



THE DELUGE

By DAVID GRAHAM PHILLIPS, Author of "THE COAL" etc.

CHAPTER XXIX.—Continued.

The first news I got was that Bill Van Nest had disappeared. As soon as the Stock Exchange opened, National Coal became the feature. But, instead of "wash sales," Roebuck, Langdon and Melville were themselves, through various brokers, buying the stocks in large quantities to keep the prices up. My next letter was as brief as my first philippic:

"Bill Van Nest is at the Hotel Frankfort, Newark, under the name of Thomas Lowry. He was in telephonic communication with President Melville, of the National Industrial Bank, twice yesterday.

The underwriters of the National Coal company's new issues, frightened by yesterday's exposure, have compelled Mr. Roebuck, Mr. Mowbray Langdon and Mr. Melville themselves to buy. So, yesterday, those three gentlemen bought with real money, with their own money, large quantities of stocks which are worth less than half what they paid for them.

"They will continue to buy these stocks so long as the public holds aloof. They dare not let the prices slump. They hope that this storm will blow over, and that then the investing public will forget and will relieve them of their load."

I had added: "But this storm won't blow over. It will become a cyclone." I struck that out. "No prophecy," said I, to myself. "Your rule, iron-clad, must be facts, always facts, only facts."

The gambling section of the public took my hint and rushed into the market; the burden of protecting the underwriters was doubled, and more and more of the hoarded loot was disgorged. That must have been a costly day—for, 10 minutes after the Stock Exchange closed, Roebuck sent for me.

"My compliments to him," said I to his messenger, "but I am too busy. I'll be glad to see him here, however."

"You know he dares not come to you," said the messenger, Schilling, president of the National Manufactured Food company, sometimes called the Poison Trust. "If he did, and it were to get out, there'd be a panic."

"Probably," replied I with a shrug. "That's no affair of mine. I'm not responsible for the rotten conditions which these so-called financiers have produced, and I shall not be disturbed by the crash which must come."

Schilling gave me a genuine look of mingled pity and admiration. "I suppose you know what you're about," said he, "but I think you're making a mistake."

"Thanks, Ned," said I—he had been my head clerk a few years before, and I had got him the chance with Roebuck which he had improved so well. "I'm going to have some fun. Can't live but once."

My "daily letters" had now ceased to be advertisements, had become news, sought by all the newspapers of this country and of the big cities in Great Britain. I could have made a large saving by no longer paying my sixty-odd regular papers for inserting them. But I was looking too far ahead to blunder into that fatal mistake. Instead, I signed a year's contract with each of my papers, they guaranteeing to print my advertisements. I guaranteeing to protect them against loss on label suits. I organized a dummy news bureau, and through it got contracts with the telegraphic companies. Thus insured against the cutting of my communications with the public, I was ready for the real campaign.

It began with my "History of the National Coal company." I need not repeat that famous history here. I need recall only the main points—how I proved that the common stock was actually worth less than two dollars a share, that the bonds were worth less than twenty-five dollars in the hundred, that both stock and bonds were illegal; my detailed recital of the crimes of Roebuck, Melville and Langdon in wrecking mining properties, in wrecking coal railways, in ejecting American labor and substituting helots from eastern Europe; how they had swindled and bribed and bribed; how they had twisted the books of the companies, how they were planning to unload the mass of almost worthless securities at high prices, then to get from under the market and let the bonds and stocks drop down to where they could buy them in on terms that would yield them more than 250 per cent on the actual capital invested. Less and dearer coal; lower wages and more ignorant laborers; enormous profits absorbed without mercy into a few pockets.

On the day the seventh chapter of this history appeared, the telegraph companies notified me that they would transmit no more of my matter. They feared the consequences in label suits explained Moseby, general manager of one of the companies.

"But I guarantee to protect you," said I. "I will give bond in any amount you ask."

"We can't take the risk, Mr. Blacklock," replied he. The twinkle in his eye told me why, and also that he, like every one else in the country except the clique, was in sympathy with me.

My lawyers found an honest judge, and I got an injunction that compelled the companies to transmit under my contracts. I suspended the "History" for one day, and sent out in place of it an account of this attempt to shut me off from the public. "Hereafter," said I, in the last paragraph of my letter, "I shall end each day's chapter with a forecast of what the next day's

chapter is to be. If for any reason it fails to appear, the public will know that somebody has been coerced by Roebuck, Melville & Co."

XXX.

ANITA'S SECRET.

That afternoon—or, was it the next?—I happened to go home early. I have never been able to keep alive anger against any one. My anger against Anita had long ago died away, had been succeeded by regret and remorse that I had let my nerves, or whatever the accused cause was, whirl me into such an outburst. Not that I regretted having rejected what I still felt was insulting to me and degrading to her; simply that my manner should have been different. There was no necessity or excuse for violence in showing her that I would not, could not, accept from gratitude what only love has the right to give. And I had long been casting about for some way to apologize—not easy to do, when her distant manner toward me made it difficult for me to find even the necessary commonplaces to "keep up appearances" before the servants on the few occasions on which we accidentally met.

But, as I was saying, I came up from the office and stretched myself on the lounge in my private room adjoining the library. I had read myself into a doze, when a servant brought me a card. I glanced at it as it lay upon his extended tray. "General

Monson," I read aloud. "What does the damned rascal want?" I asked.

The servant smiled. He knew as well as I how Monson, after I dismissed him with a present of six months' pay, had given the newspapers the story—or, rather, his version of the story—of my efforts to educate myself in the "arts and graces of a gentleman."

"Mr. Monson says he wishes to see you particularly, sir," said he.

"Well—I'll see him," said I. I despised him too much to dislike him, and I thought he might possibly be in want. But that notion vanished the instant I set eyes upon him. He was obviously at the very top of the wave.

"Hello, Monson," was my greeting, in it no reminder of his treachery.

"Howdy, Blacklock," said he. "I've come on a little errand for Mrs. Langdon." Then, with that nasty grin of his: "You know, I'm looking after things for her since the bust-up."

"No, I didn't know," said I curtly, suppressing my instant curiosity. "What does Mrs. Langdon want?"

"To see you—for just a few minutes—whenever it is convenient."

"If Mrs. Langdon has business with me, I'll see her at my office," said I. She was one of the fashionables that had got herself into my black books by her treatment of Anita since the break with the Ellerslys.

"She wishes to come to you here—this afternoon, if you are to be at home. She asked me to say that her business is important—and very private."

I hesitated, but I could think of no good excuse for refusing. "I'll be here an hour," said I. "Good day."

He gave me no time to change my mind. Something—perhaps it was his curious expression as he took himself off—made me begin to regret. The more I thought of the matter, the less I thought of my having made any civil concession to a woman who

myself. He had not been gone a quarter of an hour before I went to Anita in her sitting room. Always, the instant I entered the outer door of her part of our house, that powerful, intoxicating fascination that she had for me began to take possession of my senses. It was in every garment she wore. It seemed to linger in any place where she had been, for a long time after she left it. She was at a small desk by the window, was writing letters.

"May I interrupt?" said I. "Monson was here a few minutes ago—from Mrs. Langdon. She wants to see me. I told him I would see her. Then it occurred to me that perhaps I had been too good-natured. What do you think?"

I could not see her face, but only the back of her head, and the loose coils of magnetic hair and the white nap of her graceful neck. As I began to speak, she stopped writing, her pen suspended over the sheet of paper. After I ended there was a long silence.

"I'll not see her," said I. "I don't quite understand why I yielded." And I turned to go.

"Wait—please," came from her abruptly.

Another long silence. Then I: "If she comes here, I think the only person who can properly receive her is you."

"No—you must see her," said Anita at last. And she turned round in her chair until she was facing me. Her expression—I can not describe it. I can only say that it gave me a sense of impending calamity.

"I'd rather not—much rather not," said I.

"I particularly wish you to see her," she replied, and she turned back to her writing. I saw her pen poised as if she were about to begin; but she did not begin—and I felt that she would not. With my mind shadowed with vague dread, I left that mysterious stillness, and went back to the library.

It was not long before Mrs. Langdon was announced. There are some women to whom a haggard look is becoming; she is one of them. She was much thinner than when I last saw

her; instead of her former restless, petulant, suspicious expression, she now looked tragically sad. "May I have your own way after that, without any attempt from me to oppose her. For she was evidently unutterably wretched—and no one knew better than I the sufferings of unreturned love. But she had given me up; slowly, sobbing, she left the room I opening the door for her and closing it behind her.

"I almost broke down myself," said I to Anita. "Poor woman! How can you be so calm? You women in your relations with each other are—a mystery."

"I do not intend to ask her," I replied. "To ask her would be an insult."

She made no comment beyond a scornful toss of the head. We both had our gaze fixed upon the door through which Anita would enter. When she finally did appear, I, after one glance at her, turned—it must have been triumphantly—upon her accuser. I had not doubted, but where is the faith that is not the stronger for confirmation? And confirmation there was in the very atmosphere round that stately, still figure. She looked calmly, first at Mrs. Langdon, then at me.

"I sent for you," said I, "because I thought that you, rather than I, should request Mrs. Langdon to leave your house."

At that Mrs. Langdon was on her feet, and blazing. "Fool!" she flared at me. "Oh, the fools women make of men!" Then to Anita: "You—you—but no, I must not permit you to drag me down to your level. Tell your husband—tell him that you were riding with my husband in the Riverside drive yesterday."

I stepped between her and Anita. "My wife will not answer you," said I. "I hope, Madam, you will spare us the necessity of a painful scene. But leave you must—at once."

She looked wildly round, clasped her hands, suddenly burst into tears. If she had but known, she could have had her own way after that, without any attempt from me to oppose her. For she was evidently unutterably wretched—and no one knew better than I the sufferings of unreturned love. But she had given me up; slowly, sobbing, she left the room I opening the door for her and closing it behind her.

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"I suppose there are people," she went on, "who have never known what it was to—really to care for some one

body of the police, and in due course were advertised by them as found. A few days ago the necklace was identified and claimed by a lady well known in fashionable circles, who had dropped it into the river while staying at a Thameside mansion near Henley.

The pearls are valued at £40 or £50, and the man who found them has received a check for five pounds sterling.

Thoughts Were Elsewhere. Chancellor James R. Day, of Syracuse university, in a discussion of the craze for athletics that sometimes becomes too rampant in the universities of America, said with a smile: "Why, I know a young clergyman—he had been an excellent first baseman at college in his time—who, after reading a portion of the scriptures, said solemnly as he closed the Bible one Sunday morning in the baseball season: 'Here endeth the second inning.'"

Necklace From Thames

Lost for Year, Recovered by Workman Who Didn't Know Its Value.

A valuable pearl necklace lost in the Thames over a year ago by a lady of title has just been recovered by its owner, says the London Tribune.

Some months ago a Henley-on-Thames workman walking by the side of the river, near Shiplake Ferry, saw something glistening in the water, and getting the object out, he found that it was a pearl necklace. Thinking the gems, however, were only imitation, he casually carried the necklace home in his pocket and gave it to his wife.

She occasionally wore it, but never dreamed of its real value until some little time ago, when she broke the clasp and took it to a local jeweler to be repaired. The jeweler at once saw that the pearls were valuable, and, not satisfied with the woman's story, he sent for the police. The pearls were handed over to the cus-

clinging to a man after he has shown me that—that his love has ceased." "Pardon me, Mrs. Langdon," I interrupted. "You appear to think your husband and I are intimate friends. Before you go any further, I must disabuse you of that idea."

"She looked at me in open astonishment. 'You do not know why my husband has left me?'" "Until a few minutes ago, I did not know that he had left you," I said. "And I do not wish to know why."

Her expression of astonishment changed to mockery. "Oh!" she sneered. "Your wife has fooled you into thinking it a one-sided affair. Well, I tell you, she is as much to blame as he—more. For he did love me when he married me; did love me until she got him under her spell again."

I thought I understood. "You have been misled, Mrs. Langdon," said I gently, pitying her as the victim of her insane jealousy. "You have—"

"Ask your wife," she interrupted angrily. "Hereafter, you can't pretend ignorance. For I'll at least be revenged. She failed utterly to trap him into marriage when she was a poor girl, and—"

"Before you go any further," said I coldly, "let me set you right. My wife was at one time engaged to your husband's brother, but—"

"Tom?" she interrupted. And her laugh made me bite my lip. "So she told you that! I don't see how she dared. Why, everybody knows that she and Mowbray were engaged, and that he broke it off to marry me."

All in an instant everything that had been confused in my affairs at home and down town became clear. I understood why I had been pursued relentlessly in Wall street; why I had been unable to make the least impression on the barriers between Anita and myself. You will imagine that some terrible emotion at once dominated me. But this is not a romance; only the veracious chronicle of certain human beings. "My first emotion—relief that it was not Tom Langdon. 'I ought to have known she couldn't care for him,' said I to myself. I, contending with Tom Langdon for a woman's love had always made me shrink. But Mowbray—that was vastly different. My respect for myself and for Anita rose.

"No," said I to Mrs. Langdon, "my wife did not tell me, never spoke of it. What I said to you was purely a guess of my own. I had no interest in the matter—and haven't. I have absolute confidence in my wife. I feel ashamed that you have provoked me into saying so." I opened the door.

"I am not going yet," said she angrily. "Yesterday morning Mowbray and she were riding together in the Riverside drive. Ask her groom."

"What of it?" said I. Then, as she did not rise, I rang the bell. When the servant came, I said: "Please tell Mrs. Blacklock that Mrs. Langdon is in the library—and that I am here, and gave you the message."

As soon as the servant was gone, she said: "No doubt she'll lie to you. These women that steal other women's property are usually clever at fooling their own silly husbands."

"I do not intend to ask her," I replied. "To ask her would be an insult."

She made no comment beyond a scornful toss of the head. We both had our gaze fixed upon the door through which Anita would enter. When she finally did appear, I, after one glance at her, turned—it must have been triumphantly—upon her accuser. I had not doubted, but where is the faith that is not the stronger for confirmation? And confirmation there was in the very atmosphere round that stately, still figure. She looked calmly, first at Mrs. Langdon, then at me.

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I SPY!

BEING SOME STRANGE PERSPECTIVES SEEN THROUGH THE SMALL END OF THE GLASS— WITH A CHERRY AT THE BOTTOM DESCRIBED BY HELENA SMITH-DAYTON PICTURED BY ANGIE BREAKSPEAR

MRS. WEEDS--\$1.25 PER DAY--TRY HER

"Does that clock say nine o'clock?" demanded Mrs. Weed, reproachfully, as if the deceitfulness of clocks was past her understanding. "Why, I left the house just as it was striking eight, which would allow me enough time to get here in plenty of time—though I did miss one car. Maybe my clock was wrong—I'll see about getting it fixed. "Why, since you insist, I might take a cup of coffee, Mrs. Rogers. That's one reason I always enjoy sewing here—more than plenty to eat. It's not that way everywhere I go. You'd be surprised at things I could tell about people who hold their heads 'way up higher than I do—or you, either."

"Still, I can keep my mouth shut and say nothing, as I always say to



Mrs. Weed in the gown she will make for herself pretty quick.

Mrs. Judge Gillsley. Poor Mrs. Gillsley—that's a woman I feel sorry for. Poor as I am I wouldn't swap places with her. Do you know the judge? Yes, he seems nice enough. That's what folks always used to say when I was having my trouble with Jim Weed—he seemed the salt of the earth. Butter wouldn't melt in Jim's mouth when there was anyone around.

"Say, I stopped several places to get that skirt pattern—you might send Mabel out to try somewhere else. And while she's out she can get some more of that seam binding, some machine needles—and whatever you're going to trim your waist with. I woke up in the night and thought of a sweet way to make your polka dot silk."

"Dear me, some day I'm going to stop fixing other people up long enough to make something for myself. If I had the time I'd show folks what clothes really are!"

"That's a pretty little skirt you have on," said Mrs. Rogers. "I do hope we'll be able to accomplish a lot today—there's so much to be done and so little time."

"This? Why this is an old thing I've had three years. I've worn it to work so long it's all gone up. But Sunday I had on a dress you'd like. Little check. Simple, yet stylish. I could give you Tuesday of next week and Friday and Saturday of the week following—if that'll help you out any. I had to cut out one of my best customers to come here to-day. I always like to be accommodated, even if it isn't always appreciated. Oh, certainly I know you do, Mrs. Rogers. I haven't any fault to find with the treatment I get in this house. Now, if you'll get ready to try on this waist—"

"If there's anything I do love to do, it's to work on a wedding outfit. I think you're going to have some real pretty clothes, Miss Constance. Well, this is the time to get 'em—if you never have 'em again. I'm sure I hope you're doing well—still, that's what we all think. Oh, I know you're happy. Well, this only happens once in a lifetime, and you might as well look on the bright side. Of course you're only an inexperienced girl—but I know what I'm talking about. You haven't had your troubles yet—but we all have to go through just about so much. I'm sure I've had more than my share. And when I first knew Jim Weed he was as fine appearing a young man as you intended. Have you a picture of your gentleman? I would like to see what he's like."

"I'm sure I hope he's all you think he is, Miss Constance. But these men—you never can tell. Yes, I hope you'll be very happy. I know you'll make a lovely bride. This goods is so soft and clingy."

"Isn't one of my shoulders higher than the other?" asked Miss Constance Gillsley, bride-elect, anxiously. "Oh, you haven't got a very bad figure. Why, I sewed for a woman last week and she wasn't any shape whatever. Hope you will have nice weather. You know, 'happy is the bride the sun shines on.' And there's no time like June for a wedding. I was a June bride. Good land! have I gone and cut two lefts? Well, the goods won't be wasted—I can use it for something else. Yes, Jim thought the sun rose and set in me those days. I suppose that's the way your friend talks now?"

"Yes, he does," admitted Miss Gillsley. "But I'm sure it will be all right in my case."

"Maybe so," sighed Mrs. Weed. "Jim left me three times. And yet I believed him every time he came back with a hard luck story and a lot of fine promises. But I wouldn't take

Jim Weed back again if he was the last man on earth. And why should I? Here I am getting along well, and even getting ahead a little—free to come and go as I please. Now, wouldn't I be a fool to make it up with him and start to slaving for two instead of just myself? 'Deed I would. It may sound hard-hearted to you, Miss Constance, but if he came back and offered to cover me with diamonds I wouldn't look at him!"

"Do you still love him, Mrs. Weed?" asked Constance, romantically.

"Love Jim Weed after the way he's treated me? I should rather guess not! I wouldn't take him back, even if I could live like a lady. That's where I stand on that question. I made a dress for Mrs. Preston last week and it cost three dollars a yard, without a scissors in it. It was a lovely plum color and—Mrs. Weed shifted the pins from one side of her mouth to the other—I wouldn't be surprised if she was thinkin' some of steppin' off herself. Mrs. Preston advises me to save up and get a divorce—maybe I will. Though, goodness knows, I'd hate to waste the money on Jim Weed. He's cost me enough already!"

"I guess you'll have to sit up nights, Miss Wheaton, to wear all the clothes you're having made," commented Mrs. Weed. "I don't think I'd want to have quite so many all to once—things go out of style so quick. Still—I suppose you'll have to dress often at that fashionable place you're going to. Now, that's where we're different. If I was going away on a vacation I'd prefer a quiet place, where I didn't have to keep fixed up all the time like a wax doll in a show case."

"I suppose you'll come back engaged to a duke or a millionaire—land knows there won't be anyone dressed any better, if I did make your clothes. But, whatever you do, don't just take a man because he appears to be all you'd have him. You never can tell about these strangers. I've had all I want of handsome faces and palaverin' speeches. You'll hear plenty of 'em at one of those summer resorts. When I first met Jim Weed he was a dandy lookin' feller, if I do say it. He'd a turned any girl's head. And such ways as he had with him! Heigho!"

"Do you want this organdy made up with val lace? Dear me, isn't it perishable material? I'd like to see you

"You look well in black, Mrs. Willis. He was such a well meaning man, I never was so surprised in my life. Did Miss Thomas make that black silk you had on Sunday? She is a terrible butcher—of course I don't know only what other customers who used to employ her tell me. I wish you could a saw what she made Mrs. Joseph Rogers. Never seen such a fitting thing in my life—wasn't any fit to it. If there's one thing I do like to see it's a well fitting garment. Yes, he was a grand man—always a pleasant word for everybody—even me."

"You know that black waist I had to get in a hurry?" asked Mrs. Willis. "Couldn't you do some little thing to it? I hate boughten things."

"Try it on and I'll see," said Mrs. Weed, trying to reconcile a needle's eye with a piece of thread. "You must look on the bright side, Mrs. Willis, 'cause it might be a sight worse. Look at my case! You know where John Willis is—which is more than I do. Mr. Willis was a nice man as far as we know, and he might a' gone on being nice—and then again—you can't never tell. Some of 'em turn out such double-dealing rascals. My Jim—snf-snf-snf—please excuse my giving away like this, but when I think how bad that black-hearted wretch treated me I can't help it!"

"Would I take him back? Why, I'd want Heaven to strike me dead if I even spoke to him in passing on the street! No, I hope I know when I'm well off."

"Now, Miss Willis, if you're ready to have this fitted—"

The Cherry—Jim's back; but it won't interfere with Mrs. Weed's sewing for a few of her old customers.

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BALLADE OF THE RECEPTION.

Dear me, how do you do? I've longed to see you so. Why, what a pretty blue! It's new, isn't it?—No? My dresses always show. But you—you've such a way—A bit of lace—a bow— (Yes, such a pleasant day!)

That Smith woman! Well, who invited her here? Oh, indeed? You like her, too? But she's so common, though. Yes, really quite de trop. And then the neighbors say—Of course, these stories grow— (Yes, such a pleasant day!)

Dear Mrs. Smith, it's you! How I longed to see you so. To find some one I know—A song! How heavenly slow! And May—voice like a crow. I loved that last one, May. It seemed so appropriate— (Yes, such a pleasant day!)

ENVY. No, really, I must go. I'll simply love to stay. But—best of friends—you know— (Yes, such a pleasant day!)

—Horatio Winslow, in Puck.

MR. SUGGS AND HIS SYSTEM

Mr. Pulsifer Suggs appeared on his front porch just as his neighbor came out on his own steps. The neighbor glanced over and saw that Mr. Suggs's cheeks were puffed out and that his eyes seemed to be bulging. He observed also that Mr. Suggs walked methodically the length of his porch, then turned and retraced his steps, cheeks still puffed and eyes still bulging.

"Good morning!" called the neighbor cheerily.

"One!" said Mr. Suggs with a mighty out-puffing of breath. Then his cheeks sank in and his eyes went back to normal, while his shoulders curved forward and his chest became concave. His waist-line also became smaller, and Mr. Suggs walked the length of his porch and back in this shape, while the neighbor looked on with amazement.

"Good morning!" the neighbor said again when Mr. Suggs returned to his end of the porch.

"Two—oo-oo!" blazed Mr. Suggs with a tremendous inrush of breath.

Two infinitesimal white eggs (as the tiny nest of the humming bird,

have some tea. If it won't be too much extra trouble. Too much coffee is bad for me, I find, though I'm crazy about it. Jim Weed was a great hand for coffee."

"Now, how would you like this collar finished off? You might have a little narrow edge of black velvet. Black—even a touch—gives such character to a costume. I see they are wearing a dash on most of the French creations. I make it a point to keep posted—course that's part of my business. Did you know that Mr. and Mrs. Judge Gillsley aren't getting along very well together? Yes, I know quite a lot about 'em. Mrs. Gillsley's an awful nice little woman. Makes quite one of the family of me. The judge, though, never has much to say. He's a queer sort of a man. Why, if you want to have it tucked, I guess we've got goods enough. Of course I never gossip from house to house—but I know you can be trusted with anything. Did I tell you about Kittle Ty-

son? Oh, I guess I better not! Well, if you promise not to ever breathe it that I told you—"

"You look well in black, Mrs. Willis. He was such a well meaning man, I never was so surprised in my life. Did Miss Thomas make that black silk you had on Sunday? She is a terrible butcher—of course I don't know only what other customers who used to employ her tell me. I wish you could a saw what she made Mrs. Joseph Rogers. Never seen such a fitting thing in my life—wasn't any fit to it. If there's one thing I do like to see it's a well fitting garment. Yes, he was a grand man—always a pleasant word for everybody—even me."

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