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The Kott Piano For Sale CHEAP. Also a Square Piano For Sale or Rent. E. C. CHAMBERLIN, Jeweler and Optician.

PROFESSIONAL BRETHREN

BY GEORGE E. WALSH

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Belle," he added a moment later. "I tell you I will cure Charles. I can do it, and I will do it. If not for his sake, I will do it for yours."

A faint smile was visible through her tears as she looked at him and answered slowly:

"You are good, doctor, to sacrifice so much for either or both of us. Cure him by all means for his sake, not for mine. I could never marry him; I would be afraid."

Again she covered her face and sobbed.

"Not if I cured him entirely?" he asked in a voice that had a curious tension to it. "Not if I assured you positively that the disease would never show itself while either of you lived?"

"No, no; I could not. It would be a sin, a crime. And yet I loved him so—I loved him, loved him!"

There was an awkward silence. The tears stood in my own eyes, but those of the doctor were dry and exultant. The confession, I knew, pleased him. These words from her lips would give him the clear field. He could honorably try to win her love. With Charles no longer a possible rival, what was there to prevent him from winning a beautiful bride and a princely fortune? A few moments later they gathered up their reins and rode away. She was pale and beautiful; he was strong and robust—and exultant.

CHAPTER XI.

It is not often that conflicting emotions trouble me. But on that afternoon as I walked back to Mr. Goddard's house I experienced the strangest contradiction of feelings. One moment I thought I would pursue the tragedy no further, but decamp immediately and let my master work out his own fate. After all, he was nothing to me, and he probably cared less for me than I did for him.

But the next moment I would have a revulsion of feelings. I would fall to pitying and sympathizing with both my master and Miss Stetson. Her love for him was genuine, and it must be a terrific blow to receive such intelligence. Was she not to be pitted more than Mr. Goddard? On the other hand he was conscious of the terrible doom that awaited him and was buoyed up only by the thought that possibly Dr. Squires could cure him. But now he could never gain his prize. Would she marry him even though pronounced cured?

What would be the result? Mr. Goddard would go away to some foreign country, and after grieving over him for a time Miss Stetson would yield to the importunities of Dr. Squires and marry him. I saw the climax of the tragedy, which, after all, would prove a tragedy only to my master, and it made me more faithful in my devotion to the unfortunate man. This decided me to stay by him until the time should come when my expectations would be fulfilled. Then I would return to my old ways. Meanwhile I was leading an honest life and making the money which I spent.

I had become quite efficient in my duties, and was trusted in many ways that never fell to the lot of my predecessor. I was more than butler—I was my master's confidential secretary in many respects. But there were some secrets that he would not reveal to me, and one was the dread disease which brought him so much care and sorrow.

After hearing the truth from Dr. Squires' own lips my attention was drawn more closely to Mr. Goddard's appearance. I watched his languid manners, his pale face and all the symptoms of disease that he showed during his periodical fits of sickness. More than this, I read up all the medical books about leprosy and then watched for the signs. To an excited imagination these were readily visible.

About this time Miss Stetson and the doctor took lunch at the house again, and my attention was called to the matter by an incident that greatly affected all of us. I had not seen Miss Stetson since that afternoon when I watched her from my hiding place at the wayside brook. She was paler than usual, and her manner was nervous and excited, especially when Charles was near her.

During the progress of the lunch I caught her studying the hands and face of her host on every occasion when his eyes were turned away from her. I could not at first understand the reason for this secret scrutiny, but it suddenly dawned upon me that she, too, had been reading on the subject and was looking for symptoms of the disease.

The doctor, as usual, was the life of the party and kept the conversation flowing freely from one to the other, never being at a loss for words. Nevertheless there was an uneasiness in his manner which seemed very unnatural. My master alone appeared to be perfectly at his ease and normal.

When the conversation lagged a moment, he suddenly rubbed the back of one of his hands with the palm of the other and said:

"Doctor, I think I must have run up against some poison ivy or sumac in the woods, for I'm sure that my hands and face are poisoned."

"Very likely, very likely," the doctor replied quickly, but with a little tremor in his voice. "There is a great deal of it around, and one of your nature would be very susceptible to it."

"My hands and face itch terribly, and blotches are breaking out on my face and forehead," Mr. Goddard continued.

I looked at Miss Stetson. She was staring at my master with horror written all over her face. The hand that held her fork trembled so that she had to put it down.

My master displayed his hands and added:

"See these red spots on the back of my hand. Are they not the result of poison? And over my eyes and forehead. They seem to be breaking out all over."

"Probably, Charles. I will investigate after lunch," the doctor said hurriedly, glancing toward Miss Stetson.

For the first time Mr. Goddard turned his eyes toward her. Feeling that she was attracting attention, her overwrought nerves could stand the strain no longer. She had been thinking as I had—that the brown spots were the first and earliest symptoms of leprosy. We both knew just enough to be carried away by any symptoms that resembled those which indicate the beginning of the dread disease.

"Belle, what is the matter? Are you ill?"

Mr. Goddard had hardly spoken these words before she dropped her hands and fainted. She would have fallen to the floor had I not caught her in time.

They deposited her on a couch and rubbed her hands and moistened her brow with water. She slowly recovered consciousness.

"You should not have mentioned being poisoned to her," the doctor said admonishingly to my master. "To one of her sensitive disposition the mere mention of a thing like that might cause her to faint."

"How careless and brutal of me," my master said in tones of repentance. Then as she opened her eyes he knelt down by her side and, drawing one of her hands into his, said:

"Did I frighten you? I was a brute to do it. Look at me, Belle, and tell me that you forgive me."

For reply she turned her head away from him with a shudder and withdrew her hand from his clasp.

"What is it, dear?" he continued. "Do not draw away so. Tell me what it is that I have done. I will do anything to repair it. Speak, Belle."

"Leave me, please; leave me," she gasped. "I'm nervous and excited. Let me alone for a few minutes, and then I'll be better. But I must go home. Doctor, will you help me to get on my things?"

"Belle, you're not going to leave me like this," pleaded my master, approaching her again.

But she moved aside and said in a wavering voice:

"Let me go now, Charles. Maybe I can explain some day. I'm not myself now. Goodby!"

She did not extend her hand or offer to take his, but walked quickly out of the room.

Mr. Goddard stood quite still for some time, puzzled, perplexed, discouraged.



CHAPTER XII.
I WAS probably as much troubled as my master over this sad state of affairs. Miss Stetson's treatment hurt him more than he cared to confess. He seemed so perplexed and worried over the matter that I was several times on the point of telling him the reason for her sudden aversion for him.

There was but little doubt that he had noticed her dislike for him, but he was too proud and sensitive to mention the matter to any one. He was not a kind to speak of such personal questions even to Dr. Squires. For several days he remained away from the Stetson mansion, sending me over twice a day to inquire after Miss Stetson's health. I never saw her myself in any of these visits except the last. Then, instead of sending the message down to me by one of the servants, she called me up to her library.

The first thing I noticed about her was a peculiar careworn, suffering expression on her face. Under the dark eyes and around the lips there were delicate lines and tints which revealed more than words. She had suffered and was doomed to suffer more. Patiently acceptance of her lot was apparent on every lineament of her face. She had evidently battled successfully with herself and had become resigned to her fate.

The room in which she ushered me was an old-fashioned library where her father, the doctor, had gathered together many rare books and curios. The heavy woodwork, the dark paper and furnishings of the library cast a gloomy aspect over the sole occupant, and her white face gleamed out of the darkness like an old-fashioned picture in a somber setting. In spite of her surroundings she was still beautiful—more beautiful it seemed to me than when fully exposed to broad daylight. Hers was a beauty that did not fade in light or shade.

"You come from Mr. Goddard with a message for me?" she said interrogatively as I entered the room.

"Yes, ma'am. He sent to inquire after your health," I replied, bowing respectfully.

"And he trusts you without a written message?" she continued.

"In this matter he does, for he considered you too ill to write, and he did not wish to put you to any unnecessary trouble."

"That is the true reason," she said quietly. "He is always very considerate to me."

"He is to every one," I added, wishing to show my devotion to him.

"Yes, yes; he is kind to all. He is a good man."

"I have never met a better, ma'am, if you will permit me to say it, and I've seen many kinds of men in the world. He is always thinking of other people, and if he does wrong I believe he has some good reason for it."

She looked at me as if she liked to hear me praise him, and when I stopped her expression seemed to say, "Go on, go on; it's music to me." But I knew my position and would say no more.

"Is Mr. Goddard well himself?" she asked when she found that I was mute.

"Yes. Except for an attack of poison, which has now gone away entirely, he has been very well."

She turned a shade paler and then flushed a little as she remembered that I had been present on the day when she fainted.

"Oh, yes; I remember he spoke of the poison the last time I saw him," she said in a moment, recovering her mental poise. "Have the spots or eruption entirely disappeared?"

"Entirely, ma'am. There are no signs of any left."

"I suppose Dr. Squires gave him something to cure them."

I knew that she was thinking of the doctor's cure for leprosy and that she imagined he had given my master something which would drive away the first symptoms of the disease, at least temporarily. But I knew differently, and I courted the opportunity to disabuse her mind of the mistake.

"No, ma'am; the doctor did nothing for my master," I answered. "I gave him something which cured the eruption."

"You? What did you know about the matter?"

"Not very much, ma'am, except that I had been poisoned once, and I remembered what helped me. I asked my master to let me get him a bottle."

"A little of what?"

"Witch hazel. It was one of my mother's cures for poison from ivy or sumac."

"And that cured him?"

Her face brightened wonderfully. She began to realize that she had been a victim of her imagination.

"Completely," I answered.

"Then it was not—nothing more serious than ordinary poison," she added, with a sigh of relief.

"Nothing, ma'am."

She gave expression to her relieved feelings in a short laugh. The sweet



"You come from Mr. Goddard?"

Bess of it made me turn my head to look at her. The beautiful face had suddenly brightened up so that it seemed almost divine in its expression. Here, I thought, was true love, and I willingly pardoned her for it.

"Pardon me," she said after a moment of silence. "I was thinking of something else which amused me. You must take a message to your master."

She walked toward the library table and drew pen and paper from a drawer. She hesitated a moment and then added:

"No; I won't write. I will send a verbal message by you. Charles has trusted you to bring one, and I will return it in the same way."

"Thank you, ma'am. I shall endeavor to prove worthy of the trust."

"Well, tell Mr. Goddard that I am quite recovered and that I expect to have him call on me today. Be sure to tell him that I must see him at once. He must give up every other engagement to come to me. Now, do you understand? Can you put it so he can't say no?"

"I can, ma'am, and I'll venture to give you my word of honor that he will be here before the sun sets."

"Go, then, and prove your words."

"As I left her presence I felt that my mission had been one of mercy that morning, for I had, apparently unconsciously, been the means of lifting a burden temporarily from one heavy heart. I knew also that I carried a message that would bring a ray of sunlight into the life of another.

I might have stretched the importance of this interview to my master or I might have given him the literal truth. I know not which now. However, I delivered the message. It was sufficient to make him obey it.

The result of their meeting was manifested at once. Both of them appeared happy and normal again, and the old relationship seemed to be re-established. How much Miss Stetson explained to him about her fears and knowledge of his case I never knew, but for a time at least she was determined to put down all feelings of aversion for my master because of her knowledge that he was a doomed leper. Or perhaps—like another self-sacrificing virgin that I have read about—she had decided to consecrate her life to him, to live by him and nurse him through the coming years of pain and suffering and mental agony which must ever be the lot of a leper.

CHAPTER XIII.

I HAD now been in my position about six months. The interesting events which I have recorded had kept me from any longing to return to the exciting experiences of my profession. During this time I had grown somewhat stouter, and my countenance had begun to assume a kindly, benevolent, well-fed appearance. Necessarily I had grown a trifle lazier. Several times I had almost decided to return to my old methods of life, but a certain inertia, undoubtedly bred and nourished by my new existence of ease, always prevented. I would keep deferring the time until a more convenient period.

A genuine fear that I would lose my skill through lack of practice occasionally tormented me, but each time I put it aside with the thought that my profession was no longer an absolute necessity. It did not mean bread and butter to me as it did at one time. I was a full-fledged butler, and I could secure a good permanent position from my master any time I chose to leave.

Warned by my own experiences, I never let an opportunity pass to help a young man just starting on the downward road to get back to the main highway. I never entertained any serious thoughts of getting back there myself, but I hate to see others straying from it.

Nevertheless I now found myself slowly drifting back to an honest life. This had been accomplished through

no choosing of my own. Circumstances which were responsible for this change, I did not make any resolves to remain there for any length of time—in fact, I rather expected that the time would be brief.

As I just remarked, I never liked to see another, especially a young man, taking the downward road, and it was this strange feeling that gave me a little worry and anxiety in my idle life as butler for Mr. Goddard. I realized that my master was leading a double life; that he was pursuing his burglary tendencies systematically and that he was committing crime even while he was making love to Miss Stetson. This circumstance at first puzzled me; then it worried and irritated and finally disgusted me. I could not fathom its meaning. I saw my own crime, illustrated in him, in its true light, and it positively made me ashamed of my record. I longed to speak of the matter to him, but our peculiar relationship prevented it.

While I sympathized with him for the incurable disease which had always cast a blight over his young life, I soon learned to condemn him for his rash folly. No man of his position, intelligence and opportunities in the world had any business to stoop to crime. In some cases necessity may drive a man to the commission of a theft and habit may later deaden his conscience, but no such excuse could be held out for my master.

He was either bad at heart, a criminal by instinct, or he had a weak will that had been perverted by others when young and unformed. In everything else he seemed a model of strength, self command and intelligence. Why should he be so helpless in this respect?

Since that first memorable meeting at the dead of night in the Stetson mansion no word or sign had ever passed between us which indicated that we knew anything of the other's criminal tendencies. Out of a sense of honor I kept my part of the agreement, and for some reason he remained uncommunicative about the subject. Nevertheless I longed to break the ice between us. If I could once more meet him when robbing a house, I would have the liberty to speak, and I would not again bind myself to silence.

To be continued.

ALDRICH BILL DEFEATED

Displaced in Senate by Philippine Tariff Measure.

NEW SENATORS ARE SWORN IN.

Delaware Represented in Upper House for First Time in Two Years—Party Passion Flares Up in the House. Conference Reports Adopted.

Washington, March 4.—The final defeat of the Aldrich financial bill was witnessed in the senate yesterday, when it was displaced by the Philippine tariff bill. Aldrich explained in detail his measure and said that a small number of men in the senate had deliberately, with malice aforethought, murdered it.

One of the features of the session was the fact that for the first time in two years Delaware was represented in the senate. J. Frank Allee and L. Heister Ball, elected for the long and short terms respectively, appeared in the senate and were sworn in by President Pro Tem Frye. Besides the two years that Delaware had been totally unrepresented in the senate there were two years previous to that time when there was a vacancy in one of the seats. The senate for the first time in four years has its full membership of ninety.

In the course of the night session, Quay sprung a surprise by offering an amendment to the Philippine tariff bill the statehood bill, which he later withdrew, remarking "that the circumstance requiring the offering of the amendment had collapsed." The conference report on the naval and general deficiency bills were agreed to.

Albia Has Expensive Blaze.
Oskaloosa, Ia., March 4.—The town of Albia had one of the worst fires in its history yesterday morning, entailing a loss of \$30,000. Pills' restaurant, Reel's drug store, McAllister's grocery and company A are the principal losers. Insurance on the several buildings is less than \$10,000.

DO YOU KNOW that nearly all the wealthy men of your acquaintance bought land while it was cheap?

DO YOU KNOW that the area of cheap lands is becoming much less every year?

DO YOU KNOW that you made a mistake by not buying while land was cheap here?

DO YOU KNOW that you will make another mistake by not buying NOW where land is cheap?

DO YOU KNOW that I can sell you good land cheap, and on easy terms, in Burleigh, Dickey, Emmons, Logan, Kidder, McIntosh, Stutsman, Cavalier, Pierce, McHenry and Bottineau counties, North Dakota? Also Canadian lands in Manitoba and Assiniboia?

DO YOU KNOW that I would be glad to have you call and investigate these propositions?

D. L. BOYNTON,
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That is the Rock Island's rate from Omaha and Kansas City. In effect daily, February 15 to April 30. Correspondingly low rates from points in Iowa. Tickets are good in Rock Island tourist sleeping cars, which go through to Los Angeles and San Francisco. These cars make quicker time to Southern California than similar cars over any other line. Choice of routes—"Scenic" and "Southern" just as you prefer. Folder giving full information mailed on request.

If you are going to California, GO NOW. After May 1 it will cost you nearly \$20.00 more than at present.

Low rates to Montana, Idaho, Utah and Puget Sound are also offered by the Rock Island. Write or call. We'll gladly give you full information.

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3-30-03