THE =

NE'ER-DO-WELI

A Romance of the Panama Canal REX BEACH

The Crash.

URK had no further chance of speaking with his wife, for after the dance she was whisked away, leaving him but the memory of an adoring. Hestni glance as she passed. With Ronnels and Cortlandt and the rest he was driven to the Hotel Central, where they found a very attractive table set is a private dining room. It was a lirsly party, and Kirk's secret elation enabled him to play the part of host with unforced geniality. The others joined him in a hearty effort to show their guest the high regard in which they held him, and if Cortlandt did not enjoy himself it was entirely his own fault.

Toward Kirk, however, he preserved a peculiar attitude, which only the young man's self absorption prevented him from noticing. If he had been less jubilant he must have felt the unnatural aloofness of the other man's bearing. But even had be done so he would doubtless have attributed it to Cortlandt's well recognized frigidity.

At the propitious moment Runnels, who had reluctantly agreed to share the social responsibility, made a little speech, explaining that he and his boys had been sensible from the first of their guest's interest in them and were deeply grateful for it. They now tendered him a token of their regard in a form which he could preserve.

He handed a handsome loving cup to Cortlandt, who thanked him approprintely, then waited courteously for the party to break up. But Anthony rose, saying:

"I simply have to say a word on my own account, fellows, for I owe Mr. Cortlandt more than any of you."

The object of these remarks shot a swift, questioning glance from his stony eyes and raised a hand as if to sheck him. But Kirk ran on unheed-

"I want to thank him before all of you for what he has done for me persenally. When I landed in Panama I got into trouble of the worst sort, and Mr. Cortlandt got me out. He was my half bond, he put me up at his botel, gave me clothes and paid my way until I got started. I was a stranger, mind a, but he's been just like one of my own people, and if I ever succeed in doing anything really worth while it will be due to the start he gave me."

Though the words were commonplace enough, they carried a sincere message, and Cortlandt saw by the faces about him that the others were pleased. His own gaunt features turned more sallow than ever. The memory of what he had heard on the porch of his own house a few aftermoens ago, of what he had seen at other times, of his wife's telltule behavior on this very evening, swept over him, fanning anew the sullen emotions he had cherished all these mouths. How far would this fellow dare to go, he wondered? He dropped his eyes to hide the fary in them.

I want to give you a little remembrance of my own." Anthony was speaking directly to him. "It isn't much, but it means a good deal to me. and I hope it will have some sort of personal association for you, Mr. Cortlandt." He draw from his pocket a plush case and took from M a very handsome thin Swiss watch with the etters "S. C." artfully enameled upon the back.

Cortlandt accepted the gift mechanfally; then, as it touched his fiesh, a widden color mounted to his cheeks, only to recede, leaving them bloodless

"I really didn't expect this," he be ma slowly as he rose. "Anthony exagerates; he is too kind. But since te has chosen to publicly call attention our relations, I will confess that what he tells you is all true. Through by assistance-partly, at any rate-be has made a man of himself. He has been welcome at my house, at my table; he has come and gone as be pleased. like one of the family, you might say. But those are little things; they count for nothing." His tone eripped his hearers, and Anthony stirred uneasily, thinking this an odd

way of accepting a gift. Unclasping his long, white fingers, Cartlandt held up the watch to public

"In payment for my poor friendship he has given me this magnificent thing of gold and jewels, the finest I ever aw. I never counted upon such gratitude. It is too much, and yet a man cannot refuse the gift of his friend and not seem ungracious, can be? Somewhere in the orient they have a matem of exchanging gifts. No man may accept a thing of value without making adequate return, and it has alvays struck me as a wise practice." is turned full upon Kirk for the first lime since he had begun speaking, and his voice rose a tone as he said, "I tan't let the obligation rest entirely on me. We have been friends, Anthony, and I am going to give you ething in return which I have brited bighly. It would be counted of | better take a walk."

landt's accusation had sunk into his mind, Kirk lapsed into a mood of sulien bitterness. He said little, but his set face worried his companion, who when they were close to the Tivoli. After they had parted Runnels was upon the point of going back and offering to spend the night with him, but thought better of it.

Instead of passing through the office Kirk mounted to the porch of the Tivoll and entered his room from the outside, as he and Chiquita had done earlier that evening. He found Allan wating and bursting with a desire to

"Get my street clothes. I'm going out." He tore the white tie from his going to give you-my wife. You have throat as if it were choking him. "I've been hurt, Allan. I can't explain, for you wouldn't understand, but I've been will those men think? Listen! You hurt. Come along."

> The negro's lips drew apart in an expression of apelike ferocity, and he be-



"He's yours now. You can have him." gan to chatter threats of vengeance, to which Kirk paid little heed. A few moments later they went out quietly, and "I'm going home, fellows. I'm kind together they took the rock road down of sick." Kimble said. One of the toward the city, the one silent and others murmured unintelligibly, and, desperate, the other whining like a

Edith Cortiandt did not retire immediately upon her return from the his eyes squarely. There was no sym- ball. Her anger at Anthony's behavior kept her wakeful, and the night had The knowledge of what these actions turned off so dead and humid that

She was still sitting in her room at shout his innocence at them, to beat and body would have been more than she could bear.

She was unreasonably, approved therefore when he came boldly into her chamber without even knocking. "Rather late for good night," she said

coldly. "I've just come from Anthony's sup-

per party." His voice made her look round sharp-

She saw that his linen, ordinarily stiff and immaculate, was sodden and crumpled, his collar limp, his forehead glistening with drops of moisture. "What ails you, Stephen?" she cried.

Have you been drinking?" "No. I didn't drink much. I brought

you something." He took the loving cup from its finne! bag and set it upon the table. They gave me this.

with its enameled monogram into her "Ah! That's very handsome."

"Yes. I thought you'd like it. It's from Anthony." He laughed, then

"Why, you seem excited over these uvenirs. You surely expected" He broke in-a thing he rarely did while she was speaking:

"Anthony made a speech when be gave it to me-a very nice speech, full of friendship and love and gratitude." He repeated Kirk's words as be remembered them. "What do you think

of that?" Mrs. Cortlandt's eyes widened. This was not the man she knew. At this moment he was actually insistent, almost overbearing, and he was regarding her with that same ironical speer that had roused her anger earlier in the evening.

He began to chuckle, apparently without reason. His shoulders shook feebly at first, then more violently. His flat chest heaved, and he hiccoughed as if from physical weakness. It was alarming, and she rose, staring at picture which she was tired of conhim affrightedly. He continued to shudder and shake in uncontrollable hysteria, but his eyes were bright and

watchful. p-put the noose around his own neck true. He loves the Garavel girl and and tie the knot. Then I hung him." His convulsive giggling was terrible forecasting, as it did, his immediate breakdown.

was going. "You are ill. You need a I was frightened, and it was purely men, one evidently a sergeant.

like, with lips drawn back in a grin. played with me. Think!"

Her face went suddenly ashen.

Then she roused to sudden action. Seizing him by the shoulders she shook What are you going to do?" him, roughly with far more than her

which neither of them understood. "Oh, I did it," he declared. "He's For years I have longed to show myyours now. You can have him. He's self a man, and now-what have I been your lover"-

She flung him away from her so violently that he nearly fell. "It's a lie! You know it's a lie!"

"It's true. I'm no fool." She beat her hands together distractedly. "What have you done? What bad." must stop them quickly. Tell them it's

not so." He seemed not to hear her. going away tomorrow," he said, "but I'll never divorce you, no matter what you do, and I won't let you divorce me either. No, no! Take him now if you want him, but you'll never be able to marry him until I'm gone. And I won't die soon-I promise you that. I'm going to live."

"You can't go"-"There's a boat tomorrow."

"Don't you see you must stay and explain to those men? My God! They'll think you spoke the truth. They'll be-

lieve what you said." "Of course they will," he chattered shrilly. "That's why I did it in that No matter what you or he or I can do or say now they'll believe it forever. It came to me like a flash of light, and I saw what it meant all in a minute. Do you understand what it means, eh? Listen! No matter how you behave they'll know. They won't say anything, but they'd know, and

"No? What about that night at Taboga? You were mad over the fellow then, but you didn't think I saw. That day I caught you together in the jungle-have you forgotten that? Didn't you think it strange that I should be the one to discover you? Oh, I pretended to be blind, but I followed you everywhere I could, and I kept my eyes

"You saw nothing, for there was nothing."

"I waited because I wasn't strong enough to revolt-until tonight. Oh, but tonight I was strong! Something gave me courage."

CHAPTER XXIV.

A Question and the Answer. him as usual. she was

and terror.

"Bah! Why try to fool me? I have head. I was on the gallery outside when you were pleading with him, and I heard it all. But he was growing tired of you. That, you know, makes it all the more effective." He smiled

of one beating barehanded at a barred door. "You had no right to do such a

The look she gave him was heavy with loathing. "That means nothing with us. I never loved you, and you know it. You never could have succeeded without me. All you have is due to me-even your reputation in the service. Your success, your influence, it is all mine. The debt is all on your side, as you and I and all the world know."

manded, with womanish fury, a fury that had been striving for utterance these many years. I had ambitions "And this too." He tossed the watch and hopes and ability once-not much perhaps, but enough-before you married me. I was nothing great, but I was getting along. I had confidence. too, but you took it away from me. You-you absorbed me. You had your father's brain, and it was too big for me. It overshadowed mine. In a way you were a vampire, for what I had you drained me of. But tonight, when he got up before those other men and dangied my shame before my eyes, I had enough manhood left in me to strike back. Thank God for that at least! Maybe it's not too late yet for me to be a man. Maybe if I get away from you and try"- His voice died out weakly. In his face there was a miserable half gleam of hope.

never knew you could feel that way, she said in a colorless voice. "But you made a terrible mistake."

"Do you mean to say you don't love him?"

"No. I have loved him for a long time. I can't remember when it begnn." She spoke very listlessly, looking past him as if at a long familiar templating. "I never knew what love was before; I never even dreamed. I'd give my life right now to undo what you have done, just for his sake, for "Oh, I-I-took it all in-I let him he is innocent. Oh, don't sneer; it's wants to marry her. I'm going to tell you the whole truth now without sparing myself. It began, I think, at Tabogn, that night when he kissed me, "Stephen." she exclaimed, in a It was the only time he ever did such shocked tone, convinced that his mind a thing. It was dark, we were alone,

doctor. I will call Joceel." She laid impulse on his part. But it woke me her hand on his arm. "Won't you go up, and all at once I knew how much to your room and let me call a doctor?" he meant to me. When I discovered "Not yet. Wait! He told them what that he cared for that girl-well, if you I had done for him. I acknowledged it overheard you must know. I frightentacle of his pitiable loss of self control. ed me. That's the truth. Stephen. If

"You are shielding him. You want

"Those are the facts. Heaven knows "Well, I told him before them all they are bad enough, but they are by that I intended to give him something no means so bad as you thought. And in return, and I did. I-gave-him- i'm your wife. Stephen. That thing con did was brutal. Those men will "God! You didn't tell him that! talk. I was guilty no doubt in my You didn't say that-before those ment thoughts, but I'm young, and you have Oh-h!" She shrank back, drawing the no right to blight my life and my repgauzy silk robe closer about her breast. utation-yes, and yours-by a thing like that. We will have to meet those men.

"I don't know," he said. "In all my natural strength, voicing furious words life I never felt but one moment of power, and that, it seems, was false. done? What have I done? I am no monster. Why couldn't you be consistent? Why did you go halfway? Why couldn't you be all good or all bad and save me this?"

made him writhe.

way out."

bed and I'll think, I'm trying to think now, but this heat is suffocating me and my bead is tired."

Despite the breathless oppression of the night, she shivered. "I never can meet them now, and I don't see how you will dare to, knowing that you were wrong."

"Don't!" he pleaded. "The other was bad enough, but this- Tell me what to do!

"I can't. I don't know myself. All I can see is that those men will never cease to believe, no matter what you tell them.'

she heard him still stirring about in his quarters, but afterward she did not detect his cautious footsteps when he stole out of his chamber, closing the door softly behind him.

Kirk was roused from a heavy, senseless slumber the next morning by

"Where did you go ofter I left you last night?"

"I came here, of course." As the memory of the previous night swept "Did you stay here?"

nearly all night trying to walk it off." Runnels' face blenched, and he drew back.

"Then, of course, you know?" "What?" "About Cortlandt. He's dead!"

"Nobody knows just how. He was found on the sea wall near Alfarez's

house, shot." "Shot! Good Lord!" "Did you see Cortlandt again after I

left you?" Runnels swallowed hard. Kirk whirled about and faced him. "Great heavens! No! See here, that idea is ridiculous!"

Runnels sank weakly into a chair and mopped his face. "When you said you'd gone out again it knocked

was with me. I couldn't sleep, so I tried to walk off my excitement. No, no; I couldn't do a thing like that! 1 thought last night that I could, but-I couldn't, really."

"I'm afraid Wade will tell all about the party if we don't stop him." "Then we'd better hunt him up."

Kirk resumed his dressing, while Runnels consulted his watch. "No. 5 is due in twenty minutes

Together they hastened to the railroad building. Runnels telling all he knew of the tragedy as they went along. Cortlandt's body, it seemed, had been found about daylight by a Spiggoty policeman, who had identified it. Becoming panic stricken at the imper tance of his discovery, he had sounded the alarm, then reported directly to the governor, whose house was close by. The whole city was alive with the news. The police were buzzing like bees. Rumors of suicide, murder, robbery, were about, but no one seemed to know anything definite.

conviction. "The man was insane last night, and that accounts for what he long time."

"If those boys will only keep their mouths shut," Runnels said anxiously. "There's no telling what these Spiggoties might do if they heard about that row."

young fellows who had taken part in the entertainment on the night before had gathered in the office and at the appearance of Runnels greeted him eagerly. Toward Kirk, however, they maintained a disheartening constraint. The acting superintendent began to

"and it's something I for one don't want to be mixed up in. I've heard rumors already about some sort of a quarrel at our party, so I'm afraid you fellows have been talking."

Wade acknowledged it recklessly "Yes, I'll answer for my part, and I'm not going to make any promise of se-

Into the office behind them came Ra mon Alfarez and two Panaman police-

"Eh, there you are!" Alfarez cried as he caught sight of Kirk. "You are arrest'!"

"What for?" "Gentlemen, you will be so kind as to geeve the names, yes? The jodge will desire to make inquiries regarding those sopper to Senor Cortlan' las'

night.

At that moment the building began to shake and reverberate as No. 5 rolled in from Colon, bearing John Weeks, American consul, and Mr. Williams of St. Louis in one of the forward coaches. As the two hurried out through the turnstiles they found the street blocked by a considerable crowd, evidently interested in something quite apart from the arrival of the morning train. But before they could learn the cause out from the nearby building came Ramon Alfarez, accompanied by several policemen and a group of railroad employees, among whom was Kirk Anthony.

"There he is!" wheezed the consul, clutching at his companion's arm. "Get him now before his friends."



"You are arrest"!"

Williams thrust the policemen and the curious onlookers aside and, laying hold of Anthony, cried in triumph: "Well, Mr. Jefferson Locke, I want

A little man in blue uniform was at tempting to take the prisoner in charge, but the detective disregarded him. Runnels elbowed his way forward

with a question. "Oh, I've got a warrant for him," Williams declared. "What for? Well. for one thing, he embezzled \$80,000,

and I'm going to take him back." "Eh? W'at is this?" Alfarez bustled into the conversation, "Embezzle? He is then a t'ief?"

"Exactly. If you're the inspector I'll ask you to make this arrest for me. I believe we're on foreign ground." "I regret you 'ave arrive' so late," smirked Alfarez. "The gentleman is lready arrest' for the murder of Senor Cortlan'. He will first answer to that,

I assure you." It was during to lunch hour that Ramon Alfarez called at the Garavel home, finding the banker and his daughter still loitering over their midday meal and discussing the topic that had electrified the whole city.

"So fine a man," the father was say ing. "He was, indeed, my good friend. It is shocking."

"Yes, and to think be should have been killed in this cowardly manner!" "Killed! Is it believed that he was murdered? Caramba! I supposed he had shot himself. That was the gossip an hour ago."

"Upon leaving the Tivoli last night Senor Cortlan' dined with six of his friends at the Central. There was drinking. The waiters have been questioned; also one of the men who was present has recounted to me what occurred. It seems that for a long time Senor Cortlan' has been jealous of his wife. Cortlan' openly accused his enemy before all the others. It was most dramatic, it was terrible! There was a scene of violence. The other man made threats."

Garavel breathed an incredulous ex

clamation. "Ab, but wait! It was Senor Cortlan's best friend, too, the man for whom he had accomplished many favors, whom he accused." He noted with mingled anger and satisfaction the pallor that was creeping into the girl's checks. "You would never guess. It was-! hesitate, and yet you are bound to learn, my dear friends-it was this Ant'ony."

"It is a lie," said the girl quietly 'He loved no one but me."

"Gertrudis!" The banker was shock ed beyond measure at what he considered his daughter's jealousy. "Those are not nice words."

"I do not believe it." Ramon had not counted upon such a spirit, and, his anger getting the better of him, be sneered: "I should not have spoken. I did not know you still care.' "She does not care," Garavel de clared loudly.

"Ab, but I do. I love him very dear-

The two men were upon their feet in an instant, staring at her, the elder in amazement, the younger with ruge and resentment blazing from his counte

"Silence;" thundered the banker "Yonder stands your afflanced husband. "It is a mistake"- she persisted

gently.

"No, no, no! There is no mistake. chattered Ramon. "Those other men have told all, and your Aut'ony is now in the carcel under guard. It was I who saw to his arrest. Nor is that all. He is not at all the man he pretended to be, even his name is false. This

morning there arrived an American officer of police to arrest him on other charges. He is a thief, it seems, havployers. Oh, there is no mistake. Within the hour I have been talking with this detective, and he has the

papers of proof. Is not that enough?" "It is, indeed!" gasped the father. "But it is not true," maintained the girl simply, and her eyes were steady as altar flames. "Take me

him, please. I must go at once to the carcel. But he only answered her with a stare of amazement. "Go!" he murmured, after an instant. "Have I lost

my senses?" "Yes, I must go, for he is my husband. We were wed last night."
"Mother of God!" the banker ejacu-

lated hoarsely, and sank into the seat from which he had arisen. Ramon was staring from one to the other, his head turning jerkily.

"Oh, yes! The judge from Colon married us during the dance. I would have liked a church wedding, but that will come later. The Senor Ronnels and his wife were there also, and they will tell you. It made me very happy. Her face was transfigured by a look that left the two men no choice but

"A civil marriage!" stammered Ra-

"A civil marriage, indeed!" said Garavel in a choking voice. "So that is where you were when I believed youto be dancing! But I will not have it, understand! You are betrothed.

You have given your word to Ramon. "Ah but I never loved him. You compelled me to consent because you said you could not be president unless I married him, And that was not so: Ramon deceived you. Now it is all right. You will be president, and I can be happy."

Ramon's suspicion kindled on the instant. He turned upon the banker. "So I begin to see! That was a trick. then, to betray my father."

"But wait." Gertrudis exclaimed sharply. "Did you not trick us also? Did you not use the general, your father, to make me give up the man I love? Which of us, then, is the better?

Andres Garavel spoke threateningly, menacingly, to his daughter,

"It was no marriage, and it will not stand. I will have it annulled. The man was a criminal, a fugitive, even when he forced you to marry"-"No, no! You cannot do that. It

was I who asked him to marry me." The girl lied tremulously, panic stricken at the threat. "Before God, I am his wife!" she maintained. "And if this marriage has a flaw then I will stand beside the prison gates and remarry him as he comes forth."

"He will not come forth," Ramon de-

clared harshly. "Oh, yes! And now will you take me to him?

"No!" her father bellowed. "You are my daughter, you are under my roof, and here you shall stay until you give up this madness and this man. I forbid you to go near him. Come! Do you promise?" She inclined her dark head. "I must learn more of this affair at once. You will find your senses, miss, or if you do not you will spend your life in meditation and prayer-

that much I promise you." "I,do not wish to enter a convent." she said, with white lips. "I wish to be happy. When Keerk is free I shall go to him. Now, if you please, Ithink I shall go away." She turned and went out of the big high ceilinged room, and not until she had reached the hall did her feet waver or her

hand droop. (To Be Continued Next Wedneslay,)

Public Notice. January, 23, 1914.

To The Stockholders of the Rock Island Sand and Gravel Co.: Notice is hereby given that a special meeting of the stockholders of the Rock Island Sand and Gravel compan will be held at the rifler of said company, in the city of Rock Island, County of Rock Island, state of Illinois, on the "nd day of March, A. D. 1914, at the hour of 8 o'clock p. m., for the purpose of considering and voting upon the question of increasing the capital

stock of said company. C. J. LARKIN. WM H EDWARDS. WM H M'CONOCHIM GEO. RICHMOND. AUGUST HENKE, CORNELIUS DONOVAN,

JACOB IMHOF, H. J. LARKIN, Secretary. (Adv.) All the news all the time-The

Argus.

FEDERAL INCOME TAX FORMS

For the Return of Annual Net Incomes of Individuals The government has just issued

Form No. 1040, which every citizen or resident of the United States with an income of \$3,000 per year or over will be required to fill out and file with the Internal Revenue Collector on or before March 1st next, covering the statement of his or her income for the period between March 1st and December 31st, 1913.

We are prepared to furnish copies of this form on request.

Litten & Koherts Stocks, Bonds, Mortgages,

Peoples National Bank Building

Rock Island, III.



COPYRIGHT. 1910. 1911. BY HARPER & BROTHERS great value by some." Once more b CHAPTER XXIII. paused and drew his lips back in that

> had her from the first, and now she is yours." For one frightful moment there was no sound; even the men's breathing was bushed, and they sat slack jawed. stunned, half minded to believe this some bideous, incredible jest. Cort-

grimace of mockery. It could no long-

er be termed a smile. "It is this-I am

landt turned away gloatingly. Kirk was the last to recover his powers, but when they did revive they came with a prodigious rush. He plunged upward out of his chair with a cry like a wounded animal, and the others rose with him. The table rocked, something smashed, a chair was hurled backward. The room broke into instant turmoil. Kirk felt hands upon him, and then went blind with fury, struggling in a passion too strong for coherent speech. He was engulfed in chaos. He felt things break beneath

his touch, felt bodies give way before

How or when Kirk left the room he never knew. Eventually he found himself pinned in his chair, with Runnels' white face close against his own and other hands upon his arms. His first frenzy quickly gave way to a sickening "It's a lie! The man's crazy!" he cried hoarsely; then, as his compan-

I never"-Ruppels turned to the table and with shaking hand put a glass to bis lips and gulped its contents. Wade and Kimble exchanged glances, then, avoiding each other's eyes, took their hats from the hooks behind them.

"Wait! Bring him back!" Kirk

mumbled. "I'll get him and make him

ions drew away from him, he rose to

his feet. "Why are you looking at me

like that? I tell you it's a d-d lie!

say it's a lie." But still no one answered, no one looked at him. "God! You don't believe it?" wetting a napkin, bound up his hand, bound nearing a scent. which was bleeding. They continued to watch Kirk as if fearful of some insane action, yet they refused to meet

pathy in their faces. meant came to him slowly. Was it sleep was in any case a doubtful pospossible that his friends believed this sibility. incredible accusation? As he began to collect himself he saw his plight more | a late hour when she heard the outside clearly. His first thought had been door close and Cortlandt's footsteps that Cortlandt was insane, but the mounting the stairs. She was glad he man's actions were not those of a had his own room and never entered maniac. No! He actually believed- hers at such an hour, for even to talk and these fellows also. He wanted to with him in her present state of mind

it into their heads. One by one they took their hats and went out mumbling goodnight to one another, as if intending to go home singly in order to avoid all discussion of this thing that had fallen among

"You don't believe I did-that?" Anthony asked in a strained voice. "I-I think I do." There was a miserable silence, and then: "It isn't the thing itself, you know, so much as the rotten-underhanded advantage you

them. Runnels alone remained.

Honestly, isn't it true? Kirk shook his head listlessly. wouldn't lie to you." Runnels drew a deep breath. "Oh, ome, now, the man must have known what he was saying. Men don't do

took. If he'd been a stranger, now-

"He misunderstood our friendship, said Kirk heavily, then roused himself for a last plea. "Look here!" he cried. "You know Cortlandt, and you know The man was insanely jealous. I know it sounds weak, but it's the truth, and it's all I can say. I'll go mad if you doubt me. And tonight of nII"-He broke off sharply. "My God! I'd forgotten that I'm married. Suppose Gertrudis hears of this!" An-

things like that on suspicion."

thony seized his temples in despair. Runnels took a sudden fllogical deci-He never knew exactly what had influenced him, but his whole past knowledge surged up in him with a force that he could not resist. He laid his hand on Kirk's shoulder. "Take it easy, old man," he said. "I believe I've always known that they didn't get along together, althoughwell. I won't try to understand it. He may not do anything further, and these fellows won't mention what hap

pened here. They can't." "Women are apt to be jealous, aren't they, Runnels? What do you suppose she'd do?"

"Don't worry about that. I'm think ing about Cortiandt. If he finds out he's mistaken what will be do?" "He'll have to find out. I'm going to tell him. His wife will tell him. Good God! Do you see what an awful light

it puts me in? You don't doubt me,

do you really, old man?" "No. but what a night this has been It seems a year old. Come along, now. You must get out of here. You must turn in. The waiters are wondering what this row is about. I think we'd

In passing through the deserted lobby of the hotel they saw Clifford idling about. But they were too much absorbed to wonder what had kept him up so late. By the clock across the plaza they saw it was two hours after midnight as they stepped into the street. Then, finding no coaches in sight, they set out to walk toward Aucon, both badly in need of the open

A moment later Clifford followed them, taking pains to keep at a dis-

Now that the full import of Cortwas loath to bid him good night even

gossip, but cut him short.

you can't stand that, can you?" "You have no evidence."

all their married life Edith Cortlandt had never known her husband to show such stubborn force. Failing to with a strange feeling of helplessness

"You had no right to accept such evidence," she stormed. your own words for it. The other afternoon I came home sick-with my

"You-cur," she cried, with the fury

thing even if I were guilty." "Right. Aren't you my wife?"

"Who made me a manikin?" he de-

"I never knew you felt like that. I

all and made them hear it from my ed Garavel into dismissing him, and I lips too. Then"- He paused, and she set out to break him, just to show him steeled herself to witness another spec- that he needed me. Tonight he scorn-But instead he grew icy and corpse we believed in oaths I would swear it." "I played with him the way you have to make me out wrong." But she knew he knew

"All women are half good and half

"I can't blame you for not loving me. I suppese," he mumbled. "No woman of your kind could love a man like me. "Those men!" she said in a way that

"Wait until I-think. I must think." "Perhaps in the morning we can see "That's it." He nodded. "You go to

As she prepared for bed an hour later

a vigorous rapping at his door. He opened the door and Runnels rushed

over Kirk he scowled. "No. I went out again, and was out

"Dead? When? Where? How did it bappen?"

me flat, understand?" "I can prove where I was, for Allan

We'll probably find him at the office."

"It was suicide." Kirk averred, with said about me. He's been sick for a

"Cortiandt was an American." "But it happened in Panama, and i would be their affair." Although it was Sunday, the four

caution them tersely. "It's a bad business," said Runnels.

crecy either."