In Male Attire by Joseph Hatton

Copyright, 1900, by Joseph Hatton.

CHAPTER XLII—Continued.

HE was slightly above the medium height and suggested a county magnate or a country squire rather than a professional man of the city of London. A round, cheery countenance, penetrating eyes with marked eyebrows, a clean-shaven face, full lips, a somewhat stumpy nose. In business he had a calm, astute manner, rarely smiling, but outside the trammels of work a frank, open, mirthful expression. Though the use of his monocole was perfectly natural to him, his critics credited him with making histrionic play with it especially when cross-examining a witness. There was, by the way, something of an inquisitorial and doubting manner in his reception of Philip Grey.

"Miss Zella Brunnen's cousin?" he said while untying a bundle of papers marked "Brunnen, Glover and Dankes."

"Came over in the Umbria?"

"Yes."

"Sad end to a financial career, Dexter's."

"Very."

Though she had no experience of a cross-examination in court, Zella was bracing herself to that kind of ordeal. Lorrimer surveyed her for a moment through his eye-glass and then dropped it; which simply suggested to her a conjuring trick. The monocle fascinated and puzzled her.

"You have seen the reports of his death?"

"Yes."

"My friend, Glover, did not tell me that his fiancee was a type-writing girl."

"No?"

"Odd, when he appeared to have told me everything else about her. Rather a remarkable young person?"

"Yes."

"But that is not our business at the moment. What have you to say to me, Mr. Grey?"

"I guess I was expecting that you would have something to say to me," Zella replied, looking him squarely in the face. "You received my cousin's letter from New York?"

"Accrediting you, as her representative; yes."

"Have you, may I ask, received any telegrams from Chicago?"

This was a speculative shot of Zella's on the strength of several cables that were docketed among Lorrimen's bundle of papers.

"Yes," he said, turning over the messages which Zella had noticed, and examining them by the aid of his glass. "One from Storey, Daily Mail, one from Bridget O'Hagan, one from Hildyards, Miss Brunnen's Chicago lawyers; each more or less urgent, all asking my firm if they had seen or heard from Miss Brunnen."

"Zella is just a little erratic. Anxious to be free for awhile she delayed her journey; but this morning she cabled to them full particulars of her arrival in London and requested them to address any messages or letters to her to your care."

"In town, is she?"

"Yes; in London."

"Came over with you?"

"She couldn't come without me."

"Indeed!" said Lorrimer, contemplating her, glass in eye, with a puzzled expression. "Then she was actually on board the Umbria when Dexter, the millionaire, committed suicide?"

"Here is the passenger list."

Lorrimer took the paper from her and examined it as if it might have been a document in evidence that he would presently hand up to the bench.

"Don't sea the name of Philip Grey," he said; which for a moment flurried Zella, who began to think he suspected her.

"Here is a corrected list," she said, handing him the second roll of passengers.

"Grey—and no Brunnen. But why these trifling details, Mr. Grey?"

"Just what I was asking myself," Zella replied.

"Beg pardon," said Lorrimer, as if addressing the other side. "I suppose I shall see Miss Brunnen shortly; to-morrow, say?"

"At present she is not quite well; rather disappointed with London, I think—"

"Niagara has disappointed some travelers, I believe."

"So I am told," said Zella, with a touch of asperity in her manner. "My cousin may go to Eastbourne or Bournemouth for a few days; she is advised that the change will be good for her."

"She is well advised no doubt. And now, what can I do for you, Mr. Grey? Or for Miss Brunnen between now and the day when she honors me with a call?"

Zella felt it was time to establish the bona-fides of Philip Grey in such a way as to entirely win the lawyer's confidence.

"My cousin," she said, taking from her breast pocket a bundle of papers, "has intrusted me with the documents at present in her possession relating to poor Mr. Glover's will and his partnership with Solomon Dankes, together with certain bonds and scrip in Platts Valley mines, and a note for twenty thousand dollars, which I have deposited for her this morning with Drexell, Morgan & Co."

"I appreciate Miss Brunnen's confidence in my firm," said Lorrimer, opening an iron safe and placing the documents therein.

"Miss Brunnen has the very highest opinion of you and your firm, sir."

"We shall strive to justify her good opinion, Mr. Grey," he said, locking the safe, leaving his table desk and passing round to the side of the room where she was sitting. "And I think that brings our business interview to an end."

"I think so," said Zella, a cold chill at her heart as she rose to take her leave.

"Don't go for a minute, please," said Lorrimer in another tone of voice and with a genial manner that surprised her. "In the first place let us shake hands."

She put out her hand in a perfunctory kind of manner. He pressed it cordially.

Welcome to London! It is your first visit, I understand. As a stranger and the cousin of my interesting client I shall hope to show you some little hospitality. I have been twice in America and never lose an opportunity of showing my gratitude to your people for their kindness to me by returning some of it to any American who may bring me an introduction. Moreover, we have other ties, Mr. Grey. One of the best fellows that ever lived, engaged to be married to your cousin, was a dear friend of mine. His death touched me deeply."

Zella lowered her eyes. Lorrimer walked about the room.

"She must be a wonderful creature, this Zella Brunnen, "he continued; "a beauty, abnormally clever, a linguist, an athlete, with a romantic career; her father a great soldier—I am quoting Glover's letters. The poor fellow was madly in love with her; yet he never told me that she was a typewriting girl in Dexter's office."

"That lowers her very much in your estimation, I suppose?" said Zella, summoning all her presence of mind and mental resource under the pressure of other feelings than her remark indicated, which were awakened by Lorrimer's references to Glover's love for her.

"Not at all, I assure you," said Lorrimer. "In London it would have ruined her social status; in America you take a higher and better view of social worth and the career of a clever woman. But there, Mr. Grey, I must not keep you now, nor must you keep me. I have several clients waiting to see me. A bothering and exciting business, you know, law, whether one is English or American; but I want you to promise that you will dine with me to-night. Now, don't say you are otherwise engaged. I have so much to say to you and you must have plenty to say to me. Eight o'clock at the Sheridan Club, eh?"

"Oh, thank you," said Zella, "you are very kind."

"Not at all; the kindness will be on your side. The Sheridan is close to Covent Garden? But every cabman knows it. Where are you staying, may I ask?"

"At the Grand Hotel," said Zella.

"Only a walk to the Sheridan. Then, I shall expect you?"

"I will be there," said Zella.

And she was there, punctually; and with considerably revised opinions of both Lorrimer and London from those he and the great city had at first inspired. During the day she had found her way to Westminster and the Thames embankment, to Oliver Goldsmith's grave in the Temple, to St. Paul's completing her experiences in an open barouche, provided by the hotel, along the Mall and Piccadilly to the Park. April was verging into May. It was nearing the height of the London season. The sun shone warm on the gray streets. Every other shop seemed to be a goldsmith's, or to flash with silver, when it was not bright with flowers or gay with costly fabrics and pictures. Here and there the Stars and Stripes flaunted high up against the blue sky, making her heart beat the quicker. Oh, if Ned Glover could have been by her side! Sometimes she thought he was. Once she was sure she heard his voice. It was like a joyous whisper of content that she should at last have seen his beautiful London, from which Fleet street had banished him, but to which he had meant to return a conqueror, hand in hand with the lovellest woman in the world.

In Pall Mall Zella met a squadron of cavalry, marching to the strains of their fine mounted band. Some special function was being celebrated, she thought. Other flags were flying from the club houses. Her coachman had to pull up near St. James Palace. More troops came swinging round into Pall Mall, from the Park. The sight of the worn old historic pile, the inspiring strains of the military band, followed presently by the wild swirl of the bagpipes and the tramp of a company of Gordon Highlanders overcame her; she had to mop her face with her handkerchief. * * * Her carriage now threaded its way along St. James street; and it seemed to her that the entire region was peopled with ghosts of past days, ghosts of buildings, ghosts of great events, ghosts of famous people, ghosts of her mother's ancestors, the dead, patient little woman she just remembered, with her sweet English voice; the ghosts of Glover's forbears, and the realities, too, of the London he was to reveal to her. Then round into Piccadilly, with scores of equipages, beautiful women in gorgeous attire, powdered footmen, smart victorias, family chariots with armorially decorated panels, and on the pavement a well-dressed throng of pedestrians. On one hand the Green Park, on the other a row of palaces.

Then Wellington on his horse and the four typical warriors at the base of the equestrian figure, recalling memories of her father's oft-repeated saying, "Almost the only people we ever fought were your English mother's countrymen, and in whom Prussia never had braver or truer allies; a great people, the English." * * * Oh, that he, or her mother or Ned, or some dear friend, were with her—even Mr. Storey or Glencoe or Bridget—that she might have some one to speak to, some one with whom she might relieve, in words, the deep emotions of her heart. She seemed so lonely amidst the great and brilliant crowd. She had never imagined anything so imposing as Hyde Park, with its procession of carriages, three or four abreast, and its splendid array of horses, its superb toilets, its handsome women, its gallant men and its multitude of gayly attired people on the sidewalks, the brilliant array of sunshades and parasols, backed by ornamental trees in the first freshness of spring leaves, and here and there great patches of crocuses and tulips. A new world to Zella. * * * Presently, in obedience to an official hand, the autocrat of the streets, there was a gradual suspension of movement, a passage way was made, a number of outriders cantered by; then every hat was raised, and it seemed to Zella as if every lady rose to her feet. A carriage, drawn by four white horses ridden by postillions, came along. An elderly lady was bowing right and left, with a young demoiselle by her side and on the opposite seat an officer in a bright uniform. The elderly lady was bowing right and left, a pleasant smile lighting up a benevolent face; it was her Majesty the Queen of England, with the Princess Beatrice and the Duke of Connaught. Zella at once guessed it was the Queen, and as her Majesty left the park she heard the great burst of cheering that greeted her at Hyde Park Corner and followed her on her way to Buckingham palace, where, the coachman told her, the Queen was to stay the night. "A great event for London," he said.

"Her Majesty don't care for Buckin'em Palace, but London loves her just the same."

CHAPTER XLIII.

DICK LORRIMER AND HIS GUEST.

But, oh, she was very lonely! The one reed that she had looked to lean upon in London broke at the first touch. If only Ned's friend, Lorrimer, had said even a few sympathetic nothings to her. It was true he had unbent at last; it was true she was going to dine with him; it was true he had expressed an intention to be kind to her and show her some hospitality; but, oh, she was sad and lonely! It had even been a relief to speak with the coachman. She wondered if it had not been better to have come as herself, Zella Brunnen. In that position she would assuredly have commanded at least the gentler attentions of Richard Lorrimer. How disappointed she was in him! Not in his appearance. He was not what might be called handsome; but he had fine eyes, his manners were refined, he was evidently a gentleman.

Zella little knew what an impression she had made on Lorrimer. "What a handsome youngster!" he had said to himself, as he walked from his office in the afternoon, for a cup of tea at his club and to order dinner, and then to his chambers in Whitehall Court. "If Miss Zella Brunnen is anything like Philip Grey she is all poor Ned described her. And clever, too, by Jove! For a minute it seemed as if I was cross-examining him in court; but the rest of the time I felt as if he were cross-examining me! Hang me, if I ever remember being so impressed with a young fellow! And he has just a bit of music in his American accent that one notices in a cultivated Scotchman's soupcon of dialect; or one of our dear Irish girl's touch of the brogue. His 'I guess' was fairly musical. Well-dressed, too! They say America isn't great in tailoring, but Poole couldn't have made a better frockcoat, nor old Sandeman better fitting breeches. Well, we shall see if he improves on acquaintance."

Zella, having no idea that she had made a good impression on Ned's dearest friend, did not look forward to meeting him again with any great expectations of relief from the gloom that was settling down upon her, notwithstanding the glory of the London streets and the pageantry of the park. Perhaps the very brightness of the strange city, blossoming into its annual season of fashion and furbelows, of gayeties and social functions, of balls and parties, of plays and players, of picture exhibitions, of royal levees, and the time for debutantes and society, weddings and aristocratic high-jinks, had got upon her nerves. She had never before felt so solitary. The lake of Chicago, miles and miles away from shore, the woods of Platts Valley, silent as the grave, had never once seemed lonely; nor had the great prairie over which she had roamed, beyond Chicago's furthest outposts; nor the vast wastes she remembered, when a girl, on the skirts of the frontier, made a solitude to her so profound as London, with all its hum of voices, the thunder of its streets and the multitudes of its people.

"We don't treat strangers as hospitably in our clubs as you do in America," said Lorrimer, when they had adjourned to the smoking-room of the Sheridan. "You give us the run of your entire house; we set apart special rooms for you—'strangers' rooms' we call them—and we treat you as strangers. It is a survival of an old custom of clubs, like a bit of the British constitution; it seems to work fairly well, however. We are a conservative people and an exclusive."

"I don't know much of club life," said Zella; "your rooms seem to me to be very charming; I have never seen any so crowded with pictures; and, I may say, without, I hope, offense, that the dinner was excellent, the fish remarkable, the souffiet perfect. I am not sure that it is what you call the right thing for a guest to comment on his entertainment."

"Oh! yes, quite the correct thing, I assure you," said Lorrimer, with a laugh. "And now what will you take with your coffee? Benedictine, chartreuse, kummel?"

"A little benedictine, thank you," said Zella, taking out her cigarette case.

"Won't you smoke a cigar?"

"No, thank you. I am not a great smoker, and I generally carry my own mild cigarettes."

"Well, as you please. May I join you? A cigarette is a good preliminary to a cigar."

Zella passed her case, and Lorrimer commended the flavor of the tobacco.

"Few strangers dining to-night," he said, "and they all appear to be going to the opera—a Patti night. We might have gone, but I thought we would have a quiet chat. And we are in the way of it; evidently got the smoking room to ourselves. I hope Miss Brunnen is better?"

"Yes, thank you. She seems to feel lonely; I suppose one does in a strange city, where one has no friends."

"But she shall make friends. My sister shall call upon her. My sister's a rare gossip; knows everybody worth knowing; a regular gadabout, but as good a creature as ever lived. Single, like myself; but the liveliest old maid imaginable. Could have married a dozen times; is only forty now, and looks twenty. I am sure Miss Brunnen will like her; and you, too. Oh! we'll soon surround both of you with friends."

Zella was amazed at the change in Lorrimer—"Dick," as one or two clubmen called him, men who were entertaining strangers. He was full of high spirits; natural, unstrained; and his laugh was fairly catching. With Lorrimer's exuberance Zella's spirits rose, and she detected, for the first time, something of the brogue he had himself spoken of in his speech. He was an Irishman, who knew nothing of Ireland; had never set foot in it since he left it as a lad, and was never suspected of his nationality. He was not ashamed of it; but he was at heart a Londoner, by instinct and habits a very Cockney: knew London inside out, and could quote you almost every poetic tribute the Muses had ever paid to it.

"You are not a marrying family, then?" said Zella; so like a woman to take hold of this casually dropped word about marriage.

"My youngest sister is married, and I have a brother living happily in that pleasant state. As for myself, well, I have never seen my fate. You haven't a sister, eh?"

"No. Why?"

"Life is full of surprises. I shouldn't have wondered that, if you had a sister, she might have influenced my destiny," and he laughed heartily at the notion. "That confirmed old bachelor, Richard Lorrimer," he said, "to Miss Emily or Elmira, or Jane, or whatever it might be, Grey, at St. George's, Hanover Square; no cards! Sounds interesting, eh?"

"Then I may conclude you do not disapprove of Philip Grey? And I thought you hated me this morning."

"Was I so horribly brutal? They tell me I am low, in business; positively low, don't you know!" And he fixed his eyeglass at Zella; not defiantly, but with a kind of apologetic meekness.

"You have made up for it since, Mr. Lorrimer. And I am much indebted to you; for I was very lonely and depressed when I came here to dinner."

"Were you, now? And it was my fault. I must really try and correct that infernal professional habit of mine."

He dropped his glass, almost indignantly, and turned to light a cigar.

"Oh! no; you are not to blame in the least. I felt lonely, that is all; and—"

"Oh! by the way," he said suddenly, "that comes of separating one's self so entirely from business when one leaves it; I had forgotten a most important thing. I positively believe, sometimes, my dear Mr. Grey, that I am two persons—one a confounded martinet in the bonds of red tape, and the other a thoughtless idiot. I make it a rule never to talk shop when I'm out of it; but there are exceptions to every rule. Here's a cable I received only an hour ago. My friend, Straker, considered it of sufficient importance to send it to my chambers, with instructions that if I was not at home it was to be sent to the club. I thrust it into my pocket. And here it is, by Jove! Can Miss Brunnen stand a shock? Not a disagreeable one, mind you; but a shock, nevertheless?"

"I guess she's just about as nervous as I am. What is it?" said Zella.

"Shall I read it?" asked Lorrimer, unfolding a cable message. "It's great news; but joy hurts, as well as pain, they say. And I suspect you will feel very elated, though you are only her cousin."

"Please read it," said Zella.

"Hildyards, Chicago, to Straker, Love and Lorrimer. Acquaint Zella Brunnen with the fact that Dexter has bequeathed to her one-half of his real and personal estate, which is expected to realize not less than ten million dollars."

CHAPTER XLIV.

"THE MYSTIC DOMINION OF CLOTHES.

Zella found it more and more embarrassing to maintain her disguise. She carried it off well enough. No one ever for a moment suspected her. If her masculine courage and physique had been put to the test we know how well she could have acquitted herself. But behind her mask there was a true woman. If she wore her breeches with a manly air she could wear her petticoat with a finer grace. Her womanly instincts, let alone her conscience, began to trouble her.

There was reason and courage and even nobility in her masculine armor, when it was donned for love of Ned Glover and justice to his memory; but what would he have thought of her masquerading about London as Philip Grey? This reflection haunted her. She began to despise herself, all the more so that she had to confess she was enjoying her wanderings about the great town. The shops were a perpetual wonder to her. Now and then, as a young man, she found herself taking an undue interest in the drapers' and millinery stores. Then she blushed and hurried on, as if she had betrayed herself. The jewelry stores amazed and delighted her. Where could all the wonderful and beautiful things come from? What a rich country it must be, with customers sufficient to keep such warehouses going! And the book shops, the picture galleries, the collections of bric-a-brac—in short, the engrossing things that were to be seen for nothing; the British Museum, that made her head ache; South Kensington, that made her legs ache, and slums that made her heart ache.

What a strange, contradictory town it was! She walked about Fleet street, wondering from which newspaper office Ned Glover had been discharged. She asked a policeman to direct her to the Daily Times; but there was the Times, and with his guidance she eventually found her way to Printing House square. The Times! There it was! It looked just the kind of hard and matter-of-fact building that would inclose the sort of editor who drove Ned out into the world beyond the sea. Then she remembered that but for the Times discipline she would never have known the English journalist. Would it have been better never to have known him than to love him and to lose him as she had lost him—and at the hands of an infamous countryman of her own? One night she heard the bells of St. Clement Danes. She asked a policeman. Never once had she wanted to know anything that a policeman had not told her and with a courtesy that, compared with Chicago and New York, was as if London policemen had been trained in a school of good manners. On that night when, losing her fear, she stood for a few minutes at Piccadilly Circus after an evening at the theater she had heard young men chaff policemen to such an extent that she had expected every moment to see them beaten to death. If they had said one tithe of what they said to London officers to New York or Chicago men they would first have been clubbed into insensibility and then dragged to the nearest police station.

Downing street, the official residence of the great Minister, was easy to find, though it did not convey to Zella's mind anything like the Arabian Nights' scene Ned had depicted. It is true she had only the exterior of the place to go by, but the broad street that led to it, the imposing sentinels of the Horse Guards, the Foreign Office on the right, the sad, sad window on the left, where the poor foolish King had stepped out to the headsman, the Abbey beyond, the palace of Parliament, the historic Thames, Westminster bridge, the view up and down the river, the bright blue sky, the happy faces of the people, the enormous traffic—it was far beyond anything Ned Glover had promised her. She held her course hither and thither as one in a dream or as one who had died and had arrived in another world. Oh, if that might have been and Ned was there. * * * She walked along the Thames embankment and paused by the Obelisk to say to herself in very conventional commonplace words, "What does it matter? It all comes to naught. By comparison one's life is no more than a butterfly's; just a passing day, and then you are forgotten. * * * But how much happiness may be compressed into one day; if not for one's self for others. * * * What shall I do with that money of Dexter's? * * * First, with its magic wand convert Parkside into a palace and Bridget into the queen thereof, with Old Glencoe, Mrs. Ferguson and the Senator for Kentucky as princely guests. Poor Bridget! She can have but few more years to live; but they shall be happy years if money is the talisman they say, but which I take leave to doubt. * * * And then we'll see what Mr. Storey lacks to make the Mail the journal of his highest ambition; and how to make Joe Williams happy, in spite of his being out of the way when most I required him for the Women's Athletic Club. * * * And then, oh, for Old Prudent's Gulch, the Valley, and Blind Man's Drift and the Ridge! * * * Mr. Storey shall advise me. We'll make the three camps and Old Prudent's Gulch a city, one and the same, and we'll call it—what shall we call it? Gloverstown? Or Edwinstown. * * * It shall be put to the vote. Dankes, and Captain Dan, and Dave and Storey shall decide, and Old Glencoe shall have a voice in it, and he shall go along with the bosses and advisers, and the engineers and the lawyers, when I make my re-entry into Colorado as Zella Brunnen!"

"Hello! Where the blazes are you a-shovin' to?" exclaimed a voice from the real world which she had forgotten.

"I beg your pardon," she said, with a startled glance at the man she had run into, staggering under a load of publications hot from the press; for Zella had turned into one of the side streets toward the Strand.

"I should think so, you young hass!" he exclaimed, as he gathered himself and his load together.

Zella, full of her schemes for the future, made her way into the Strand, and thence to her hotel. She ordered her bill. Then she went to her room. She began to overhaul her trunks. She paid her bill but she did not give up her rooms. She would speak with the manager, she said. Then she went out, and made many purchases. Hitherto she had not been able to make up her mind what kind of presents she would take home, for Bridget and the Parkside people; for the Manageress of the Athletic Club, for the two professors, for Mr. Storey, for Joe Williams, for her partner Dankes, for Captain Dan, for Dave, and for Mickey, who had "Hoorroohed after poor 'Ned and wished him luck. * * * She found that she would require a large sum of money the next day from Lorrimer. The account of Philip Grey was getting low at the National Provincial Bank. Drexel, Morgan & Co. had cashed Zella's latest draft. But Philip, it is hardly necessary to say, could sign Zella's name for any amount. Lorrimer had intimated that, apart from the deposit Philip Grey had made on her behalf and the securities in his hands, Miss Brunnen's name was good for any amount that her cousin might require. Zella had kept up the reality of her own position and personality by correspondence with great care and skill. She had even gone down to Eastbourne once to mail two letters thence to Straker, Love and Lorrimer; but, as Philip, she generally received instructions by letter direct, and as Philip she had sent Zella's letters to her "dear cousin Phil" on to Lorrimer. One day Lorrimer asked her what Miss Brunnen would be likely to do with the great wealth which had been bequeathed her. As Philip she had replied that really neither of them cared much about money; it was quite possible that Zella would hand the disposition of it over to him (Philip), but of course he should consult her in everything, and he should not be at all surprised that she would devote a great deal of it to some national purpose. Taking this magnanimous view of Miss Brunnen's dealing with her great fortune, Philip Grey had gone up tremendously in Lorrimer's good opinion. Indeed, Lorrimer had quite bored his sister and one or two friends with his constant references to the young American; no wonder America was the nation it was when it could boast of such sons as Philip Grey, who combined in his character all the reverence that culture should have for art and literature and antiquities of the Old World with all that was high-minded and progressive and young and hopeful and ambitious in the New!

It was a busy night with Zella. Until quite late she was at packing and unpacking, writing letters and looking at timetables and asking questions. She was evidently bent upon flight.

CHAPTER XLV.

"ALL ABOARD!"

They were all very early birds at Bedford row, lawyers and sparrows; and the spring adjacent trees came out as green and chirpy as if they were country born and bred.

Mr. Richard Lorrimer took his seat before a heavy mail and flashed his eyeglass at it with a sprightliness quite in keeping with the exhilarating morning. A shorthand clerk sat opposite to him. Mr. Lorrimer thrust a small silver paperknife into the envelopes, and almost simultaneously seemed to dictate his replies. As he rattled on he laid aside several letters and telegrams addressed to the care of the firm. These were for Miss Zella Brunnen. After dealing with the pile of correspondence he turned them over curiously and looked at their postmarks. They were all from Chicago, letters and cables. One of them was addressed "Philip Grey." There was no reason why that should strike him as odd, but it did.

"Herewith I send you two letters and cables for Miss Brunnen," he said, dictating to his clerk a note to Philip Grey, "and a cable for yourself. Will you kindly forward the former to your cousin, Miss Zella Brunnen, and say how much I desire to see her. If she does not feel disposed to come up to town I will wait upon her at Bournemouth or Eastbourne, or anywhere else she may appoint. Questions must presently arise of importance in connection with her property in Platts Valley and Prudents Gulch, and Miss Brunnen's still more important inheritance under the late Hiram Dexter's will—questions which we (Miss Brunnen, yourself and myself) should discuss together. I am not now writing for the firm, but simply between ourselves; and I therefore add that, if Miss Brunnen would care to have some friends of mine at Eastbourne call upon her, I shall be delighted to try and make the city by the sea more cheerful than it can be with, as you tell me, only one visitor, and that a medical man. Also, let me say how pleased I shall be if you will dine with me at the club to-night, to meet one or two fellows, whose acquaintance may be agreeable to you."

"Transcribe that at once, and let me have it."

"Yes, sir," said the clerk, and left the room.

"I find myself growing very curious about this remarkable young lady," said Lorrimer to himself. "'Not sick,' Grey says, 'but fanciful; not yet recovered from the shock of Ned Glover's death, though she finds the change is doing her good.' A woman in ten thousand, evidently. Writes a capital letter, well-educated, and has quite a pretty way of turning a sentence; a fine bold hand, too! Poor Ned, to arrive, with wealth and beauty and everything a man can desire, and be wrecked in port! It makes one's heart bleed. Wonder how much the young lady is like her cousin? Grey says she is very like him. An odd thing for Grey to say, when he hasn't an atom of vanity; and Zella Brunnen is a beauty! Well, if she's as good a fellow, using the term in its best sense, as he is, why, heaven has been bountiful to what they call 'the great and glorious West.'"

He had left his chair, and walked about the room as he soliloquized, and would evidently have gone on neglecting his business ever so long, but for the return of his clerk with the transcript of his letter to Philip Grey. He read it over, signed it, placed it, with the letters and telegrams to which it referred, in a large envelope, which he directed and sealed.

"By messenger, at once, to Mr. Philip Grey, Grand Hotel," he said, handing it to his clerk, "and wait for an answer."

As the clerk left the room the liveried porter, who seemed to have caught the lively spirit of the morning, entered with an elastic step and head erect to announce, 'Two gentlemen, without an appointment, but must see you, they say; all the way from Chicago for that purpose—Mr. Amos V. Storey and Mr. Joseph Williams, and Mr. Williams has an introduction to you from the late Mr. Edwin Glover."

"Indeed; is that so? Well, well, show them in," said Lorrimer, not attempting to conceal his surprise.

"Yes, sir," said the porter, who returned almost immediately, ushering in, with much ceremony, the American detective, and the editor-proprietor of the Chicago Daily Mail.

"Good morning, gentlemen," said Lorrimer, going forward to meet them, with more of the manner of "Dick" than of Richard Lorrimer. "I am glad to see you."

"I am Storey," said the Chicago journalist, "and this is my friend, Mr. Williams, the head of the Secret Service Department of Washington, recently appointed from Chicago."

Lorrimer put out his hand and welcomed his visitors with unusual geniality, though he staggered Storey for a moment with a critical survey through his monocle.

They were a remarkable pair, as the reader well knows, Storey and Williams: Story, long, bony, angular, but with a fine head and a strong, frank face; Williams, dapper, smart, alert and "dressy"—"decidedly dressy"—as Story had commented, when they met accidentally at the Langham, Storey just arrived from Chicago and Williams from Vienna. During his absence he had been appointed to Washington, and Storey had been, furthermore, glad to learn that the case which had called him away from America had come to a satisfactory conclusion, giving Williams both kudos and money. They had very surprising stories to tell each other, and they were now about to very much astonish the popular junior partner of Straker, Love and Lorrimer.

"Often heard of you, from my dear friend, Glover," said Williams. "Seems like a message from the dead to present his card to you and his few words of introduction."

"Indeed, it does," said Lorrimer. "He mentioned you to me in one of the very few letters I received from him."

"He had no better friend that Mr. Storey," said Williams.

"And Mr. Storey never had a more promising recruit from your side the ferry, sir. Would have made a great position, if—but, Lord, life is full of ifs!—what's the good of speculating on what might have been! No use in grumbling over the past. No time, either, with the call of the future constantly ringing in your ears! * * * Well, now, Mr. Lorrimer, we are anxious to see Miss Brunnen. I suppose you know that I am one of the trustees under Edwin Glover's will, and that I have interests in connection with Dexter's will that jump somewhat with her own; but, apart from all this, I would say that I and my wife, Mrs. Storey, have a deep and affectionate regard for the girl."

"Part of which I know, sir; and all of which interests me," said Lorrimer.

"And where is Miss Brunnen, may I ask?" said Storey.

"At Eastbourne, I believe," Lorrimer replied.

"At Eastbourne, eh? And when, sir, did you see her last?"

"I have not seen her at all."

"Not seen her!" exclaimed Storey and Williams together.

"Excuse me," said Storey, "if I seem to be too curious, but how do you know she is at Eastbourne?"

"I have seen letters from her; and her cousin, Mr. Philip Grey, is in daily communication with her."

"Really! Is he, indeed?" said Storey, unable to control his laughter. "Her cousin, Mr. Philip Grey, is in daily correspondence with her, eh, Joe?"

He turned his beaming face to the detective, and they both laughed heartily. Lorrimer, his glass glued to his eye, contemplated them with anything but an approving expression.

"Really, gentlemen," he said, "if there is a joke going I may be glad to participate in your mirth, if I am permitted to share your secret?"

"Forgive our seeming rudeness, Mr. Lorrimer. Don't get mad, sir," said Storey, sitting down and fairly shaking with laughter.

"Mr. Storey is not given to fits of this kind, I assure you," said Williams, "and my profession is almost as serious as your own; so you may conclude there is a joke lying around somewhere," said Williams.

"Look here, Mr. Lorrimer," said Storey, pulling out a Denver newspaper from his coat pocket; "just throw your eye over that, while we survey Bedford row from your window."

He directed Lorrimer's attention to a heavily headlined half-page of the paper, and Lorrimer read: "THE ROMANCE OF PLATTS VALLEY—Vengeance is mine, saith the American Girl—The Murderer of Edwin Glover Brought to Book—ZELLA BRUNNEN, the Lady Athlete, IN MALE ATTIRE—A Heroine in Breeches—Duel to the Death with Bowies—History of the Long and Deadly Knife—Tributes of Admiration from the Camps—CAPTAIN DAN and OLD PRUDENT—ZELLA BRUNNEN'S Leave-taking—Sails for Europe—How the Camps Promised to Keep Her SECRET; How an Enterprising Reporter Rooted It Out—Good Luck to Zella, and a Safe Return!"

He stood poring over the paper, intensely engrossed, for nearly half an hour. His face was a study. Both Williams and Storey turned from the window to watch it.

"Don't seem to want his old pane of glass to read by," remarked Storey, in a whisper.

"More show than use, I guess," said Williams. "Gives a feller time to think; takes off his opponent's attention."

"By Jupiter! What a time he's having!" said Storey. "It's as good as a play; just only look at him. 'Philip Grey in daily correspondence with Zella!' Great Scott, what a comedy, eh?"

"Like the cheap theaters up in the East End there. I must take you to one. Tragedy first, comic piece to follow. Poor Glover! What a treasure he lost."

"A woman, by all that's wonderful!" exclaimed Lorrimer, his face flushed, his eyeglass dangling at the back of his neck; his hands shaking, as he laid the paper down. "A woman! What an ass I have been! And I had got to like the youngster. Have you seen Philip Grey—I mean Miss Brunnen as Philip Grey?"

"No!" they both exclaimed.

"Then you may not think me such an ass as I feel myself to be."

"It may well make you feel wild," said Williams. "I should want to kick myself if I'd been done to that extent."

"I don't quite know how I feel," said Lorrimer. "I am a bachelor, gentlemen, and with no intention of ever changing that independent state; but only the other evening I said to Philip Grey, as much in earnest as in jest, that if he had a sister as good-looking as himself and as pleasant and companionable, the fact might possibly have a serious influence on my destiny."

"My dear sir," said Storey, "the girl couldn't help being lovely, whatever character she might assume. If Miss Brunnen is in Eastbourne, where is Mr. Philip Grey?"

"At the Grand Hotel," said Lorrimer. "I have only just sent some letters and cables to him—er—I mean, to her. My dear sirs, both of you, I beg you won't talk about this; I mean, so far as I am concerned; I shall be the laughing-stock of the town."

"That goes, Mr. Lorrimer. And I don't know as it would be good for Zella to have it known in Chicago she carried her masquerade further than her splendid act of love and vengeance."

"I assure you, gentlemen, she—er—he has been most circumspect, delicate and discreet"——

"Why, of course," said Storey. "Not a better girl lives, not a more refined—for an Amazon; eh, Joe?"

"That's so; but, as you say, an Amazon after all. And I speak from practical knowledge."

"Come along, Mr. Lorrimer. What do you say? Will you join us? I propose to go straightway to the Grand Hotel."

"Do you think we ought to go without letting Mr. Grey—er—I mean, the lady—know of our intention to call?"

"Why, certainly! Do you think we should find her otherwise?"

"No, sir; no warning. We are her friends, and I have the dignity of being one of her trustees. Can't we call a cab?"

A cab was called, and straightway, as Mr. Storey had proposed, they went to the Grand.

"Mr. Philip Grey," said Lorrimer at the desk, "is he in?"

"Mr. Philip Grey left the hotel late last night," said the clerk.

"Left!" exclaimed Storey. "Where for?"

"Eastbourne. Beg pardon, but is one of you gentlemen named Mr. Joseph Williams?"

"Yes. Why?" Williams replied.

"You telegraphed here from Paris?"

"Yes, sir; and Mr. Grey was at the desk talking to the clerk when your message came, and he said he knew you and that you would probably call upon him; and that if you did so, whether he was in or out, you should be shown to his sitting-room."

"Then he has not given up his rooms?"

"No; he has been expecting his cousin to occupy them. But please to go up. Boy!"

"Yes, sir."

"Show these gentlemen to Mr. Grey's room."

And away they went to the elevator, less jubilant than before, but more puzzled.

"The bird's flown," said Storey; "all through you, you dude! Why couldn't you have wired to every other hotel except the Grand?"

"I have stayed here several times."

"Confound you!" said Storey.

The boy knocked at the door.

"Come!" said a voice from within.

The boy opened the door and stood aside. The three visitors, each pushing with a certain timidity to give the other first place, stepped in.

As they entered a handsome and stately lady came forward to receive them. There was nothing of the Amazon in her appearance. As in her beautiful face, so in her dress, there was a note of seriousness. Her gown was of white crepe de chine; a trailing gown, that at the same time set rather close to her graceful figure. It was white, with a white fichu, edged with black velvet ribbon. At her waistbelt she wore a bouquet of violets, and around her neck a black band with a diamond pendant. Her wealth of hair was tied up in a knot, high upon her head. The general effect of her appearance was that of a young lady of distinction, whose beauty needed no artificial aids. Storey, for a moment, hardly knew the handsome young woman of Parkside, and Lorrimer and the other visitors were each equally amazed.

Taking them all into one welcoming, but surprised survey, Zella exclaimed, her face wreathed in smiles, "Why, Mr. Storey! And Mr. Williams! Well, this is delightful. I am real glad to see you!

She took both their hands and shook them heartily.

They said nothing; but looked around at Lorrimer.

"Mr. Lorrimer, I guess I don't know whether to be glad to see you or not," she said. "I fear you will never forgive me; indeed, I can hardly forgive myself."

"Miss Zella Brunnen," said Lorrimer, "there's nothing in the wide world I could not forgive you! You well nigh made a willing slave of me as Philip Grey; but as Zella Brunnen! Well, there, I don't know what to say to you!"

"Only say you don't despise me, Mr. Lorrimer," said Zella, putting out her hand, her lip trembling as she spoke.

"Despise you!" he exclaimed, pressing his lips to her hand. "I admire you beyond all women—I love you."

For the moment Lorrimer was quite oblivious of the presence of Storey and Williams. They had been too much taken aback by the appearance of Zella, and the perfectly calm and gracious way in which she had received them—"like a queen in her own right," as Storey remarked afterward—that they "gave the London lawyer the floor," as Williams observed. And Lorrimer made the best of his opportunity.

"Whatever your feelings may be, Miss Zella, in regard to that rash, and perhaps unpardonable, declaration, don't dismiss me; let me help you. I will devote my life to your interests, and never again annoy you with any reference to my admiration for your person, or—"

"Speak of it some other time, Mr. Lorrimer," she said, interrupting him—"a year hence, perhaps. I am not angry; I am proud of your good opinion."

Then, turning to her other visitors, she said, "And now, Mr. Storey, and dear Mr. Williams, though you were not on hand when I wanted you badly—"

"Which will remain the one deep regret of my life," said Williams.

"Do you think Chicago will forgive me?"

"Chicago will raise a statue to you," said Storey. "But it was too bad to disappoint us; we wanted to be introduced to Mr. Philip Grey. How did you know your secret had been annexed by that all-fired Denver reporter?"

"I had wired my address to Solomon Dankes, and last night I received a letter from him, denouncing that truthful historian, but at the same time sending me the report, which, under the circumstances, the dear old fellow says, was not so bad, and gave me what Platts Valley considered to be a good send-off, though unauthorized, and in regard to which they await my instructions."

"Be merciful, as you are powerful," said Storey.

"And when do we return home?" asked Zella.

"Whenever you please," Storey replied.

"With you and Mr. Williams, as my escort?"

"Why, certainly," said Williams.

"I have important business in America," said Lorrimer. "Won't you permit me to be one of the company?"

"Oh, yes, certainly; by all means," Zella replied. "What do you say, Mr. Storey?"

"Whatever you say, my child."

"Then all go away, and pack. I am dying to see Parkside and dear old Bridget once more, and longing to begin the transformation of Platts Valley and Blind Man's Drift."

THE END.

TYPEWRITER VERSUS THE PEN.

SCIENTISTS SAY COMPOSITION IS VERY MUCH EASIER WITH THE LATTER.

MANY