

THE BLACK ROBE.

BY WILKIE COLLINS.

—AUTHOR OF—

"THE WOMAN IN WHITE," "THE MOON-GLOSS," "AFTER DARK," "NO NAME," "MAN AND WIFE," "THE LAW AND THE LADY," "THE NEW MAGDALEN," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE PRINT ON THE WOMAN?

Lord Loring hurried away to his dressing-room. "I won't be more than ten minutes," he said, and left Romayne and Stella together.

She was seated with her customary love of simplicity. White lace was the only ornament on her dress of delicate silver grey. Her magnificent hair was left to plead its own merits, without ornament of any sort.

It may be that women have no positive appreciation of what is beautiful in form and color, or it may be that they have no opinions of their own. This at least is certain, that not one of them in a thousand sees anything objectionable in the gloomy and hideous evening costume of a gentleman in the nineteenth century.

It was impossible to answer this plainly without entering into explanations from which Romayne shrunk. He hesitated. "I understand," she said. "You were talking of my faults."

"I have been true to those companions, Miss Eyrecoat, for many years. If the doctors are to be believed, my books have not treated me very well indeed. They have broken down my health, and have made me, I am afraid, about as unwell as I can be."

"I should try to induce you to shut up your books, and choose some living companion who might restore you to your happier self."

"I have already had reason to think of myself. Many men, after that I had been true to those companions, Miss Eyrecoat, for many years. If the doctors are to be believed, my books have not treated me very well indeed."

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Folkestone—and if I had thought it right to say so, there was no opportunity. Romayne felt the weight of the suspicion which fell upon her.

"I am sorry for it. You ought to have some idea of your friend always near you."

"I am not quite easy, my dear." "Turn over the music. Indigestion?" "Good heavens, Adelaide, what a question?"

"Well, what is it, then?" "Lord Loring looked toward Stella and her companion."

"They don't seem to get on together as well as I had hoped," he said. "I should think not—when you are walking about and disturbing them! Sit down there behind me."

"What is the matter with you?" "I am not quite easy, my dear." "Turn over the music. Indigestion?"

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"All the tickets were disposed of in three hours," Lord Loring answered. "Everybody like Librarian told me it was a success. Have you looked in yet?"

"I have just come from the gallery," Lord Loring continued. "And here I am driven off it again by the remarks of some of the visitors. You know my beautiful copy of Raphael's 'Cupid and Psyche' designs?"

"Do the ladies propose paying a visit to the gallery?" "Of course—to see the people! I have recommended them to wait until they are ready to go out for their drive. In their indoor costume, they might become objects of general observation as the ladies of the house."

"Do the ladies draw out to-day at their usual hour?" he inquired, when the servant appeared. The man answered in the affirmative. The carriage was ordered for three o'clock.

"At half-past two Father Denwell slipped quietly into the gallery. He posted himself midway between the library-door and the grand entrance, on the watch, not for the civilizing influences of art, but for the appearance of Lady Loring and Stella."

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Where the United States Bank Bills Come From. A reporter has made a tour through the government paper mills at Collinsville, Mo. The mill itself, says the reporter, is a model of compactness and convenience, and its location is one of the prettiest in the country, shaded by trees and fanned by the valley breezes.

The drying rooms are on the upper floor, where the paper hangs in little bunches as clothes upon a clothes line. In the basement is the "big machine," where the paper is made from the pulp coming from the upper mill of Crane & Co.

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PRECIOUS PAPER. A Vermont Report on the Sioux Chief. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief.

SITTING BULL'S MESSAGE. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief.

BOARDING-HOUSE THIEVES. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief. A Vermontian Report on the Sioux Chief.

POPULAR SCIENCE. It is expected that Germany will soon (if she has not already done so) seek the co-operation of other powers in establishing an exploration of the Polar regions in the interests of meteorology, geology and other sciences.

WORDS OF WISDOM. Modesty is the conscience of the body. Nothing makes men sharper than want. Fly the pleasure that bites most sore.

Complexion of Criminals. In speaking of a prisoner who had just been sent back to the cells of the Butler Street Police Station in Brooklyn, Sergeant Dyer said: "I don't like his color. In fact, it betrays him."

Discovery of Egyptian Mummies. The finding of Tleibes of thirty-nine mummies of Egyptian royal and priestly persons, which has been hailed in Europe as the greatest archaeological discovery since Sir Henry Layard's discovery of the Nineveh, grows in importance.

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