

"No. I thought it best not to alarm her," answered the other.

Van Trevor never came again through the slow days of convalescence. Evans' letters to Leila were unanswered. Gradually a sickening fear began to come over the little Welshman, a sense of some undefinable tragedy. At last, when two weeks had passed, he was permitted to leave the hospital. He hurried to the Van Trevor house. The butler who opened the door, stood in his way.

"Mr. Van Trevor left a letter for you, sir," he said, handing him a missive.

The little Welshman opened it. It stated briefly that the work had come to an end, and included a check for \$500.

Evans tore the check to pieces and turned away from the house in blind agony and rage.

IV.

The bungalows stood side by side in their trim plots at the edge of the shore. Near by, at the huge hotel, where music and dancing, and the mirth of holiday-makers. Many couples, strolling along the road, looked askance at the seedy little man, with the bandage about his head, who walked hurriedly toward the bungalow at the end of the row.

In the shadow of a pine tree Evans halted. The bungalow was ablaze with lights. He heard the voices of Van Trevor and his friends, and the tittering laughter of his wife. Then came a laugh that made him clutch at his heart—Leila's.

He crept forward. He saw the interior of the room now. Leila, attired in a sheer silken dress, her arms bedecked with bracelets, a pendant upon her neck, was leaning forward in her chair, listening to a young man who was apparently telling some rather broad story for Mrs. Van Trevor's protesting titter rang out again, and her husband's louder outburst.

Then suddenly the little Welshman

seemed to become inspired with a strong personality that had never been his. He strode through the open door into the living-room, and stood there at the door.

He saw a look of fear in Van Trevor's eyes, astonishment in the guests', wonder in Leila's. The little, shabby man suddenly dominated the situation.

"Hugh!" exclaimed Leila, leaping to her feet. "You are ill! What is the matter?"

"I have come to take you home, dear," said Evans.

Mrs. Van Trevor advanced with mincing steps. "This is Leila's husband," she explained to the group. "He has been unwell, you know. Mr. Evans, it would really have been more seemly to have written."

"Come, dear," said Evans, taking his wife's arm in his. In that moment he saw all the struggle in the girl's soul; the old love and the new pleasures. It was a hard test for her, beaten by the storms of uncertainty.

"Leila is certainly not going away with you," exclaimed Elsie Van Trevor angrily. "This is an outrage! Leila, dear, we will protect you."

With a swift, passionate gesture Evans tore the bracelets from Leila's arms, the pendant from her neck, and cast them down. And, while they still stared at them, they were gone, and Leila clung to her husband's neck in the darkness.

"Hugh, dearest!" she wept. "What was it? Why didn't you write? I didn't know you had been ill. They wanted me to get a divorce—O, Hugh, if you hadn't come they would have made me do anything—anything. Keep me! Guard me! Never leave me again!"

And in her husband's clasp she felt at last a safeguard against the dangers that had beset her, and knew that thenceforward their real life would be together.

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There were only 354 days in the year 1752.