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Author of "Walter Bronnfeld," "Stage Struck," "The Hired Girl," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XV.

THE HAWK AND DOVE.

"Well! he turns up again! ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Osborne to himself as the footsteps of the school teacher died away in the hall below.

"If he is here she may be also. She a devilish fine looking girl, ha, ha, ha! I guess he'll never forgive me that trick. They were lovers no doubt, and probably engaged and I may have come in and spoiled some nicely laid domestic arrangements.

Then Mr. Osborne sat in his easy chair, crossed his legs and compactly twisted his mustache while a smile played upon his lips. He gazed upon the floor, his face expressing all the ironical force which characterized him.

When Mr. Osborne was a single man. With his vanity, ambition, and rush in business he had never had time to devote any part of his thoughts to matrimony.

He was steeped in business continually, and if he possessed a heart it was hardly known. He was a brilliant young business man; in fact he was far above the average of young men in intelligence in the town where he lived.

But with all his popularity he had never been what might be termed a cavalier. He could have pick and choice of any of the young ladies in his town, or any other town near around, but he had always had other aspirations which completely checked all desire for female society.

He had slung out thoughts of beautiful faces, as only worthy the weaker class of human intellect. He was too much absorbed in his ambitious plans to give them even a passing thought, but now he found this one image constantly forcing itself upon him.

He regarded it as very foolish to keep the memory of a young girl whom he had met but once, and who perhaps had no recollection of him whatever.

There was no time when the vision was more clearly outlined to Mr. Osborne than when he sat in his office a few moments after the departure of the schoolmaster.

Some one entered his office and finding the attorney somewhat abstractly gazing out of his window he spoke to him.

"Mr. Osborne, now that the pretty picture his fancy had created was shattered turned about and looked upon the new corner.

"Why Willis how are you?" he said. "Be seated."

"You must have been asleep Mr. Osborne."

"No I was not."

"Then why so lost to yourself and everything else."

"Oh I was studying out some matters of business that was all," answered Osborne.

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ture his fancy had woven was once more coming back into shape.

He started up, threw of the fancy, pleasant as it was, and looking at his watch said it was time to go.

The day was pleasant and no one enjoyed a drive for pleasure's sake more than Mr. Osborne.

He crossed the long bridge which spanned the creek, and went rattling down a road which was lined on either side by grand old elms.

"Yes, I think we have," he said. "We were at a ball I believe in the city and I did you a service by showing you the perfidy of a man whom you trusted."

"Teaching school," she answered her eyes still cast upon the floor? "Oh you have met him then?"

"Perhaps you have forgiven him."

"I have nothing really to forgive. I forgive the whole world of any injury that may have been done me."

"She made no answer. She felt it only a coarse compliment and paid on too short an acquaintance at that.

"After a moment's silence during which time Mr. Osborne was shrewdly studying the young lady before him,

"You are Mr. Vane's only niece."

"Yes sir, his only relative," she answered meekly.

"Aye, then you have come to make your home with him."

"I hope you find it agreeable."

"That is right. Your uncle is an old man and very feeble in body and mind.

He started back in amazement and wonder. Well he might, for there standing in the hall way was the vision which had been for weeks haunting him.

Mr. Osborne was not long embarrassed. He had powers of self control which were wonderful, and he recovered his self possession and bowing asked for Mr. Vane.

Claudia was the most perplexed of the two. She now made a double discovery. The man of whom she had only partially caught a glimpse through the door was her uncle's lawyer Mr. Osborne, and now that she met him squarely face to face, she made him out to be same man whom she had met in the city. Her embarrassment and confusion were complete.

"I beg your pardon young lady," said the lawyer removing his hat and bowing very politely, "but unless I am very much mistaken we have met before, have we not?"

"I—I don't," know stammered Claudia.

"Do you live here?"

"Yes sir."

"You certainly have not been here a great while because I have been at Mr. Vane's quite frequently of late, being his friend and adviser, and I never met you before."

"Perhaps not," she answered, "I have been here but three or four weeks."

"No not at present I wish to speak with you," he began twirling his mustache with his finger and thumb.

"I say, young lady, unless I am seriously mistaken, we have met before," went on Mr. Osborne crossing his legs.

"I do not know—I think we have," she answered her eyes drooping and a blush suffusing her face.

"Yes, I think we have," he said. "We were at a ball I believe in the city and I did you a service by showing you the perfidy of a man whom you trusted."

"She was still silent, and he, feeling that he was gaining ground went on."

"Yes young lady I flatter myself that I did you a great service on that evening—and by the way I met that same young fellow a short time ago and do you believe he was not very well pleased to meet me. Do you know what he is doing in this part of the world?"

"Teaching school," she answered her eyes still cast upon the floor? "Oh you have met him then?"

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"Perhaps not," she answered, "I have been here but three or four weeks."

"Aye that accounts for it," said the lawyer giving his mustache another twirl. "Are you a relative of Reuben Vane's?"

"Yes sir—his niece."

"Well I came to see your uncle."

way of getting his power over people. It's a strange way, but as strong as iron. You must avoid him."

"He is a bad man uncle."

"Don't say that."

"Why?"

"He might hear you. He never forgives an enemy and he will not forgive you if he hears you."

"But he cannot harm me."

"How do you know?"

"I do not know—he has a thousand ways of harming people."

They reached the house and Mr. Vane went at once into the room where the lawyer was sitting.

"Do you know that our case comes up for trial next Tuesday?"

"It does."

"Do you think we will win?"

"Oh, I don't know. The verdict of a jury is devilish uncertain."

The lawyer then proceeded with his preliminary arrangements in regard to witnesses and various other matters.

He worked with wonderful skill and great earnestness, for to the credit of Mr. Osborne he it said, he never neglected or deserted his client.

He had fought many a desperate case through and took every advantage he could, but his clients invariably had to pay the penalty with heavy fees.

Mr. Osborne had great advantages and his opponents invariably trembled when they came in contact with him.

Besides being shrewd and legally technical, he had gained the confidence of judges and juries to such an extent that he seemed capable of swaying the case almost any way he desired.

He came into court on the morning of the day set for Reuben Vane's trial with a confidential smile upon his face.

His manner was very aggressive and he seemed to have victory assured. He laughed and jested and sneered at all his brother attorneys at the bar.

Not one of them that he regarded as his equal. They were only fit to be made sport of, and at times his wit was really keen.

"Do you think I will lose the case?" asked Mr. Ward of his counsel.

"I do not know," was the answer.

"Were it any other lawyer than Osborne who had charge of the case I should say there was no danger, but as it is him we can count nothing as sure."

The court was in and a jury called and sworn to full, fairly and impartially try the cause at issue and a true verdict render according to law and evidence.

The skirmish began, and Mr. Osborne as usual was merry, keeping his points well guarded and holding fast to all he gained.

There were several, and hidden and unknown mysterious points were dug up which at times had the defence on the quiver of suspense.

To the unsophisticated Mr. Ward looked as if the prosecution was sure to beat him. Could it be possible that his property was to be taken and sold to pay the debt of another.

would not waver until the verdict came in. His argument and whole management of the case met with the applause and approbation of every one, but they thought that "Rube Vane" was an old fool to bring such a suit.

The jury at last returned their verdict for Ward. This would add a long column of costs against Reuben Vane and the attorney for the defence at once gave notice that he should proceed on plaintiff's attachment bond for damages.

Reuben Vane saw ruin staring him in the face. At every point he seemed to meet with ill luck. The suit had brought great honor to Mr. Osborne's skill in the management of the case, but it had brought almost certain ruin to himself.

He went to Ward and asked him if he would not withdraw his claim for damages. No, he would not. He had offered to do so once, but the suit was not dismissed, and he would now claim everything to the utmost farthing.

That evening he went to the office of his lawyer. His face was flushed with anger and he said in a somewhat sharp manner.

"Mr. Osborne I told you how the case would turn out and it has turned out just as I said it would. I have lost. I don't think I want you any more for my adviser."

"Turning upon him with his face expressing more withering scorn than can possibly be expressed in words, he said:

"You old fool, you glaring idiot, do you not realize that the penitentiary yawns for you?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MOLLIE'S REMEDY.

"Please, Fred, don't smoke. I cannot bear the smell of that tobacco!"

So said smart little Mrs. Fred Woodman to her husband, who stood on the hearthrug, calmly lighting his cigar.

"Pshaw, Mollie, you'll soon get accustomed to it. Thousands of women do. It isn't at all bad after you are used to it," replied Fred careless of anybody's comfort but his own.

"But, Fred, once you wouldn't have done what I asked you not to do," pleaded Mollie, earnestly. "Just think, we haven't been married quite two months yet, and you are so soon entirely disregarding my comfort."

"Fred, dear, please don't," continued Mollie, taking her husband's hand beseechingly. "You know what tobacco has done for Uncle Jacob, and I don't want my husband to be like him."

Mr. Woodman laughed loudly, and exclaimed, "Now Mollie, really you are getting too particular. Your delicate sense of smell will have to be toned down a little. And the idea of comparing me to old, crabbled Uncle Jake, and his wife in the insane asylum, and his boy almost a desperado!"

They did tell me when I was beginning to go up to Deacon Clark's to see you, they did use to say, 'Mollie Clark is as lively and smart a girl as you would wish for a wife, but nobody would marry her, she has shown such a strong mind on that 'woman's rights question.' Really, my dear, you mustn't let me be called a hen-pecked husband quite so soon."

And Fred took the cigar from his mouth, blew a cloud of smoke from his lips, and kissed his wife, notwithstanding her wry face, as though he had been partaking of some balm of a thousand flowers.

Then thinking, "I've settled that little difference," he departed to his office.

The description Mr. Woodman had given of his wife was one most of her acquaintances would have given before her marriage.

But our mere acquaintances judge usually by surface appearances, being unable to see our inner lives, motives, or qualities.

It is true, Mollie was called "a strong-minded woman." And when some of her friends remonstrated with her, and assured her it was the "talk of the town," she only replied, "Why, I think it is far from disgraceful not to be called weak-minded. To be called strong-minded is a compliment?"

She had aided in several ways, the woman's cause in its infancy. "Such a pity!" the neighbors said. "She was a good girl, so witty and smart and a splendid housekeeper. It was too bad for her to do so; for no one would marry a girl with such a mind of her own."

So when Fred Woodman, who was considered such a "catch" by all the mamas in town, came and wanted this terrible Mollie to be his wife, he was warned on every side. People told him with horror that she "entertained the suffrage speaker who lectured in town!"

And she was "taking a suffrage paper!"

But Fred was not dismayed. In spite of Mollie's unpopular ideas, she was pretty, kind, loving, lovable. So the day was fixed and the event came off.

For a week afterward the neighborhood was predicting awful consequences. But when Mollie's apparently terrible qualities were disproved and shown to the world minus Dame Rumor's dressing, her strong-minded-

ness appeared only righteousness, and her so-called love of power was simple a love of fairness.

Mollie had retolved that her husband should not be a slave to the habit of smoking, and the first step, as we have seen, was one of remonstrance.

That method failing in such an unpromising way, Mollie set her strong mind to work in a way peculiar to herself in order to find a remedy which should be quick and effectual.

As she swept and dusted the cozy little sitting-room, her face bore a pre-occupied look, as she put the chamber in order on her face was a look of quiet determination; and later, as she nicely washed the potatoes and put them in the oven, there was a beam of kindly satisfaction on her countenance.

When she had arranged the table and everything was ready for dinner she took a lamp in her hand and went down cellar. After a few minutes she appeared again in the kitchen with two moderate-sized, very respectable looking onions in her hand.

She smiled to herself as she prepared these two vegetables which were raised in Farmer Somebody's garden, with a destiny to be used as instruments of defense.

After she had chopped one of them she covered it with vinegar, and proceeded to eat the not over-tempting mixture.

It is only necessary to add that if there was anything Mr. Woodman detested it was onions.

Dinner was smoking hot on the board when the master of the house returned, Mollie stood at the table with her back to the door as he came into the kitchen in great spirits.

"O Mollie, you haven't been cooking onions! Bah, they are the meanest of all smelling things! And what is the matter Mollie? You might welcome a tired, hungry fellow in a different style from this. Last week my wife used to kiss me when I came home. I've been trained that way," and the inconsistent fellow turned Mollie round and kissed her.

"Bah!" he snorted vociferously "have you been eating onions?"

"Why, yes," replied Mollie, with a mischievous twinkle in her eye. "You will get accustomed to them. They aren't at all bad when you are used to them."

Fred paused abruptly, and looked half displeased; but it was only his own words turned against him, so he could not be offended.

"Thousands of women eat onions. Fred, you are altogether too particular. Your delicate sense of smell will have to be toned down a little."

There was the same roguish twinkle in Mollie's eye, and Fred could only laugh foolishly, with a half-ashamed look on his face.

"I see Mollie, what you're trying to do," said he; "but really this is only foolishness. You never heard of anybody in your station making a practice of eating such things?"

"Oh, yes," answered Mollie. "It's going to be very womanly. After we women have been busy with our household duties, we need something to quiet our nerves."

Fred was thoroughly discomfited, but laughingly turned the subject as they sat down to dine.

After the meal was over, Mollie said, "Fred, are you going to have a cigar before you go to the office, I'll keep you company, and let my dinner dishes wait awhile."

"What!" cried Fred. "you can't smoke?"

"Oh, no Fred; I don't like the smell of tobacco," and she came into the sitting room with the other onion in her hand.

"Goodness!" exclaimed the victim "You aren't going to eat that! Please don't! Really the room will hold the scent, and I asked Lawyer Pitman to step in and have a—"

"Oh! you asked him to come in and have a cigar? Well, glad you told me Fred," said the tormentor, "I'll wait till he comes!"

"Now really, Mollie, this is too bad!" cried poor Fred. "You would not eat that before him? Why, he has a dreadful sensitive nose; he can't bear anything! Mollie please don't come into the room; your breath is so scented that he can't help smelling it."

"Well," said cruel Mollie, "he is another of your men with a delicate sense of smell. What is this world coming to? I'll tone you both down. It isn't right for you to have such sensitive noses!"

At that moment the door-bell rang, and Fred went to the door, with a last imploring look at Mollie, who with a victorious little laugh, called after him "I shall come in if I smell smoke."

Mollie felt confident that she had won the day, and went to her work with a happy heart.

She did not smell smoke. When the front door had closed after Mr. Pitman she heard her husband's foot steps. He came into the room and said, "Mollie, before I go to my work, let's 'fogive and forget.' We'll have fair play after this. I've learned the lesson. 'What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.'"