

The Wand of Sleep

OR

The Devil-Stick

By the Author of
"The Mystery of a Hansom Cab," Etc.

CHAPTER XXII.—(Continued.)

The door opened to admit—Dr. Etwald. Both the Major and the Creole stared at him in surprise, as neither for the moment could grasp the idea that he had been bold enough to present himself before those whom he had so deeply wronged.

"Ah," said Etwald, as complacently as ever, "I thought I should find you here, Major; but I hardly expected to see Mrs. Dallas."

"You villain!" cried that lady, starting from her seat. "Do you think I want to see you after all the misery you have caused? Why, I refuse even to remain in the same room with you!" And with a furious gesture the Creole swept past Etwald and out of the door, which she banged loudly. Etwald looked at the door, shrugged his shoulders, and turned politely to the Major.

"It is just as well she is gone," said he, quietly. "It is better than our conversation should be private."

"I wish to hold no conversation with a scoundrel, sir!" cried Jen, purple with rage. "I'll have you turned out of the house."

"In that case you'll never hear what I have come to tell you."

"What is that, sir?" demanded Jen, in a calmer tone.

"The truth! My story is quite different to that of Dido."

"David's was different also."

"I know it. But my story—the true story—differs even from David's. Will you hear it, Major, or shall I leave your house before I suffer the disgrace of being kicked out?"

The Major considered for a few moments before replying. There was a hinted mystery in the manner of Etwald which puzzled him not a little. Moreover, he wished to know the actual facts of the case, and now that Dido had fled, Etwald was he only one who could tell them. Acting upon these considerations, Jen sat down again in his chair and sulkily gave Etwald permission to remain and explain. This the doctor proceeded to do at once.

"As you are aware," said he, calmly, "I escaped the charge of murder, and very right, too, seeing that I was innocent of the crime. But as to the stealing of the body I am guilty. I am out on bail, and must come up for trial soon, on the charge that I spoke of. However, I am not afraid, as I can defend myself in a manner you little dream of. But being out on bail, I came to see you."

"To tell me more lies."

"To tell you the truth, my dear Major; and I assure you that the truth will surprise you not a little. But, by the way, Major—Dido?"

"She has fled."

"I know it. She was afraid of me."

"Hardly," replied Jen, a trifle spitefully. "You have lost the Voodoo Stone, remember."

"Yes. I was taken advantage of for once in my life. A cunning woman, that Dido. She got permission to see me in prison, and to talk to me alone, under the pretence of seeing me about her evidence. Knowing that I could compel her to do what I wished by means of the Voodoo Stone, I saw her with pleasure, as it was my intention to put the words likely to get me off—to prove my innocence—into her mouth. However, while I was talking to her, she suddenly produced a phial of the devil-stick poison, and threw it in my face. Of course, I instantly became unconscious, and it was then that she wrenched the talisman off my watch-chain."

"Is the poison so quick in its effects, then?"

"I should think so," said Etwald, coldly. "You saw how David fell in court, after wounding his hand. I fell in prison quite as quickly, but as my skin was not scratched, and the drug only took effect through the nostrils, I recovered."

"And when you recovered?"

"The gaoler told me that Dido had called him in, saying that I had fainted. While they were getting me round Dido went off with the Voodoo Stone. Those about the prison had no reason to detain her, so she left. When I found the Voodoo Stone gone," added Etwald, impressively, "I knew that the black wretch would give evidence against me, and that the game was at an end."

"You expected to be hanged?" suggested Jen.

"Well, no," replied the doctor, with wonderful coolness. "I did not expect that. If the worst came to the worst, I knew that I could protect myself; but I must admit that the confession of my counsel, Mr. Farby, took me somewhat by surprise."

"Poor David!" sighed Jen, thinking of the young man cut off in the bloom of his youth.

"Poor David!" echoed Etwald, with a sneer. "Foolish David, you might say, to die for the sake of a woman."

"Yet you risked death for the same woman."

"I risked danger for the woman's fortune," retorted Etwald, with revolting candor. "It was the money I wanted. But death, no, I did not risk that."

"I am not so sure of that, Etwald.

How did you know that David would confess in so dramatic a fashion?"

"I did not know it, Major. As I said before, his confession took me by surprise. Still, as I was innocent, I knew that I could not be hanged."

"Well," said Jen, growing weary of this long-continued conversation, which seemed to lead to nothing, "at all events, you'll not escape a long term of imprisonment."

"Why?" said Etwald, with an agreeable smile. "There are two opinions about that. Mine is that I shall go free. Then," he added, coolly, "I intend to seek Barbadoes, and search for that black witch in order to recover the Voodoo Stone."

"I hope you'll get the change of going; but I doubt it. However, if you do get as far as the West Indies, you'll find friends there. Mrs. Dallas and her daughter go back to their estates in Barbadoes within the month."

"Really!" said Etwald, again. "Then I may marry her after all."

"She won't have you."

"Oh, I think so. I have a means of compelling her to marry me."

Jen jumped up with a scowl.

"I'm tired of your enigmas," he cried, angrily. "What is it you wish to tell me?"

"The name of the person who committed the murder!"

"I know it. David Sarby!"

"Not at all! He accused himself to shield the real person!"

"To shield the assassin?" gasped Jen, thunderstruck. "And who is the assassin?"

"Can't you guess from his self-accusation? Why, the woman he loved!"

"Isabella?"

"Exactly. Isabella Dallas, and none other, killed your boy, Maurice."

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Isabella killed Maurice!" said Jen, pushing back his chair. "Impossible, Doctor. You must be mistaken."

"I don't think so!" replied Etwald, dryly. "I saw her do it. So did David."

"You must be mistaken!" insisted the Major once more. "David was in New York on the night when the crime was committed."

"By his own confession in court, David was in the grounds of Mrs. Dallas on that night."

"Yes, yes. You are right!" said Jen, in a bewildered tone. "Still, I cannot believe that Isabella killed Maurice. She loved him dearly, and had no reason to murder him."

"None in the world. Yet she certainly took his life. Come, Major, I won't worry you any longer with inquiries. Dido hypnotized the daughter to commit the crime, as she had willed the mother to steal the devil-stick. Isabella is absolutely ignorant of what she did, and firmly believed that I was the guilty person. Now, of course, she thinks David—by his own confession—is the assassin."

"But David confessed himself guilty to save her?"

"Of course; but Isabella does not know that. She thinks—and, on the face of it, with reason—that David killed Maurice out of jealousy."

"How was it David saw the crime committed?"

"I shall explain," said Etwald. "David found out that Maurice was going to meet Isabella that night, secretly, in the grounds of Mrs. Dallas, near the gate. Determined to see the meeting, and to learn if there was any hope for him, he feigned a journey to New York in order to lull any suspicions which Maurice might have that he was being watched. Instead of going, however, he concealed himself at a spot where he could see the gates, which opened on to the highway. Now," added Etwald, with a side glance at the Major, "it so happened that I also wished to see that meeting."

"How did you know it was about to take place?"

"I learned the fact from Dido. Well, I saw David in his place of concealment, and guessed his reason for coming. Maurice appeared at the rendezvous, and shortly afterwards Isabella, under the hypnotic influence, came down the avenue. In her hand she held the devil-stick, and came swiftly towards Maurice. He, not understanding the deadly weapon with which she was armed, came to meet her with outstretched arms. She thrust the devil-stick before her, and wounded him in the palm of the hand. With a cry he fell—dead."

"Within the gates?" asked the Major, much agitated.

"Yes, within the gates," responded Etwald. "When Isabella had struck the blow, she dropped the devil-stick in the grass where, if you remember, it was found by Batterses. Then she returned to the house by the little path which leads thither through the surrounding trees. The body lay in the bright moonlight, full in the center of the path, not a stone's-throw from the high-road. David and I rushed simultaneously from our hiding-places, and I explained hurriedly that the body must not be found in the grounds. He understood, and we carried the body on

to the road. Before we had time to deliberate what was to be done, we heard the noise of approaching footsteps, and afraid—both of us—of being accused of the crime, we fled. Then you came down the road and discovered the corpse."

"Yes. I heard the poor lad's cry," said Jen, simply, "and I ran down at once. You must have been very quick in your movements. I wish both of you had been more open with me."

"I am afraid that would have been impossible, Major," said Etwald, rising. "You were so distracted over the death of Maurice, and so unjust in your hatred of me, that it would have been dangerous to trust you."

"Am I unjust in my hatred of you?" demanded Jen, getting on his feet. "I think not, Dr. Etwald. Your desire to marry Isabella, or, rather, her fortune, has been the cause of all these ills. Dido was only your instrument, whom you compelled to work by means of the Voodoo Stone. That she betrayed you in the end was your punishment. I do not blame her so much as I do you. You alone are responsible for the death of those two poor lads of mine."

"Well, have it your own way," said Etwald, carelessly. "I am a scoundrel in your eyes, I dare say; but if you will permit me to see you to-morrow at 11 o'clock, I shall be able to prove that I am not quite so black as you have painted me."

"I never want to set eyes on you again," said Jen, bluntly.

"Nor will you—after mid-day to-morrow. But you will regret if you do not grant me this interview. If you are wise you will arrange to let me come here to-morrow at 11, and meet Mrs. Dallas and her daughter."

"Both of them will refuse to meet you. You saw Mrs. Dallas to-day, how she behaved."

"Like the fool she is," said the doctor, putting on his hat. "Well, I am going. Will you see me to-morrow morning?"

"Yes. I don't know what possible things you can find to say to me after this interview; but, as you make such a point of it, I'll see you."

"And ask Mrs. Dallas and her daughter to be present."

"Yes. I'll try and get them to come."

Later on in the day Jen sent a letter to "The Wigwam," asking Mrs. Dallas to come with her daughter the next morning at 11 o'clock. He did not explain that Dr. Etwald would be present, as he knew the temper of Mrs. Dallas. Whatever might be at stake, even if it were to her own interest, she would refuse to meet the men towards whom she bore so strong a hatred. Therefore Jen decided to be diplomatic, and keep silent as to the visit of Etwald. During the afternoon a note was brought to Jen, in which Mrs. Dallas promised to come and to bring Isabella.

At 11 o'clock next morning Mrs. Dallas arrived with Isabella, the latter looking wan and ill. Even had the Major not promised to be silent, he could not have brought himself to tell the poor girl the truth at that moment. After all, she was perfectly innocent, and had committed the crime unwittingly. Dido was the culprit, not Isabella; and the Major felt a profound pity for the miserable girl, who had been made a tool of by the unscrupulous negress and the evil-minded Etwald.

"Well, Major," said Mrs. Dallas, after the first greetings were over, "what did that wicked man say to you yesterday?"

"He explained how my poor Maurice was killed."

"Ah!" said Isabella, clasping her hands. "I am sure that it was that terrible man who made David kill Maurice. Oh, if I had only met Maurice on that night, I might have prevented the quarrel."

"Did you meet Maurice, my dear?"

"Of course not," replied Isabella, in the most truthful manner. "I did not leave the house, and Dido was with me all the time. I expect Maurice was waiting for me, and that David saw him. No doubt they quarrelled, and then the death took place. I had a nervous headache, and Dido hypnotized me. When I woke up it was too late to see Maurice."

The Major had learned all that he wished to know, and, not wishing to pursue the subject, turned the conversation by explaining that Etwald was coming in a few minutes. Mrs. Dallas rose up in a cold fury.

"Did you ask me here to insult me, Major?"

"I asked you here at the particular request of Dr. Etwald."

"Why? What can he have to say to my mother?" cried Isabella, in surprise.

"Miss Dallas, I know no more than you do; but he evidently desires to make a clean breast of this whole miserable business."

"I have heard quite enough about it," said Mrs. Dallas, marching towards the door, "and I refuse to meet that monster of iniquity!"

(To be continued.)

A Business Conference.

"The junior partner wants to see you right away," announced the book-keeper. "I guess it's the bounce for yours."

"Nix," responded the office boy. "He only wants to find out what new players have been signed."—Washington Herald.

Practice vs. Preaching.

Clergyman's Daughter—Papa's subject to-night is to be "Love One Another." Shall we go, Henry?

Henry—No, dear. I think we had better stay at home and practice what your father is preaching.—St. Louis Times.

There is always some levity, even in excellent minds; they have wings to rise, and also to stray.—Joubert.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

There are fourteen thousand oysters of full size in a ton.

Kissing and shaking hands are rarely practiced in Japan.

Japanese dead are buried in a squatting posture, chin upon knees.

There is record of wheat growing in China as far back as 3000 B. C.

The first recorded Thanksgiving was the Hebrew feast of the tabernacles.

Turkey has a government tannery for such products as are needed in the army.

While 2,000-horse power locomotives are common in the United States and many exceed that size, a 1,200-horse power engine is considered large in continental Europe.

At twenty-one, Alexander stood at the head of his army on the plains of Thessaly, Wilberforce entered parliament, and Tasso had begun his immortal poem, "Jerusalem Delivered," which took ten years to complete.

Oyster production in Canadian waters is steadily decreasing. The yield fell from 35,757 barrels in 1903 to 27,297 barrels in 1907. Canada imported \$271,760 worth of American oysters in 1908 out of a total export of \$663,832 worth.

To check New Jersey's destructive forest fires, the State has ordered the railroads traversing its pine forests to clear the ground for fifty feet on each side of the tracks and plow up and gravel ten-foot strips to prevent the growth of brush again.

At twenty, Tintoretto was one of the most prolific and popular painters in Italy; Schelling had grappled with the philosophy of Kant; Galileo had discovered the use of the pendulum; Lafayette was a major-general, and Garrison voiced emancipation for the slave.

At twenty-two Paul Potter painted "The Young Bull," now in the museum at The Hague, said to be one of the finest animal pictures on canvas; Campbell wrote his "Pleasures of Hope," on which his fame as a poet rests; Farquhar had made for himself a lasting name as a dramatist, and Conde was the most famous military general of his time.

The ceremony of electing a mayor in a beiry was performed yesterday according to ancient custom in the parish church of Brightlingsea, when Arthur Lucas was chosen in succession to the Rev. Arthur Petwee, vicar of Brightlingsea, and six mariners who had married Brightlingsea women were admitted freemen of the port on payment of eleven pennies into the treasury.—London Standard.

The United States and the British empire produce \$2.7 per cent of the world's gold supply. Germany and France, which produce no gold, and Russia, which produces only some \$27,000,000 worth a year, feel compelled to hoard vast amounts of it to be prepared for emergencies, such as sudden war. This is the reason why the banks of these countries begin a process of hoarding gold whenever there is any likelihood of trouble.

Japan, the country that is not bound by traditions in her search for the best manner of doing things, has tried our national bank plan, and, finding it not at all satisfactory, has adopted the European plan of the central bank. The Bank of Japan is capitalized at \$15,000,000. Its circulation at present is more than \$170,000,000, and its deposits exceed \$200,000,000. It issues all the notes of the country and thus controls the currency situation. Besides the Bank of Japan there are other semi-official banks filling various specific functions for the government.

The chairman of the Imperial Tobacco Company of Canada was asked, at Montreal, if the report was correct that they had bought the Ontario tobacco crop. His answer was that tobacco grown in Canada to-day was superior to the American-grown leaf from the same type of seed, for the reason that the soil in the United States has been used for a number of years and the Canadian soil is practically virgin soil for tobacco growing purposes, and therefore produced a better quality. The proof of this is that the consumption is constantly increasing.—Consular Reports.

Professor Ranke some time ago brought out a new fact concerning the brain of a man as compared with that of other animals. It has long been known that the brain of a man does not weigh as much as that of a whale, or an elephant, and that there are birds and apes whose brains are heavier than man's in proportion to the weight of their bodies. But Professor Ranke showed that the way to reveal the actual superiority of the human brain is to compare its weight with that of the spinal cord. Measured in this way, man's brain is proportionately far heavier than that of any of the lower animals.—Harper's Weekly.

Biliousness

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Meyerbeer, like Handel, composed best in a thunderstorm. He had a room made at the top of his house with glass roof and sides, so that he might enjoy these conditions to the full whenever they presented themselves. It is said that no beast of the field, no raven or nightjar, could scent the approach of a storm more unerringly than Meyerbeer, and nothing was allowed to interfere with his solitary enjoyment of it when it arrived. Wherever he was he would leave at the first premonitory rumble.

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