

A Will and a Way

The Mysterious Woman Who Could Neither Read Nor Write

By BELLE MANIATES

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"His ruling passion was strong in death," remarked Jules Lorine whimsically as he learned the contents of his father's will from his father's lawyer. "He knew that I would not comply with the terms of so atrocious a will to marry a woman who could neither read nor write."

"You have a year of grace," reminded Coyle.

A year later Jules appeared at the office of the family lawyer.

"My lease is up, Coyle," he reminded.

"And I think I have found a way by which you can fulfill all conditions and still retain your freedom. You can marry a woman who can neither read nor write, and immediately after the ceremony you can go abroad. At the expiration of two years she can quietly secure a divorce. You can spare a generous alimony. I have met a good, conscientious girl who is perfectly willing."

"Is she a domestic?"

"No! I believe she does needlework."

"It's odd in these days of schools and trunk officers that she escaped the alphabet at least."

"She says she never has had the opportunity nor the desire to learn. I will arrange all details for you."

After some further discussion Jules acceded to the proposition, and at dusk of the appointed day he rang for admission to Coyle's residence. The lawyer met him in the hall and ushered him into a dimly lighted library where a minister and Henry Phillips, Jules' next friend, were in waiting. They all went into the reading room adjoining. Near the doorway Jules paused and looked into the room, which was in total darkness.

With an odd sinking of the heart Jules took his position beside the shadowy form of a woman. He made the responses in a quick, jerky way, anxious to end the affair. The woman at his side spoke in nearly inaudible tones.

When the sentence of man and wife was pronounced Jules returned to the library and hastily signed some papers Coyle gave him.

"Where is my wife?" he then asked.

"She remained in the reading room."

The young bridegroom hesitated. Then resolutely he turned and went back into the reading room. His eyes, now accustomed to the gloom, discerned her at the end of the room. She was sitting on a couch, her face buried in the cushions. One arm hung listlessly over the edge.

"May I speak with you?" he asked courteously.

"She did not lift her head from the pillow.

"I want to thank you," he continued.

"For the service you have rendered me."

She murmured a disclaimer of his thanks. He took her hand. It was all cold and trembling. His grasp, firm and sustaining, tightened.

"I am sorry," he said firmly, "that you will not see me, but I want you to promise me that if you ever need help or advice you will come to me."

"I will," she said softly.

"Lorine," called the warning voice of Coyle from the doorway.

"I must go now. Good night."

He went to his lodgings and tried to smoke away the burden of his thoughts. The shadowy outlines of the tall, drooping figure and the low tones in which she had spoken haunted him all night.

"I suppose her motive was as mercenary as my own, so I don't need to reproach myself."

The next day he was leaning against the railing of the steamer, idly watching the scenes upon the wharf, when he saw Phillips making his way toward a young girl who was daintily petite in form and lovely of face and feature. She was accompanied by a middle aged woman.

"You must look after Miss Derrington, Jules," cautioned Phillips as he was taking leave of them all a few moments later. "Her aunt has the stateroom habit, she tells me."

Jules scarcely heard him. He was looking into the wonderful eyes of the young girl. An hour later Mrs. Marshall had fulfilled the prophecy regarding the stateroom and Jules had joined Salome on deck.

"You don't seem a stranger to me," she said. "I have come to know you through your books."

There followed a long and animated discussion of books and authors until dinner time.

"She is a darling," Jules told himself as he lay in his berth listening to the rhythmic measures of the engines that night.

The voyage passed in a succession of days of sparkling sunshine. Mrs. Marshall remained perforce in solitary confinement, and Jules was constantly with Salome, who grew fairly radiant with happiness. He came to have an odd feeling at times, as if in some pre-existence she had belonged to him. Then his new fancy would be succeeded by the mystic charm of the other.

Early in the morning of the last day of their voyage he came out on the afterdeck. Salome was already there.

As she turned to him he saw a shadow of sadness in her eyes.

"This is our last day," she said in a low tone.

"Yes, and I am sorry," he replied simply.

"I wish you were coming with us to the north of England."

He did not reply at once.

"It can't be," he argued to his troubled self. "It is only the first fluttering fancy of a young girl—the fancy for an older man and one who writes. I shall not see her after we land. Still, in a young, romantic girl's heart affection sometimes flourishes in absence. I should tell her. I will."

"Salome"—the name slipped out unconsciously—"I should have told you before, but I disliked to talk about my personalities. I am married."

He then briefly related the circumstances of his marriage.

"Before the ceremony," he concluded, "I had considered only my part in the affair. I was narrow enough to think that because she had been denied certain advantages a little money would recompense. It may have been great need for herself and others that forced her to this step. At any rate, I should have talked the matter over with her. I am going to return to New York if she wishes and have the marriage annulled."

He glanced at her for the first time during the recital. His heart leaped to life. In her eyes was an exquisite softness. A slight moisture dimmed her lashes. She held out her hand.

"Thank you for telling me. And now I must tell you something. I, too, am married."

"You! Salome, impossible! You, so young?"

"I was married the night before we sailed in Mr. Coyle's library."

"Salome, the woman I married was tall—very tall."

"I stood on a stool."

"Her name was Mary."

"My first name is Mary. I never use it except to sign."

He gathered her close to his arms as she clasped his own.

"Salome, only the recollection of my wife was between us. Will you be my wife—my real wife?"

There was a revealing answer of joy in the face upraised to his.

"Tell me," he commanded, "how it came about."

"My aunt engaged Mr. Coyle to manage our estate. He learned how interested I was in your books, and he talked much of you and the will. He proposed this marriage and planned the voyage. He said we could find out if we cared."

"I can't imagine Coyle's being so frank," he laughed.

"It wasn't romance. He would not have proposed it if—"

"If?"

"Oh, Jules, I can neither read nor write! I have been blind since I was four years old until three months ago. Aunt read your books to me."

Making Amends.

A poor Turkish slater of Constantinople, being at work upon the roof of a house, lost his footing and fell into the narrow street upon a man. The pedestrian was killed by the concussion, while the slater escaped without material injury. A son of the deceased caused the slater to be arrested. The cord listened attentively and in the end asked the slater what he had to say in his defense.

"Dispenser of justice," answered the accused, "it is even as this man says, but heaven forbid that there should be evil in my heart. I am a poor man and know not how to make amends."

The son of the man who had been killed thereupon demanded that condign punishment should be inflicted on the accused.

The cadi meditated a few moments and finally said, "It shall be so." Then to the slater he said, "Thou shalt stand in the street where the father of this young man stood when thou didst fall on him."

And to the accuser he added: "Thou shalt, if it please thee, go up on the roof and fall upon the culprit even as he fell upon thy father. Allah be praised!"

Autopsy of a Poem.

"What sort of a thing is a 'poem,' anyway?" asked the old Billville citizen.

"Why, a poem is—hard to define."

"You said it then, fer shore. Now, take this one my boy writ, fer instance. First taking the editor said wuz it didn't have the right number o' feet; then it wuz in a strange 'measure,' an' the 'germ' of it wuzn't original; lastly, it wuz too 'simple' an' lacked 'beddick' or 'sometin'."

"You mean 'technique'?"

"Lord only knows, but it wuz somethin' like that! Now, the blamed thing didn't walk on 'feet,' thar wuzn't a peck 'measure' of it, an' 'fer 'germ,' they wuzn't none at all in it fer as I could see. Leastways they wuzn't no 'germs' that the nat'ed eye could discover, though a doctor might with a microscope! I reckon I'll have to discourage the boy from further 'foolin' with sich deadly material."—Frank L. Stanton in Uncle Remus' Magazine.

Playing Safe.

"Doctor," said the caller, "I'm a victim of insomnia. Can you cure me?"

"I can," replied the physician. "But before I take the case I want to ask you one question. Are you in business for yourself, or do you work for others?"

"I'm employed as clerk in a grocery," answered the patient.

"Then you'll have to pay in advance," said the doctor. "I'm not doubting your honesty, but after I get through with you the chances are you will sleep so soundly you'll lose your job. Then you can't pay me."—Chicago News.

FRAUD BY TELEGRAPH AT THE OCTAGON HOUSE

Bold Swindlers Perpetrated by Use of the Wire.

THE WAY A BANK WAS FOOLED

A Lot of Nerve and a Little Telegram That Was Properly Delivered by One of the Company's Messenger Boys Made a Winning Combination.

Ninety-nine men out of a hundred will accept as gospel truth the contents of a telegram when it comes from the hands of a messenger boy. They buy and sell, pay out large sums of money, start on long journeys and do countless other things upon the suggestion of the little yellow or white paper slips with their condensed messages without in the least questioning their authenticity. This is an interesting fact, upon which hinges an enormous amount of the country's business, and it is also a fact upon which hinge some of the cleverest and boldest frauds in criminal records.

A lot of nerve and a little telegram was a combination that made possible a smooth swindle on a Des Moines bank. A well dressed man, apparently a business man of large affairs, called at the paying teller's window with a draft or check on an Omaha bank and asked if the Omaha bank had telegraphed notice that the draft was good. He got "no" for an answer and then informed the teller that such a telegram might be expected at any moment. Soon afterward the telegram arrived, delivered by a messenger boy, appearing to have come from the Omaha bank and authorizing the Des Moines bank to pay the draft. When the stranger appeared again he was given the \$500. When the Des Moines bank people took up the matter by wire with the Omaha bank it found that the latter institution had not sent the telegram, and then it was discovered that the whole transaction was a fraud.

But how could the swindlers send a telegram from Omaha bearing the bank's name? They did it in this manner: An accomplice of the Des Moines man stepped to a telephone booth in Omaha and called the telegraph office. "This is the — bank," he said. "Send a messenger at once to get a telegram for Des Moines." Then this accomplice hurried to the entrance of the Omaha bank to meet the messenger and there handed him the message for Des Moines. The telegraph company had no reason to believe otherwise than that the bank had actually signed the message, and it transmitted it. The Des Moines bank also accepted the telegram as genuine because it bore every mark of genuineness, and it paid out the money to the swindlers, who timed their fraud so that they got out of reach of the law on trains that left immediately after their game had been worked.

In two smaller western towns a similar game was worked, only for seven or eight times the amount. An alleged horse buyer appeared in one of the towns and made purchase of a carload of fine animals to be delivered and paid for at a later day, preceding which he made the acquaintance of the officers of one of the banks. On the day fixed for the delivery of the horses the alleged buyer deposited in the bank a draft for a large amount drawn on a bank in another town a hundred miles away. At the same time the bank received a telegram purporting to come from the distant bank authorizing the payment of this draft. The bank believed the telegram, paid out the money and then discovered that the telegram was fraudulent. It had not been sent by the second bank, but by a confederate of the alleged horse buyer. Later developments disclosed that this accomplice had called up the telegraph office in the distant town by telephone. "This is —, cashier of the — bank," he said. "Please send this telegram for me." Then he gave the message authorizing the first bank to pay the bogus draft, and this message the telegraph company sent without suspecting that it was fraudulent.

Some years ago an eastern man was induced to invest in worthless mining stock on the basis of a fraudulent telegram purporting to come from an expert he had sent out to investigate the mining property, but which was in reality sent in a manner similar to the above by a confederate. This eastern man's faith in telegrams cost him something more than \$10,000.

The story of a fraud with an amusing side comes from across the water, with a London man of rather convivial habits as the victim. This man was forgetful and used to leave at home his office and safe keys. He also had a practice of leaving the city surreptitiously for a day now and then for a convivial time with friends, all unknown to his wife. One day this business man went on one of his periodical jaunts, and a rogue who knew his habits ventured to send this telegram to his wife: "Please send my keys. Love, Freddy." In due course of time the keys were delivered at the office door, and the rogue was there to receive them. He ransacked the whole office at his leisure, safe and all. Late that night the business man came home and was teased by his wife for his forgetfulness. This was news to him, but he kept his counsel. The next morning he discovered that his office had been robbed.—B. K. Mann in Pittsburg Dispatch.

The affections are like lightning. You cannot tell where they will strike until they have fallen.—Laocordaire.

FRAUD BY TELEGRAPH AT THE OCTAGON HOUSE

It Wasn't a Burglar That the Pratty Intruder Encountered.

By CLARISSA MACKIE.

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Rosamond Lee walked slowly down the rose bordered path to the tall stone wall that inclosed the deserted house next door. The owners were abroad, and there was no prospect of their immediate return to inhabit the Octagon House, as it was called.

Rosamond had made many excursions about the neglected grounds and dreamed many dreams beneath the noble trees that rose from the unkept turf. She had taken toll of the blooming flowers and shrubs in the seasons, and now she fed the gray squirrels that raced up and down the green branches.

Her family laughed at her fondness for the Octagon House and predicted a speedy abandonment when Mrs. Phillips came home again, for Mrs. Phillips was old and feeble and much feared by Rosamond since she was a little child.

But on this glorious September day, when the late monthly roses were bordering the path with delicate sweetness, Rosamond, a fair, sweet rose herself, thought little of Mrs. Phillips in distant Berlin. The day was made for her—for her alone—and the Octagon House.

She followed the stone wall to an interesting fence which served as a stepping stone. In a trice she had jumped lightly to the soft turf of the other side and sped swiftly across the dappled green toward the house.

The crooked piazza, which followed the outline of the old house, was covered with Virginia creeper, even now turning to brilliant scarlet and gold. In one corner where the vines hung low and formed a curtain were a long wicker chair and a pile of Rosamond's favorite books.

She had tired of reading and was sitting half drowsy with sleep when a step on the piazza roused her. Never before had any one trespassed on her chosen retreat.

She parted the vines and peeped through to discover a man's tall form bent to peer into the half drawn shades of the long windows. He straightened up again, and she saw that his clothes were gray and dusty and that white dust powdered his dark hair. He was mopping his forehead vigorously with a handkerchief, and she noticed that his hands were bronzed by exposure to the sun.

"That man was a burglar Rosamond had not a doubt. Her heart almost stopped beating when he glanced carelessly toward her vine covered retreat before he sat down on the top step to light a pipe.

"He's wondering how to get in," murmured Rosamond to herself. "If only I were brave enough I would go out and frighten him away, but I am fearfully afraid of burglars, and yet if he should break in and steal some of Mrs. Phillips' pictures I would feel dreadful, because I have enjoyed her hospitality unasked." She snuffed thoughtfully and then sat very quietly.

Presently she dropped a book on the floor and rustled out of her retreat with a haughty expression on her sweet face. The stranger jumped to his feet and pulled off his gray cap.

"I beg your pardon," he stammered. "I didn't know any one was around."

Rosamond fixed him with a cold stare while she mentally decided that he was too good looking to be engaged in such a nefarious pastime as burglarizing unoccupied country houses.

She lifted her pretty brows inquiringly. "You wished to see some one?"

"Why—er—no. I didn't expect to see any one here. I thought the place was vacant," he stammered, knocking his pipe against the railing and stuffing it into his pocket.

"It is not vacant. I am here," said Rosamond bravely.

"So I—er—see," with an air of chagrin.

"The house is well protected."

"I am glad of that," he said heartily. Rosamond imagined his tone was sarcastic. "Perhaps you wished to see my husband," she said in a wavering voice.

The man started violently, and his eyes sought her face and dropped to the ground. "Of course it would be a pleasure," he said. "Is he around?"

Rosamond edged closer to the steps and ran lightly down to the path below. "I will call him. He is not far away," she cried breathlessly. Then she turned and sped swiftly toward the wall that divided the place from her home. Once there, her father would telephone to the village for assistance, and thus the burglary would be prevented.

She thought she heard swift steps behind her, and she renewed her speed toward the wall. Her heart was beating almost to suffocation as she stepped on a loose stone. She uttered a terrified cry as the stone slipped and she fell to the ground.

Now she heard swift steps in reality as the stranger crossed the turf and bent anxiously above her.

"I hope you have not hurt yourself," he said gravely.

"I have sprained my ankle," admitted the girl with white lips.

"What were you trying to do—not to scale the wall?"

"Yes."

"Why? Was your husband over there?"

A red flush crept to her brows.

"Yes," she said.

"Shall I call him," asked the suspected burglar frankly, "or shall I carry you back to the piazza and get you some cold water? Where are the

servants? Have you occupied the house long? My aunt wrote me that the place was vacant." He hammered out the questions with remorseless haste.

Rosamond stared with growing horror. "Who are you? Who is your aunt?" she gasped in return.

"I am Mrs. Phillips' nephew. My name's David Phillips. I have bought the place, and I came down to look it over. I was to have met the real estate man at the station. He came, but he forgot the keys, so I walked on. As he said nothing about the place being occupied, I was surprised to find a tenant."

Rosamond closed her eyes wearily, while her brain sought some escape from her appalling position. She was angry at having placed herself in such a situation. She might have known this good looking young man was not a burglar. She opened her eyes with suddenness and looked straight at him.

"I wish you would go away," she said petulantly.

"Of course, if you wish it. But you are suffering. May I not call some one to help you? I will look for your husband, if you will tell me his name." He stopped awkwardly.

"I haven't any husband," she said habitlessly. "You see, I've been in the habit of running over here and sitting on the porch and reading, and today I saw you looking in the window, and I thought you were a burglar, and so I tried to frighten you away by pretending I had a husband. I live next door, and my name is Rosamond Lee—see there! You may laugh if you want to."

"But I don't want to laugh," he said softly. "I think it was awfully brave of you, you know, when you believed me to be a desperado. Now, Miss Lee, you must let me help you home again, for that ankle needs attention at once. Permit me as a neighbor and perhaps later on a friend!" He stooped and lifted her in his strong arms and carried her through quiet bypaths to a small gate in the wall and thus up the rose bordered path into her father's care.

Many times after that David Phillips strode up the rose bordered path to see Rosamond Lee, and the following June, when the roses were rioting the garden, he claimed her as his own, and together they passed under the portal of the rejuvenated Octagon House, of which Rosamond became in fact the mistress.

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