SERIAL STORY

THE HOUSE OF A THOUSAND CANDLES

By MEREDITH NICHOLSON

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CHAPTER X.—Continued.

I gathered up the fragments of Morgan's lantern and went back to the library. The lights in half the candlesticks had sputtered out. I extinguished the remainder and started to my room.

Then, in the great dark hall, I heard a muffled tread as of some one following me—not on the broad staircase, nor in any place I could identify—yet unmistakably on steps of some sort beneath or above me. My nerves were already keyed to a breaking pitch, and the ghost-like tread in the wall angered me. Morgan, or his ally, Bates, undoubtedly, O reflected, at some new trick. I ran into my room, found a heavy walking stick and set off for Bates' room on the third floor. It was always easy to attribute any sort of mischief to the fellow, and undoubtedly he was crawling through the house somewhere on an errand that boded no good to me.

It was now past two o'clock and he should have been asleep and out of the way long ago. I crept to his room and threw open the door without, I must say, the slightest idea of finding him there. But Bates, the enigma, Bates, the incomparable cook, the perfect servant, sat at a table, the light of several candles falling on a book over which he was bent with that maddening gravity he had never yet in my presence thrown off.

He rose at once, stood at attention, inclining his head slightly.

"Yes, Mr. Glenarm."

"Yes, the devil!" I roared at him, astonished at finding him—sorry, I must say, that he was there! The stick fell from my hands. I did not doubt he knew perfectly well that I had some purpose in breaking in upon him. I was baffled and in my rage floundered for words to explain myself.

"I thought I heard some one in the house. I don't want you prowling about in the night, do you hear?"

"Certainly not, sir," he replied in a grieved tone.

I glanced at the book he had been reading. It was a volume of Shakespeare's comedies, open at the first scene of the last act of "Winter's Tale."

"Quite a pretty bit of work that, I should say," he remarked. "It was one of my late master's favorites."

"Go to the devil!" I bawled at him, and went down to my room and slammed the door in rage and chagrin.

CHAPTER XI.

I Receive a Call.

Going to bed at three o'clock on a winter morning in a house whose ways are disquieting, after a duel in which you escaped whole only by sheer good luck, does not fit one for sleep. When I finally drew the covers over me it was to lie and speculate upon the events of the night in connection with the history of the few weeks I had spent at Glenarm. Larry had suggested in New York that Pickering was playing some deep game, and I, myself, could not accept Pickering's statement that my grandfather's large fortune had proved to be a myth. If Pickering had not stolen or dissipated it, where was it concealed? Morgan was undoubtedly looking for something of value or he would not risk his life in the business; and it was quite possible that he was employed by Pickering to search for hidden property. This idea took strong hold of me, the more readily, I fear, since I had always been axious to see evil in Pickering. There was, to be sure, the unknown alternative heir, but neither she nor Sister Theresa was, I imagined, a person capable of hiring an assassin to kill me.

On reflection I dismissed the idea of appealing to the county authorities, and I never regretted that resolution. The seat of Wabana county was 20 miles away, the processes of law were unfamiliar, and I wished to avoid publicity. Morgan might, of course, have been easily disposed of by an appeal to the Annandale constable, but now that I suspected Pickering of treachery the caretaker's importance dwindled. I had wanted all my life for a chance at Arthur Pickering, and in this affair I hoped to draw him into the open and settle with him.

I slept presently but woke at my usual hour, and after a tub felt ready for another day. Bates served me, as usual, a breakfast that gave a fair aspect to the morning. I was alert for any sign of perturbation in him; but I had already decided that I might as well look for emotion in a stone wall as in this placid, colorless serving man. I had no reason to suspect him of complicity in the night's affair, but I had no faith in him, and merely waited until he should show his hand.

By my plate next morning I found this note, written in a clear, bold, woman's hand:

"The Sisters of St. Agatha trust that the intrusion upon his grounds by Miss Armstrong, one of their students, has caused Mr. Glenarm no annoyance. The Sisters beg that this infraction of their discipline will be overlooked, and they assure Mr. Glenarm that it will not recur."

An unnecessary apology! The note paper was of the best quality. At the head of the page "St. Agatha's, Annandale" was embossed in purple. One of the sisters I had seen beyond the wall undoubtedly wrote it—possibly Sister Theresa herself. A clever woman, that! Thoroughly capable of plucking money from guileless old gentlemen! Poor Olivia! born for freedom, but doomed to a pent-up existence with a lot of nuns! I resolved to send her a box of candy sometime just to annoy her guardians. Then my own affairs claimed attention.

"Bates," I asked, "do you know what Mr. Glenarm did with the plans for this house?"

He started slightly. I should not have noticed it if I had not been so keen for his answer.

"No, sir. I can't put my hand upon them, sir."

"That's all very well, Bates, but you didn't answer my question. Do you know where they are? I'll put my hand on them if you will kindly tell me where they're kept."

"I fear very much, Mr. Glenarm, that they have been destroyed. I tried to find them before you came, to tell you the whole truth, sir; but they must have been put out of the way."

"That's very interesting, Bates. Will you kindly tell me whom you suspect of destroying them? The toast again, please."

His hand shook as he passed the plate.

"I hardly like to say, sir, when it's only a suspicion."

"Of course I shouldn't ask you to incriminate yourself, but I'll have to insist on my question. It may have occurred to you, Bates, that in a sense—in a sense, mind you—I'm the master here."

"Well, I should say, if you press me—that I fear Mr. Glenarm, your grandfather, burned the plans when he left here the last time. I hope you will pardon me, sir, for seeming to reflect upon him."

"Reflect upon the devil! What was his idea, do you suppose?"

"I think, sir, if you will pardon—"

"Don't be so fussy!" I snapped. "Damn your pardon, and go on!"

"He wanted you to study out the place for yourself, sir. It was dear to his heart, this house. He set his heart upon having you enjoy it—"

"I like the word—go ahead."

"And I suppose there are things about it that he wished you to learn for yourself."

"You know them, of course, and are watching me when I'm hot and cold, watching me to see when I'm hot and cold, like kids at a child's game."

The fellow turned and faced me across the table.

"Mr. Glenarm, as I hope God may be merciful to me in the last judgment, I don't know any more about it than you do."

"You were here with Mr. Glenarm all the time he was building the house, but you never saw walls built that weren't what they appeared to be, or doors made that didn't lead anywhere."

I summoned all my irony and contempt for this arraignment. He lifted his hand as though making oath.

"As God sees me, that is all true. I was here to care for the dead master's comfort and not to spy on him, sir."

"And Morgan, your friend, what about him?"

"I wish I knew, sir."

"I wish to the devil you did," and I flung out of the room and into the library.

At 11 o'clock I heard a pounding at the great front door and Bates came to announce a caller, who was now stamping the snow from his shoes audibly in the outer hall.

"The Reverend Paul Stoddard, sir."

The chaplain of St. Agatha's was a big fellow, as I had remarked on the occasion of his interview with Olivia Gladys Armstrong by the wall. His light brown hair was close-cut; his smooth shaven face was bright with the freshness of youth. Here was a sturdy young apostle without frills, but with a vigorous grip that left my hand tingling. His voice was deep and musical—a voice that suggested sincerity and inspired confidence.

"I'm afraid I haven't been neighborly, Mr. Glenarm. I was called away from home a few days ago after I heard of your arrival, and I have just got back. I blew in yesterday with the snow storm."

He folded his arms easily and looked at me with cheerful directness, as though politely speculating as to what manner of man I might be.

"It was a fine storm; I got a great day out of it," I said. "An Indiana snow storm is something I have never experienced before."

"This is my second winter. I came out here because I wished to do some reading and thought I'd rather do it alone in a university."

"Studious habits are rather forced on one out here, I should say. In my own case my course of reading is all cut out for me."

"The Glenarm collection is famous—the best in the country, easily. Mr Glenarm, your grandfather was certainly an enthusiast. I met him several times, though he was a trifle hard to meet!"—and the clergyman smiled.

"My grandfather had his whims; but he was a fine, generous-hearted old gentleman," I said.

"You haven't been on our side of the wall yet? Well, I promise not to molest your hidden treasure if you'll be neighborly," and he laughed merrily.

"Damn Your Pardon, and Go On!"

"I fear there's a big joke involved in the hidden treasure," I replied. "I'm so busy staying at home to guard it that I have no time for social recreation."

He looked at me quickly to see whether I was joking. His eyes were steady and earnest. The Reverend Paul Stoddard impressed me more and more agreeably. There was a suggestion of quiet strength about him that drew me to him.

"I suppose every one about here thinks of nothing but that I'm at Glenarm to earn my inheritance. My residence here must look pretty sordid from the outside."

"Mr. Glenarm's will is a matter of record in the county, of course. But you are too hard on yourself. It's nobody's business if your grandfather wished to visit his whims on you. I should say, in my own case, that I don't consider it any of my business what you are here for. I didn't come over to annoy you or to pry into your affairs. I get lonely now and then and thought I'd like to establish neighborly relations."

"Thank you; I appreciate your coming very much,"—and my heart warmed under the manifest kindness of the man.

"And I hope"—he spoke for the first time with restraint—"I hope nothing will prevent your knowing Sister Theresa and Miss Devereux. They are interesting and charming—the only women about here of your own social status."

My liking for him abated slightly. He might be a detective, representing the alternative heir, for all I knew and possibly Sister Theresa was a party to the conspiracy to drive me away.

"In time, no doubt, in time, I shall know them," I answered evasively.

"Oh, quite as you like!"—and he changed the subject. We talked of many things—of outdoor sports, with which he showed great familiarity, of universities, of travel and adventure. Columbia was his alma mater, but he had spent two years at Oxford.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Happenings in Missouri.

To Control Tuberculosis.

Tuberculosis was discussed by the State Medical association at Jefferson City. Dr. R. O. Cross of Kansas City, Dr. J. M. Allen of Liberty and Dr. W. B. Deffenbaugh of St. Joseph took part in the discussion. The committee on tuberculosis appointed at the meeting last year made its report recommending the organization of the Missouri Association for the Prevention and Control of Tuberculosis, and submitted a constitution and by-laws to govern the new association. Missouri editors, state officers, physicians and persons giving financial aid to the association are eligible to membership. The report of the committee was adopted and the permanent organization effected by the election of the following officers for the ensuing year: Dr. George Homan, St. Louis, president; Robert J. Newton, secretary, and J. H. Lynch, treasurer, both of St. Louis. Dr. E. W. Schauffler of Kansas City was elected to the board of directors.

Printer Observes 85th Birthday.

Joseph H. Sycaomer of St. Louis celebrated his 85th birthday a few days ago. He has been a citizen of that city 70 years, and is thought to be the oldest printer and pressman in number of years and service west of the Mississippi river. He has been in the printing business since 1841, when he entered the service of the Evening New Era. He also worked on the old Democrat. He is a member of the Veteran Fireman's Association, having been a member of the Mound volunteer company, and went through the great fire of 1849. He is still active, and works among his flowers, of which he is very fond.

Smashed the Mirror.

W. A. Ray of Carrollton was awakened about midnight one night by dogs baying at a burglar who was attempting to break into Mr. Ray's house. The intruder was frightened away. About three hours later the burglar returned. By this time Mr. Ray's nerves were badly overwrought. He arose and proceeded in the direction of the noise when he caught sight of the figure of a man in the kitchen. He cried out a warning and fired at the visitor. There was a sound of falling glass and the frightened householder learned that he had shot his own reflection in the mirror.

A Youthful Hero.

The Carnegie hero fund commission recently made 21 awards and distributions of eight gold, seven silver and six bronze medals, besides an annuity. One of the most interesting cases was that of Lydon Phifer, a schoolboy of Rich Hill, who is given a bronze medal and $2,000 for his education. On October 14, 1905, at Rich Hill, Bates county, Phifer, aged 13 years saved Paul I. Burrows, aged 5 years from in front of a moving passenger train on bridge No. 63 on the Missouri Pacific railroad.

Catholic Union Officers Chosen.

With the selection of Springfield as the next meeting place, the Catholic Union of Missouri adjourned after a three days' session at St. Joseph. Officers were named as follows: A. Zipf, St. Louis, president; J. P. Rehme, St. Louis, first vice president; L. Lomeyer, Springfield, second vice president; B. Luig, St. Louis, Corresponding and recording secretary; B. Wehr, Kansas City, financial secretary; J. G. Drogge, Washington, treasurer; H. Lomeyer, Springfield, Marshal.

Professor Sued for Assault.

Andrew J. Clay, 17 years old, of Augusta, a student at Columbia Normal academy in Columbia, filed suit for $3,000 damages against Prof. George H. Beasley, president and proprietor of the college, for assault. He says that he was beaten by Prof. Beasley without justification or excuse May 11.

Wind Wrecks Barns.

A severe rain and wind storm swept the section about Excelsior Springs recently. Barns were blown down, houses moved from their foundations and orchards destroyed.

Widow Gen. James Craig Dead.

Mrs. Helen Craig, widow of the late James Craig, for many years widely known in Northwest Missouri, died recently at St. Joseph. She was 82 years old.

Writing History of State.

Congressman Champ Clark and Walter Williams of the Columbia Herald are writing in collaboration a history of Missouri.

State Medical Association.

Officers of the State Medical association for the ensuing year were elected at Jefferson City as follows: Dr. W. S. Allee, Olean, president; Dr. Thomas B. Cook Rayville; Dr. A. H. Vandevert, Bethany; Dr. C. P. Hough, Jefferson City, and Dr. O. F. Pile of Memphis, vice presidents; Dr. A. W. McAllister, jr., Kansas City, secretary, and Dr. J. F. Welch, Salisbury, treasurer. Springfield was selected for the next annual meeting place without opposition.

Better Salaries for Teachers.

A decided reaction has occurred in recent months touching teachers' salaries in country districts in Northern Missouri. School boards have abandoned the practice of letting the schools to the lowest bidder and are demanding a higher grade of executive ability and general efficiency. There have been schools in Macon and other counties taught by so-called instructors who were willing to accept $20 a month, and pay $2.50 a week board. Of course, not much progress was made in schools of that character and boards have learned that truth. Men and women qualified to teach were forced to seek other employment. Fair wages were paid in the larger towns, but there were not enough positions to go around. Now the situation has changed for the better and instead of teachers crowding each other for a job, the boards are seeking the teachers.—Kansas City Star.

Fooled the Boys.

An isolated case of measles appeared at the state school for the deaf at Fulton. The authorities wished to transfer the sick boy to the hospital without exposing the other pupils. To do this it was necessary to play a trick on them. Presley Wright, one of the supervisors, lined the boys up to march in to supper. Ernest Shipman, the other supervisor, came hurriedly into the presence of the boys and sighed: "Mr. George Berry's automobile in front yard, hit tree wrecked." The boys all broke the line and ran down to the scene of the supposed wreck and the sick boy was moved to the hospital while the others looked for the wrecked automobile.

Reward for Stockman's Slayer.

Edward Reed, a widely known stockman of Mexico, is dead as a result of an attack made on him by robbers. Reed was beaten and left unconscious in the southern part of the town and his injuries and the exposure resulted in his death. Gov. Folk, the county court, the Mexico Ledger and citizens of Mexico, will offer a reward aggregating $2,500 for the arrest and conviction of the slayer.

$50,000 to Missouri Sister.

The will of Charles E. Halliwell, vice president of the American Tobacco Company has been filed in New York. The value of the estate is said to be $20,000,000. A bequest fund of $50,000 is created the income to go to his sister Margaret Ann Hawkins of Springfield, Mo., for life and $20,000 of the principal to her husband, Josiah Hawkins at her death, the rest to revert to the estate.

Girls' Industrial Home Changes.

The board of control of the industrial home for girls at its annual election of officers elected Mrs. Annie M. Clay, matron of the Blessing hospital at Quincy, Ill., superintendent, to succeed Mrs. Emma J. Mackay. The other officers were re-elected with the exception of one cottage manager who resigned. Several new cottage managers were added.

A Girl of 12 Years Eloped.

Margaret Vedora, a 12-year-old girl of St. Louis, and Charles W. Vergin of Joliet, Ill., were arrested at Jefferson City. The girl was dressed in boy's clothing, and when the two applied to a lodging house for a room the girl was detected by the proprietor. The police authorities were notified, and the couple taken in custody.

One Road Would Enjoin Another.

The Frisco Railway company has asked for an injunction against the Springfield Southwestern railway to prevent the latter company from closing three streets which abut on the property of both roads in Springfield. The contention of the Frisco is that the vacation of the thoroughfares will deprive it from its main ingress and egress at its property.

A Gruesome Souvenir.

Fayette received a souvenir of the race question from the Sunny South the other day. A brakeman entered a car of lumber from Louisiana and found a dead negro with several feet of rope about his neck. Evidently he had been lynched, cut down and thrown into the car of lumber.

Wild Duck on Fish Line.

Charles Vestal of Van Buren caught a wild duck on a trot line in 15 feet of water. Presumably the duck had dived for the minnow on the hook, or for some other fish, and became entangled. The hook caught it by the wing.

Big Fire in Gibson.

The business section of the little town of Gibson, 80 miles south of Cape Girardeau, on the Frisco road, was almost wiped out by fire recently. Five of the seven stores and two residences were destroyed. There were no casualties.

Miner Killed by Cavein.

Lee Brammer, aged 18, a coal miner employed in a mine at Bevier was instantly killed by a cavein of the roof in his working channel in the mine.

BOY HAD NOT UNDERSTOOD.

Pretty Phrase That Was Most Woefully Misunderstood.

That the effect of a choice and appropriate phrase is sometimes lost and oftimes woefully misinterpreted is well illustrated in an incident connected with the death of a Virginia lawyer.

During the man's illness the wires were disconnected which attached the bell to the old-fashioned pull knob on the front door.

A messenger boy came to the house one morning and began pulling at the bell. There was no response. He continued to jerk the ancient knob vigorously. A white-haired gentleman finally appeared, who raised his hand warningly and said:

"My boy, the silver cord has been severed."

"Is that so?" exploded the boy. "From the way it acted I thought the whole darn thing was busted."—N. Y. Times.

Desert Lands Made Fertile.

According to official figures, since the reclamation law was enacted by congress in 1902, eight towns have been built and 10,000 people have settled on what were desert lands. One hundred miles of branch railways have been built, 1,267 miles of canals have been dug, many of which carry whole rivers, and 47 tunnels have been excavated. It is estimated that the territory embraced in what is known as the arid regions of the United States covers 600,000,000 acres, of which about 60,000,000 acres are subject to irrigation and can be converted into farms as productive as lands in the most favored sections.

Siamese Object to Walking.

The Siamese, above all nations in the world, hate to walk; no such mode of progression is tolerated by a Siamese if he or she can by any means ride. A Venetian gondolier will walk sometimes; even a Hollander will ride on his rough cart; but a Bangkok man—not if he can help it. His family boat for him.—Windsor Magazine.

Defined.

"Dad," inquired Freddy, "what is a figure of speech?" "Where's your mother?" asked "Dad," cautiously. "She's downstairs," answered the boy. "Well then," began "Dad," "a figure of speech, my son, is a woman."—Harper's Weekly.

The rich man's son is called a prig if he walks in the way of the righteous, and he is denounced as a degenerate if he endeavors to put his father's money into circulation.