

The Conjurantist;
OR
One Life's Secret!

A
TRUE
STORY
OF
THE
SOUTH
OF
FRANCE

CHAPTER XV.

It was now... Helen Montauban had entered her apartment... the door, gave way to the passionate feelings... the interview between her father and Rose in the morning, the hint at a confession... feeling witnessed that afternoon and evening in her close yet silent and stealthy watch over actions and words... something peculiar in the manner of the marquis, and the occasional gay yet mysterious jests of the Count de Clairville...

less de Clairville had kissed and congratulated the young girl to her heart's content. Everywhere there were smiles; everywhere there were happy hearts, save in one bosom.

The young count had taken his cousin Helen out upon the terrace; he had told her he wished to talk with her alone, and she knew well that which she was to do. He had looked at her with a smile; he had looked at her with a smile; he had looked at her with a smile...

CHAPTER XVI.

There was a talk of the approaching wedding day. The impatience of Louis had urged its being fixed at an early period. He asserted that a delay of three months would be quite sufficient. His gay and vivacious yet earnest remarks were half accepted. The marquis was inclined to favor them, though it was not until now that he realized the full extent of his affection for Rose. She had become very dear to him. Her gentleness and innocence and goodness of heart, her childlike loveliness, and more than all, her likeness to one beloved in bygone years, endeared her to the heart of this second father. He shrank from speaking of the parting, though he could not deny to Louis the boon so earnestly sought.

It could be seen, by a close observer, that now, while this discussion was going on, and one and another laying plans touching the event, Rose herself said little, merely giving assent to the various propositions laid before her, and seeming to take but a passive part in the general action. There was, too, at times, a certain gravity, which might as well have been called actual sadness, in her demeanor, and which could not well be accounted for. Gradually it became so evident, that the marquis had detected an uneasiness in the breast of Louis. He seemed dejected, as if he were drawing from her the cause of it. She seemed disinclined to acquaint him with the origin of this unusual mood.

And Helen Montauban, bending her beautiful head, calmly and with seeming kindness and affection, kissed Rose on her forehead. The girl shuddered. "How cold you are, Helen! Are you ill? Your lips are like ice!"

"No, I am not ill, dear child, and I think it must be because you are so warm, so excited, so happy, that you inspire me to be cold. I have come to sit with you a little while before I retire."

Rose told her all, from beginning to end, with her fair head lying on that stormy heart, whose gathering fires her innocent, whispered, bashful words fed with a fearful sustenance. Helen Montauban listened. She heard all this—every word, every syllable of this confession, and each word, each syllable, struck her with a deadly blow. The deliberate stab of the midnight murderer tells no deeper wound. Yet she listened, and smiled, and the smile, indeed, you alarm yourself unnecessarily.

"My dear uncle," he said to the marquis, "what can all this be? I am sure she is not quite happy, though she refuses to admit it."

"He loves another," he does not love me!" "The words which he said to her heart; they were written there in characters of fire; they were ineffaceable."

"I will not deny it, monsieur," she returned, quietly and sadly. "And you will not tell me what it is—this? Dear Rose, this reserve pains me extremely. I am sure you would not wish to cause me a moment's disquiet, and yet you unconsciously give me the utmost apprehension. You confide neither in Helen nor Louis; then I entreat you to be, at least, frank with me. Is it anything which I can do to gratify you, my child?"

"Indeed, I scarcely think so," answered Rose; "I do not think any one here could bring me what I wish. It is—"

"Rose, I think I know what you wish. I have thought of it, more than once—the very subject, doubtless, upon which you are secretly dwelling at this moment. You have not seen your father in a long time. You are about to take a most important step, and you wish to see him, to tell him of all this. Is it not so?"

She had sworn revenge. The dream of her whole life had been broken now. It was as if a single thread of shining silver had run glittering like the rainbow through her life—wood, and those threads were so lately pressed upon her own, had ruthlessly snapped it asunder. Rose might be innocent of intention to wrong her—she knew her to be so. And yet she hated her—hated the beautiful face, the sweet voice, that had won her to love them. She shuddered as she seemed to feel once again the presence of that young head upon her bosom. It oppressed—suffocated her; she could not breathe. The very air of the room was stifling. She flung open a casement, and trembling hands and leaned far out to drink the cool and dewy air of the dark midnight.

"I know that, monsieur," she rejoined, "and it was partly on that account that I have been silent all this while."

"And the good marquis could easily comprehend the reason; that had also been instrumental in preventing her from giving utterance to the wish she had so long and sorrowfully cherished. Much as she loved them all, she had shrunk from reminding them, in their seeming forgetfulness, that while her future was occupying them continually, that her father, poor and homeless and forgotten, might be glad to clasp his only child once more in his arms and breathe a father's blessing over her."

It was about this time that the Count...

MASCULINE HANDSHAKE HAS TAKEN THE PLACE OF THE FEMININE KISS.

THE newspapers are now chronicling the passing of the kiss. Of course, there may be some kisses still exchanged by unregenerate ones, but the kiss between women really seems a thing of the past.

Time was when one feminine met another feminine whom she knew, be it ever so slightly and be the place ever so inconvenient, that she kissed her, thus knocking her bonnet awry and severely rumpling her temper and her collar.

When women didn't kiss they glared at each other and said, frigidly, "How do you do," and then all the spectators knew a fight was on, and their respective friends took the principals aside and asked anxiously: "What did she say about you?"

Particularly was such osculation a habit with Southerners, and when the clans met, as at church in the country, when they hadn't seen each other for a week or more, the exchange of caresses was so general that even the men became involved sometimes, and the boys only escaped through running away and hiding in the tall grass back of the edifice.

Then the fashion changed, and really elegant people who were not more than second cousins to each other began presenting a cool and freshly powdered cheek for the kiss instead of the lips. This was commenced with a regard for hygiene, no doubt, but it was soon so satisfactory that two cheeks were always pressed together now, and there was no pretense at a warmer greeting.

This had an additional advantage in that one lady could not call another lady Judas when she merely presented her cheek and not her lips.

A little later it went out of fashion to salute each other warmly at all when two women met on the street or in a public place.

It was bruited about that demonstration in public was in bad taste, and so since there must be some way of welcoming a friend, the manly handshake came in.

There were some elderly ladies who disliked this as masculine and unfeminine, and who persisted in pecking dutifully at the ears of their relatives, even when they met in the theater, but by far the majority of the sex took to the handshake as a diplomatic way out of trouble. You see it is very hard to reach the face of a person who wears a Gainsborough hat, while it is quite a simple matter to reach her hand.

And so there is no more kissing; at least, there isn't much. And it is quite beautiful to see the girls solemnly pressing each other's hands and asking after each other's health. But there is no lack of affection nowadays—dear me, now—we are all quite as fond of each other as in the days of the perpetual kiss, and we are glad to be let down so easy in the matter of caresses.—Baltimore News.

RHODE ISLAND FISHHAWKS. They Are Protected by the State at All Seasons. The author of a recently published novel, the scene of which is laid in Rhode Island, refers to the fishhawk as "Rhode Island's best-loved bird."

MONUMENT TO THE TROPIC OF CANCER. The Mexican national railroad has erected a monument, with suitable inscription, marking the point where the globe is crossed by the Tropic of Cancer. This very curious picture shows the monument. It is of wood, 12 feet high and 24 feet long. On the top are two arms pointing out the two zones. It is situated on desert ground, a few miles south of Catare.

Very Much a Millionaire. Quizzer—is he a multimillionaire? Whizzer—Oh, my, yes. In fact, he's so multi that he can afford to run over ordinary millionaires and then let his secretary attend to the damages.—New York Sun.

Russia a Good Customer. Russia takes nearly half the agricultural machinery that the United States exports.

Some men make a living by letting their wives keep boarders.

THIS HOUSE FOLLOWS THE SUN.



The House at 11 A.M. The House at 5 P.M. REVOLVING MANSION BUILT ON A WHEEL IS NEVER IN THE SHADE. An ingenious French physician has erected a sanatorium in the Alps and proposes to give his patients the benefit of sunshine all day long. The house turns on a platform and always faces the sun.

Science AND Invention GEO. P. CROWELL, DEALER IN

One of the most durable woods is sycamore. A statue made from it in the museum of Gizeh at Cairo, is known to be nearly 6,000 years old. Notwithstanding this great age, it is asserted that the wood itself is entirely sound and natural in appearance.

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A new fuel is being manufactured in California which is made from twigs and leaves of the eucalyptus tree mixed with crude petroleum. It is said to burn freely and give good results. Piles made from this tree are immune from attacks by the teredo, and last longer than yellow pine. The demand for them is greater than the supply.

An innovation in the line of railroad telegraph service has been put into use on the New York Central Railroad between Utica and Albany. By the means of the apparatus a single wire can be used for telegraph and telephone messages at the same time. While the operator is ticking away a telegraph in Morse code another person can telephone a message without the slightest interference.

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