

mystery deepened. The plot thickened. The agony was piling up.

With a little gesture of discouragement she gave up her quest. Beyond was the den—office—what you might call it—of Mr. Wickersham. Into this she darted. I hastened after her across the floor, and again paused breathlessly watching her. Here she repeated the performance of the billiard room. Hurdled, feverishly, I thought terrifiedly, she sought everywhere. She even felt all over Mr. Wickersham's desk. She frantically opened and shut the drawers of the stands and bookcases.

At last I heard her give a gentle sigh of delight. With a movement so quick that I could not discover what she held, she had transferred something from the big writing table to some part of her flowing robe. She turned and ran so speedily toward the exit at which I stood that I had only time to draw back. If she had not been so absorbed, she must certainly have noticed me. As it was, she hurried past, and I was left to follow more slowly as she made her way back to her room.

When I tried to go to sleep, I could not do it,—my mind was in such a whirl with thoughts of what I had witnessed. Try as I might, I could not make head or tail, end or beginning, of it. At last I fell into a broken doze, and dreamed that I was chasing the Countess Szisizski—I thought of her only as that—through a dizzy maze, and then that she was pursuing me.

IN the morning I found myself as much perplexed as I had been in the darkness. Certainly I had not reached any clearer determination what to do. I concluded that I could not let my discovery pass without some action, and yet I hesitated about saying anything to anyone. I was considering all this deeply, when Faustine came with my cup of tea, and the idea of what I was to do arrived with her and it. Here, clearly, was a case for simplicity and directness. The best way to prevent possible trouble, and at the same time to avoid a disturbance and scandal, was for me to go directly to my pretty neighbor and let her know that she was discovered.

Filled and thrilled with this determination, I decided to seek the object of my suspicions at the very earliest moment. With careful attention and a small amount of planning, I managed to get her all to myself on the terrace very shortly after eleven o'clock. She sat under a rosy sunshade in the clear morning light, with the innocent aspect and, what was more, the complexion of a young girl. She was watching eagerly a small hummingbird darting at the blossoms, and no one could have appeared less like a deep and dark plotter. But, as I told myself, just because she did not look it, she was one of whom to beware.

"I am afraid," I began, "that you did not sleep well last night."

She gazed up quickly with a startled, almost guilty manner that surprised me. "Why?" she faltered.

"Your light was burning, and then I heard you in the hall."

"Oh!" she exclaimed with a little squeak of fright. "You heard me?"

"I saw you," I said with emphasis.

I never beheld such sudden terror in human eyes.

She had a most expressive small face; but what amazed me was that being what she was she allowed her feeling to be so clearly displayed. "Oh!" she moaned. "How much?"

"I will be honest," I answered quickly. "I will confess that I followed you. I know all."

She bent forward and clutched my hand. "Oh!" she begged. "You look good—kind! Ah! you will not tell! You do not understand what may depend on it. If Arthur should know—"

Then the Hon. Arthur was not in the secret! I hardly saw how he could be, with his prim face and his starched manner, perfect as such were for purposes of disguise.

"Promise me!" she implored.

"Why," I replied, "I don't want to make a row. I only want to prevent one." I did some pretty quick thinking. "I'll tell you. I'll agree to say nothing, if you put back at once what you took last night."

"I can—I will!" she replied very thankfully in her delightful voice.

"And give me your word not to make another attempt of the kind while you are at Greenlawns," I went on.

"I do, I do!" she cried, and in her gratitude she rose, threw her arms about my neck, and embraced me. She was a most dramatic and expansive little lady. "Ah! you are a dear girl! You are not a spiteful cat! You are a dove with the leaf of the olive between your lips! Oh, I go immediately to do what you say! Oh, I never forget you!"

I stood for a moment alone, laughing at the picture of myself retrieving an olive branch, and next I was called to make up mixed doubles at tennis. And then nothing happened until after luncheon.

LED by what impulse I cannot tell, but influenced, I see now, by that instinct that never deserts me, I wandered alone into the billiard room. I had no earthly reason for visiting the scene of—well, I can hardly say the crime. Still, there I was. With apparent aimlessness, and yet with an unconscious purpose, I strayed along studying the place. I was about to pass through the door into Mr. Wickersham's sanctum, when I came plump on Charley Tremaine coming out of it.

"Oh!" I exclaimed, falling back to prevent his running into me; for he was so lost in thought he did not notice me at all.

"Why, Cynthia," he said glancing up, and I marked at once his wrinkled brow and the anxious look in his eyes.

I had known him since we were children; though, as often happens, now that we had grown up we saw each other but infrequently. Still, we were awfully good friends when we met, and he always regarded me in something of a big brotherly way.

"What's the matter?" I demanded.

At first he was inclined to put me off. Then, after a short, perplexed glance, he sat down on the edge of a table and spoke out like one who, greatly harassed, finds comfort in the chance to recount his troubles safely.

"I'm in a boat, Cynthia, up a tree, and in several other uncomfortable positions," he answered. "I know that you're to be trusted, and I know too that

you are rather a good one to whom to come for advice."

I gleamed and beamed with natural satisfaction and pride.

"Though I'm sure you can't do anything for me," he went on, "still it is a relief to speak to anyone. You see, there was a very valuable document—"

Anyone must understand that I began to prick up my ears.

"I shall not attempt to explain to you fully what it was. You would not understand, and the less said about it the better. I can only tell you that in this paper are set down certain facts in regard to the— Well, you know that Mr. Wickersham is high in the councils of—the name, like the sacred name of Rome, is not to be uttered lightly nor oftener than is absolutely necessary. Anyway, certain things are given in the paper, certain plans of the company are mentioned, which many would be glad to know. The affair is so considerable, the interests involved so great, that the matter is worthy of the notice even of foreign Governments. Our enormous financial concerns are now as important as many kingdoms, and are watched in quite the same way that hostile nations watch one another."

I clasped my hands in delight, realizing that here was a situation worthy of me.

"I had the document in my pocket with some others. Late last night, after working with Mr. Wickersham, I thrust, as I thought, some trifling memoranda into a drawer of a table. I made a mistake—I can never forgive myself—and left the secret paper. When I discovered my loss and came back for it early this morning, it was gone. You don't understand all it means to me. You know that I love Emily. Indeed, because I was thinking of her I believe I did what I did. I had almost dared to tell her. I have sometimes believed she might listen to me. Now with the disgrace,—I may be accused of selling out to the enemy,—I felt I must keep silent. Certainly, Mr. Wickersham would never give his consent now. She does not understand. She thinks I do not care. She is flirting with Harry Delaney. I'm afraid at any moment he may propose to her and she may accept him."

"What would you give me if I got back the paper for you?"

Charley looked at me curiously for a moment. "I don't think—indeed I am sure I could not help kissing you."

"No you shouldn't!" I answered promptly. "If I want any of that sort of thing, I won't have them for mere gratitude."

"Then I'd promise not to."

"That's better," I assured him. "Oh! I'd do all I could for you—and Emily. I'm going to try."

"Do you know anything? Is there a chance?" he asked with an earnestness that went to my heart.

"I'm not sure." I did not want to speak too soon, or say too much.

AT that I was away before he could stop me. How my heart beat! My hands fairly trembled. I certainly could not remain quiet for a moment. In the nervousness of my excitement I tramped backward and forward up and down a distant garden path. Oh, well, I had always found the most direct way the best.

A moment afterward I was knocking at the door of Mrs. Carden-Carew's room, and stood tremblingly ready for what might follow.

When I entered, after her somewhat faint and smothered injunction to come in, I found her stretched out on a great divan in the darkened apartment, disposed for a short siesta.

"I am sorry to disturb you," I began in my most businesslike tone; "I really shouldn't unless it was most important."

At the sound of my voice she propped herself on her elbow and stared at me in wonder. As if what she saw astonished her and interested her still more, she slipped her little feet to the floor and sat up. "What do you mean, please?"

"You have not done what you said you would do!" I declared with the utmost sternness.

"What?"

"You have not put back what you took, as you promised."

"But I have," she replied, in mounting confusion, a slight blush showing on her rose leaf cheeks.

"I hate to be so decided," I replied; "but that is not so. I have just seen Mr. Tremaine, and he told me about the precious paper that has disappeared. He put it by mistake for a packet containing merely lists of things in the drawer in the table in Mr. Wickersham's office. That is not there now. I saw you take something from that very place. How you learned it was there, I do not know. You must have watched."

The Countess Szisizski—I could not get the name out of my head—sprang up erect. She confronted me with flashing eyes. She stood with small clenched fists. I never encountered such a picture of indignation and fury and grief.

"He's afraid he will be ruined, and dares not speak to Emily Wickersham, whom he loves madly, who may accept Mr. Delaney, and everything is topsyturvy, and the fat is all in the fire, and there is the particular old Nick to pay."

"You," she spoke slowly and with great dignity and solemnity,—"you think I took that?"

"I certainly saw you."

Before I could go on, she broke into the merriest, trippingest silvery laughter that I ever heard from

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GREAT WORDS DEFINED IN EPIGRAM

By William George Jordan

TEARS

The silent speech of sorrow.
Nature's automatic relief to grief.
The heart overflowing into the eyes.
Woman's last argument.
Emotion bursting the bounds of reserve.
The universal expression of all the high-tide moments of the soul.
The melting point of the emotions.
The heart seeking to voice the inexpressible.
The soul's outburst in the Gethsemane of a sorrow.

ENVY

Egotism gone to seed.
Mental dyspepsia because some one else is feasting.
The mud that inferiority throws at success.
The malicious contemplation of the powers or possessions of another.
Belittling the honors of those we cannot equal.
The gangrene of unsatisfied desire that eats away purpose and kills energy.
Inability to bear bravely the prosperity of another.
The vice that turns one's own clothes to rags at sight of another's ermine.
Appreciating a quality, depreciating its possessor.

SLANG

Conversational coin minted by the people.
The fresh red blood of current speech.
Words bearing the bar sinister of vulgarity.
High spiced verbal seasoning to conversation.
The humor, poetry, and metaphor of the people focused in a word or phrase.
Language on probation.
Verbal needs in the garden of speech.
Squatter sovereignty of speech.
Wild broncos of language not broken to harness.
Verbal upstarts seeking to enter the select society of language.

PUBLIC OPINION

The pulse of the people.
Canned wisdom for those who do not do their own thinking.
The thoughts of the few becoming contagious among the many.
The golden calf that Society worships.
The public, sitting as a jury on great questions.
An ever changing ocean formed by the rivers of countless opinions.
A community's guesses at truth.
A conscience owned by a syndicate.
A million echoes, but one voice.
The world's substitute for private judgment.