Robert Carruthers in my heart I alighted from the train into the city of Hayesville, which is the capital of the great American state of Harpeth. The black man had swung himself off with my bags and that of the beautiful Madam Whitworth, who, with me, was the last of the passengers to descend from the steps of the car.

"My dear Jeff!" exclaimed my so lovely new friend as she raised her face for a very sweet kiss from a tall and quite broad gentleman with a very wide hat and long mustaches that dropped far down with want of wax that it is the custom to use for their elevation in France, as I well know from my father's warty remarks to his valet if he made a too great use of it upon his. "And this is General Carruthers' nephew who came down on the train with me. My husband, Mr. Carruthers of Grez and Bye," with which introduction she confronted me with the gentleman.

"Glad to know you, young man; glad to know you," he answered as he took my hand and gave it an embrace of such vigor that I almost made outcry. "There's the general over there looking for you. Come to see us some time. Come on, Patsy!" "Goodby, Mr. Carruthers. I'll see you soon," said the beautiful Madam Whitworth as she held out her hand to me. "Do it now—there comes the general—quick, kiss my hand!"

I bent and did as she bade me and as I had promised her to do, and as I raised myself she slipped away quickly after her husband with a salutation of great coolness to a person over my shoulder and a "How do you do, General Carruthers?" remark as she went.

POSSIBLY MAY EVADE ORDERS

C. O. I. COULD DODGE COMMISSION.

After June 17 Irrigation Company Seemingly Won't Be Subject to Mandates of State Public Service Commission

(From Thursday's Daily.)

(Special to The Bulletin.) SALEM, Dec. 14.—It will probably not be until January that the public service commission takes up the final examination of the affairs of the Central Oregon Irrigation company. And when that examination is followed by the commission's orders, whatever they may be, there is expressed in well informed quarters here the belief that those orders may never get fully enforced. That is, perhaps they will not if they are especially displeasing to the company.

The reason for such an outlook, as intimated by an observer in touch with the irrigation problem and the commission's activities, is because the company may be able to dodge. And folks up in Central Oregon say the C. O. I. is good at dodging.

For instance, suppose that the commission makes some pretty drastic orders. Suppose the company delays all it can—and it's a neat little delayer. It might appeal to the courts, for instance, from the mandates of the commission, and by the time the legal smoke cleared away, why June 17 might have rolled around.

And on June 17, remember, the contracts call for a new deal. So far as administration of the segregation goes, the present company passes in its checks. It pays its percentage to the house, and retires from the game. At least, it does all that so far as its relations to the commission are concerned.

June 17 Sees Change.

After June 17 a new order of things commences. In the words of the contract, a "corporation of water users" takes control. Of course, it happens that the company (unless the settlers in the mean time form an irrigation district) will control that corporation, as they will be majority holders of land as water users. But it will not be the same company to which the public service commission issued its edicts. That company will be off the stage.

Further, the new corporation will be a mutual affair. It will be in the nature of a co-operative association. And the commission, according to authorities, has no jurisdiction over mutual or co-operative corporation of this character.

Therefore, it is possible, and perhaps probable, that the commission next month may issue orders until it is blue in the face, unofficially speaking, and if the company doesn't like what is handed out, all it must do to escape the consequences is to sit tight, delay, and wait until that fatal June 17. After that the commission's orders will not be worth the perfectly good paper they are written on, so far as getting results is concerned—probably.

Members of the commission, it is understood, are entirely aware of this possibility, but intend to go ahead with their work, pushing it to completion as rapidly as possible. It is intimated that they have an idea that they can get some kind of action which will be beneficial all around. And if the worst comes to the worst, observers declare, there will at least have resulted a goodly lot of healthful publicity, which will show the water users and the public just where the company stands, and just where it merits praise or censure.

Instantly I turned and faced the materialization of the ogre I had taken me years to build up into my wicked uncle. And what did I see?

My eyes looked straight into eyes of the greatest kindness and wisdom I had ever before beheld, and it was with difficulty I restrained myself from flinging myself and my suit of English tweed straight into the strong arms and burying my head on the broad deep chest that confronted me as the huge old gentleman, with as perfect a mop of white hair as is mine of black, rioting over his large head, towered over me.

"You gallivanting young idiot, where did you pick up that dimity?" he demanded of me as he laid a large hand with long, strong fingers on my shoulders and gave me a slight shake.

"I'm your Uncle Robert, sonny, and don't you ever forget that, sir," he continued, and I could see a longing for the embrace, which I so desired, in his keen eyes that had softened with a veil of mist in the last second. "Lord, I'm glad you're not a woman! And from now on just stop knowing the creatures exist—Pat Whitworth and her kind. We've got work to do to put out a fire—a fire of dishonor and devastation. Come on to my car over there; we've no time to waste. Drive to the governor's mansion and don't sprout grass under your wheels," he commanded the black chauffeur—"the governor's mansion, private door on Sixth street."

(To Be Continued.)

GAMBLING MUST STOP; CITY TO HANDLE ALL FUTURE VIOLATIONS

Reports coming to the attention of the police authorities and Mayor Eastes during the last week that violations of the city gambling ordinance have been prevalent for some time, led the council, at a special session this morning, to authorize the appointment of a special policeman to be detailed to watch all card games in town.

It was the feeling of several of the councilmen that the privilege given just before Thanksgiving to several places to raffle turkeys has been abused. Although raffling turkeys will not be stopped until after New Year's day, gambling in the strict sense of the word will be watched and suspects arrested for alleged violations of the city ordinance.

Upon recommendation of City Engineer Gould, the report of the viewer of the Fir tree vacation was rejected by the council and a new report will be authorized at the next regular meeting of the council in January.

The council will meet Monday night in the council chambers to consider an ordinance authorizing the issuance, execution and delivery to the purchasers of the \$35,000 negotiable warrants for the Oregon, California & Eastern railroad. Details of the issue, provision for the levy, assessment and collection of taxes will also be considered at this meeting.

In order that a suitable place might be available when it meets to organize, the council tendered the use of the council chambers to the Deschutes county court.

DOG OWNERS COMPLY WITH MUZZLING LAW

Either Bend is to become a dogless city, or each of its canine inhabitants will be muzzled shortly, is the declaration of Chief of Police Nixon, and from the willingness which dog owners are showing within the last few days to provide their pets with wire headguards, he is inclined to the latter belief.

The efficient work done by Dog Catcher McMillen has convinced residents of the city that the officers will not stop at halfway measures, he declares, and the results are showing for themselves.

FUNERAL NEAR BEND

Large Number of Friends Attend Services for Mrs. Lowe.

Members of the Grange, and a number of Bend residents as well, paid their final respects to the memory of Mrs. Charles Lowe this morning, when funeral services were held from the family home seven miles from Bend. More than 150 were present, and following the services fully half the number joined the cortege to the Bend cemetery, where interment was made.

Rev. H. C. Hartranft officiated at the services, both at the home and at the graveside.

Mrs. Lowe died Thursday night from heart trouble.

Clean up and paint up. See Edwards.—Adv.

For farm land loans see J. Ryan service.—Adv.

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