The Hollow of Her Hand

by George Barr McCutcheon

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:nough!"

ou wrong me vilely! You must e—"

.ave an excellent memory, and es me well."

suddenly threw herself upon and buried her face in her at sobs shook her slender

od over her and watched for e with pitiless eyes. Then uneasy, wondering light be- elop in those dark, ominous leaned forward the better to the choked, inarticulate t were pouring from the At last, moved by some he could not have accounted nelt beside the quivering laid her hand, almost tim- on the girl's shoulder.

Hetty, if I have wronged thinking that of you—I—" gan brokenly. Then she lift- , and the harsh light tried ck into them. "No, no! saying? What a fool I way—"

ve wronged me—terribly, came in smothered tones cushions. "I did not dream it that of me."

as I to think?"

ed her head and cried out: not let me speak! You hear my story. You have ing this of me all along, t against me, damning me and I have been closer to you My God, what manner of are you?"

seized her hands and held them rce, tense grip. Her eyes were g with a strange fire.

ll me—tell me now, on your soul, tty were you—were you—"

"No! No! On my soul, no!"

"Look into my eyes!"

The girl's eyes did not falter. She met the dark, penetrating gaze of the other and, though dimmed by tears, her blue eyes were steadfast and resolute. Sara seemed to be searching the very soul of her, the soul that laid itself bare, denuded of every vestige of guile.

"I—I think I believe you," came lowly from the lips of the searcher. You are looking the truth. I can see it. etty, I—I don't understand myself. is so—so overwhelming, so tre- ndous. It is so incredible. Am I ly believing you? Is it possible that I have been wrong in—"

"Let me tell you everything," cried the girl, suddenly throwing her arms about her.

"Not now! Wait! Give me time to think. Go away now. I want to be alone." She arose and pushed the girl toward the door. Her eyes were fixed on her in a wondering, puzzled sort of way, and she was shaking her head as if trying to discredit the new emo- that had come to displace the one ted ages ago.

ly Hetty Castleton retreated the door. With her hand on b, she paused.

r what has happened, Sara, you t expect me to stay with you r. I cannot. You may give the law, but—"

e was tapping gently at the

ee who it is?" asked the ng period of silence.

y. "Mr. Leslie has re- astleton, and asks if at once. He says it be down in a few

losed, she waited steps died away

him, Sara, and I you will tell him

"Tell Me—Tell Me, Now—on Your Soul, Hetty—"

why I cannot be his wife. Do you understand? Are you listening to me?"

Sara turned away without a word r look of response.

Hetty quietly opened the door and ent out.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Second Encounter.

Booth trudged rapidly homeward after leaving Hetty at the lodge. He was throbbing all over with the love of her. The thrill of conquest was in his blood. She had raised a mysterious barrier; all the more zest to the inevitable victory that would be his. He would delight in overcoming obstacles—the bigger the better—for his heart was valiant and the prize no smaller than those which the ancient knights went o to battle for in the ys.

oug the present to him.

re Hetty Glynn? been an artist's d had into the more like

eyes was all-convincing. She was worthy of the noblest love.

After luncheon—served with some exasperation by Patrick an hour and a half later than usual—he smoked his pipe on the porch and stared reminiscently at the shifting clouds above the tree tops.

He did not see the Wrandall motor at his garden gate until a lusty voice brought him down from the clouds into the range of earthly sounds. Then he dashed out to the gate, bareheaded and coatless, forgetting that he had been sitting in the obscurity of trailing vines and purple blossoms the while he thought of her.

Leslie was sitting on the wide seat between his mother and sister.

"Glad to see you back, old man," said Booth, reaching in to shake hands with him. "Day early, aren't you? Good afternoon, Mrs. Wrandall. Won't you come in?"

He looked at Vivian as he gave the invitation.

"No, thanks," she replied. "Won't you come to dinner this evening?"

He hesitated. "I'm not quite sure whether I can, Vivian. I've got a half-way sort of—"

"Oh, do, old chap," cut in Leslie, more as a command than an entreaty. "Sorry I can't be there myself, but you'll fare quite as well without me. I'm dining at Sara's. Wants my private ear about one thing and another—see what I mean?"

"We shall expect you, Brandon," said Mrs. Wrandall, fixing him with her lorgnette.

"I'll come, thank you," said he.

He felt disgustingly transparent under that inquisitive glass.

Wrandall stepped out of the car. "I'll stop off for a chat with Brandy, mother."

"Shall I send the car back, dear?"

"Never mind. I'll walk down."

The two men turned in at the gate as the car sped away.

"Well," said Booth, "it's good to see you. Pat!" He called through a basement window. "Come up and take the gentleman's order."

"No drink for me, Brandy. I've been in the temperance state of Maine for two weeks. One week more of it and I'd have been completely pickled. I shall always remember Maine."

Booth sat down on the porch rail, hooked his toes in the supports and proceeded to fill his pipe. Then he struck a match and applied it, Leslie watching him with moody eyes.

"How do you like the portrait, old man?" he inquired between punctuating puffs.

"It's bully. Sargent never did anything finer. Ripping."

"I owe it all to you, Les."

"To me?"

"You induced her to sit to me."

"So I did," said Leslie sourly. "I was Mr. Fix-it sure enough." He allowed a short interval to elapse before taking the plunge. "I suppose, old chap, if I should happen to need your valuable services as best man in the near future, you'd not disappoint me?"

Booth eyed him quizzically. "I trust you're not throwing yourself away, Les," he said drily. "I mean to say, on some one—well, some one not quite up to the mark."

Leslie regarded him with some severity. "Of course not, old chap. What the devil put that into your head?"

"I thought that possibly you'd been making a chump of yourself up in the Maine woods."

"Piffle! Don't be an ass. What's the sense pretending you don't know who she is?"

"I suppose it's Hetty Castleton," said Booth, puffing away at his pipe.

"Who else?"

"Think she'll have you, old man?" asked Booth, after a moment.

"I don't know," replied the other, a bit dashed. "You might wish me luck, though."

Booth knocked the burnt tobacco from the bowl of his pipe. A serious line appeared between his eyes. He was a fair-minded fellow, without guile, without a single treacherous instinct.

"I can't wish you luck, Les," he said slowly. "You see I'm—I'm in love with her myself."

"The devil!" Leslie sat bolt upright and glared at him. "I might have known! And—and is she in love with you?"

"My dear fellow, you reveal considerable lack of tact in asking that question."

"What I want to know is this," exclaimed Wrandall, very pale but very hot: "is she going to marry you?"

Booth smiled. "I'll be perfectly frank with you. She says she won't."

Leslie gulped. "So you've asked her?"

"Obviously."

"And she said she wouldn't? She refused you? Turned you down?" His little mustache shot up at the ends and a joyous, triumphant laugh broke from his lips. "Oh, this is rich! Ha, ha! Turned you down, eh? Poor old Brandy! You're my best friend, and dammit I'm sorry. I mean to say," he went on in some embarrassment, "I'm sorry for you. Of course, you can hardly expect me to—er—"

"Certainly not," accepted Booth amiably. "I quite understand."

"Then, since she's refused you, you might wish me better luck."

"That would mean giving up hope."

"Hope?" exclaimed Leslie quickly. "You don't mean to say you'll annoy her with your—"

"No, I shall not annoy her," replied his friend, shaking his head.

"Well, I should hope not," said Leslie with a scowl. "Turned you down, eh? 'Pon my soul!" He appeared to be relishing the idea of it. "Sorry, old chap, but I suppose you understand just what that means."

Booth's lips hardened for an instant, then relaxed into a queer, almost pitying smile.

"And you want me to be your best man?" he said reflectively.

Leslie arose. His chest seemed to swell a little; assuredly he was breathing much easier. He assumed an air of compassion.

"I shan't insist, old fellow, if you feel you'd rather not—er— See what I mean?" It then occurred to him to utter a word or two of kindly advice. "I shouldn't go on moping if I were you, Brandy. 'Pon my soul, I shouldn't. Take it like a man. I know it hurts, but— Pooh! What's the use aggravating the pain by butting against a stone wall?"

His companion looked out over the tree tops, his hands in his trousers pockets, and it must be confessed that his manner was not that of one who is oppressed by despair.

"I think I'm taking it like a man,

Leslie Sat Bolt Upright and Glared at Him.

Les," he said. "I only hope you'll take it as nicely if she says nay to you."

An uneasy look leaped into Leslie's face. He seemed noticeably less corpulent about the chest. He wondered if Booth knew anything about his initial venture. A question rose to his lips, but he thought quickly and held it back. Instead, he glanced at his watch.

"I must be off. See you tomorrow, I hope."

"So long," said Booth, stopping at the top of the steps while his visitor skipped down to the gate with a nimbleness that suggested the formation of a sudden resolve.

Leslie did not waste time in parting inanities he strode off briskly in the direction of home, but not without a furtive glance out of the tail of his eye as he disappeared beyond the hedgerow at the end of Booth's garden. That gentleman was standing where he had left him, and was filling his pipe once more.

The day was warm, and Leslie was in a dripping perspiration when he reached home. He did not enter the house but made his way direct to the garage.

"Get out the car at once, Brown," was his order.

Three minutes later he was being driven over the lower road toward Southlook, taking good care to avoid Booth's place by the matter of a mile or more. He was in a fever of hope and eagerness. It was very plain to him why she had refused Booth. The iron was hot. He didn't intend to lose any time in striking.

And now we know why he came again to Sara's in the middle of a blazing afternoon, instead of waiting until the more seductive shades of night had fallen, when the moon sat serene in the seat of the Mighty.

* * * * * * *

He didn't have to wait long for Hetty. Up to the instant of her appearance in the door, he had reveled in the thought that the way was now paved with roses. But with her entrance, he felt his confidence and courage slipping. Perhaps that may explain the abruptness with which he proceeded to go about the business in hand.

"I couldn't wait till tonight," he explained as she came slowly across the room toward him. She was half-way to him before he awoke to the fact that he was standing perfectly still. Then he started forward, somehow impelled to meet her at least half-way. "You'll forgive me, Hetty, if I have disturbed you."

"I was not lying down, Mr. Wrandall," she said quietly. There was nothing ominous in the words, but he experienced a sudden sensation of cold. "Won't you sit down? Or would you rather go out to the terrace?"

"It's much more comfortable here, if you don't mind. I—I suppose you know what it is I want to say to you. You—"

"Yes," she interrupted wearily; "and knowing as much, Mr. Wrandall, it would not be fair of me to let you go on."

"Not fair?" he said, in honest amazement. "But, my dear, I—"

"Please, Mr. Wrandall," she exclaimed, with a pleading little smile that would have touched the heart of anyone but Leslie. "Please don't go on. It is quite as impossible now as it was before. I have not changed."

He could only say, mechanically: "You haven't?"

"No. I am sorry if you have thought that I might come to—"

"Think, for heaven's sake, think what you are doing!" he cried, feeling for the edge of the e with a supplicating, support-seeking hand. had Sara's word that you were

"Unfortunately not speak for me in matte d. Thank you for the hon d—"

"Honor be ha ourted out, losing his tem e you! It's a purely said ith me, and I'm blowed if I consider it an honor to be refused by any woman. I—"

"Mr. Wrandall!" she cried, fixing him with her flashing, indignant eyes. "You are forgetting yourself." She was standing very straight and slim and imperious before him.

He quailed. "I—I beg your pardon. I—I—"

"There is nothing more to be said," she went on icily. "Goodby."

"Would you mind telling me whether there is anyone else?" he asked, as he turned toward the door.

"Do you really feel that you have the right to ask that question, Mr. Wrandall?"

He wet his lips with his tongue. "Then, there is some one!" he cried, rapping the table with his knuckles. He didn't realize till afterward how vigorously he rapped. "Some confounded English nobody, I suppose."

She smiled, not unkindly. "There is no English nobody, if that answers your question."

"Then, will you be kind enough to offer a reason for not giving me a fair chance in a clear field? I think it's due—"

"Can't you see how you are distressing me? Must I again go through that horrid scene in the garden? Can't you take a plain no for an answer?"

"Good Lord!" he gasped, and in these two words he revealed the complete overturning of a lifelong estimate of himself. It seemed to take more than his breath away.

"Goodby," she said with finality.

He stared at the door through which she disappeared, his hopes, his conceit, his self-regard trailing after her with shameless disloyalty to the standards he had set for them, and then, with a rather ghastly smile of self-commiseration on his lips, he slipped out of the house, jumped into the motor car, and gave a brief but explicit command to the chauffeur, who lost no time in assisting his master to turn tail in ignominious flight.

Hetty was gloomily but resolutely employed in laying out certain of her personal belongings, preparatory to packing them for departure, when Sara entered her room.

They regarded each other steadily, questioningly for a short space of time.

"Leslie has just called up to ask 'what the devil' I meant by letting him make a fool of himself," said Sara, with a peculiar little twisted smile on her lips.

Hetty offered no comment, but after a moment gravely and rather wistfully called attention to her present occupation by a significant flaunt of her hand and a saddened smile.

"I see," said Sara, without emotion. "If you choose to go, Hetty, I shall not oppose you."

"My position here is a false one, Sara. I prefer to go."

"This morning I should have held a sword over your head."

"It is very difficult for me to realize all that has happened."

"You are free to depart. You are free in every sense of the word. Your future rests with yourself, my dear."

"It hurts me more than I can tell to feel that you have been hating me all these months."

"It hurts me—now."

Hetty walked to the window and looked out.

"What are your plans?" Sara inquired, after an interval.

"I shall seek employment—and wait for you to act."

"I? You mean?"

"I shall not run away, Sara. Nor do I intend to reveal myself to the authorities. I am not morally guilty of crime. A year ago I feared the consequences of my deed, but I have learned much since then. I was a stranger in a new world. In England we have been led to believe that you lynch women here as readily as you lynch men. I now know better than that. From you alone I learned my greatest lesson. You revealed to me the true meaning of human kindness. You shielded me who should not Even now I believe that your first impulse was a tender one. I shall not forget it, Sara. You will live to regret the baser thought that came later on. I have loved you—yes, almost as a good dog loves his master. It is not for me to tell the story of that night and all these months to the world. I would not be betraying myself, but you. You would be called upon to explain, not I. And you would be the one to suffer. When you met me on the road that night I was on my way back to the inn to give myself into custody. You have made it impossible for me to do so now. My lips are sealed. It rests with you, Sara."

Sara joined her in the broad window. There was a strangely exalted look in her face. A gilded birdcage hung suspended in the casement. Without a word, she threw open the window screen. The gay little canary in the gilded cage cocked his head and watched her with alert eyes. Then she reached up and gently removed the cage from its fastenings. Putting it down upon the window sill, she opened the tiny door. The bird hopped about his prison in a state of great excitement.

Hetty looked on, fascinated.

At last a yellow streak shot out through the open door and an instant later resolved itself into the bobbing, fluttering dicky-bird that had lived in a cage all its life without an hour of freedom. For a few seconds it circled over the tree tops and then alighted on one of the branches. One might well have imagined that he could hear its tiny heart beating with terror. Its wings were half-raised and fluttering, its head jerking from side to side in wild perturbation. Taking courage, Master Dicky hopped timorously to a nearby twig, and then ventured a flight to a tree top nearer the window casement. Perched in its topmost branches he cheeped shrilly, as if there was fear in his little breast.

In silence the two women in the window watched the agitated movements of the bird. The same thought was in the mind of each, the same question, the same intense wish.

A brown thrush sped through the air, close by the timid canary. Like a flash it dropped to the twigs lower down, its wings palpitating in violent alarm.

"Dicky!" called Sara Wrandall, and then cheeped between her teeth.

A moment later Dicky was fluttering about the eaves; his circles grew smaller, his winging less rhythmical, till at last with a nervous little flutter he perched on the top of the window shutter, so near that they might have reached to him with their hands. He sat there with his head cocked to one side.

"Dicky!" called Sara again. This time she held out her finger. For some time he regarded it with indifference, not to say disfavor. Then he took one more flight, but much shorter than the first, bringing up again at the shutter-top. A second later he hopped down and his little talons gripped Sara's finger with an earnestness that left no room for doubt.

She lowered her hand until it was even with the open door of the gilded cage. He shot inside with a whir that suggested a scramble. With his wings folded, he sat on his little trapeze and cheeped. She closed and fastened the door, and then turned to Hetty.

"My symbol," she said softly.

There were tears in Hetty's eyes.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PUBLIC DINNER A NUISANCE?

New York Newspaper Says It Is, Both on Account of Poor Food and Poor Speakers.

It has long been the agreeable habit of friendly organizations, from the Sons of St. Patrick to the New England society, the Ohio, the Southern and others, to give occasional dinners at which they may refresh their spirits with the familiar dialect which is grateful in the ears long unused to it, and by reminding each other of what a good place the old home was, and is, remarks the New York Evening Sun. But the old custom has long since become a bore beyond description because of the inordinate attention required of the diners to a long array of speakers, none of whom has anything in particular to say, and at the same time because of the very indifferent quality of the dinner provided. It is no doubt true that the great majority of persons who go to these dinners do not know or care what they eat, and therefore gobble the usually very indifferent food set before them and wait, helplessly, for "the speakers." Their own indifference is much to blame for the general stodginess. It is encouraging, of course, to observe that the disgust with such silliness as this has finally resulted in an explosion which would do away entirely with the public dinner. The private dinner, of course, chosen carefully and served to a small and congenial company, is one of the most honorable and sacred social rites in the civilized world; men and women will always stand up to defend and maintain it. But the great machine-made dinner is a foolish anomaly to begin with; nobody but the hotelkeepers, who charge enough to pay for a much more tempting dinner than they serve, feels any tenderness for it.

Pie, the National Dish.

Three years ago a pie-eating contest was held for the championship of New Jersey, relates the London Chronicle. In the United States pie is a national dish, and the variety with which the competitors had to struggle consisted of a layer of pastry a quarter of an inch thick, spread with canned fruit, the average weight being half a pound. According to the report of a local journal, "amid enthusiasm, thirty-five young men, trained to the minute, entered the contest for the championship. The state record of twenty-six pies in half an hour fell during the battle. Walter Tappin of Tilsomfield, N. J., was the winner. He managed to put himself on the outside of twenty-seven pies in the allotted time. For this he received the "championship belt." It should have been an elastic one.

Georgia Invasion.

"It's been the dream of the old man's life to see Wash'ton," said the Billville matron, "an' now he's a-goin' thar, an' I'm a-goin' with him. 'I won't be unknown thar,' he says, 'fer I've been a member of six Georgia legislatures, an' any one of 'em could beat congress a-raisin' of the place whar' Satan lives at an' a-doin' of nuthin!' But what we want to see most is the place whar they make the money, an' find out how come us why we don't git our share of it."—Atlanta Constitution.

LYON'S ACHES AND PAINS

Have All Gone Since Taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Terre Hill, Pa.—"Kindly permit me to give you my testimonial in favor of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. When I f t began taking I was suffering m female troubl for some time a ad almost all ki of aches—pains in w- er part of b and in sides, and pressing down pains. I could not sleep and had no appetite. Since I have taken Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound the aches and pains are all gone and I feel like a new woman. I cannot praise your medicine too highly."—Mrs. AUGUSTUS LYON, Terre Hill, Pa.

It is true that nature and a woman's work has produced the grandest remedy for woman's ills that the world has ever known. From the roots and herbs of the field, Lydia E. Pinkham, forty years ago, gave to womankind a remedy for their peculiar ills which has proved more efficacious than any other combination of drugs ever compounded, and today Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is recognized from coast to coast as the standard remedy for woman's ills.

In the Pinkham Laboratory at Lynn, Mass., are files containing hundreds of thousands of letters from women seeking health—many of them openly state over their own signatures that they have regained their health by taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound; and in some cases that it has saved them from surgical operations.

Constipation Vanishes Forever

Prompt Relief—Permanent Cure

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS never fail. Purely vegetable — act surely but gently on the liver. Stop after dinner distress—cure indigestion, improve the complexion, brighten the eyes.

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS.

SMALL PILL, SMALL DOSE, SMALL PRICE.

Genuine must bear Signature

Brent Good

The Weapon.

"This letter plainly envenomed my father's mind against me. How do you suppose the writer did it?"

"I suppose, to be in the fashion, he used a poisoned pen."

SCALP ITCHED AND BURNED

833 South Scioto St., Circleville, Ohio.—"My little girl's trouble first started on her head in a bunch of little pimples full of yellow-looking matter and they would spread in large places. In a short time they would open. Her scalp was awfully red and inflamed and the burning and itching were so intense that she would scratch and rub till it would leave ugly sores. The sores also appeared on her body, and her clothing irritated them so that I had to put real soft cloth next to her body. She would lie awake of nights and was very worrisome. At times she was tortured with itching and burning.

"I tried different remedies with no benefit for months. I had given up all hope of her ever getting rid of it, then I concluded to try Cuticura Soap and Ointment. The second application gave relief. In a short time she was entirely cured." (Signed) Mrs. Alice Kirlin, Nov. 4, 1912.

Cuticura Soap and Ointment sold throughout the world. Sample of each free, with 32-p. Skin Book. Address postcard "Cuticura, Dept. L, Boston."—Adv.

And Wood Wouldn't.

Marks—I hear that the Woods have separated. What was the trouble?

Parks—It seems that Mrs. Wood wanted him to dye his white hair to watch her new lavender wig.

Good Cause for Alarm

Deaths from kidney diseases have increased 72% in twenty years. People overdo nowadays in so many ways that the constant filtering of poisoned blood weakens the kidneys.

Beware of fatal Bright's disease. When backache or urinary ills suggest weak kidneys, use Doan's Kidney Pills, drink water freely and reduce the diet. Avoid coffee, tea and liquor.

Doan's Kidney Pills command confidence, for no other remedy is so widely used or so generally successful.

A Kentucky Case

"I suffered terribly from dull pains in the small of my back," says A. G. Packham, of Lakeland, Ky. "When I stooped, it seemed as if my back would break and my limbs were badly swollen. I couldn't rest well and mornings I was always tired. I had headaches and dizzy spells and specks floated before my eyes. Doan's Kidney Pills completely cured me and I can't be too grateful."

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