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"No. 13 Washington Square"

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NEXT WEEK, "MR. PRATT," BY JOSEPH LINCOLN.

(Continued from our last issue.)

They glared into one another's eyes; old friends now thoroughly aroused against each other. Mrs. De Peyster it was who first spoke. Her voice had recovered its most formal, rigid tone.

"Please recall, Judge Harvey, that you are here at the present moment not as a friend, but as my man of affairs."

"You will recall that the money with which I was to buy your letters of credit was money which I was to draw for you, today, as dividends on the stock you hold in the New York & New England railroad."

"Certainly—though I do not see the drift of your remarks."

"And I hardly need to remind you that the bulk of your fortune is invested in this railroad."

"A perfectly good stock, I believe," Mrs. De Peyster commented.

"Perfectly good—perfectly sound," Judge Harvey agreed. "But you are doubtless aware that all the railroads have been complaining about bad business, owing to increased wages on the one side and governmental regulation of rates on the other."

"In fact," the Judge continued, "I have just come from the meeting of the directors. They have voted to pay no dividends."

Mrs. De Peyster sank back in her chair. For a moment she was so overwhelmed that she did not even hear Judge Harvey, whose anger had ere this begun to relax, try to reassure her with remarks about the company being perfectly solvent.

"I trust you have enough in your bank for your present plans. And if not, your bank will readily advance you what you need."

"Of course," said she with mechanical composure.

"Or if there is any difficulty," he continued, desirous of making peace, "I shall be glad to arrange a loan for you."

She was too blinded by disaster to think, to realize her needs. And at that moment, the person of all persons in the world from whom it would have been most humiliating to her to accept even a finger's turn of assistance was Judge Harvey.

"Thank you. I shall manage very well."

He made her the briefest of bows and walked out.

At the sound of the closing door, Mrs. De Peyster unloosed the mantle of dignity, and slumped down into her chair, a loose, inert bundle.

A little before, during a silence between Judge Harvey and Mrs. De Peyster, the study door had slowly opened and there had appeared the reconnoitering face of the entrapped Mr. Bradford.

"But, Cousin Caroline, what is it?" asked Olivetta excitedly, as Matilda went out.

"Wait!" said Mr. De Peyster in a majestic tone.

A minute passed, Mrs. De Peyster standing composedly by the fireplace, Olivetta gazing at her in throbbing suspense. Then Matilda returned.

"Matilda, you have proved your loyalty to me by twenty years of service," she began, "and you, Olivetta, I know, are completely devoted to me. So I know you both will faithfully execute my requests. But I must ask you not to breathe a word of what I tell you, and what we do."

"I'll never," cried Olivetta, "never a syllable!"

"Nor I, ma'am—never!" declared Matilda.

"But first, Matilda, I must acquaint you with a situation that has just arisen." And Mrs. De Peyster outlined such details of her predicament as she thought Matilda needed to know. "And now, here are my orders, Matilda. The house, of course, is being boarded up, as usual. All the servants are sent away except William. You, Matilda, are to remain here alone in charge of the house as has been your custom. The report that I am sailing is to be allowed to stand. But in reality—"

"Yes, in reality," cried the excited Olivetta.

"In reality," continued Mrs. De Peyster calmly, "I shall, during the entire summer, say here in my own house."

"Stay here!" ejaculated Olivetta.

"Stay here. Chiefly in my suite. Secretly, of course. No one but you two will ever know of it. By staying here, I shall be practically at no expense. But the world will think I am in Europe, and my position will be saved."

Staggered as she was, Olivetta had remaining a few fragments of reason.

"But—but, Caroline! People will see that you do not sail. How will you get around that?"

"Very simply, Olivetta. You shall sail in my stead."

"But—but if you cannot afford Europe for yourself, how can you afford it for me?"

"It would take a great many thousands for me to go in the manner that is expected of me. I cannot afford that. For you, Olivetta, since the passage is already paid, it would take but a few hundred—and that I can afford."

"You—you mean that I am to pass for you?"

"But I never can! People will know the difference!"

With high curiosity he had studied Judge Harvey a moment, and then the duchess-like Mrs. De Peyster. Then quickly and soundlessly the heavy door had closed. Now again the heavy, sound-proof door of the study began to open—noiselessly, inch by inch. Again the face of Mr. Bradford appeared in the crack. This time he watched the bowed figure of the solitary Mrs. De Peyster for several moments; considered; measured the distance to the door of escape; evaluated the silencing quality of the deep library rug; then slipped through the door, closed it, and with tread as soft as a bird's wing against the air he slipped on out of the room, closing the door without a sound.

After a time Mrs. De Peyster mounted weakly to the more intimate asylum of her private sitting room.

The collapsed Mrs. De Peyster heard Matilda enter, pause, then pass into the bedroom, but did not look up; nor a moment later when Olivetta re-entered from the bedroom, did she at first raise her dejected head.

"Why, what's the matter, Cousin Caroline?" cried Olivetta. There was no occasion for maintaining an appearance before Olivetta, so Mrs. De Peyster related her misfortune.

"Do you realize what it means, Olivetta?" she concluded in a benumbed voice. "It means that, except for less than a thousand which I have on hand—a mere nothing—I am penniless until months! I cannot go to Europe!"

"But, Caroline," Olivetta cried, "why not borrow the money from the bank, as you say Judge Harvey suggested?"

"Olivetta, you should know that that is against my principles." She tried to instill proud rebuke into her voice. But just here was the pinch—or one of them. To cover the excess in her expenses she had already borrowed—secretly, for she would never have had it come to Judge Harvey's knowledge—from her bank to the very limit of her personal credit.

"But, Caroline," pursued the sympathetic Olivetta, "can't you cut down expenses and remain in town? What yith your credit, you have enough for that?"

Mrs. De Peyster turned slowly about and gazed at Olivetta—gazed at her steadily.

"You have an idea, Caroline?" cried Olivetta, struck by her look.

"Wait, Matilda!"

The housekeeper instantly appeared.

"Matilda, call William and have him waiting in the hall till I summon him. Come back immediately."

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"But I never can! People will know the difference!"

"People will never see you," returned the calm voice of Mrs. De Peyster. "The plutonia sails at 1 tonight. You will go on board with my trunks late this evening, heavily veiled. Since no one must see you on the way over, you must, of course, keep to your cabin. You must be seasick."

"But I am never seasick!" cried Olivetta.

"Then you must stay in your berth anyhow and pretend to be ill. You are to be too ill to receive any friends who may chance to be on board. Your stewardess will bring your meals to your stateroom. When the boat arrives, you must wait until every one else is off, and when you land you must again be heavily veiled and be too sick to speak to any one. Once you are in Paris—"

"Yes, there's the difficulty!"

"Not so great as you think. I shall give you full directions what to do. Once you are in Paris, you quietly disappear. It will become known that Mrs. De Peyster has gone off on a long motor trip thru unvisited portions of Europe. With Mrs. De Peyster started on this trip, you become yourself and see Europe just as you please."

"Oh!" ejaculated Olivetta, drawing a deep breath.

"On the way back, Olivetta, you are to preserve the same precautions as on the way over. And to avoid any possible difficulty in getting into the house, I shall provide you with a key to the house and one to my sitting room."

"But you, ma'am," objected Matilda, "in the meantime you cannot stay cooped up all summer in this room!"

"I do not intend to," returned Mrs. De Peyster. "Matilda, will you now please have William come in?"

Matilda stepped to the door and a moment later followed in the most clean-shaven, the most deferentially dignified, the most irreproachably expressionless of men servants.

"William, Matilda will acquaint you with certain alternations in my plans," began his mistress. "I desire to add that she will remain in the house alone during my absence; that you are to keep to your quarters in the stable and not enter the house; and that you are to arrange to take, at my expense, all your meals outside."

William inclined his body slightly.

"And in order to give the horses proper exercise, and to relieve Matilda's monotony, I desire you to take Matilda out driving every evening."

Again William bowed.

Mrs. De Peyster dismissed him. "You don't mean—" began Matilda, almost breathless.

"Yes, I mean that I shall go out driving nightly in your clothes," responded Mrs. De Peyster.

"But—but—" gasped Matilda.

"Have no fear. I shall, of course, be veiled, and William is the best trained, the most incurious of servants."

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Widow Is Chief Witness Against Extortion Gang



Mrs. Klipper of Philadelphia, widow and mother of two children, will be the chief witness in the trial of alleged blackmailers caught by secret service agents and said to have extorted \$1,000,000 from men and women.

Frank Crocker, said to be a member of the blackmail syndicate who turned state's evidence, told the authorities he met Mrs. Klipper in a flirtation at a New York hotel.

It is alleged he contrived to get into her room and was there when two members of the syndicate walked in and demanded money for secrecy. Mrs. Klipper is said to have given them jewelry and \$500 and later to have been kidnaped to prevent her appearance at a trial.

"Just you, and Mary, and me—and, oh, say, Matilda, won't it be a lark!"

The Honeymooners

Only the embrace of Jack's good left arm kept Mrs. De Peyster from subsiding into a jellied heap upon her parquered floor. Her only self-control was that she held her tongue.

Fortunately, there was little necessity for her speaking. The bride and groom chattered on and she began to regain some slight steadiness—enough to consider spasmodically how she was to escape undiscovered from the pair, when suddenly her wits were sent spinning by a new fear.

The real Matilda! Mrs. De Peyster's ears, at that moment frantically acute, registered dim movements of Matilda overhead.

The couple chatted on about their household arrangements, and Mrs. De Peyster, the prisoner of Jack's affectionate arm, stood gulping, as though her soul were trying to swallow itself.

"Jack, you run along, there's a dear," commanded Mary, "and unpack your things, Matilda and I want to have a little chat."

"Married six hours, and bossed already," grumbled Jack happily. "All right. But I'm starved. I'll be back in five minutes and then we'll get supper down in the kitchen."

"Yes, all three of us," agreed Mary.

Jack picked up his bag. Frantically Mrs. De Peyster tried to think of some way of holding him back from a possible encounter with Matilda upon the stairway. But she could think of nothing. Jack went out.

"I'll go to the kitchen—and get you something to eat," Mrs. De Peyster gulped. Mary followed her into the dining room, but the supposed Matilda hurried on into the dark butler's pantry, where she sank into a chair.

An instant later she heard Jack returning, and, pushing the pantry door open a crack, saw him sweep his bride into his arms.

"Mary!"

His voice was tremulous. Slowly their lips came together; they embraced; then drew apart, and holding hands, stood gazing at other.

(Continued in Our Next Issue)

SCHOOL BUDGET IS LESS; LEVY HIGHER

school board Monday. The school tax levy, however, will be about a third of a mill higher. The budget this year is \$387,837.48; while last year's was \$416,273.

BOYS!

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WHAT YOU CAN BE DEPENDS UPON YOUR ABILITY AND TRAINING

Are you going to be one of the country's future successful men?

This Is the First Step

Be independent and lay the foundation of future ease by getting into a business of your own. No boy ever developed the best that was in him until he was thrown on his own resources. Nothing does this so well as owning and operating a business of your own. Nearly all of the successful business and professional men of today will tell you they got their start through selling newspapers.

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