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VOL. 4079.

THE DIVA'S RUBY BY F. MARION CRAWFORD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. 2.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

THE DIVA'S RUBY

A SEQUEL TO
"SOPRANO" AND "THE PRIMADONNA"

BY

F. MARION CRAWFORD

AUTHOR OF "SARACINESCA," "VIA CRUCIS," "ARETHUSA,"
ETC.

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IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

LEIPZIG

BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1908.

THE DIVA'S RUBY

A NOVEL IN

—SIXTEEN VOLUMES—

E. MERRICK CRAWFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I



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THE DIVA'S RUBY.

CHAPTER I.

MARGARET received her friend's letter and the account of Baraka's trial by the same post on the morning after she and Mr. Van Torp had been to hear *Parsifal* together, and she opened the two envelopes before reading her other letters, though after assuring herself that there was nothing from Logotheti. He did not write every day, by any means, for he was a man of the world and he knew that although most women demand worship at fixed hours, few can receive it so regularly without being bored to the verge of exasperation. It was far better, Logotheti knew, to let Margaret find fault with him for writing too little than to spoil her into indifference by writing too much. Women are

often like doctors, who order their patients to do ten things and are uncommonly glad if the patient does one.

So Margaret had no letter from Logotheti that morning, and she read Lady Maud's and the enclosure before going on to the unpaid bills, religious tracts, appeals for alms, advertisements of patent medicines, "confidential" communications from manufacturers of motor cars, requests to sing for nothing at charity concerts, anonymous letters of abuse, real business letters from real business men, and occasional attempts at blackmail, which are the usual contents of a celebrity's post-bag, and are generally but thinly salted with anything like news from friends.

The Primadonna, in her professional travels, had grown cautious of reading her letters in a room where there were other people; she had once surprised a colleague who was toying with an opera-glass quite absently, ten paces away, as if trying its range and focus, but who frequently directed it towards a letter she was perusing; and short-sighted people had dropped a glove or a handkerchief at her very feet in order to stoop down and bring their noses almost against a note

she held in her hand. The world is full of curious people; curiosity is said, indeed, to be the prime cause of study and therefore of knowledge itself. Margaret assuredly did not distrust Mrs. Rushmore, and she did not fear Potts, but her experience had given her the habit of reading her important letters alone in her own room, and sometimes with the door locked. Similarly, if anyone came near her when she was writing, even about the most indifferent matters, she instinctively covered the page with her hand, or with a piece of blotting-paper, sometimes so hastily as to lead a person to believe that she was ashamed of what she had written. Natural habits of behaviour remind us how we were brought up; acquired ones recall to us the people with whom we have lived.

Margaret read the newspaper cutting first, supposing that it contained something flattering about herself, for she had been a little short of public admiration for nearly a fortnight. Baraka's case was reported with the rather brutal simplicity which characterises such accounts in the English papers, and Logotheti's name appeared in Mr. Pinney's evidence. There had been the usual "laughter," duly noted by the stenographer,

when the poor girl's smart man's clothes were produced before the magistrate by the policeman who had arrested her. The magistrate had made a few stern remarks when ordering the delinquents to prison, and had called Baraka "hardened" because she did not burst into tears. That was all, and there were barely five-and-twenty lines of small print.

But the Primadonna bit her handsome lip and her eyes sparkled with anger, as she put the cutting back into the first envelope, and took the folded letter out of the other. The girl had not only stolen a ruby, but it was Margaret's ruby, her very own, the one Logotheti had given her for her engagement, and which she had insisted upon having set as a ring though it would cover more than half the space between her knuckle and the joint of her third finger. Further, it had been stolen by the very girl from whom Logotheti had pretended that he had bought it, a fact which cast the high light of absurdity on his unlikely story! It was natural enough that she should have seen it, and should have known that he was taking it to Pinney's, and that she should have been able to prepare a little screw of paper with a bit of glass inside, to substitute for it.

The improbabilities of such an explanation did not occur to Lady Maud, who saw only the glaring fact that the handsome Tartar girl had accompanied Logotheti, between London and Paris, disguised as a man, and had ultimately robbed him, as he richly deserved. She had imposed upon Van Torp too, and had probably tried to sell him the very stone she had stolen from Logotheti, and the one she had made him take as a gift was nothing but a bit of glass, as he said it might be, for all he knew.

She devoured Lady Maud's letter in a few moments, and then read it twice again, which took so long that Mrs. Rushmore sent Justine to tell Potts to ask if Miss Donne did not mean to go out that morning, though the weather was so fine.

Great singers generally develop a capacity for flying into rages, even if they have not been born with hot tempers. It is very bad for the voice, but it seems to be a part of the life. Margaret was very angry, and Potts became as meek and mild as a little lamb when she saw the storm signals in her mistress's face. She delivered her message in a pathetic and oppressed tone, like a child reciting the collect for the day at a Sunday school.

The Primadonna, imposing as a young lioness, walked slowly backwards and forwards between her window and the foot of the iron bedstead. There was an angry light in her eyes, and instead of flushing, as her cheeks did for any ordinary fit of temper, they were as white as wax. Potts, who was a small woman, seemed to shrink and become visibly smaller as she stood waiting for an answer. Suddenly the lioness stood still and surveyed the poor little jackal that served her.

"Ask Mrs. Rushmore if she can wait half an hour," she said. "I'm very angry, Potts, and it's not your fault, so keep out of the way."

She was generous at all events, but she looked dangerous, and Potts seemed positively to shrivel through the crack of the door as she disappeared. She was so extremely glad to keep out of the way! There were legends already about the great singer's temper, as there are about all her fellow-artists. It was said, without the slightest foundation, that she had once tossed a maid out of the window like a feather, that on another occasion she had severely beaten a coachman, and that she had thrown two wretched lap-dogs into a

raging fire in a stove and fastened the door, because they had barked while she was studying a new part. As a matter of fact, she loved animals to weakness, and was kindness itself to her servants, and she was generally justified in her anger, though it sometimes made her say things she regretted. Œdipus found the right answer to the Sphinx's riddle in a moment, but the ingenious one about truth propounded by Pontius Pilate has puzzled more than sixty generations of Christians. If the Sphinx had thought of it, Œdipus would never have got to Thebes, and some disgustingly unpleasant family complications would have been prevented by his premature demise.

Margaret's wrath did not subside quickly, and as it could not spend itself on any immediate object, it made her feel as if she were in a raging fever. She had never been ill in her life, it was true, and therefore did not know what the sensation was. Her only experience of medical treatment had been at the hands of a very famous specialist for the throat, in New York, to whom she went because all her fellow-artists did, and whose mere existence is said by grateful singers to effectually counteract the effects of the bad climate during the

opera season. He photographed her vocal chords, and the diagrams produced by her best notes, made her breathe pleasant-smelling sprays and told her to keep her feet dry in rainy weather. That was the sum of her experience with doctors, and it was not at all disagreeable.

Now, her temples throbbed, her hands trembled and were as hot as fire, her lips were drawn and parched, and when she caught sight of herself in the looking-glass she saw that she was quite white and that her eyes were bloodshot.

But she was really a sensible English girl, although she was so very angry.

"This is ridiculous!" she said aloud, with emphasis. "I won't be so silly!" And she sat down to try and think quietly.

It was not so easy. A Tartar girl indeed! More probably a handsome Greek. How could they know the difference in a London Police Court? She was not aware that in London and other great cities the police disposes of interpreters for every known language, from the Malay dialects to Icelandic. Besides, it did not matter! She would have been angry if Logotheti had

made love to the Duchess of Barchester, or to Lady Dick Savory, the smartest woman in London, or to Mrs. Smythe-Hockaday, the handsomest woman in England; she would have been angry of course, but not so furious as she was now, not in a white rage that made her teeth chatter, and her eyes burn as if they were red-hot in her head. An ignorant Eastern girl! A creature that followed him about in men's clothes! A thief! Pah! Disgusting!

Each detail that occurred to her made it more unbearable. She remembered her conversation with him through the telephone when she was at Versailles, his explanation the next day, which she had so foolishly accepted, his kiss! Her blood raged in her eyes, and her hands shook together. On that evening he had refused to stay to dinner; no doubt he had gone back to his house in Paris, and had dined with the girl—in the hall of the Aphrodite! It was not to be believed, and after that memorable moment under the elm-tree, too, when the sun was going down—after an honest girl's first kiss, the first she had given any man since she had been a child and her lips had timidly touched her dead father's forehead! People would not believe it,

perhaps, because she was an artist and an opera-singer; but it was true.

It was no wonder that they had succeeded in deceiving her for awhile, the two Orientals together! They had actually made Rufus Van Torp believe their story, which must have been a very different matter from lying to a credulous young woman who had let herself fall in love! But for her friend Lady Maud she would still be their victim. Her heart went out to the woman who had saved her from her fate, and with the thought came the impulse to send a message of gratitude; and the first fury of her anger subsided with the impulse to do so. By-and-by it would cool and harden to a lasting resentment that would not soften again.

Her hand still shook so that she could hardly hold the pen steady while she wrote the telegram.

"Unspeakably grateful. If can join me here will gladly wait for you. Must see you at once. Do come."

She felt better as she rose from the table, and when she looked at herself in the mirror she saw that her face had changed again and that her natural colour was returning. She rang for Potts, remembering that the half-hour must be almost up.

The maid appeared at once, still looking very small and mild; but one glance told her that the worst was past. She raised her head, threw back her shoulders and stood up straight, apparently growing visibly till she regained her ordinary size.

"Potts," Margaret said, facing round upon her, "I've been in a rage, but I'm only angry now. Do I look like a human being again?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered the maid, inspecting her gravely. "You are still a bit pale, ma'am, and your eye is a trifle wild, I may say. A motor veil, perhaps, if you are thinking of going out, ma'am."

"I haven't got such a thing, have I? I never motor now."

Potts smiled the smile of the very superior maid, and moved towards a perfectly new leather hat-box that stood in the corner.

"I always put in two for sea, ma'am," she said. "You wore one when we crossed the Channel the last time, if you remember."

"Potts, you're a treasure!"

"Yes, ma'am," Potts answered vaguely in her meek voice, as she dived into one of the curious secret pockets

of the hat-box. "That is, ma'am," she said, correcting herself, "I mean, it's very kind of you to say so."

Without further consulting Margaret, who had seated herself before the dressing-table, Potts proceeded to fasten a broad-brimmed black straw hat on the thick brown hair; she then spread an immense white veil over it, drew it under her mistress's chin and knotted it in a way that would have amazed a seaman.

When Margaret was putting on her gloves, Mrs. Rushmore herself came to the door, knocked and opened discreetly before there was any answer.

"My dear child," she asked, "what in the world is the matter? Nothing serious, I trust?"

"Oh, nothing," Margaret answered, going forward to meet her, and finding her natural voice. "I'm sorry if I've kept you waiting."

"It's so unlike you, my dear," Mrs. Rushmore said, with emphasis; "and Potts looked quite grave when she brought me your message half an hour ago."

"You would have been more surprised if she had burst out laughing," Margaret said viciously.

"My dear," Mrs. Rushmore answered, "I'm astonished

at you! I know something has happened. I know it. You are not yourself this morning."

This was a statement so evidently absurd that it could not be answered except by a flat contradiction; so Margaret said nothing, and went on working her hand into a perfectly new glove.

"I see that you have not even opened your letters," Mrs. Rushmore continued severely. "Except that," she added, noticing the loose sheets of Lady Maud's letter on the toilet-table.

Margaret gathered them up hastily, folded them into a crumpled package and thrust them into the empty envelope. For once, she had forgotten her caution, but she retrieved herself by pushing the thick letter into her long glove, much to Potts's distress, for it made an ugly lump. She made it worse by forcing in the second envelope, which contained the newspaper cutting.

"I'm ready now," she said.

Mrs. Rushmore turned and led the way with stately steps; she was always imposing, but when she was offended she was monumental. The two went out in silence, opened their parasols, the one black, the other scarlet, and walked slowly down the straight, dull street

side by side. Mrs. Rushmore spoke first, after they had gone some distance.

"I know," she said, "that something has happened. It was in that letter. You cannot deny it, Margaret. It was in the letter you folded in that hurried manner."

"The news was," answered the Primadonna, still vicious.

"I told you so. My dear child, it's not of the slightest use to try to deceive me. I've known you since you were a child."

"I'm not trying to deceive you."

"When I asked what had happened, you answered 'Nothing.' I do not call that very frank, do you?"

"Potts was there, to begin with," explained Margaret rather crossly.

But Mrs. Rushmore no longer heard. Her head was up, her parasol lay back upon her shoulder, her faded eyes were brighter than before, and the beginning of a social smile wreathed her hitherto grave lips. There was game about, and she was pointing; there were lions to windward.

"There's Mr. Van Torp, my dear," she said in quite another tone, and very low, "and unless I'm much

mistaken—yes, I knew it! He's with Count Kralinsky. I saw the Count from the window yesterday when he arrived. I hope our friend will present him."

"I daresay," Margaret answered indifferently, but surveying the two men through the white mist of her thick veil.

"Yes," said Mrs. Rushmore with delight, and almost whispering in her excitement. "He has seen us, and now he's telling the Count who we are."

Margaret was used to her excellent old friend's ways on such occasions, and gave no more heed to them than she would have given to a kitten scampering after a ball of string. The kitten would certainly catch the ball in the end, and Mrs. Rushmore would as surely capture the lion.

Mr. Van Torp raised his hat when he was within four or five paces of the ladies, and his companion, who was a head and shoulders taller than he, slackened his pace and stopped a little way behind him as Mrs. Rushmore shook hands and Margaret nodded pleasantly.

"May I present Count Kralinsky?" asked the American. "I've met him before, and we've just renewed our acquaintance."

Mr. Van Torp looked from Mrs. Rushmore to Margaret, and tried to see her expression through her veil. She answered his look by a very slight inclination of the head.

"We shall be delighted," said the elder lady, speaking for both.

Mr. Van Torp introduced the Count to Mrs. Rushmore and then to Margaret, calling her "Miss Donne," and she saw that the man was handsome as well as tall and strong. He had a magnificent golden beard, a clear complexion, and rather uncertain blue eyes, in one of which he wore a single eyeglass without a string. He was quietly dressed and wore no jewellery, excepting one ring, in which blazed a large "tallow-topped" ruby. He had the unmistakable air of a man of the world, and was perfectly at his ease. When he raised his straw hat he disclosed a very white forehead, and short, thick fair hair. There was no sign of approaching middle age in his face or figure, but Margaret felt, or guessed, that he was older than he looked.

In her stiffly correct French, Mrs. Rushmore said that she was enchanted to make his acquaintance, and Margaret murmured sweetly but unintelligibly.

"The Count speaks English perfectly," observed Mr. Van Torp.

He ranged himself beside Margaret, leaving the foreigner to Mrs. Rushmore, much to her gratification.

"We were going to walk," she said. "Will you join us?" And she moved on.

"It is a great pleasure to meet you," Kralinsky said by way of opening the conversation. "I have often heard of you from friends in Paris. Your little dinners at Versailles are famous all over Europe. I am sure we have many mutual friends, though you may never have heard my name."

Mrs. Rushmore was visibly pleased, and as the way was not very wide, Margaret and Van Torp dropped behind. They soon heard the other two enumerating their acquaintances. Kralinsky was surprised at the number of Mrs. Rushmore's friends, but the Count seemed to know everybody, from all the Grand Dukes and Archdukes in Russia, Germany, and Austria, to the author of the latest successful play in Paris, and the man of science who had discovered how to cure gout by radium. Kralinsky had done the cure, seen the play, and dined with the royalties within the last few

weeks. Mrs. Rushmore thought him one of the most charming men she had ever met.

In the rear Mr. Van Torp and the Primadonna were not talking; but he looked at her, she looked at him, they both looked at Kralinsky's back, and then they once more looked at each other and nodded; which meant that Van Torp had recognised the man he had met selling rubies in New York, and that Margaret understood this.

"I'll tell you something else that's quite funny, if you don't mind dropping a little farther behind," he said.

Margaret walked still more slowly till a dozen paces separated them from the other two.

"What is it?" she asked in a low tone.

"I believe he's my old friend from whom I learned to whistle *Parsifal*," answered the American. "I'm pretty sure of it, in spite of a good many years and a beard—two things that change a man. See his walk? See how he turns his toes in? Most cow-boys walk like that."

"How very odd that you should meet again!" Mar-

garet was surprised, but not deeply interested by this new development.

"Well," said Van Torp thoughtfully, "if I'd known I was going to meet him somewhere, I'd have said this was as likely a place as any to find him in, now that I know what it was he whistled. But I admit that the other matter has more in it. I wonder what would happen if I asked him about Miss Barrack?"

"Nothing," Margaret answered confidently. "Nothing would happen. He has never heard of her."

Van Torp's sharp eyes tried in vain to penetrate the veil.

"That's not quite clear," he observed. "Or else this isn't my good day."

"The girl fooled you," said Margaret in a low voice. "Did she mention his name to you?"

"Well, no——"

"She never saw him in her life, or if she ever did, it was she who robbed him of rubies; and it was not the other way, as you supposed. Men are generally inclined to believe what a nice-looking girl tells them!"

"That's true," Van Torp admitted. "But all the same, I don't quite understand you. There's a mean-

ing in your voice that's not in the words. Excuse me if I'm not quick enough this morning, please. I'm doing my best."

"Your friend Baraka has been arrested and sent to prison in London for stealing a very valuable ruby from the counter in Pinney's," Margaret explained. "The stone had just been taken there by Monsieur Logotheti to be cut. The girl must have followed him without his knowing it, and watched her chance, though how old Pinney can have left such a thing lying on the counter where anyone could take it is simply incomprehensible. That's what you heard in my voice when I said that men are credulous."

Mr. Van Torp thought he had heard even more in her accent when she had pronounced Logotheti's name. Besides, she generally called him "Logo," as all his friends did. The American said nothing for a moment, but he glanced repeatedly at the white veil, through which he saw her handsome features without their expression.

"Well," he said at last, almost to himself, for he hardly expected her to understand the language of his surprise, "that beats the band!"

"It really is rather odd, you know," responded Margaret, who understood perfectly. "If you think I've adorned the truth I'll give you the Police Court report. I have it in my glove. Lady Maud sent it to me with a letter." She added, after an instant's hesitation, "I'm not sure that I shall not give you that to read too, for there's something about you in it, and she is your best friend, isn't she?"

"Out and out. I daresay you'd smile if I told you that I asked her to help me to get you to change your mind."

"No," Margaret answered, turning slowly to look at him. "She tells me so in this letter."

"Does she really?" Van Torp had guessed as much, and had wished to undermine the surprise he supposed that Margaret had in store for him. "That's just like her straightforward way of doing things. She told me frankly that she wouldn't lift a finger to influence you. However, it can't be helped, I suppose."

The conclusion of the speech seemed to be out of the logical sequence.

"She has done more than lift a finger now," Margaret said.

"Has she offended you?" Van Torp ventured to ask, for he did not understand the constant subtone of anger he heard in her voice. "I know she would not mean to do that."

"No. You don't understand. I've telegraphed to ask her to join us here."

Van Torp was really surprised now, and his face showed it.

"I wish we were somewhere alone," Margaret continued. "I mean, out of the way of Mrs. Rushmore. She knows nothing about all this, but she saw me cramming the letters into my glove, and I cannot possibly let her see me giving them to you."

"Oh, well, let me think," said the millionaire. "I guess I want to buy some photographs of Bayreuth and the *Parsifal* characters in that shop, there on the right. Suppose you wait outside the door, so that Mrs. Rushmore can see you if she turns around. She'll understand that I'm inside. If you drop your parasol towards her you can get the letters out, can't you? Then as I come out you can just pass them to me behind the parasol, and we'll go on. How's that? It won't take one second, anyhow. You can make-believe your glove's

uncomfortable, and you're fixing it, if anybody you know comes out of the shop. Will that do? Here we are. Shall I go in?"

"Yes. Don't be long! I'll cough when I'm ready."

The operation succeeded, and the more easily as Mrs. Rushmore went quietly on without turning her head, being absorbed and charmed by Kralinsky's conversation.

"You may as well read the newspaper cutting now," Margaret said when they had begun to walk again. "That cannot attract attention, even if she does look round, and it explains a good many things. It's in the thinner envelope, of course."

Van Torp fumbled in the pocket of his jacket, and brought out the slip of newspaper without the envelope, a precaution which Margaret noticed and approved. If she had been able to forget for a moment her anger against Logotheti she would have been amazed at the strides her intimacy with Van Torp was making. He himself was astounded, and did not yet understand, but he had played the great game for fortune against adversaries of vast strength and skill, and had won by his qualities rather than his luck, and they did not de-

sert him at the most important crisis of his life. The main difference between his present state of mind and his mental view, when he had been fighting men for money, was that he now felt scruples wholly new to him. Things that had looked square enough when millions were at stake appeared to him "low-down" where Margaret was the prize.

She watched him intently while he read the printed report, but his face did not change in the least. At that short distance she could see every shade of his expression through the white veiling, though he could not see hers at all. He finished reading, folded the slip carefully, and put it into his pocket-book instead of returning it to the envelope.

"It does look queer," he said slowly. "Now let me ask you one thing, but don't answer me unless you like. It's not mere inquisitiveness on my part." As Margaret said nothing, though he waited a moment for her answer, he went on. "That ruby, now—I suppose it's to be cut for you, isn't it?"

"Yes. He gave it to me in Versailles, and I kept it some days. Then he asked me to let him have it to take to London when I came here."

"Just so. Thank you. One more question, if I may. That stone I gave you, I swear I don't know that it's not glass—anyhow, that stone, does it look at all like the one that was stolen?"

"Oh no! It's quite another shape and size. Why do you ask? I don't quite see."

"What I mean is, if these people are around selling rubies, there may be two very much alike, that's all."

"Well, if there were? What of it?"

"Suppose—I'm only supposing, mind, that the girl really had another stone about her a good deal like the one that was stolen, and that somebody else was the thief. Queer things like that have happened before."

"Yes. But old Pinney is one of the first experts in the world, and he swore to the ruby."

"That's so," said Van Torp thoughtfully. "I forgot that."

"And if she had the other stone, she had stolen it from Monsieur Logotheti, I have not the least doubt."

"I daresay," replied the millionaire. "I'm not her attorney. I'm not trying to defend her. I was only thinking."

"She was at his house in Paris," Margaret said,

quite unable to keep her own counsel now. "It was when I was at Versailles."

"You don't say so! Are you sure of that?"

"He admitted it when I was talking to him through the telephone, and I heard her speaking to him in a language I did not understand."

"Did you really? Well, well!" Mr. Van Torp was beginning to be puzzled again. "Nice voice, hasn't she?"

"Yes. He tried to make me think he wasn't sure whether the creature was a boy or a girl."

"Maybe he wasn't sure himself," suggested the American, but the tone in which she had spoken the word "creature" had not escaped him.

He was really trying to put the case in a fair light, and was not at all manœuvring to ascertain her state of mind. That was clear enough now. How far she might go he could not tell, but what she had just said, coupled with the way in which she spoke of the man to whom she was engaged as "Monsieur Logotheti," made it quite evident that she was profoundly incensed against him, and Van Torp became more than ever anxious not to do anything underhand.

“Look here,” he said, “I’m going to tell you something. I took a sort of interest in that Tartar girl the only time I saw her. I don’t know why. I daresay I was taken in by her—just ordinary ‘taken in,’ like a tenderfoot. I gave her that fellow’s address in New York.” He nodded towards Kralinsky. “When I found he was here, I wired Logotheti to tell her, since she’s after him. I suppose I thought Logotheti would go right away and find her, and get more mixed up with her than ever. It was mean of me, wasn’t it? That’s why I’ve told you. You see, I didn’t know anything about all this, and that makes it meaner still, doesn’t it?”

Possibly if he had told her these facts forty-eight hours earlier she might have been annoyed, but at present they seemed to be rather in his favour. At all events he was frank, she thought. He declared war on his rival, and meant fight according to the law of nations. Lady Maud would not be his friend if he were playing any double game, but she had stuck to him throughout his trouble in the spring, he had emerged victorious and reinstated in public opinion, and she had been right. Lady Maud knew him better

than anyone else, and she was a good woman, if there ever was one.

Yet he had accused himself of having acted "meanly." Margaret did not like the word, and threw up her head as a horse does when a beginner holds on by the curb.

"You need not make yourself out worse than you are," she answered.

"I want to start fair," said the millionaire, "and I'd rather your impression should improve than get worse. The only real trouble with Lucifer was he started too high up."

This singular statement was made with perfect gravity, and without the slightest humorous intention, but Margaret laughed for the first time that day, in spite of the storm that was still raging in the near distance of her thoughts.

"Why do you laugh?" asked Van Torp. "It's quite true. I don't want to start too high up in your estimation and then be turned down as unfit for the position at the end of the first week. Put me where I belong and I won't disappoint you. Say I was doing something that wasn't exactly low-down, considering the ob-

ject, but that mightn't pass muster at an honour-parade, anyhow. And then say that I've admitted the fact, if you like, and that the better I know you the less I want to do anything mean. It won't be hard for you to look at it in that light, will it? And it'll give me the position of starting from the line. Is that right?"

"Yes," Margaret answered, smiling. "Slang 'right' and English 'right'! You ask for a fair field and no favour, and you shall have it."

"I'll go straight," Van Torp answered.

He was conscious that he was hourly improving his knowledge of women's little ways, and that what he had said, and had purposely expressed in his most colloquial manner, had touched a chord which would not have responded to a fine speech. For though he often spoke a sort of picturesque dialect, and though he was very far from being highly educated, he could speak English well enough when he chose. It probably seemed to him that good grammar and well-selected words belonged to formal occasions and not to everyday life, and that it was priggish to be particular in avoiding slang and cowardly to sacrifice an hereditary freedom from the bonds of the subjunctive mood.

"I suppose Lady Maud will come, won't she?" he asked suddenly, after a short silence.

"I hope so," Margaret said. "If not, she will meet me in Paris, for she offers to do that in her letter."

"I'm staying on in this place because you said you didn't mind," observed Van Torp. "Do you want me to go away if she arrives?"

"Why should I? Why shouldn't you stay?"

"Oh, I don't know. I was only thinking. Much obliged anyway, and I'll certainly stay if you don't object. We shall be quite a party, sha'n't we? What with us three, and Lady Maud and Kralinsky there——"

"Surely you don't call him one of our 'party'!" objected Margaret. "He's only just been introduced to us. I daresay Mrs. Rushmore will ask him to dinner or luncheon, but that will be all."

"Oh yes! I suppose that will be all."

But his tone roused her curiosity by its vagueness.

"You knew him long ago," she said. "If he's not a decent sort of person to have about, you ought to tell us—indeed you should not have introduced him at all if he's a bad lot."

Mr. Van Torp did not answer at once, and seemed to be consulting his recollections.

"I don't know anything against him," he said at last. "All foreigners who drift over to the States and go West haven't left their country for the same reasons. I suppose most of them come because they've got no money at home and want some. I haven't any right to take it for granted that a foreign gentleman who turns cow-boy for a year or two has cheated at cards, or anything of that sort, have I? There were all kinds of men on that ranch, as there are on every other and in every mining camp in the West, and most of 'em have no particular names. They get called something when they turn up, and they're known as that while they stay, and if they die with their boots on, they get buried as that, and if not, they clear out when they've had enough of it; and some of 'em strike something and get rich, as I did, and some of 'em settle down to occupations, as I've known many do. But they all turn into themselves again, or turn themselves into somebody else after they go back. While they're punching cattle they're generally just 'Dandy Jim' or 'Levi Longlegs,' as that fellow was, or something of that sort."

"What were you called?" asked Margaret.

"I?" Van Torp smiled faintly at the recollection of his nickname. "I was always Fanny Cook."

Margaret laughed.

"Of all the inappropriate names!"

"Well," said the millionaire, still smiling, "I guess it must have been because I was always sort of gentle and confiding and sweet, you know. So they concluded to give me a girl's name as soon as they saw me, and I turned out a better cook than the others, so they tacked that on, too. I didn't mind."

Margaret smiled too, as she glanced at his jaw and his flat, hard cheeks, and thought of his having been called "Fanny."

"Did you ever kill anybody, Miss Fanny?" she asked, with a little laugh.

A great change came over his face at once.

"Yes," he answered very gravely. "Twice, in fair self-defence. If I had hesitated, I should not be here."

"I beg your pardon," Margaret said quietly. "I should not have asked you. I ought to have known."

"Why?" he asked. "One gets that kind of question asked one now and then by people one doesn't

care to answer. But I'd rather have you know something about my life than not. Not that it's much to be proud of," he added, rather sadly.

"Some day you shall tell me all you will," Margaret answered. "I daresay you did much better than you think, when you look back."

"Lady Maud knows all about me now," he said, "and no one else alive does. Perhaps you'll be the second that will, and that'll be all for the present. They want us to come up with them, do you see?"

Mrs. Rushmore and Kralinsky had stopped in their walk and were waiting for them. They quickened their pace.

"I thought perhaps this was far enough," said Mrs. Rushmore. "Of course I could go on farther, and it's not your usual walk, my dear, but unless you mind——"

Margaret did not mind, and said so readily; whereupon Mrs. Rushmore deliberately took Van Torp for her companion on the way back.

"I'm sure you won't object to walking slowly," she said to him, "and Miss Donne and the Count can go on as fast as they like, for they are both good walkers.

I am sure you must be a great walker," she added, turning to the Russian.

He smiled blandly and bent his head a little, as if he were acknowledging a compliment. Van Torp looked at him quietly.

"I should have thought you were more used to riding," said the American.

"Ah yes!" The indifferent answer came in a peculiarly oily tone, though the pronunciation was perfect. "I was in the cavalry before I began to travel. But I walked over two thousand miles in Central Asia, and was none the worse for it."

Margaret was sure that she was not going to like him, as she moved on with him by her side; and Van Torp, walking with Mrs. Rushmore, was quite certain that he was Levi Longlegs, who had herded cattle with him for six months very long ago.

CHAPTER II.

LOGOTHETI reached his lodgings in Saint James's Place at six o'clock in the evening of the day on which he had promised to dine with Van Torp, and the latter's note of excuse was given to him at once. He read it, looked out of the window, glanced at it again, and threw it into the waste-paper basket without another thought. He did not care in the least about dining with the American millionaire. In fact, he had looked forward to it rather as a bore than a pleasure. He saw on his table, with his letters, a flat and almost square parcel, which the addressed label told him contained the Archæological Report of the Egyptian Exploration Fund, and he had heard that the new number would contain an account of a papyrus recently discovered at Oxyrrhynchus, on which some new fragments of Pindar had been found. No dinner that could be devised, and no company that could be asked to meet him at it,

could be half as delightful as that to the man who so deeply loved the ancient literature of his country, and he made up his mind at once that he would not even take the trouble to go to a club, but would have a bird and a salad in his rooms.

Unhappily for his peace and his anticipated feast of poetry, he looked through his letters to see if there were one from Margaret, and there was only a coloured post-card from Bayreuth, with the word "greetings" scrawled beside the address in her large hand. Next to the card, however, there was a thick letter addressed in a commercial writing he remembered but could not at once identify; and though it was apparently a business communication, and could therefore have waited till the next morning, when his secretary would come as usual, he opened it out of mere curiosity to know whence it came.

It was from Mr. Pinney the jeweller, and it contained a full and conscientious account of the whole affair of the theft, from the moment when Logotheti and Van Torp had gone out together until Mr. Pinney had locked up the stone in his safe again, and Baraka and Spiro had been lodged in Brixton Gaol. The envelope con-

tained also a cutting from the newspaper similar to the one Margaret had received from Lady Maud.

Logotheti laid the letter on the table and looked at his watch. It was now a quarter-past six, and old-fashioned shops like Pinney's close rather early in the dull season, when few customers are to be expected and the days are not so long as they have been. In the latter part of August, in London, the sun sets soon after seven o'clock, and Logotheti realised that he had no time to lose.

As he drove quickly up towards Bond Street, he ran over the circumstances in his mind, and came to the conclusion that Baraka had probably been the victim of a trick, though he did not exclude the bare possibility that she might be guilty. With all her cleverness and native sense, she might be little more than a savage who had picked up European manners in Constantinople, where you can pick up any manners you like, Eastern or Western. The merchant who had given her a letter for Logotheti only knew what she had chosen to tell him, and connived in her deception by speaking of her as a man; and she might have told him anything to account for having some valuable precious stones to dis-

pose of. But, on the other hand, she might not be a Tartar at all. Anyone, from the Bosphorus to the Amur, may speak Tartar, and pretend not to understand anything else. She might be nothing but a clever half-bred Levantine from Smyrna, who had fooled them all, and really knew French and even English. The merchant had not vouched for the bearer's character beyond saying that "he" had some good rubies to sell, called himself a Tartar, and was apparently an honest young fellow. All the rest was Baraka's own story, and Logotheti really knew of nothing in her favour beyond his intimate conviction that she was innocent. Against that stood the fact that the stolen ruby had been found secreted on her person within little more than half an hour of her having had a chance to take it from Pinney's shop.

From quite another point of view, Logotheti himself argued as Margaret had done. Baraka knew that he possessed the ruby, since she had sold it to him. She knew that he meant to have it cut in London. She might easily have been watching him and following him for several days in the hope of getting it back, carrying the bit of bottle glass of the same size about with her, carefully prepared and wrapped in tissue-paper, ready

to be substituted for the gem at any moment. She had watched him go into Pinney's, knowing very well what he was going for; she had waited till he came out, and had then entered and asked to see any rubies Mr. Pinney had, trusting to the chance that he might choose to show her Logotheti's, as a curiosity. Chance had favoured her, that was all. She had doubtless recognised the twist on the counter, and the rest had been easy enough. Was not the affair of the Ascot Cup, a much more difficult and dangerous theft, still fresh in everyone's memory?

Logotheti found Mr. Pinney himself in the act of turning the discs of the safe before going home and leaving his shopman to shut up the place. He smiled with grave satisfaction when Logotheti entered.

"I was hoping to see you, sir," he said. "I presume that you had my letter? I wrote out the account with great care, as you may imagine, but I shall be happy to go over the story with you if there is any point that is not clear."

Logotheti did not care to hear it; he wished to see the ruby. Mr. Pinney turned the discs again to their places, stuck the little key into the secret keyhole which

then revealed itself, turned it three times to the left and five times to the right, and opened the heavy iron door. The safe was an old-fashioned one that had belonged to his father before him. He got out the japanned tin box, opened that, and produced the stone, still in its paper, for it was too thick to be put into one of Mr. Pinney's favourite pill-boxes.

Logotheti undid the paper, took out the big uncut ruby, laid it in the palm of his hand, and looked at it critically, turning it over with one finger from time to time. He took it to the door of the shop, where the evening light was stronger, and examined it with the greatest care. Still he did not seem satisfied.

"Let me have your lens, Mr. Pinney," he said, "and some electric light and a sheet of white paper."

Mr. Pinney turned up a strong drop light that stood on the counter, and produced the paper and a magnifier.

"It's a grand ruby," he said.

"I see it is," Logotheti answered rather curtly.

"Do you mean to say," asked the surprised jeweller, "that you had bought it without thoroughly examining it, sir—you who are an expert?"

"No, that's not what I mean," answered the Greek,

bending over the ruby and scrutinising it through the strong magnifier.

Mr. Pinney felt himself snubbed, which had not happened to him for a long time, and he drew himself up with dignity. A minute passed, and Logotheti did not look up; another, and Mr. Pinney grew nervous; a few seconds more, and he received a shock that took away his breath.

"This is not my ruby," said Logotheti, looking up, and speaking with perfect confidence.

"Not—your—ruby!" Mr. Pinney's jaw dropped. "But——." He could get no further.

"I'm sorry," Logotheti said calmly. "I'm very sorry, for several reasons. But it's not the stone I brought you, though it's just as large, and most extraordinarily like it."

"But how do you know, sir?" gasped the jeweller.

"Because I'm an expert, as you were good enough to say just now."

"Yes, sir. But I am an expert too, and to the best of my expert belief this is the stone you left with me to be cut, the day before yesterday. I've examined it most thoroughly."

"No doubt," answered the Greek. "But you hadn't examined mine thoroughly before it was stolen, had you? You had only looked at it with me, on the counter here."

"That is correct, sir," said Mr. Pinney nervously. "That is quite true."

"Very well. But I did more than merely look at it through a lens or weigh it. I did not care so much about the weight, but I cared very much for the water, and I tried the ruby point on it in the usual way, but it was too hard, and then I scratched it in two places with the diamond, more out of curiosity than for any other reason."

"You marked it, sir? There's not a single scratch on this one! Merciful Providence! Merciful Providence!"

"Yes," Logotheti said gravely. "The girl spoke the truth. She had two stones much larger than the rest when she first came to me in Paris, this one and another. They were almost exactly alike, and she wanted me to buy both, but I did not want them, and I took the one I thought a little better in colour. This is the other, for she still had it; and, so far as I know, it is her legal

property, and mine is gone. The thief was one of those two young fellows who came in just when Mr. Van Torp and I went out. I remember thinking what nice-looking boys they were!"

He laughed rather harshly, for he was more annoyed than his consideration for Mr. Pinney made him care to show. He had looked forward to giving Margaret the ruby, mounted just as she wished it; and the ruby was gone, and he did not know where he was to find another, except the one that was now in Pinney's hands, but really belonged to poor Baraka, who could certainly not sell it at present. A much larger sum of money was gone, too, than any financier could lose with equanimity by such a peculiarly disagreeable mishap as being robbed. There were several reasons why Logotheti was not pleased.

So far as the money went, he was not sure about the law in such a case, and he did not know whether he could claim it of Pinney, who had really been guilty of gross carelessness after a lifetime of scrupulous caution. Pinney was certainly very well off, and would not suffer nearly as much by the loss of a few thousand pounds as from the shame of having been robbed in such an

impudent fashion of a gem that was not even his, but had been entrusted to his keeping.

"I am deeply humiliated," said the worthy old jeweller. "I have not only been tricked and plundered, but I have been the means of sending innocent people to prison."

"You had better be the means of getting them out again as soon as possible," said Logotheti. "You know what to do here in England far better than I. In my country a stroke of the pen would free Baraka, and perhaps another would exile you to Bagdad, Mr. Pinney!"

He spoke lightly, to cheer the old man, but Mr. Pinney shook his head.

"This is no jesting matter, sir," he said. "I feel deeply humiliated."

He really did, and it was evidently a sort of relief to him to repeat the words.

"I suppose," said Logotheti, "that we shall have to make some kind of sworn deposition, or whatever you call it, together, and we will go and do it at once, if you please. Lock up the ruby in the safe again, Mr. Pinney, and we will start directly. I shall not go back

to my lodgings till we have done everything we can possibly do to-night."

"But you will dine, sir?" Mr. Pinney put that point as only a well-regulated Englishman of his class can.

"I shall not dine, and you will not dine," answered Logotheti calmly, "if our dinner is at all likely to keep those people in prison an hour longer than is inevitable."

Mr. Pinney looked graver than ever. He was in the habit of dining early, and it is said that an Englishman does not fight on an empty stomach, and will eat an excellent breakfast before being hanged.

"You can eat sandwiches in the hansom," said the Greek coldly.

"I was thinking of you, sir," Mr. Pinney answered gloomily, as he finished the operation of shutting the safe; he did not like sandwiches, for his teeth were not strong.

"You must also make an effort to trace those two young men who stole the ruby," said Logotheti.

"I most certainly shall," replied the jeweller, "and if it is not found we will make it good to you, sir,

whatever price you set upon it. I am deeply humiliated, but nobody shall say that Pinney and Son do not make good any loss their customers sustain through them."

"Don't worry about that, Mr. Pinney," said Logotheti, who saw how much distressed the old jeweller really was.

So they went out and hailed a hansom, and drove away.

It would be tiresome to give a detailed account of what they did. Mr. Pinney had not been one of the principal jewellers in London for forty years without having been sometimes in need of the law; and occasionally, also, the law had been in need of him as an expert in very grave cases, some of which required the utmost secrecy as well as the greatest possible tact. He knew his way about in places where Logotheti had never been; and having once abandoned the idea of dinner, he lost no time; for the vision of dinner after all was over rose softly, as the full moon rises on a belated traveller, very pleasant and companionable by the way.

Moreover, as the fact that Baraka and Spiro were really innocent has been kept in view, the manner in

which they were proved so is of little importance, nor the circumstances of their being let out of Brixton Gaol, with a vague expression of regret on the part of the law for having placed faith in what Mr. Pinney had testified "to the best of his belief," instead of accepting a fairy story which a Tartar girl, caught going about in men's clothes, told through the broken English of a Stamboul interpreter. The law, being good English law, did not make a fuss about owning that it had been mistaken; though it reprimanded Mr. Pinney openly for his haste, and he continued to feel deeply humiliated. It was also quite ready to help him to find the real thieves, though that looked rather difficult.

For law and order, in their private study, with no one looking on, had felt that there was something very odd about the case. It was strange, for instance, that the committed person should have a large bank account in Paris in his, or her, own name, and should have made no attempt to conceal the latter when arrested. It was queer that "Barak" should be known to a number of honourable Paris jewellers as having sold them rubies of excellent quality, but that there should never have been the least suspicion that he, or she,

took any that belonged to other people. It was still more extraordinary that "Barak" should have offered an enormous ruby, of which the description corresponded remarkably well with the one that had appeared in evidence at the Police Court, to two French dealers in precious stones, who had not bought it, but were bearing it in mind for possible customers, and were informed of Barak's London address, in case they could find a buyer. In the short time since Baraka had been in prison, yards of ciphered telegrams had been exchanged between the London and Paris police; for the Frenchmen maintained that if the Englishmen had not made a mistake, there must have been a big robbery of precious stones somewhere, to account for those that Baraka was selling; but that, as no such robbery, or robberies, had been heard of anywhere in Europe, America, India, or Australia, the Englishmen were probably wrong and had locked up the wrong person. For the French jewellers who had bought the stones all went to the Paris Chief of Police and laid the matter before him, being much afraid that they had purchased stolen goods which had certainly not been offered for sale in "market overt." The result was that the English police had begun to

feel rather nervous about it all, and were extremely glad to have matters cleared up, and to say so, and to see about the requisite order to set the prisoners at large.

Also, Mr. Pinney restored the ruby to her, and all her other belongings were given back to her, even including the smart grey suit of men's clothes in which she had been arrested; and her luggage and other things which the manager of the hotel where she had been stopping had handed over to the police were all returned; and when Spiro appeared at the hotel to pay the small bill that had been left owing, he held his head as high as an Oriental can when he has got the better of anyone, and that is pretty high indeed. Furthermore, Mr. Pinney insisted on giving Logotheti a formal document by which Messrs. Pinney and Son bound themselves to make good to him, his heirs, or assigns, the loss of a ruby, approximately of a certain weight and quality, which he had lost through their carelessness.

All these things were arranged with as little fuss and noise as might be; but it was not possible to keep the singular circumstances out of the newspapers; nor

was it desirable, except from Mr. Pinney's point of view, for Baraka had a right to be cleared from all suspicion in the most public manner, and Logotheti insisted that this should be done. It was done, and generously too; and the girl's story was so wonderfully romantic that the reporters went into paroxysms of adjectivitis in every edition of their papers, and scurried about town like mad between the attacks to find out where she was and to interview her. But in this they failed; and the only person they could lay hands on was Logotheti's private secretary, who was a middle-aged Swiss with a vast face that was as perfectly expressionless as a portrait of George the Fourth on the signboard of an English country inn, or a wooden Indian before the door of an American tobacconist's shop. He had been everywhere and spoke most known languages, for he had once set up a little business in Constantinople that had failed; and his power of knowing nothing when he had a secret to keep for his employer, was as the combined stupidity of ten born idiots.

He knew nothing. No, he did not know where Baraka was; he did not know what had become of her

servant Spiro; he did not know where Logotheti was; he did not know anything; if the reporters had asked him his own name, he would very likely have answered that he did not know that either. The number of things he did not know was perfectly overwhelming. The reporters came to the conclusion that Logotheti had spirited away the beautiful Tartar; and they made some deductions, but abstained from printing them yet, though they worked them out on paper, because they were well aware that Logotheti was engaged to marry the celebrated Cordova, and was too important a personage to be trifled with, unless he had a fall, which sometimes happens to financiers.

On the day following Baraka's liberation, Lady Maud received Margaret's pressing telegram begging her to go to Bayreuth. The message reached her before noon, about the time when Margaret and her companions had come back from their morning walk, and after hesitating for half-an-hour, she telegraphed that she would come with pleasure, and would start at once, which meant that evening.

She had just read the official account of the ruby case in its new aspect, and she did not believe a word

of the story. To her mind it was quite clear that Logotheti was still infatuated with the girl, that he had come to London as fast as he could, and that he had deliberately sworn that the ruby was not his, but another one, in order to get her out of trouble. If it was not his it had not been stolen from Pinney's, and the whole case fell through at once. If she was declared innocent the stone must be given back to her; he would take it from her as soon as they were alone and return it to his own pocket; and being an Oriental, he would probably beat her for robbing him, but would not let her out of his sight again till he was tired of her. Lady Maud had heard from her late husband how all Turks believed that women had no souls and should be kept under lock and key, and well fed, and soundly beaten now and then for the good of their tempers. This view was exaggerated, but Lady Maud was in a humour to recall it and accept it without criticism, and she made up her mind that before leaving town to join Margaret she would make sure of the facts. No friend of hers should marry a man capable of such outrageous deeds.

If she had not been an impulsive woman she could

never have done so much good in the world; and she had really done so much that she believed in her impulses, and acted on them without taking into consideration the possibility that she might be doing harm. But the damage which very actively good people sometimes do quite unintentionally is often greater and more lasting than that done by bad people, because the good ones carry with them the whole resistless weight of real goodness and of real good works already accomplished.

Perhaps that is why honestly convinced reformers sometimes bring about more ruin in a few months than ten years of bribery and corruption have wrought before them.

Lady Maud was a reformer, in a sense, and she was afraid of nothing when she thought she was doing right. She went to Logotheti's lodgings and asked to see him, as regardless of what anyone should think of her, if she were recognised, as she had been in the old days when she used to go to Van Torp's chambers in the Temple in the evening.

She was told that Logotheti was out of town. Where? The servant did not know that. The lady

could see the secretary, who might, perhaps, tell her. He received everyone who had business with Monsieur Logotheti.

She went up one flight and was admitted to a very airy sitting-room, simply furnished. There were several large easy-chairs of different shapes, all covered with dark wine-coloured leather, and each furnished with a different appliance for holding a book or writing-materials. There was a long bookcase full of books behind glass. There was a writing-table, on which were half-a-dozen monstrously big implements of an expensive kind, but handsome in their way: a paper-cutter hewn from at least a third of an elephant's tusk, and heavy enough to fell a man at a blow; an enormous inkstand, apparently made of a solid brick of silver, without ornament, brightly polished, and having a plain round hole in the middle for ink; a blotting-case of the larger folio size, with a Greek inscription on it in raised letters of gold; a trough of imperial jade, two feet long, in which lay a couple of gold penholders fitted with new pens, and the thickest piece of scarlet sealing-wax Lady Maud had ever seen. They were objects of the sort that many rich men receive as presents, or order with-

out looking at them when they are furnishing a place that is to be a mere convenience for a few days in the year. There was nothing personal in what Lady Maud saw, except the books, and she could not have examined them if she had wished to.

The one thing that struck her was a delicate suggestion of sweetness in the fresh air of the room, something that was certainly not a scent, and yet was not that of the perfumes or gums which some Orientals like to burn where they live. She liked it, and wondered what it was, as she glanced about for some one of the unmistakable signs of a woman's presence.

The Swiss secretary had risen ponderously to receive her, and as she did not sit down he remained standing. His vast face was fringed with a beard of no particular colour, and his eyes were fixed and blue in his head, like turquoises set in pale sole leather.

"I am Countess Leven," she said, "and I have known Monsieur Logotheti some time. Will you kindly tell me where he is?"

"I do not know, madam," was the answer.

"He is not in London?"

"At present I do not know, madam."

"Has he left no address? Do you not forward his letters to him?"

"No, madam. I do not forward his letters to him."

"Then I suppose he is on his yacht," suggested Lady Maud.

"Madam, I do not know whether he is on his yacht."

"You don't seem to know anything!"

"Pardon me, madam, I think I know my business. That is all I know."

Lady Maud held her beautiful head a little higher and her lids drooped slightly as she looked down at him, for he was shorter than she. But the huge leathern face was perfectly impassive, and the still, turquoise eyes surveyed her without winking. She had never seen such stolidity in a human being. It reminded her of those big Chinese pottery dogs with vacant blue eyes that some people keep beside a fire-place or a hall door, for no explicable reason.

There was clearly nothing to be done, and she thought the secretary distinctly rude; but as that was no reason why she should be, she bade him good-

morning civilly and turned to go. Somewhat to her surprise, he followed her quickly across the room, opened the door for her and went on into the little hall to let her out. There was a small table there, on which lay some of Logotheti's hats, and several pairs of gloves were laid out neatly before them. There was one pair, of a light grey, very much smaller than all the rest, so small indeed that they might have fitted a boy of seven, except that they looked too narrow for any boy. They were men's gloves as to length and buttons, but only a child could have worn them.

Lady Maud saw them instantly, and remembered Baraka's disguise; and as she passed the big umbrella jar to go out, she saw that with two of Logotheti's sticks there was a third, fully four inches shorter; just a plain crook-handled stick with a silver ring. That was enough. Baraka had certainly been in the lodgings and had probably left in them everything that belonged to her disguise. The fact that the gloves and the stick were in the hall, looked very much as if she had come in dressed as a man and had left them there when she had gone away in woman's attire. That she was with Logotheti, most probably on his

yacht, Lady Maud had not the least doubt, as she went down the stairs.

The Swiss secretary stood at the open door on the landing till she was out of sight below, and then went in again, and returned to work over a heap of business papers and letters. When he had worked half an hour, he leaned back in his leathern chair to rest, and stared fixedly at the bookcase. Presently he spoke aloud in English, as if Lady Maud were still in the room, in the same dull, matter-of-fact tone, but more forcibly as to expression.

"It is perfectly true, though you do not believe me, madam. I do not know anything. How the dickens should I know where they are, madam? But I know my business. That is all."

CHAPTER III.

THE *Erinna* was steaming quietly down the Channel in a flat calm, at the lazy rate of twelve knots an hour, presumably in order to save her coal, for she could run sixteen when her owner liked, and he was not usually fond of going slow. Though September was at hand, and Guernsey was already on the port quarter, the sea was motionless and not so much as a cat's-paw stirred the still blue water; but the steamer's own way made a pleasant draught that fanned the faces of Logotheti and Baraka as they lay in their long chairs under the double awning outside the deck-house.

The Tartar girl wore a skirt and jacket of dark blue yachting serge, which did not fit badly considering that they had been bought ready-made by Logotheti's man. She had little white tennis shoes on her feet, which were crossed one over the other on the

deck-chair, but instead of wearing a hat she had bound a dove-coloured motor-veil on her head by a single thick gold cord, in the Asiatic way, and the thin folds hung down on each side, and lay on her shoulders, shading her face, and the breeze stirred them. Logotheti's valet had been sent out in a taximeter, provided with a few measurements and plenty of cash, and commissioned to buy everything that a girl who had nothing at all to wear, visible or invisible, could possibly need. He was also instructed to find a maid who could speak Tartar, or at least a little Turkish.

After five hours he had come back with a heavy load of boxes of all shapes and sizes and the required maid. You can find anything in a great city, if you know how to look for it, and he had discovered through an agency a girl from Trebizond who had been caught at twelve years old by missionaries, brought to England and educated to go into service; she spoke English very prettily, and had not altogether forgotten the *lingua franca* of Asia. It was her first place outside of the retired missionary's house, where she had been brought up and taught by a good old lady who had much to say about the heathen, and gave her to under-

stand that all her deceased forefathers and relatives were frying. As she could not quite believe this, and had not a grateful disposition, and was of an exceedingly inquiring turn of mind, she was very glad to get away, and when she learned from the valet that her mistress was a Tartar lady and a Musulman, and could not speak English, her delight was quite boundless; she even said a few unintelligible words, in a thoughtful tone, which did not sound at all like any Christian prayer or thanksgiving she had learned from the missionaries.

Moreover, while Logotheti and Baraka were lying in their chairs by the deck-house, she was telling the story of her life and explaining things generally to the good-looking young second mate on the other side of the ship.

The consequence of her presence, however, was that Baraka was dressed with great neatness and care, and looked very presentable, though her clothes were only ready-made things, bought by a manservant, who had only her height and the size of her waist to guide him. Logotheti watched her delicate, energetic profile, admiring the curves of her closed lips, and the

wilful turning up of her little chin. She was more than very pretty now, he thought, and he was quietly amused at his own audacity in taking her to sea alone with him, almost on the eve of his marriage. It was especially diverting to think of what the proper people would say if they knew it, and to contrast the intentions they would certainly attribute to him with the perfectly honourable ones he entertained.

As for Baraka, it never occurred to her that she was not as safe with him as she had been in her father's house in the little white town far away, nearly three years ago; and besides, her steel bodkin with the silver handle had been given back to her, and she could feel it in its place when she pressed her left hand to her side. But the little maid who had been brought up by the missionaries took quite another point of view, though this was not among the things she was explaining so fluently in her pretty English to the second mate.

Logotheti had been first of all preoccupied about getting Baraka out of England without attracting attention, and then for her comfort and recovery from the strain and suffering of the last few days. As for that, she

was like a healthy young animal, and as soon as she had a chance she had fallen so sound asleep that she had not waked for twelve hours. Logotheti's intention was to take her to Paris by a roundabout way, and establish her under some proper sort of protection. Margaret was still in Germany, but would soon return to France, and he had almost made up his mind to ask her advice, not dreaming that in such a case she could really deem anything he did an unpardonable offence. He had always laughed at the conventionalities of European life, and had paid very little heed to them when they stood in his way.

He had been on deck a long time that day, but Baraka had only been established in her chair a few minutes. As yet he had hardly talked with her of anything but the necessary preparations for the journey, and she had trusted him entirely, being so worn out with fatigue and bodily discomfort, that she was already half asleep when he had at last brought her on board, late on the previous night. Before the yacht had sailed he had received Van Torp's telegram informing him that Kralinsky was at Bayreuth; for his secretary had sat up till two in the morning to telegraph him the latest

news and forward any message that came, and Van Torp's had been amongst the number.

Baraka turned her head a little towards him and smiled.

"Kafar the Persian said well that you are a great man," she said in her own language. "Perhaps you are one of the greatest in the world. I think so. He told me you were very rich, and so did the Greek merchants who came with me to France. When you would not buy the other ruby I thought they were mistaken, but now I see they were right. Where you are, there is gold, and men bow before you. You say: 'Set Baraka free,' and I am free. Also, you say: 'Give her the ruby that is hers,' and they give it, and her belongings, too, all clean and in good order and nothing stolen. You are a king. Like a king, you have a new fire-ship of your own and an army of young men to do your bidding. They are cleaner and better dressed than the sailors on the Sultan's fire-ships that lie in the Golden Horn, for I have seen them. They are as clean as the young effendis in London, in Paris! It is wonderful! You have not many on your ship, but you could have ten ships, all with sailors like these, and they would be

all well washed. I like clean people. Yes, you are a great man."

She turned her eyes away from him and gazed lazily at the still blue sea, having apparently said all she had to say. Logotheti was well used to Asiatics, and understood that her speech was partly conventional and intended to convey that sort of flattery which is dear to the Oriental soul. Baraka knew perfectly well what a real king was, and the difference between a yacht and a man-of-war, and many other things which she had learned in Constantinople. Primitive people, when they come from Asia, are not at all simple people, though they are often very direct in pursuing what they want.

"I have something of importance to tell you," Logotheti said after a pause.

Baraka prepared herself against betraying surprise by letting her lids droop a little, but that was all.

"Speak," she answered. "I desire knowledge more than gold."

"You are wise," said the Greek gravely. "No doubt you remember the rich man Van Torp, for whom

I gave you a letter, and whom you had seen on the day you were arrested."

"Van Torp." Baraka pronounced the name distinctly, and nodded. "Yes, I remember him well. He knows where the man is whom I seek, and he wrote the address for me. I have it. You will take me there in your ship, and I shall find him."

"If you find him, what shall you say to him?" Logotheti asked.

"Few words. These perhaps: 'You left me to die, but I am not dead, I am here. Through me you are a rich, great man. The rubies are my marriage-portion, which you have taken. Now you must be my husband.' That is all. Few words."

"It is your right," Logotheti answered. "But he will not marry you."

"Then he shall die," replied Baraka, as quietly as if she were saying that he should go for a walk.

"If you kill him, the laws of that country may take your life," objected the Greek.

"That will be my portion," the girl answered, with profound indifference.

"You only have one life," Logotheti observed. "It

is yours to throw away. But the man you seek is not in that country. Van Torp has telegraphed me that he is much nearer. Nevertheless, if you mean to kill him, I will not take you to him, as I intended to do."

Baraka's face had changed, though she had been determined not to betray surprise at anything he said; she turned to him, and fixed her eyes on his, and he saw her lashes quiver.

"You will tell me where he is," she said anxiously. "If you will not take me I will go alone with Spiro. I have been in many countries with no other help. I can go there also, where he is. You will tell me."

"Not if you mean to murder him," said Logotheti, and she saw that he was in earnest.

"But if he will not be my husband, what can I do, if I do not kill him?" She asked the question in evident good faith.

"If I were you, I should make him share the rubies and the money with you, and then I would leave him to himself."

"But you do not understand," Baraka protested. "He is young, he is beautiful, he is rich. He will take

some other woman for his wife, if I leave him. You see, he must die, there is no other way. If he will not marry me, it is his portion. Why do you talk? Have I not come across the world from the Altai, by Samarkand and Tiflis, as far as England, to find him and marry him? Is it nothing that I have done, a Tartar girl alone, with no friend but a bag of precious stones that any strong thief might have taken from me? Is the danger nothing? The travel nothing? Is it nothing that I have gone about like a shameless one, with my face uncovered, dressed in a man's clothes? That I have cut my hair, my beautiful black hair, is that as nothing too? That I have been in an English prison? That I have been called a thief? I have suffered all these things to find him, and if I come to him at last, and he will not be my husband, shall he live and take another woman? You are a great man, it is true. But you do not understand. You are only a Frank, after all! That little maid you have brought for me would understand me better, though she has been taught for six years by Christians. She is a good girl. She says that in all that time she has never once forgotten to say the Fatiheh three times a day, and to

say '*el hamdu illah*' to herself after she has eaten! She would understand. I know she would. But you, never!"

The exquisite little aquiline features wore a look of unutterable contempt.

"If I were you," said Logotheti smiling, "I would not tell her what you are going to do."

"You see!" cried Baraka almost angrily. "You do not understand. A servant! Shall I tell my heart to my handmaid, and my secret thoughts to a hired man? I tell you, because you are a friend, though you have no understanding of us. My father feeds many flocks, and has many bondmen and bondwomen, whom he beats when it pleases him, and can put to death if he likes. He also knows the mine of rubies, as his father did before him, and when he desires gold he takes one to Tashkent, or even to Samarkand, a long journey, and sells it to the Russians. He is a great man. If he would bring a camel-bag full of precious stones to Europe he could be one of the greatest men in the world. And you think that my father's daughter would open her heart's treasure to one of her servants? I said well that you do not understand!"

Logotheti looked quietly at the slim young thing in a ready-made blue serge frock, who said such things as a Lady Clara Vere de Vere would scarcely dare to say above her breath in these democratic days; and he watched the noble little features, and the small white hands, that had come down to her through generations of chieftains, since the days when the primeval shepherds of the world counted the stars in the plains of Káf.

He himself, with his long Greek descent, was an aristocrat to the marrow, and smiled at the claims of men who traced their families back to Crusaders. With the help of a legend or two and half a myth, he could almost make himself a far descendant of the Tyndaridæ. But what was that compared with the pedigree of the little thing in a blue serge frock? Her race went back to a time before Hesiod, before Homer, to a date that might be found in the annals of Egypt, but nowhere else in all the dim traditions of human history.

"No," he said, after a long pause. "I begin to understand. You had not told me that your father was a great man, and that his sires before him had joined hand to hand, from the hand of Adam himself."

This polite speech, delivered in his best Tartar, though with sundry Turkish terminations and accents, somewhat mollified Baraka, and she pushed her little head backwards and upwards against the top of the deck-chair, as if she were drawing herself up with pride. Also, not being used to European skirts, she stuck out one tiny foot a little farther across the other, as she stretched herself, and she indiscreetly showed a pale yellow silk ankle, round which she could have easily made her thumb meet her second finger. Logotheti glanced at it.

"You will never understand," she said, but her tone had relented, and she made a concession. "If you will take me to him, and if he will not be my husband, I will let Spiro kill him."

"That might be better," Logotheti answered with extreme gravity, for he was quite sure that Spiro would never kill anybody. "If you will take an oath which I shall dictate, and swear to let Spiro do it, I will take you to the man you seek."

"What must be, must be," Baraka said in a tone of resignation. "When he is dead, Spiro can also kill me and take the rubies and the money."

"That would be a pity," observed the Greek, thoughtfully.

"Why a pity? It will be my portion. I will not kill myself because then I should go to hellfire, but Spiro can do it very well. Why should I still live, then?"

"Because you are young and beautiful and rich enough to be very happy. Do you never look at your face in the mirror? The eyes of Baraka are like the pools of paradise, when the moon rose upon them the first time, her waist is as slender as a young willow sapling that bends to the breath of a spring breeze, her mouth is a dark rose from Gulistán——"

But Baraka interrupted him with a faint smile.

"You speak emptiness," she said quietly. "What is the oath, that I may swear it? Shall I take Allah, and the Prophet, and the Angel Israfil to witness that I will keep my word? Shall I prick my hand and let the drops fall into your two hands that you may drink them? What shall I do and say? I am ready."

"You must swear an oath that my fathers swore before there were Christians or Musulmans in the world, when the old gods were still great."

"Speak. I will repeat any words you like. Is it a very solemn oath?"

"It is the most solemn that ever was sworn, for it is the oath of the gods themselves. I shall give it to you slowly, and you must try to pronounce it right, word by word, holding out your hands, like this, with the palms downwards."

"I am ready," said Baraka, doing as he bade her.

He quoted in Greek the oath that Hypnos dictates to Hera in the *Iliad*, and Baraka repeated each word, pronouncing as well as she could.

"I swear by the inviolable water of the Styx, and I lay one hand upon the all-nourishing earth, the other on the sparkling sea, that all the gods below may be our witnesses, even they that stand round about Kronos. Thus I swear!"

As he had anticipated, Baraka was much more impressed by the importance of the words she did not understand than if she had bound herself by any oath familiar to her.

"I am sorry," she said, "but what is done is done, and you would have it so."

She pressed her hand gently to her left side and felt the long steel bodkin, and sighed regretfully.

"You have sworn an oath that no man would dare to break," said Logotheti solemnly. "A man would rather kill pigs on the graves of his father and his mother than break it."

"I shall keep my word. Only take me quickly where I would be."

Logotheti produced a whistle from his pocket and blew on it, and a quartermaster answered the call, and was sent for the captain, who came in a few moments.

"Head her about for Jersey and Carterets, Captain," said the owner. "The sea is as flat as a board, and we will land there. You can go on to the Mediterranean without coaling, can you not?"

The captain said he could coal at Gibraltar, if necessary.

"Then take her to Naples, please, and wait for instructions."

Baraka understood nothing, but within two minutes she saw that the yacht was changing her course, for the afternoon sun was all at once pouring in on the deck,

just beyond the end of her chair. She was satisfied, and nodded her approval.

But she did not speak for a long time, paying no more attention to Logotheti's gaze than if he had not existed. No people in the world can remain perfectly motionless so long as Asiatics, perfectly absorbed in their own thoughts.

To the Greek's art-loving nature it was pure delight to watch her. Never, since he had first met Margaret Donne, had he seen any woman or young girl who appealed to his sense of beauty as Baraka did, though the impression she made on him was wholly different from that he received when Margaret was near.

The Primadonna was on a large scale, robust, magnificently vital, a Niké, even a young Hera; and sometimes, especially on the stage, she was almost insolently handsome, rather than beautiful like Lady Maud. Baraka was an Artemis, virginal, high-bred; delicately modelled for grace and speed rather than for reposeful beauty, for motion rather than for rest. It was true that the singer's walk was something to dream of and write verses about, but Baraka's swift-gliding step was that of the Maiden Huntress in the chase, her attitude in rest

was the pose of a watchful Diana, ready to spring up at a sound or a breath, a figure almost boyish in its elastic vigour, and yet deeply feminine in meaning.

Baraka once more turned her head without lifting it from the back of the deck-chair.

"I am hungry and thirsty again," she said gravely. "I do not understand."

"What will you eat, and what will you drink?" Logotheti asked.

She smiled and shook her head.

"Anything that is good," she said; "but what I desire you have not in your ship. I long for fat quails with Italian rice, and for fig-paste, and I desire a sherbet made with rose-leaves, such as the merchant's wife and I used to drink at the Kaffedji's by the Galata Bridge, and sometimes when we went up the Sweet Waters in a caïque on Friday. But you have not such things on your ship."

Logotheti smiled.

"You forget that I am myself from Constantinople," he said. "It is now the season for fat quails in Italy, and they are sent alive to London and Paris, and there are many in my ship, waiting to be eaten. There is

also fig-paste from the Stamboul confectioner near the end of the Galata Bridge, and preserved rose-leaves with which to make a sherbet, and much ice; and you shall eat and drink the things you like best. Moreover, if there is anything else you long for, speak."

"You are scoffing at Baraka!" answered the slim thing in blue serge, with the air of a displeased fairy princess.

"Not I. You shall see. We will have a table set here between us, with all the things you desire."

"Truly? And coffee too? Real coffee? Not the thin mud-broth of the Franks?"

"Real coffee, in a real *fldjan*."

Baraka clapped her small white hands for pleasure.

"You are indeed a very great man!" she cried. "You are one of the kings!"

At the sound of the clapping she had made, Logotheti's Greek steward appeared in a silver-laced blue jacket and a fez.

"He comes because you clapped your hands," Logotheti said, with a smile.

Baraka laughed softly.

"We are not in your ship," she said. "We are in Constantinople! I am happy." The smile faded quickly and her dark lashes drooped. "It is a pity," she added, very low, and her left hand felt the long steel bodkin through her dress.

The steward knew Turkish, but did not understand all she said in her own tongue; and besides, his master was already ordering an unusual luncheon, in Greek, which disturbed even his Eastern faculty of hearing separately with each ear things said in different languages.

Baraka was busy with her own thoughts again, and paid no more attention to her companion, until the steward came back after a few minutes bringing a low round table which he placed between the two chairs. He disappeared again and returned immediately with a salver on which there were two small cups of steaming Turkish coffee, each in its silver filigree stand, and two tall glasses of sherbet, of a beautiful pale rose-colour.

Baraka turned on her chair with a look of pleasure, tasted the light hot foam of the coffee, and then began to drink slowly with enjoyment that increased visibly with every sip.

"It is real coffee," she said, looking up at Logotheti. "It is made with the beans of Arabia that are picked out one by one for the Sheikhs themselves before the coffee is sold to the Indian princes. The unripe and broken beans that are left are sold to the great Pashas in Constantinople! And that is all there is of it, for the Persian merchant explained all to me, and I know. But how you have got the coffee of the Sheikhs, I know not. You are a very great man."

"The gates of the pleasant places of this world are all locked, and the keys are of gold," observed Logotheti, who could quote Asiatic proverbs by the dozen, when he liked. "But the doors of Hades stand always open," he added, suddenly following a Greek thought, "and from wheresoever men are, the way that leads to them is but one."

Baraka had tasted the sherbet, which interested her more than his philosophical reflections.

"This also is delicious," she said, "but in Stamboul even a poor man may have it for a few paras."

"And good water from the fountain for nothing," returned Logotheti.

There was silence again as she leaned back, suf-

ficiently satisfied to wait another hour for the fat quails, the Italian rice, and the fig-paste, to which she was looking forward. And the yacht moved on at her leisurely twelve-knot speed, through the flat calm of the late summer sea, while an atmosphere of bodily peace and comfort gathered round Baraka like a delicate mist that hid the future and softened the past.

By-and-by, when she had eaten the fat quail and the Italian rice, and then the fig-paste, and had drunk more sherbet of rose-leaves, and more coffee, but none of these things in any excess, that perfect peace came upon her which none but Asiatics can feel, and which we cannot understand; and they call it *Kéf*, and desire it more than any other condition of their inner and outer selves; but there is no translating of that word.

It is the inexplicable state of the cat when it folds its forepaw in, and is so quiet and happy that it can hardly purr, but only blinks mildly once in two or three minutes. Logotheti knew the signs of it, though he had never really felt it himself, and he knew very well that its presence has the power to deaden all purpose and active will in those who enjoy it. The sole object of taking opium is to produce it artificially, which is

never quite possible, for with most opium-smokers or opium-eaters the state of peace turns into stupor at the very moment when it is about to become consciously beatific.

He understood that this wonderful barbarian girl, who had shown such courage, such irresistible energy, such unchanging determination in the search that had lasted more than two years, was temporarily paralysed for any purpose of action by the atmosphere with which he was surrounding her. She would come to herself again, and be as much awake, as determined, and as brave as ever, but she was quiescent now, and the mere thought of effort would be really painful. Perhaps no one who has not lived in Asia can quite understand that.

Logotheti took out his notebook, which had a small calendar with a few lines for each day in the year, and he began to count days and calculate dates; for when he had expected to go to Bayreuth with the Primadonna he had found out all about the performances, and he knew how long she meant to stay.

His calendar told him that this was the off day, between the second and third representations of *Parsifal*,

and that Margaret had her rooms at the hotel for another week. He would allow two days more for her to reach Versailles and rest from the journey before she would wish to see him; and as he thought she had treated him rather badly in not letting him go with her, because he was not enough of a Wagnerian, he intended to keep her waiting even a day or two longer, on the sometimes mistaken theory that it is better to make a woman impatient than to forestall her wishes before she has had time to change her mind.

Besides, Van Torp's telegram showed that he was in Bayreuth, and Logotheti flattered himself that the more Margaret saw of the American, the more anxious she would be to see her accepted adorer. It was her own fault, since Logotheti might have been with her instead.

The result of his calculations was that he had at least ten days before him, and that as he was not at all bored by the little Tartar lady in blue serge, it was quite useless to put her ashore at Carterets and take her to Paris by that way. The idea of spending eight or nine hours alone in a hot and dirty railway-carriage, while she and her maid passed the night in another

compartment, was extremely dreary; and besides, he had not at all made up his mind what to do with her, and it would probably end in his taking her to his own house. Margaret would have some right to resent that; but as for the trip in the yacht, she need never know anything about it. The girl was really as safe with him as any girl could be with her own brother, and so long as no one knew that she was with him, nothing else mattered. Furthermore, he was good enough to be convinced that if she were let loose in Europe by herself, with plenty of money, boundless courage, and such a clever courier as Spiro seemed to be, she would certainly find Kralinsky at last and murder him, regardless of having sworn by the inviolable water of the Styx. Lastly, he saw that she was at present in that state of Asiatic peace in which it was perfectly indifferent to her what happened, provided that she were not disturbed.

He rose quietly and went aft. Though she was awake she scarcely noticed that he had left her, and merely opened and shut her eyes twice, like the happy cat already spoken of. She was not aware that the yacht changed her course again, though it was pleasant

not to have the reflection from the sea in her eyes any longer; if Logotheti had told her that he was heading to seaward of Ushant instead of for Jersey and Carterets, she would not have understood, nor cared if she had, and would have been annoyed at being disturbed by the sound of his voice.

It was pure bliss to lie there without a want, a thought, or a memory. An imaginative European might fancy that she had waking dreams and visions in the summer air; that she saw again the small white town, the foot-hills, the broad pastures below, the vastness of Altai above, the uncounted flocks, the distant moving herds, the evening sunlight on the walls of her father's house; or that she lived over again those mortal hours of imprisonment in the rocky hollow, and looked into the steel-bright eyes of the man who would not love her, and saw the tall figure of Saäd already dead, bending forward from the ledge and pitching headlong to the sand.

Not at all. She saw none of these things. She was quiescently blissful; the mysterious *Kéf* was on her, and the world stood still in the lazy enchantment—the yacht was not moving, the sun was not sinking west-

wards, her pulse was not beating, she was scarcely breathing, in her own self she was the very self of peace, motionless in an immeasurable stillness.

When the sky reddened at evening Logotheti was again in his chair, reading. She heard six bells struck softly, the first sound she had noticed in four hours, and she did not know what they meant; perhaps it was six o'clock *alla Franca*, as she would have called it; no one could understand European time, which was one in Constantinople, another in Paris, and another in England. Besides, it made no difference what time it was; but *Kéf* was departing from her—was gone already, and the world was moving again—not at all in an unpleasant or disturbing way, but moving nevertheless.

"When shall we reach that place?" she asked lazily, and she turned her face to Logotheti.

"Allah knows," he answered gravely, and he laid his book on his knees.

She had been so well used to hearing that answer to all sorts of questions since she had been a child that she thought nothing of it, and waited awhile before speaking again. Her eyes studied the man's face almost

unconsciously. He now wore a fez instead of a yacht-ing cap, and it changed his expression. He no longer looked in the least like a European. The handsome red felt glowed like blood in the evening light, and the long black silk tassel hung backwards with a dashing air. There was something about him that reminded Baraka of Saäd, and Saäd had been a handsome man, even in her eyes, until the traveller had come to her father's house with his blue eyes and golden beard. But Saäd had only seen her unveiled face once, and that was the last thing he saw when the ball from the Mauser went through his forehead.

"I mean," she asked after some time, "shall we be there to-morrow? or the next day? I see no land on this side; is there any on the other?"

"No," Logotheti answered, "there is no land near. Perhaps, far off, we might see a small island."

"Is that the place?" Baraka began to be interested at last.

"The place is far away. You must have patience. All hurry comes from Satan."

"I am not impatient," the girl answered mildly. "I am glad to rest in your ship, for I was very tired, more

tired than I ever was when I was a child, and used to climb up the foot-hills to see Altai better. It is good to be in your ship for awhile, and after that, what shall be, will be. It is Allah that knows."

"That is the truth," responded the Greek. "Allah knows. I said so just now. But I will tell you what I have decided, if you will listen."

"I listen."

"It is better that you should rest several days after all your weariness, and the man you seek will not run away, for he does not know you are so near."

"But he may take another woman," Baraka objected, growing earnest at once. "Perhaps he has already! Then there will be two instead of one."

"Spiro," said Logotheti, with perfect truth, "would as soon kill two as one, I am sure, for he is a good servant. It will be the same to him. You call me a great man and a king; I am not a king, for I have no kingdom, though some kingdoms would like to have as much ready-money as I. But here, on the ship, I am the master, not only because it is mine, and because I choose to command, but because the men are bound by English law to obey me; and if they should refuse and

overpower me, and take my ship where I did not wish to go, the laws of all nations would give me the right to put them all into prison at once, for a long time. Therefore when I say, "Go to a certain place," they take the ship there, according to their knowledge, for they are trained to that business and can guide the vessel towards any place in the world, though they cannot see land till they reach it. Do you understand all these things?"

"I understand," Baraka answered, smiling. "But I am not bound to obey you, and at least I can beg you to do what I ask, and I think you will do it."

Her voice grew suddenly soft, and almost tender, for though she was only a Tartar girl, and very young and slim, she was a woman. Eve had not had long experience of talking when she explained to Adam the properties of apples.

Logotheti answered her smile and her tone.

"I shall do what you ask of me, but I shall do it slowly rather than quickly, because that will be better for you in the end. If we had gone on as we were going, we should have got to land to-night, but to a wretched little town from which we should have had to take

a night-train, hot and dirty and dusty, all the way to Paris. That would not help you to rest, would it?"

"Oh no! I wish to sleep again in your ship, once, twice, till I cannot sleep any more. Then you will take me to the place."

"That is what you shall do. To that end I gave orders this afternoon."

"You are wise, as well as great," Baraka said.

She let her feet slip down to the deck, and she sat on the side of the chair towards Logotheti, looking at her small white tennis-shoes, which had turned a golden pink in the evening reflections, and she thoughtfully settled her serge skirt over her slim yellow silk ankles, almost as a good many European girls would always do if they did not so often forget it.

She rose at last, and went and looked over the rail at the violet sea. It is not often that the Atlantic Ocean is in such a heavenly temper so near the Bay of Biscay. Logotheti got out of his chair and came and stood beside her.

"Is this sea always so still?" she asked.

She was gazing at the melting colours, from the dark blue, spattered with white foam, under the yacht's

side, to the deep violet beyond, and farther to the wine-purple and the heliotrope and the horizon melting up to the eastern sky.

Logotheti told her that such days came very rarely, even in summer, and that Allah had doubtless sent this one for her especial benefit. But she only laughed.

"Allah is great, but he does nothing where there are English people," she observed, and Logotheti laughed in his turn.

They left the rail and walked slowly forward, side by side, without speaking; and Logotheti told himself how utterly happy he should be if Baraka could turn into Margaret and be walking with him there; yet something answered him that since she was not by his side he was not to be pitied for the company of a lovely Tartar girl whose language he could understand and even speak tolerably; and when the first voice observed rather drily that Margaret would surely think that he ought to feel very miserable, the second voice told him to take the goods the gods sent him and be grateful; and this little antiphone of Ormuzd and Ahriman went on for some time, till it occurred to him to stop the duo

by explaining to Baraka how a European girl would probably slip her arm, or at least her hand, through the arm of the man with whom she was walking on the deck of a yacht, because there was generally a little motion at sea, and she would like to steady herself; and when there was none, there ought to be, and she would do the same thing by force of habit. But Baraka looked at such behaviour quite differently.

"That would be a sort of dance," she said. "I am not a dancing girl! I have seen men and women dancing together, both Russians in Samarkand and other people in France. It is disgusting. I would rather go unveiled among my own people!"

"Which may Allah forbid!" answered Logotheti devoutly. "But, as you say, where there are Englishmen, Allah does nothing; the women go without veils, and the boys and girls dance together."

"I have done worse," said Baraka, "for I have dressed as a man, and if a woman did that among my people she would be stoned to death and not buried. My people will never know what I have done since I got away from them alive. But he thought he was leaving me there to die!"

"Surely. I cannot see why you wish to marry a man who robbed you and tried to compass your death! I can understand that you should dream of killing him, and he deserves to be burnt alive, but why you should wish to marry him is known to the wisdom of the blessed ones!"

"You never saw him," Baraka answered with perfect simplicity. "He is a beautiful man; his beard is like the rays of the morning sun on a ripe cornfield. His eyes are bright as an eagle's, but blue as sapphires. He is much taller and bigger and stronger than you are. Do you not see why I want him for a husband? Why did he not desire me for his wife? Am I crooked, am I blinded by the smallpox, or have I six fingers on both hands and a hump on my shoulder like the Witch of Altai? Was my portion a cotton shift, one brass bangle and a horn comb for my hair? I gave him the riches of the world to take me, and he would not! I do not understand. Am I an evil sight in a man's eyes? Tell me the truth, for you are a friend!"

"You are good to see," Logotheti answered, stopping and pretending to examine her face critically as she

stood still and faced him. "I was telling you what I thought of you before luncheon, I think, but you said I spoke 'emptiness,' so I stopped."

"I do not desire you to speak for yourself," returned Baraka. "I wish you to speak for any man, since I go about unveiled and any man may see me. What would they say in the street if they saw me now, as a woman? That is what I must know, for he is a Frank, and he will judge me as the Franks judge when he sees me! What will he say?"

"Shall I speak as a Frank? Or as they speak in Constantinople?"

"Speak as he would speak, I pray. But speak the truth."

"I take Allah to witness that I speak the truth," Logotheti answered. "If I had never seen you, and if I were walking in the Great Garden in London and I met you by the bank of the river, I should say that you were the prettiest dark girl in England, but that I should like to see you in a beautiful Feringhi hat and the best frock that could be made in Paris."

Baraka's face was troubled, and she looked into his eyes anxiously.

"I understand," she said. "Before I meet him I must have more clothes, many beautiful new dresses. It was shameless, but it was easy to dress as a man, after I had learned, for it was always the same—the difference was three buttons—or four buttons, or a high hat or a little hat; not much. Also the Feringhi men button their garments as the Musulmans do, the left over the right, but I often see their women's coats buttoned like a Hindu's. Why is this? Have the women another religion than the men? It is very strange!"

Logothesi laughed, for he had really never noticed the rather singular fact which had struck the born Asiatic at once.

"But this woman's dressing is very difficult to learn," Baraka went on, leaning back upon the rail with both elbows, and sticking out her little white shoes close together. "Without the girl Maggy whom you have found for me—but her real name is Gula, and she is a good Musulman—without her, Allah knows what I should do! I could not put on these things for myself; alone, I cannot take them off. When I was like a man, buttons! Two, three, four, twenty—what did it matter? All the same way and soon done! But now, I

cannot tell what I am made of. Allah knows and sees what I am made of. Hooks, eyes, strings, little bits one way, little bits the other way, like the rigging of ships—those Turkish ships with many small sails that go up the Bosphorus, you remember? And it is all behind, as if one had no front! Gula knows how it is done. But if I were alone, without her help, Allah is my witness, I would tie the things all round me decently and sit very still for fear they should come off! That is what I should do!”

The Greek thought her extremely amusing. She punctuated her explanations with small gestures indicative of her ignorance and helplessness.

“You will soon grow used to it,” he said. “But you must get some pretty things in Paris before you go to meet the man. It would also be better to let your hair grow long before meeting him, for it is hard to wear the hats of the Feringhi ladies without hair.”

“I cannot wait so long as that. Only to get pretty dresses, only so long! I will spend a thousand pounds or two—is that enough? I have much money in Paris; I can give more.”

"You can get a good many things for a thousand pounds, even in Paris," Logotheti answered.

Baraka laughed.

"It will not be what I paid for the first clothes after I ran away," she said. "I did not know then what the stones were worth! A little ruby to one woman for a shift and an over-tunic, a little ruby to another for a pair of shoes, a little ruby for a veil and a head-blanket, all little rubies! For each thing one! I did not know; the women did not know. But at Samarkand I sold one for money to a good Persian merchant, and what he gave me was enough for the journey, for me and the old woman servant I hired there, till we got to Tiflis; for the Persian merchants everywhere gave me letters from one to another, and their wives took me in, or I should have been robbed. That is how I reached Stamboul after many, many months, more than a year. The Persian merchants are good men. All fear them, because they are wise in their dealings, but they are honest men. They do not lie, but they are silent and shake their heads, and you must guess what they mean; and if you do not guess right, that is your fault, not theirs. Why should they

“speak when they can hold their peace? But this is all emptiness! We must talk of the fine dresses I must buy in Paris, and of what I must put on my head. The barbers in Paris sell wigs. I have seen them in the windows, very well made, of all colours, even of the Khenna colour. I shall wear a wig, so that the beautiful Feringhi hat will stay on. I shall perhaps wear a Khenna-coloured wig.”

“I should not advise a wig,” said Logotheti gravely; “certainly not one of that dye.”

“You know, and you are a friend. When I feel rested we will go to Paris, and you shall take me to all the richest shops and tell them in French what I want. Will you?”

“I shall do all I can to help you,” answered the Greek, wondering what would happen if his friends met him piloting a lovely barbarian about between the smartest linen-draper’s and the most fashionable dress-maker’s establishment in the Rue de la Paix.

They had watched the sun set, and the clear twilight glow was in the cloudless sky and on the violet sea. Not a sound disturbed the stillness, except the smooth wash of the water along the yacht’s side. At

her leisurely three-quarters speed the engines ran noiselessly and the twin screws turned well below the water-line in the flat calm. The watch below was at supper, and the captain was just then working a sunset amplitude in the chart-room to make quite sure of his deviation on the new course; for he was a careful navigator, and had a proper contempt for any master who trusted another man's adjustment of his compasses.

Baraka drew one end of her veil round her throat and across her mouth and over to the other side of her face, so that her features were covered almost as by a real yashmak. The action was well-nigh unconscious, for until she had left Constantinople she had never gone with her face uncovered, except for a short time, of necessity, after she had begun her long journey, almost without clothes to cover her, not to speak of a veil. But the sensation of being screened from men's sight came back pleasantly as she stood there; for the Greek was much more like her own people than the French or English, and he spoke her language, and to be with him was not like being with Mr. Van Torp, or walking in the streets of London and Paris.

The veil brought back suddenly the sense of real

power that the Eastern woman has, and of real security in her perpetual disguise, which every man must respect on pain of being torn to pieces by his fellows. Reams of trash have been written about the inferior position of women in the East; but there, more than anywhere else in the world, they rule and have their will. Their domination there never had a parallel in Europe but once, and that was in the heyday of the Second French Empire, when a great nation was almost destroyed to please a score of smart women.

Veiled as she was, Baraka turned to Logotheti, who started slightly and then laughed; for he had not been watching her, and the effect of the improvised yashmak was sudden and striking. He made the Oriental salutation in three movements, touching his heart, his lips, and his forehead with his right hand.

"Peace be with you, Hanum Effendim!" he said, as if he were greeting a Turkish lady who had just appeared beside him.

"Peace, Effendim," answered Baraka, with a light little laugh; but after a moment she went on, and her voice had changed. "It is like Constantinople," she said, "and I am happy here—and it is a pity."

Logotheti thought he heard her sigh softly behind her veil, and she drew it still more closely to her face with her little ungloved hand, and rested one elbow on the rail, gazing out at the twilight glow. In all his recollections of many seas, Logotheti did not remember such a clear and peaceful evening; there was a spell on the ocean, and it was not the sullen, disquieting calm that often comes before a West Indian cyclone or an ocean storm, but rather that fair sleep that sometimes falls upon the sea and lasts many days, making men wonder idly whether the weather will ever break again.

The two dined on deck, with shaded lights, but screened from the draught of the ship's way. The evening was cool, and the little maid had dressed Baraka in a way that much disturbed her, for her taper arms were bare to the elbows, and the pretty little ready-made French dress was open at her ivory neck, and the skirt fitted so closely that she almost fancied herself in man's clothes again. But on her head she would only wear the large veil, confined by a bit of gold cord, and she drew one fold under her chin, and threw it over the opposite shoulder, to be quite covered; and she was

glad when she felt cold, and could wrap herself in the wide travelling cloak they had bought for her, and yet not seem to do anything contrary to the customs of a real Feringhi lady.

CHAPTER IV.

Lord Maud found Mr. Van Top waiting for her at the Baymouth station.

"You don't mean to say you've come right through?" he inquired, looking — with admiration as he gazed at her hand. "You're as fresh as paint."

"That's rather a dangerous thing to say to a woman nowadays," she answered in her rippling voice. "But mine won't come off. How is Margaret?"

Her tone changed as she asked the question.

"She showed me your letter about Lora," answered her friend without heeding the question, and watching her face to see if she were surprised.

She got into the carriage he had brought, and he stood by the door waiting for the porter who was waiting for her baggage. She had no maid with her.

"I'm glad you have told me," she answered, "though I wish she had not. You probably think that

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"I'm glad you have told me," she answered, "though I wish she had not. You probably think that

when I wrote that letter I remembered what you said to me in London about giving me money for my poor women."

"No," said Van Torp thoughtfully, "I don't believe I do think so. It was like me to make the offer, Maud. It was like the sort of man I've been, and you've known me. But it wouldn't have been like you to accept it. It wasn't exactly low-down of me to say what I did, but it's so precious like low-down that I wouldn't say it again, and I suppose I'm sorry. That's all."

His rough hand was on the side of the little open carriage. She touched it lightly with her gloved fingers and withdrew them instantly, for the porter was coming with her not very voluminous luggage.

"Thank you," she said quickly. "I understood, and I understand now."

They drove slowly up the Bahnhofstrasse, through the dull little town, that looks so thoroughly conscious of its ancient respectability as having once been the "Residenz" of a Duke of Württemberg, and of its vast importance as the headquarters of Richard Wagner's representatives on earth.

"See here," said Mr. Van Torp. "I've almost per-

sueded them all to run down to Venice, and I want to know why you won't come too?"

"Venice?" Lady Maud was surprised. "It's as hot as Tophet now, and full of mosquitoes. Why in the world do you want to take them there?"

"Well," answered the American, taking plenty of time over the monosyllable, "I didn't exactly mean to stay there more than a few minutes. I've bought a pretty nice yacht since I saw you, and she's there, eating her head off, and I thought you might all come along with me on her and go home that way, or somewhere."

"I had no idea you had a yacht!" Lady Maud smiled. "What it is to have the Bank of England in your pocket! Where did you get her, and what is her name? I love yachts!"

Van Torp explained.

"I forget what she was called," he said in conclusion, "but I changed her name. It's *Lancashire Lass* now."

"The dear old mare you rode that night! How nice of you! It's a horse's name, of course, but that doesn't matter. I'm so glad you chose it. I shall never

forget how you looked when you galloped off bareback in your evening clothes with no hat!"

"I don't know how I looked," said Van Torp gravely. "But I know quite well how I felt. I felt in a hurry. Now, what I want you to decide right away is whether you'll come, provided they will—for I don't suppose you and I could go mooning around in the yacht by ourselves."

"And I don't suppose," returned Lady Maud, mimicking him ever so little, "that if 'they' decide not to come, you will have time for a long cruise."

"Now that's not fair," objected the American. "I didn't intend to put it in that way. Anyhow, will you come if they do? That's the point."

"Really, it depends a little on who 'they' are. Do you mean only Margaret and that nice old friend of hers—Mrs. Patmore, isn't she? I never met her."

"Rushmore," said Van Torp, correcting her.

"It's the same thing," said Lady Maud vaguely, for she was trying to make up her mind quickly.

"You don't know her," replied her friend. "That's the reason why you say it's the same thing. Nothing's the same as Mrs. Rushmore."

"Is she very dreadful?" asked Lady Maud, in some apprehension.

"Dreadful? No! She's very sweet, I think. One of those real, old-fashioned, well-educated New York ladies, and refined right down to the ground. There's only one thing——"

He stopped, trying to find words to express the one thing.

"What is it? All you say about her sounds very nice——"

"She's got the celebrity habit."

"Lions?" suggested Lady Maud, who understood him.

"Yes," he assented, "she's a dandy after lions. She likes them for breakfast, dinner, and tea, with a sandwich thrown in between times. She likes them to talk to, and to look at, and to tell about. That's just a habit, I suppose, like chewing gum, but she'll never get over it at her age. She's got to have a party of some kind every other minute, even here, or she's uneasy at night. But I'm bound to say, with all truth, she does it well. She's a perfect lady, and she always says the

right thing and does the right thing. Besides, we're great friends, she and I. We get on beautifully."

"You're a celebrity," observed Lady Maud.

"So's Miss Donne, and a much bigger one. So's Logo, for that matter, but she doesn't think a great deal of Greeks. You're a sort of celebrity, too, and she's perfectly delighted you're coming, because you're 'Lady' Maud, and a Russian countess into the bargain. Then there's that other Russian—not that you're one, but you understand—Kralinsky is his name, Count Kralinsky. Ever hear that name?"

"Never. It sounds Polish."

"He might be anything. Sometimes I'm absolutely sure he's a man I used to know out West when I was on the ranch, and then again there's something quite different about him. Something about his legs or his eyes, I can't tell which. I don't quite make him out. There's one thing, though. He's the Kralinsky I bought your ruby from in New York a month ago, and he doesn't deny it, though I don't remember that he was a Count then. He seemed glad to see me again, but he doesn't seem to talk much about selling rubies now.

Perhaps he's got through that, as the camel said to the eye of the needle."

"Eh? What?" Lady Maud laughed.

"Oh, nothing. I guess it's out of the Bible, or something. I'll tell you all about him by-and-by. He's going away this afternoon, but he's promised to join us in Venice for a trip, because Mrs. Rushmore finds him so attractive. He seems to know everybody intimately, all over the world. I'd like you to see him. Here we are, and there's Miss Donne waiting for you on the steps. I wish we'd had a longer ride together."

They reached the hotel, and Van Torp went off promptly, leaving Margaret to take Lady Maud upstairs and introduce her to Mrs. Rushmore.

An hour later the two young women were together in Margaret's room, while Potts was unpacking for Lady Maud in the one that had been secured for her in spite of all sorts of difficulties.

The Primadonna was sitting at her toilet-table, turned away from the glass, and Lady Maud occupied the only possible chair there was, a small, low easy-chair, apparently much too small for such a tall woman, but less uncomfortable than it looked.

They exchanged the usual banalities. It was awfully good of Margaret to ask Maud, it was awfully good of Maud to come. The journey had been tolerable, thank you, by taking the Orient Express as far as Stuttgart. Margaret did not compare Maud's complexion to fresh paint, as Van Torp had done, but to milk and roses; and Maud said with truth that she had never seen Margaret looking better. It was the rest, Margaret said, for she had worked hard.

"Are you going on Mr. Van Torp's yacht?" asked Lady Maud suddenly. "He spoke to me about it on the way from the station, and asked me to come, in case you accept."

"I don't know. Will you go if I do? That might make a difference."

Lady Maud did not answer at once. She wished that she knew how matters had gone between Margaret and Van Torp during the last few days, for she sincerely wished to help him, now that she had made up her mind as to Logotheti's real character. Nevertheless, her love of fair-play made her feel that the Greek ought to be allowed a chance of retrieving himself.

"Yes," she said at last, "I'll go, on one condition. At least, it's not a condition, my dear, it's only a suggestion, though I hate to make one. Don't think me too awfully cheeky, will you?"

Margaret shook her head, but looked very grave.

"I feel as if I were getting into a bad scrape," she said, "and I shall be only too glad of any good advice. Tell me what I had better do."

"I must tell you something else first as a continuation of my letter, for all sorts of things happened after I wrote it."

She told Margaret all that has been already narrated, concerning the news that Baraka had been set at large on Logotheti's sworn statement that the ruby was not his, and that he had seen it in her possession in Paris; and she told how she had tried to find him at his lodgings, and had failed, and how strangely the leather-faced secretary's answers had struck her, and how she had seen Baraka's gloves and stick in Logotheti's hall; and finally she said she had taken it into her head that Logotheti had spirited away the Tartar girl on his yacht, which, as everyone in town had known through the papers, was at Cowes and in commission. For

Logotheti, in his evidence, had explained his absence from the Police Court by the fact that he had been off in the *Erinna* for two days, out of reach of news.

Margaret's face grew darker as she listened, for she knew Lady Maud too well to doubt but that every word was more than scrupulously true; and the deduction was at least a probable one. She bit her lip as she felt her anger rising again.

"What do you advise me to do?" she asked, in a sullen tone.

"Telegraph to Logo and prepay an answer of twenty words. Telegraph to his rooms in Saint James's Place and at the same time to his house in Paris. Telegraph anything you like that really needs an immediate reply. That's the important thing. If he does not answer within twenty-four hours—say thirty-six at the most—he is either on his yacht or hiding. Excuse the ugly word, dear—I don't think of any other. If you are afraid of the servants, I'll take the message to the telegraph-office and send it for you. I suppose you have some way of signing which the clerks don't recognise—if you sign at all."

Margaret leaned back in her chair in silence. After

a few seconds she turned towards the glass, rested her chin on her folded knuckles, and seemed to be consulting her own reflection. It is a way some women have. Lady Maud glanced at her from time to time, but said nothing. At last the Primadonna rose with a sweep that upset the light chair behind her, one of those magnificent sweeps that look so well on the stage and are a little too large for a room. She got her blotter and pen from a shelf, brought it back to the toilet-table, picked up the chair in a very quiet and sensible way, as if she had never been on the stage in her life, and sat down to write.

"I shall take your advice, dear," she said, opening the blotter, and placing a large sheet of paper in the right position.

Lady Maud rose and went to the window, where she stood looking out while Margaret wrote her message.

"You needn't write it out twice," she said, without turning round. "Just put 'duplicate message' and both addresses."

"Yes. Thank you."

Margaret was already writing. Her message said it

was absolutely necessary that she should see Logotheti directly, and bade him answer at once, if he could come to Bayreuth; if important financial affairs hindered him, she herself would return immediately to Paris to see him.

She was careful to write "financial" affairs, for she would not admit that any other consideration could delay his obedience. While she was busy she heard, but scarcely noticed, an unearthly hoot from a big motor-car that was passing before the hotel. There must have been something in the way, for the thing hooted again almost at once, and then several times in quick succession, as if a gigantic brazen ass were beginning to bray just under the window. The noises ended in a sort of wild, triumphant howl, with a furious puffing, and the motor took itself off, just as Margaret finished.

She looked up and saw Lady Maud half bent, as if she had been struck; she was clinging with one hand to the flimsy chintz curtain, and her face was as white as a sheet. Margaret started in surprise, and rose to her feet so suddenly that she upset the chair again.

"What has happened?" she cried. "Are you ill, dear?"

The delicate colour came slowly back to the smooth cheeks, the thoroughbred figure in black drew itself up with elastic dignity, and the hand let go of the curtain.

"I felt a little faint," Lady Maud answered. "Did I frighten you? It was nothing, and it's quite gone, I assure you."

"You looked dreadfully ill for a moment," Margaret said in a tone of concern. "Won't you let me send for something? Tea? Or something iced? I'm sure you have had nothing to eat or drink for hours! How disgracefully thoughtless of me!"

She was just going to ring, but her friend stopped her.

"No—please!" she cried. "I'm all right, indeed I am. The room is a little warm, I think, and I've been shut up in that stuffy train for thirty hours. Have you written your telegram? I'll put on my hat at once, and take it for you. The little walk will do me good. Where is the telegraph? But they can tell me downstairs. Don't bother! Walking always brings me round, no matter what has happened!"

She spoke nervously, in disjointed phrases, in a way not like herself, for there was generally an air of easy calm in all she did, as if nothing really mattered in the least, save when she was deeply interested; and hardly anything interested her now except what she had made her work. In all that belonged to that, she was energetic, direct, and quick.

Margaret was sure that something was wrong, but let her go, since she insisted, and Lady Maud folded the written message and went to the door. Just as she was going to turn the handle Margaret spoke to her.

"If I have no answer to that by to-morrow afternoon I shall accept Mr. Van Torp's invitation."

"I hope you will go," Lady Maud said with sudden decision, "for if you do, I can go with you, and I'm dying to see the new yacht!"

Margaret looked at her in surprise, for it was only a little while since she had seemed much less ready to join the party, and only willing to do so, if at all, in order to please her friend. She saw Margaret's expression.

"Yes," she said, as if in explanation, "I've been

thinking it over in the last few minutes, and I want very much to go with you all. I shall be back in less than an hour."

"An hour?"

"Say half an hour. I want a good walk."

She opened the door quickly and passed out, shutting it almost noiselessly after her; she was a very graceful woman and moved easily, whether in small spaces or large. In all her life she had probably never overturned a chair with her skirt, as Margaret had done twice within ten minutes. She had not Baraka's gliding movement, the virginal step of the girl of primeval race; hers was rather the careless, swaying walk of a thoroughbred in good training, long-limbed and deep-breathed, and swift at need, but indolently easy when no call was made upon her strength. She and Baraka and the young Primadonna represented well three of the possible types of beauty, very different from each other; so widely different that perhaps no two of them would be likely to appeal to one man, as mere feminine beauty, at the same period of his life.

Straight and tall in her mourning, Lady Maud went down the stairs of the hotel. As she was going out the

hall porter raised his cap, and she stopped a moment and asked him which was the nearest way to the telegraph-office. He stood on the doorstep and pointed in the direction she was to follow as he answered her question.

"Can you tell me," she asked, "whose motor-car it was that passed about ten minutes ago, and made so much noise?"

"Count Kralinsky's, my lady," the porter answered; for he spoke good English, and had the true hotel porter's respect for the British aristocracy abroad.

"He was the gentleman with the big fair beard, I suppose? Yes, thank you."

She went out into the dull street, with its monotonous houses, all two storeys high, and she soon found the telegraph-office and sent Margaret's duplicate message. She had not glanced at it, but the clerk asked her questions about words that were not quite clearly written, and she was obliged to read it through. It occurred to her that it was couched in extremely peremptory terms, even for an offended bride-elect; but that was none of her business.

When the clerk had understood, she walked up the

hill to the Festival Theatre. It all looked very dull and heavy, being an off day, and as she was not a Wagnerian it meant absolutely nothing to her. She was disappointed in the whole town, so far as she had expected anything of it, for she had pictured it as being either grand in its way, or picturesque, or at least charming; and it was not. Her British soul stuck up its nose in the general atmosphere of beer and sausage, which she instantly perceived rather than saw, and the Teutonism of everything, from the appearance of the Festival Theatre itself to the wooden faces of the policemen, and the round pink cheeks of the few children she met, roused antagonism in her from the first. She went on a little farther, and then turned back and descended the hill, always at the same even, easy pace, for she was rarely aware of any change of grade when she walked alone.

But by degrees her expression had altered since she had left the telegraph-office, and she looked profoundly preoccupied, as if she were revolving a very complicated question in her mind, which disliked complications; and there was now and then a flash of displeased wonder in her face, when she opened her eyes quite wide and

shut them, and opened them again, as if to make sure that she was quite awake.

She went on, not knowing whither and not caring, always at the same even pace, and hardly noticing the people who passed her, of whom a good many were in two-horse cabs, some in queer little German motors, and a few on foot; and still she thought, and wondered, and tried to understand, but could not. At all events, she was glad to be alone; she was glad not to have even Van Torp with her, who was by far the most congenial person she knew; for he had the rare good gift of silence, and used it very often, and when he talked she liked his odd speech, his unusual expressions, even his Western accent; she liked him for his simple, unswerving friendship, and for his kind heart—though the world would have screamed with laughter at the idea; and more than all, she liked him for himself, and because she knew certainly that neither he nor she could possibly, under any circumstances, grow to like each other in any other way.

But she did not wish that he were walking beside her now, and she was quite indifferent to the fact that

time was passing, and that Margaret was beginning to wonder where in the world she was.

"My dear child," Mrs. Rushmore said, when the Primadonna expressed her surprise, "those English people are all alike, when they are once out on a road by themselves. They must take a long walk. I am quite sure that at this moment Countess Leven is miles from here—miles, Margaret. Do you understand me? I tell you she is walking mile upon mile. All English people do. You are only half English after all, my dear, but I have known you to walk a long distance alone, for no good reason that I could see."

"It's good for the voice if you don't overdo it," Margaret observed.

"Yes. But Countess Leven does not sing, my dear. You forget that. Why should she walk mile upon mile like that? And I know Mr. Van Torp is not with her, for Justine told me a quarter of an hour ago that she heard him tell his man to bring him some hot water. So he is at home, you see. Margaret, what do you suppose Mr. Van Torp wants hot water for at this extraordinary hour?"

"I really don't know," Margaret answered, sipping

her tea rather gloomily, for she was thinking of the telegram she had given Lady Maud to send.

"You don't think Mr. Van Torp drinks, do you, my dear?" inquired Mrs. Rushmore.

"Hot water? Some people do. It's good for the digestion."

"No, you purposely misunderstand me. I mean that he makes use of it for—for the purpose of mixing alcoholic beverages alone in his room."

Margaret laughed.

"Never! If there's a perfectly sober man living, it is he!"

"I am glad to hear you say so, my dear. Because, if I thought he had habits, nothing would induce me to go on board his yacht. Nothing, Margaret! Not all his millions! Do you understand me? Margaret, dear, if you do not mind very much, I think we had better not accept his invitation after all, though I am sure it is well meant."

"You're very much mistaken if you think he drinks," Margaret said, still inclined to laugh.

"Well, my dear," returned Mrs. Rushmore, "I don't know. Justine certainly heard him tell his man to

bring him some hot water a quarter of an hour ago. Perhaps it may have been twenty minutes. It is a very extraordinary hour to ask for such a thing, I am sure."

Margaret suggested that Mr. Van Torp might possibly have a fancy to wash his hands in hot water at that unusual time of day, and Mrs. Rushmore seemed temporarily satisfied, for apparently she had not thought of this explanation.

"Margaret," she said solemnly, "if you feel that you can put your hand into the fire for Mr. Van Torp's habits, I will go with you on his yacht. Not otherwise, my dear."

The Primadonna laughed, and at last Mrs. Rushmore herself smiled, for she was not without a sense of humour.

"I cannot help it, my dear," she said. "You must not laugh at me if I am nervous about such things; nervous, you understand, not unreasonable. But since you are prepared to take all the responsibility I will go with you, my child. I cannot even say it is a sacrifice on my part, for I am an excellent sailor, as you know, and very fond of the sea. In my young days my dear

husband used to have a nice cat-boat at Newport, and he always took me with him. He used to say that I steered quite nicely."

The vision of Mrs. Rushmore steering a Newport cat-boat was quite new to Margaret, and her lips parted in surprise.

"Oh yes, my child, we were very fond of sailing in those days," continued the elderly lady, pleased with her recollections. "I often got quite wet, I assure you, but I remember catching cold only once. I think it rained that day. My dear husband, I recollect, asked me to name the boat when he bought it, and so I called it the *Sea-Mew*."

"The *Sea-Mew*?" Margaret was mystified.

"Yes. It was a cat-boat, my dear. Cats often mew. You understand, of course. It was not very funny, perhaps, but I remember that my dear husband laughed, and liked the name."

Margaret was laughing softly too.

"I think it's awfully good, you know," she said. "You needn't say it's not funny, for it's a very creditable little joke. Do you think you could steer a boat now?"

I'm sure I could never learn! Everything about sailing and ships is an utter mystery to me."

"I daresay I could steer a cat-boat," said Mrs. Rushmore calmly. "I am sure I could keep a row-boat straight. Let me see—there's a thing you move——"

"The rudder?" suggested Margaret.

"No, my dear. It's not the rudder, nor the boom, nor the centre-board—how all the names come back to me! Yes, it is the tiller. That is the name. When you know which way to move the tiller, it is quite easy to steer."

"I fancy so," said Margaret gravely.

"Most people move it the wrong way when they begin," continued the good lady. "You see 'port' means 'left' and 'starboard' means 'right.' But when you turn the tiller to the left the boat goes to the right. Do you understand?"

"It seems all wrong," observed Margaret, "but I suppose you know."

"Yes. In the same way, when you turn the tiller to the right the boat goes to the left. The great thing is to remember that. It is the same way with 'weather'

and 'lee.' I could show you if we were in a boat."

"I haven't a doubt of it," Margaret said. "You're perfectly amazing! I believe you are a regular sailor."

"Oh no," protested Mrs. Rushmore modestly; "but indeed I often took the cat-boat out alone, now that I think of it. I used to raise the sail alone—I mean, I hoisted it. 'Hoist'—that is the proper word, I remember. I was quite strong in those days."

"Really, you are most extraordinary!" Margaret was genuinely surprised. "You'll astonish Mr. Van Torp when he hears your nautical language on the yacht! Fancy your knowing all about sailing! I knew you could swim, for we've often been in together at Biarritz—but sailing! Why did you never tell me?"

"Shall we keep some tea for Countess Leven?" asked Mrs. Rushmore, changing the subject. "I fear it will get quite cold. Those English people never know when to stop walking. I cannot understand what they can see in it. Perhaps you will kindly touch the bell, my dear, and I will send the tea away. It can be brought fresh for her when she comes. Thank you, Margaret.

But she will not come in till it is just time to dress for dinner. Mark my words, my child, the Countess will be late for dinner. All English people are. Have you heard from Monsieur Logotheti to-day?"

"Not to-day," Margaret answered, repressing a little start, for she was as near to being nervous as she ever was, and she was thinking of him just then, and the question had come suddenly.

"I think it is time you heard from him," said Mrs. Rushmore, her natural severity asserting itself. "I should think that after those very strange stories in the papers he would write to you and explain, or come himself. By-the-bye, perhaps you will kindly pass me the *Herald*, my dear. What did you once tell me was the name of his yacht?"

"The *Erinna*," Margaret answered, handing Mrs. Rushmore the sheet.

"Exactly! I think that means the 'Fury.'"

"He told me it was the name of a Greek poetess," Margaret observed.

"On account of her temper, I suppose," answered the good lady absently, for she was looking up and down the columns in search of something she had already

seen. "Here it is!" she said. "It is under the yachting news. "Cape Finisterre. Passed at 4 P.M., going south, steam yacht *Erinna*, with owner and party on board. All well.' My dear child, it is quite clear that if this is Monsieur Logotheti's yacht, he is going to Gibraltar."

"I don't know anything about geography," Margaret said, and her wrath, which had been smouldering sullenly for days, began to glow again.

"Margaret," said Mrs. Rushmore, "you surprise me! You were very well taught——"

But the Primadonna did not hear the long tirade of mild reproof that followed. She knew well enough where Gibraltar was, and that Logotheti was going all the way round to the Mediterranean on his yacht with someone for company, and that the voyage was a long one. After what Lady Maud had said, there was not the least doubt in her mind as to his companion, who could be no one but Baraka. He had been told that he was not wanted at Bayreuth, and he was celebrating the sunset of his bachelor life in his own way. That was clear. If he received the telegram that had just been sent to him, he would get it at Gibraltar, should

he stop there, and as for answering it before Margaret left Bayreuth, she was inclined to make such a thing impossible by going away the next morning, if not that very night.

Her angry reflections and Mrs. Rushmore's lecture on the importance of geography in education were interrupted by the discreet entrance of Mr. Van Torp, who was announced and ushered to the door by Justine in a grand French manner. On the threshold, however, he stood still and asked if he might come in; being pressed to do so, he yielded, advanced, and sat down between the two ladies.

"Mr. Van Torp," said Mrs. Rushmore, "I insist upon knowing what has become of Countess Leven."

"I don't know, Mrs. Rushmore," answered the millionaire, slowly rubbing his hands. "I haven't spoken to her since I brought her from the station. I daresay she's all right. She's most probably gone to take a walk. She often does in the country, I know—her father's country seat is next to mine, Mrs. Rushmore. I hope you'll pay me a visit some day. Why, yes, Lady Maud sometimes goes off alone and walks miles and miles."

"There, Margaret," said Mrs. Rushmore triumphantly, "what did I tell you? Mr. Van Torp says the Countess often walks for miles and miles."

"Why, certainly," said Mr. Van Torp, "though I'm bound to say she's just as fond of horseback. Her friends generally call her Lady Maud, Mrs. Rushmore. Perhaps you won't mind my telling you, as she prefers it a good deal herself. You see, I've had the pleasure of knowing her several years, so I daresay you'll forgive me for mentioning it."

"I think it is quite kind of you, on the contrary," answered Mrs. Rushmore. "Margaret, why did you never tell me of this? Had you any reason for not telling me?"

"I don't think I noticed what you called her," Margaret answered patiently.

"Because if you had any reason," said Mrs. Rushmore, following her own thoughts, "I insist upon knowing what it was."

"Well, now, I'll tell you," rejoined Mr. Van Torp, to save Margaret the trouble of answering the futile little speech; "her husband didn't treat her very well. There's not a purer woman in the six continents, Mrs. Rush-

more, but he tried to divorce her, because he'd lost his money, if he ever had any, and she has none, and he wanted to marry an heiress. However, they automobilised him, or something, in St. Petersburg last June."

"Auto—what did you say?" inquired Mrs. Rushmore.

"Killed by an automobile," explained Mr. Van Torp gravely. "But now I come to think, it wasn't that. He got blown up by a bomb meant for a better man. It was quite instantaneous, I recollect. His head disappeared suddenly, and the greater part of him was scattered around, but they found his pocket-book with his cards and things, so they knew who it was. It was driven through somebody else's hat on the other side of the street, wasn't it, Miss Donne? Things must have been quite lively just then, where it happened. I supposed you knew."

Mrs. Rushmore explained that she had never heard any details.

"Besides," said Mr. Van Torp, in answer, though not quite relevantly, "everybody always calls her 'Lady Maud' instead of 'Countess Leven,' which she has on her cards."

"She would naturally use the higher title," observed Mrs. Rushmore reverently.

"Well, now, about that," objected Mr. Van Torp, "I'm bound to say I think the daughter of an English earl as good as a Russian count, anywhere west of Siberia. I don't know how they figure those things out at courts when they have to balance 'em up for seats at a dinner-party, of course. It's just my impression, that's all, as a business man. He's dead anyway, and one needn't make personal remarks about dead men. All the same, it was a happy release for Lady Maud, and I doubt if she sits up all night mourning for him. Have you been out this afternoon, Miss Donne?"

He changed the subject with extreme directness, and Mrs. Rushmore, who was used to the dictatorial ways of lions, took the hint submissively enough, though she would have been glad to discuss the relative and intrinsic values of the designations "Lady Maud" and "Countess Leven." But it was much more important that the lion should be left alone with Margaret as much as possible, and the excellent lady therefore

remembered that she had something to do and left them.

"I had a little talk with Kralinsky before he left," said Van Torp, when she was gone. "He says he'll meet us in Venice any time in the next few days. He's just going to run over to Vienna in his sudden-death-cart for twenty-four hours; then he'll go south, he says. He ran me up to the hotel and dropped me. I daresay you heard the toots. I thought I saw Lady Maud looking out of the window of your room as I got out."

"Yes," Margaret said. "But how do you know that is my window?"

"In the first place, I've counted the windows. I felt a sort of interest in knowing which was yours. And then, I often see your maid opening the shutters in the morning."

"Oh!" Margaret smiled. "Did you notice anything unusual about Lady Maud when you saw her?" she asked, for she knew that he had good eyes.

"Since you mention it, I thought she looked as if she didn't feel quite up to the mark—pale, I thought she was."

"Yes," Margaret said. "She felt ill for a moment, and I thought she was going to faint. But it passed almost directly, and she insisted on going for a walk."

"Oh," mused Mr. Van Torp, "is that so? Well, I daresay it was the best thing she could do. I was telling you about Kralinsky. He's not Levi Longlegs after all, and I'm not sure he was ever in the West."

"I thought it sounded unlikely," Margaret said.

"I asked him, just like that, in a friendly way, and he thought a moment and made an effort to recollect, and then he seemed quite pleased to remember that I'd been 'Fanny' and he'd been Levi Longlegs, and that he used to whistle things out of *Parsifal* by the fire of an evening."

"Well—but in that case——" Margaret stopped with an inquiring look.

"Just so," continued Van Torp, nodding. "Did you ever attend a trial and hear a witness being cross-examined by a lawyer who wants him to remember something, and he wants to remember it himself, but can't, because he never heard of it before in his life?"

It's quite funny. The lawyer makes steps for him and puts his feet into them so that he gets along nicely, unless the judge happens to wake up and kick, and then the little game stops right there, and somebody laughs. Well, my talk with Kralinsky was like that, only there was no judge, so he went away happy; and we're old friends now, and punched cows on the same ranch, and he's coming on my yacht. I only wonder why he was so anxious to remember all that, and why he thought it would be kind of friendly if I called him Levi Longlegs again, and he called me Fanny Cook. I wonder! He says he's still very fond of *Parsifal*, and came on purpose to hear it, but that he's completely forgotten how to whistle. That's funny too. I just thought I'd tell you, because if you come on my yacht and he comes too, you're liable to see quite a good deal of one another."

"Did you tell him that Mrs. Rushmore and I would come?" Margaret asked. "And Lady Maud?"

"Why, no. You've not promised yet, any more than you did last night when he was there and we talked about it, so how could I? I forgot to mention

Lady Maud to him, or else I thought I wouldn't—I forget which. It doesn't matter."

"No." Margaret smiled. "Not a little bit!"

"You seem amused," observed Mr. Van Torp.

"By your way of putting it, and your pretending to forget such a thing."

"It wasn't quite true that I forgot, but I wanted to, so I didn't say anything about her. That's why I put it in that way. I don't choose to leave you any doubt about what I say, or mean, even in the smallest things. The moment you feel the least doubt about the perfect accuracy of anything I tell you, even if it's not at all a downright lie or anything resembling one, you won't trust me at all, in anything. Because, if you trust me, you'll end by liking me, and if you don't trust me you'll go back to thinking that I'm the Beast out of Revelations, or something, as you used to. I've forgotten the Beast's number."

Margaret smiled again, though she was continually conscious of her own sullenly smouldering anger against Logotheti. Van Torp was gaining influence over her in his own uncouth way. Logotheti had been able to play upon her moods, as on that day under the elm-

tree at Versailles, and she blushed when she remembered that single kiss he had won from her. But the American had no idea of such tactics in love, for he had never learned them. He was making war on the modern scientific system of never losing a hair's-breadth of ground once gained, keeping his communications constantly open with the base from which he had started, bringing up fresh forces to the front without intermission, and playing his heavy artillery with judgment and tenacity.

"The number doesn't matter," Margaret said, "for I've forgotten all about the Beast."

"Thank you," answered Mr. Van Torp. "To change the subject—I've got a little scheme to propose. Maybe you'll think well of it. Anyhow, as it's a mere matter of business connected with your career, you won't mind my explaining it to you, will you?"

"No, indeed!" Margaret was interested at once. "Do tell me!" she said, leaning forward a little.

"Well," he began, "I've looked around this place a good deal since I've been here, and I've come to the conclusion that it's not very well done, anyhow, except *Parsifal*. That's what most of the people really come

for. I'm informed that they give all the other operas better in Munich, with the advantage of being in what you may call a Christian town, compared with this. Is that correct, do you think?"

"Yes, I believe so."

"It is, you can depend upon it. Now, what I want to know is, why you and I shouldn't go into a little business partnership, and do this kind of thing brown, as it ought to be done." Margaret opened her handsome eyes wide. "Because," continued Mr. Van Torp, as coolly as if he were explaining a new plan to a board of directors, "we've got the capital and the ability between us, and there's a demand in New York for what I propose to do. It'll fill a want, I know, and that means success and money. Why don't we build a theatre together? When I say a theatre, I mean a first-class opera-house and not a barn. We'll employ the best architects to build it, and, of course, I'd leave everything about it to you. I've got a block in New York just about in the right place, and it won't take long to build. I'll give the land and put up the money for the building, if you'll undertake the management. You'll put in any money you like, of course, and we'll

share the profits. Maybe they'll be quite handsome, for we'll lease the theatre to other people outside of the season. We'll have the best talent in Europe, and pay for it, and the public will pay us back. We'll call it the Cordova Opera, if you like, and you'll run it according to your own ideas, and sing or not, whenever you please."

"Are you in earnest?"

Margaret had some difficulty in pronouncing the words clearly. He had brought up some very heavy artillery indeed, and at the right moment. Was there ever a great soprano who did not dream of having the most perfect theatre of her very own, and who could receive unmoved the offer to build one from a man who could build twenty if he chose? Very rarely in her life had she been aware of her bodily heart, but she could feel it now, beating like a hammer on the anvil.

"I'm in earnest," Van Torp answered with perfect calm. "I've thought the whole thing over in all its aspects, just as I would a railroad, or a canal, or a mine, and I've concluded to try it, if you'll help me, because it's going to be a safe investment. You see, Miss Donne," he went on slowly, "there's no artist on

the Grand Opera stage now who's so well equipped for the business as you are. I'm not flattering you, either. In your own kind of parts you've simply got no rival. Everybody says so, and I suppose you won't play kitty and deny it. Let's start fair, now."

"It would be silly to deny that I'm one of the first," Margaret admitted.

"That'll do, thank you. One of the first, and the first is one of them, and you're it. Besides, you've got before you what's behind most of them. You're young. I'm not talking about your personal appearance, but that's just one more item in the assets. Another big one is that you're a first-class musician, whereas half these singers can only bang the box like great, thundering, overgrown school-girls. Allow that?"

"I suppose I must 'allow' anything!" laughed the Primadonna.

"Well, now, I've told you. You've got the name I need, and you've got the voice, and the talent, and you've got the science and culture. I suppose you'll let me say that I've got the business ability, won't you?"

The iron mouth smiled a little grimly.

"Rather! I fancy some people have wished you had less!"

"And the money's here, for I always have a blank cheque in my pocket. If you like, I'll fill it in, and we'll deposit it wherever you say, in the name of the 'Cordova Opera Company,' or 'Madame da Cordova, Rufus Van Torp and Co.' We can make out our little agreement in duplicate right here, on the corner of the table, and sign it; and before we leave here you might go around and speak to the best singers about an engagement in New York for a Wagner festival, a year from next Christmas. That's business, and this is a purely business proposition. If you'd like to think it over, I'll go and take a little walk before dinner."

"It sounds like a dream!" Margaret answered, in a wondering tone.

"Money's an awful reality," Van Torp remarked. "I'm talking business, and as I'm the one who's going to put up most of the capital, you'll do me the credit to believe that I'm quite wide awake."

"Do you really, really, really mean it?" She spoke almost like a child.

It was not the first time in his life that the financier

had seen the stunning effect of a big sum, projected with precision, like a shell, at exactly the right moment. He was playing the great game again, but for a prize he thought worth more than any he had yet won, and the very magnitude of the risk steadied his naturally steady brain.

"Yes," he said quietly, "I do. Perhaps I've startled you a little, and I shouldn't like you to make a decision till you feel quite ready to. I'll just say again that I've thought the whole thing out as a genuine venture, and that I believe in it, or I wouldn't propose it. Maybe you've got some sensible lawyer you have confidence in, and would like to consult him first. If you feel that way, I'd rather you should. A business partnership's not a thing to go into with your eyes shut, and if we had any reason for distrusting one another, it would be better to make inquiries. But so far as that goes, it appears to me that we've got facts to go on, which would make any partnership succeed. You've certainly got the musical brains, besides a little money of your own, and I've certainly got the rest of the funds. I'd like you to put some money in, though, if you can spare it, because that's a guarantee that you're going to

be in earnest, too, and do your share in the musical side. You see I'm talking to you just as I would to a man in the same position. Not because I doubt that if you put your name to a piece of paper you really will do your share as a partner, but because I'm used to working in that sort of way in business. How does that strike you? I hope you're not offended?"

"Offended!"

There was no mistaking the suppressed excitement and delight in her voice. If he had possessed the intelligence of Mephistopheles and the charm of Faust he could not have said anything more subtly pleasing to her dignity and her vanity.

"Of course," he said, "it needn't be a very large sum. Still it ought to be something that would make a difference to you."

She hesitated a moment, and then spoke rather timidly.

"I think perhaps—if we did it—I could manage a hundred thousand pounds," she said. "Would that be too little, do you think?"

The large mouth twitched and then smiled pleasantly.

"That's too much," he said, shaking his head. "You mustn't put all your eggs in one basket. A hundred thousand dollars would be quite enough as your share of the capital, with option to buy stock of me at par, up to a million, or so, if it's a success."

"Really? Would that be enough? And, please, what is 'stock' in such a case?"

"Stock," said the financier, "is a little plant which, when well watered, will grow like the mustard seed, till all the birds of Wall Street make their nests in its branches. And if you don't water it too much, it'll be all right. In our case, the stock is going to be that share of the business which most people sell to raise money, and which we mean to keep for ourselves. I always do it that way, when circumstances allow. I once bought all the stock of a railroad for nothing, for instance, and sold all the bonds, and let it go bankrupt. Then I bought the road one day, and found all the stock was in my own pocket. That's only a little illustration. But I guess you can leave the financial side in my hands. You won't lose by it, I'm pretty sure."

"I fancy not!" Margaret's eyes were wide open, her hands were clasped tightly on her knee, and she was leaning forward a little. "Besides," she went on, "it would not be the money that I should care about! I can earn more money than I want, and I have a little fortune of my own—the hundred thousand I offered you. Oh no! It would be the splendid power to have the most beautiful music in the world given as it could be given nowhere else! The joy of singing myself—the parts I can sing—in the most perfect surroundings! An orchestra picked from the whole world of orchestras, the greatest living leaders, the most faultless chorus! And the scenery, and the costumes—everything as everything could be, if it were really, really the best that can be had! Do you believe it is possible to have all that?"

"Oh yes, and with your name to it, too. We'll have everything on earth that money can buy to make a perfect opera, and I'll guarantee it'll pay after the first two seasons. That is, if you'll work at it as hard as I will. But you've got to work, Miss Donne, you've got to work, or it's no use thinking of it. That's my opinion."

"I'll work like a Trojan!" cried Margaret enthusiastically.

"Trojans," mused Van Torp, who wanted to bring her back to her ordinary self before Mrs. Rushmore or Lady Maud came in. "Let me see. They say that because the Trojans had to work so hard to get over the Alps coming down into Italy, don't they?"

Whether Mr. Van Torp made this monstrous assertion in ignorance, or for effect, no one will ever know. An effect certainly followed at once, for Margaret broke into an echoing laugh.

"I believe it was the Carthaginians," she said presently. "It's the same thing, as Lady Maud is so fond of saying!"

"All in the family, as Cain said when he killed Abel," observed Van Torp without a smile.

Margaret looked at him and laughed again. She would have laughed at anything in the remotest degree amusing just then, for she found it hard to realise exactly what she was doing or saying. The possibility he had suddenly placed within her reach appealed to almost everything in her nature at once, to her talent,

her vanity, her real knowledge of her art, her love of power, even to her good sense, which was unusually practical in certain ways. She had enough experience in herself, and enough knowledge of the conditions to believe that her own hard work, combined with Van Torp's unlimited capital, could, and certainly would produce such an opera-house, and bring to it such artists as had never been seen and heard, except perhaps in Bayreuth, during its first great days, now long past.

Then, too, he had put the matter before her so skilfully that she could look upon it honestly as a business partnership, in which her voice, her judgment and her experience would bear no contemptible proportion to his money, and in which she herself was to invest money of her own, thereby sharing the risk according to her fortune as well as giving the greater part of the labour. She felt for some weak place in the scheme, groping as if she were dazzled, but she could find none.

"I don't think I shall need time to think this over," she said, controlling her voice better, now that she had made up her mind. "As I understand it, I am to put

in what I can in the way of ready money, and I am to give my time in all ways, as you need it, and my voice, when it is wanted. Is that it?"

"Except that, when you choose to sing, the Company will allow you your usual price for each appearance," answered Van Torp in a business-like manner. "You will pay yourself, or we both shall pay you, just as much as we should pay any other first-class soprano, or as much more as you would get in London or New York if you signed an engagement."

"Is that fair?" Margaret asked.

"Why, certainly. But the Company, which is you and I, will probably rule that you mustn't sing in Grand Opera anywhere in the States east of the Rockies. They've got to come to New York to hear you. Naturally, you'll be free to do anything you like in Europe outside of our season, when you can spare the time."

"Of course."

"Well, now, I suppose we might as well note that down right away, as a preliminary agreement. What do you say?"

"I say that I simply cannot refuse such an offer!" Margaret answered.

"Your consent is all that's necessary," he said, in a matter-of-fact tone.

He produced from an inner pocket a folded sheet of foolscap, which he spread on the corner of the table beside him. He took out a fountain pen and began to write quickly. The terms and forms were as familiar to him as the alphabet and he lost no time; besides, as he had told the Prima-donna, he had thought out the whole matter beforehand.

"What if Mrs. Rushmore comes in just as we are signing it?" asked Margaret.

"We'll tell her, and ask her to witness our signatures," replied Van Torp without looking up. "I judge Mrs. Rushmore to have quite a knowledge of business."

"You seem able to write and talk at the same time," Margaret said, smiling.

"Business talk, yes." The pen ran on swiftly. "There. That's about all, I should say. Do you think

you can read my writing? I don't suppose you've ever seen it."

He turned the page round, and handed it to her. The writing was large and perfectly legible, but very different from the "commercial" hand of most American business men. Any one word, taken at random, might have seemed unformed, at first sight, but the appearance of the whole was oddly strong and symmetrical. Margaret read the clauses carefully. She herself had already signed a good many legal papers in connexion with her engagements and her own small fortune, and the language was not so unfamiliar to her as it would have been to most women.

"Shall I sign first?" she asked, when she had finished. "My own name? Or my stage name?"

"Your own name, please," said Van Torp without hesitation. "The other's only binding in your profession, because you appear under it, and it's your 'business style.'"

She wrote "Margaret Donne" at the foot of the page in her large and rather irregular hand, and passed the paper back to Van Torp, who signed

it. He waved the sheet slowly to and fro, to dry the ink.

"It's only a preliminary agreement," he said, "but it's binding as far as it goes, and I'll attend to the rest. You'll have to give me a power of attorney for my lawyer in New York. By-the-bye, if you decide to come, you can do that in Venice, where there's a real live consul. That's necessary. But for all matters of business herein set forth, we are now already 'The Madame da Cordova and Rufus Van Torp Company, organised for the purpose of building an Opera-house in the City of New York and for giving public performances of musical works in the same, with a nominal capital hereafter to be agreed upon.' That's what we are now."

He folded the sheet, returned it to his inner pocket and held out his hand in a cheerful, business-like manner.

"Shall we shake hands on it?" he asked.

"By all means," Margaret answered readily, and their eyes met; but she drew back her hand again before taking his. "This is purely a matter of business be-

tween us," she said, "you understand that? It means nothing else?"

"Purely a matter of business," answered Rufus Van Torp, slowly and gravely.

CHAPTER V

"Swear," said Mr. Van Torp, "we must have some-
 thing to eat on that yacht."
 "Yes, sir. Quite so, sir."
 Stamp, who could do anything, was clipping the
 millionaire's patch of sandy hair, on the morning after
 the transaction last described. Mr. Van Torp appeared
 hunched and shaven himself, and in his less "prominent"
 days he had been in the habit of cutting his own hair
 by using two looking-glasses. The result had rarely
 been artistic, and even Stamp was not what is de-
 scribed on some American signs as a "tormenter."
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 "I mean," said Mr. Van Torp, explaining himself,
 "we must have something good to eat."

CHAPTER V.

"STEMP," said Mr. Van Torp, "we must have something to eat on that yacht."

"Yes, sir. Quite so, sir."

Stemp, who could do anything, was clipping the millionaire's thatch of sandy hair, on the morning after the transaction last described. Mr. Van Torp abhorred barbers and shaved himself, and in his less "prominent" days he had been in the habit of cutting his own hair by using two looking-glasses. The result had rarely been artistic, and even Stemp was not what is described on some American signs as a tonsorial artist, but he managed to clip his master's rough mane with neatness and precision, if not in the "Bond Street style."

"I mean," said Mr. Van Torp, explaining himself, "we must have something good to eat."

"Oh, I see, sir," answered Stemp, as if this were quite a new idea.

"Well, now, do you suppose you can get anything to eat in Italy?"

"Salmon-trout is very good there, sir, and quails are in season at the end of August. They are just going back to Egypt at this time of the year, sir, and are very fat. There's Gorgonzola cheese, too, and figs and muscatel grapes are coming on. I think that's all, sir."

"It's not bad. How about chickens?"

"Well, sir, the poultry in those parts is not much to boast of. An Italian fowl is mostly either a hawk or a butterfly. That's my experience, sir, when I travelled there with the late Duke of Barchester, a few years ago. His Grace was most particular, sir, having a poor stomach, and nothing to occupy his mind after the Duchess died in a fit of rage, having thrown her wig at him, sir, they do say, and then fallen down in a fit which was quite awful to see, and ended as we all know."

"As far as I can see, you'd better go on to Venice, Stemp," said Mr. Van Torp, not interested in his man's

reminiscences. "You'd better go off to-night and tell Captain Brown to hurry up and get ready, because I'm bringing a party of friends down the day after to-morrow. And then you just scratch round and find something to eat."

"Yes, sir. I'll telegraph to the caterers, and I think you'll be satisfied, sir."

"There's an American lady coming, who knows what's good to eat, and likes it, and wants it, and means to get it, and you've got to find it for her somehow. I can live on hog and hominy myself. And I sha'n't want you in the least. You'd better take most of my baggage with you anyway. Just leave my Tuxedo and a couple of suits, and some new flannel pants and a shirt-case, and take the rest. But don't waste time over that either if you've got to catch the train, for the main thing's to get there right away. You can go first-class, Stemp—you won't be so done up."

"Thank you, sir."

A silence followed, during which the valet's scissors made a succession of little chinking noises; from time to time he turned Mr. Van Torp's head very gingerly to a slightly different position.

"Stemp."

"Yes, sir."

"You take a good look around that yacht, and decide about the state-rooms, before I come. This way. You give the best room to Miss Donne, and have a large bouquet of carnations on the table. See?"

"Beg pardon, sir, but carnations are out of season."

"You get them just the same."

"Yes, sir."

"And give the second-best room to her ladyship, Stemp, if there are not two alike, but be extra careful to see that everything's comfortable. Lady Maud likes wood violets, Stemp. You get a handsome bouquet of them, and don't tell me they're out of season too, because you've got to get them, anyway, so it's no use to talk."

"Yes, sir. I see, sir."

"And then you get the third-best room ready for Mrs. Rushmore, and you get some flowers for her too, out of your own head. Maybe she likes those roses with stems three feet long. Use your own judgment, anyway."

"Yes, sir. Thank you, sir."

Another silence followed, and the hair-cutting was finished. Mr. Van Torp glanced at himself in the glass and then turned to his valet.

"Say, Stemp, I was thinking. Maybe that third bedroom's not quite so good as the others, and the lady might feel herself sort of overlooked."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I was thinking. If that's the case, and it looks sort of second-class, you go out and get a man and have him gild it all around nicely so as to brighten it up. I guess she'll think it's all right if it's gilt and the others aren't. Some people are like that."

"I see, sir. Yes, sir. I'll attend to it, sir. Will there be any more ladies and gentlemen, sir?"

"There's that Russian gentleman, Count Kralinsky. Put him at the other end of the ship, somewhere out of the way of the ladies. I suppose he'll bring his valet, and there'll be two or three maids. That's all. Now don't mind me any more, but just fly around, and don't forget anything. Understand? We aren't going to be in England or the States, where you can sit still and telephone for anything you've forgotten, from peanuts to

a funeral. You'll have to go full speed ahead in all directions if you're going to wake things up."

Thereupon Mr. Van Torp sat down by the window to read the paper.

His attention was arrested by a sensational "scare-head" about a thief and a ruby worth fifty thousand dollars. Some disaffected colleague in London had known, or cleverly guessed, where the stone was that had been stolen from Mr. Pinney's, and had informed the police; the nice-looking young fellow who spoke like an English gentleman had walked directly into the arms of the plain-clothes man waiting for him on the pier in New York, the stone had been found sewn up in his waistcoat, and his pleasant career of liberty had ended abruptly in a cell.

Mr. Van Torp whistled softly as he read the account a second time. Then he neatly cut the column out of the paper, folded it with great precision, smoothed it with care and placed it in his pocket-book next to a cheap little photograph of Madame da Cordova as "Juliet," which he had bought in a music-shop in New York the day after he had heard her for the first time, and had carried in his pocket ever since. He looked

up to see what Stemp was doing, and as the man was kneeling before a box on the floor, with his back turned, he took out the rather shabby photograph and gazed at it quietly for fully thirty seconds before he put it back again.

He took up the mutilated newspaper and looked up and down the columns, and among other information which he gathered in a few moments was the fact that Logotheti's yacht had "passed Cape Saint Vincent, going east, owner and party on board." The previous telegram had not escaped him, and if he had entertained any doubts as to the destination of the *Erinna*, they vanished now. She was certainly bound for the Mediterranean. He remembered having heard that many steam yachts coming from England put into Gibraltar for coal and fresh provisions, coal being cheaper there than in French and Italian ports, and he thought it very probable that the *Erinna* would do the same; he also made some deductions which need not be explained yet. The only one worth mentioning here was that Logotheti would be likely to hear in Gibraltar that the ruby had been found and was on its way back to England, and that as he would know that

Margaret would be anxious about it, since he had already given it to her, he would hardly let the occasion of communicating with her go by. As for writing from Gibraltar to any place whatsoever in the hope that a letter will arrive in less than a week, it is sheer folly. Mr. Van Torp had never tried it, and supposed it possible, as it looks, but he was tolerably sure that Logotheti would telegraph first, and had perhaps done so already, for the news of his passing Cape Saint Vincent was already twenty-four hours old.

This was precisely what had happened. When Mr. Van Torp opened his door, he came upon Margaret and Mrs. Rushmore on the landing, on the point of going out for a walk, and a servant had just brought the Primadonna a telegram which she was reading aloud, so that the American could not help hearing her.

“‘Cruising till wanted,’” she read quickly. “‘Ruby found. Address, yacht *Erinna*, Naples.’”

She heard Van Torp close his door, though she had not heard him open it, and turning round she found herself face to face with him. Her eyes were sparkling with anger.

“Very sorry,” he said. “I couldn’t help hearing.”

"It's of no consequence, for I should have told you," Margaret answered briefly.

He argued well for himself from her tone and manner, but he chose to show that he would not force his company upon her just then, when she was in a visible rage, and instead of stopping to exchange more words he passed the two ladies hat in hand, and bowing rather low, after his manner, he went quietly downstairs.

Margaret watched him till he disappeared.

"I like that man," she said, as if to herself, but audibly. "I cannot help it."

Mrs. Rushmore was more than delighted, but had tact enough not to make any answer to a speech which had probably not been meant for her ears.

"Perhaps," she said, "you would rather not go out just yet, my dear?"

Margaret was grateful for the suggestion, and they turned back into their rooms.

Meanwhile Van Torp had reached the door of the hotel, and found Lady Maud standing there with her parasol up, for the sun was streaming in.

"I was waiting for you," she said simply, as soon as

he reached her side, and she stepped out into the street. "I thought you would come down, and I wanted to speak to you, for I did not get a chance last night. They were both watching me, probably because they thought I was ill, and I had to chatter like a magpie to keep up appearances."

"You did it very well," Van Torp said. "If I had not seen your face at the window when I got out of the automobile yesterday, I shouldn't have guessed there was anything wrong."

"But there is—something very wrong—something I can hardly bear to think of, though I must, until I know the truth."

They turned into the first deserted street they came to.

"I daresay I can give a guess at what it is," Van Torp answered gravely. "I went to see him alone yesterday on purpose, before he started, and I must say, if it wasn't for the beard I'd feel pretty sure."

"He had a beard when I married him, and it was like that—just like that!"

Lady Maud's voice shook audibly, for she felt cold, even in the sunshine.

"I didn't know," Van Torp answered. "That alters the case. If we're not mistaken, what can I do to help you? Let's see. You only had that one look at him, through the window, is that so?"

"Yes. But the window was open, and it's not high above the ground, and my eyes are good. He took off his hat when he said good-bye to you, and I saw his face as distinctly as I see yours. When you've been married to a man"—she laughed harshly—"you cannot be easily mistaken about him, when you're as near as that! That is the man I married. I'm intimately convinced of it, but I must be quite sure. Do you understand?"

"Of course. If he's really Leven, he's even a better actor than I used to think he was. If he's not, the resemblance is just about the most extraordinary thing! It's true I only saw Leven three or four times in my life, but I saw him to look at him then, and the last time I did, when he made the row in Hare Court, he was doing most of the talking, so I remember his voice."

"There's only one difficulty," Lady Maud said. "Someone else may have been killed last June. It

may even have been the pickpocket who had stolen his pocket-book. Such things have happened, or do in books! But this is certainly the man you met in New York and who sold you the stone you gave me, is he not?"

"Oh, certainly. And that was at the end of July, and Leven was killed late in June."

"Yes. That only leaves a month for him to have been to Asia—that's absurd."

"Utterly, totally, and entirely impossible," asseverated Mr. Van Torp. "One of two things. Either this man is your husband, and if he is, he's not the man who found the rubies in Asia. Or else, if he is that man, he's not Leven. I wish that heathen girl had been here yesterday! She could have told in a minute. She'd better have been here anyway than cutting around the Mediterranean with that fellow Logotheti!"

"Yes," Lady Maud answered gravely. "But about myself—if Leven is alive, what is my position—I mean—I don't really quite know where I am, do I?"

"Anybody but you would have thought of marrying again already," observed Mr. Van Torp, looking up sideways to her eyes, for she was taller than he. "Then

you'd really be in a bad fix, wouldn't you? The Enoch Arden thing, I suppose it would be. But as it is, I don't see that it makes much difference. The man's going under a false name, so he doesn't mean to claim you as his wife, nor to try and get a divorce again, as he did before. He's just going to be somebody else for his own good, and he'll get married that way, maybe. That's his business, not yours. I don't suppose you're going to get up in church and forbid the banns, are you?"

"I would, like a shot!" said Lady Maud. "So would you, I'm sure! Think of the other woman!"

"That's so," answered Van Torp without enthusiasm. "However, we've got to think about you and the present, and decide what we'll do. I suppose the best thing is for me to put him off with some excuse, so that you can come on the yacht."

"Please do nothing of the sort!" cried Lady Maud.

"But I want you to come," objected her friend.

"I mean to come. Do you think I am afraid to meet him?"

Van Torp looked at her in some surprise, and not without admiration.

"There isn't anybody like you, anyway," he said quietly. "But there's going to be a circus on that ship if he's Leven," he added. "If he makes a fuss, I'll read the Riot-Act and lock him up."

"Oh no," answered Lady Maud, who was used to Mr. Van Torp's familiar vocabulary, "why need there be any trouble? You've not told him I am coming, you say. Very well. If he sees me suddenly after he has been on board a little while, he'll certainly betray himself, and then I shall be sure. Leven is a man of the world—'was' or 'is'—God knows which! But if it is he, and he doesn't want to be recognised, he'll behave as if nothing had happened, after the first moment of surprise. At least I shall be certain! You may wonder—I don't know myself, Rufus—I wish you could help me!"

"I will, as far as I can."

"No, you don't know what I mean! There's something in my life that I never quite told you, I can't tell why not. There must be people who know it besides my mother—I don't think my father ever did. Margaret has an idea of it—I let fall a few words one day.

In one way, you and I have been so intimate for years—and yet——”

She stopped short, and the soft colour rose in her cheeks like a dawn. Van Torp looked down at the pavement as he walked.

“See here,” he said in a low voice, “you’d better not tell me. Maybe you’ll be sorry some day if you do.”

“It would be the first time,” she answered softly, “and I’ve often wished you knew everything. I mean to tell you now—just wait a moment.”

They walked on; they were already in the outskirts of the dull little town. Van Torp did not again raise his eyes to her face, for he knew she would speak when she was ready. When she did, her voice was a little muffled, and she looked straight before her as he was doing. They were quite alone in the road now.

“When I was very young—nearly eleven years ago, in my first season—I met a man I liked very much, and he liked me. We grew very, very fond of each other. He was not much older than I, and had just joined the army. We couldn’t marry, because we had no money—my father had not come into the title then,

you know—but we promised each other that we would wait. We waited, and no one knew, except, perhaps, my mother, and she kept us from seeing each other as much as she could. Then came the Boer war, and he was killed—killed in a wretched skirmish—not even in a battle—buried somewhere on the Veldt—if I only knew where! I read it in a despatch—just ‘killed’—nothing more. One doesn’t die of things, I suppose, and years passed, and I went out just the same, and they wanted me to marry. You know how it is with a girl! I married to get rid of myself—I married Leven because he was good-looking and had money, and—I don’t quite know why, but it seemed easier to marry a foreigner than an Englishman. I suppose you cannot understand that! It made all comparison impossible—perhaps that was it. When mine was dead, I could never have taken another who could possibly have known him, or who could be in the remotest degree like him.”

“I understand that quite well,” said Van Torp, as she paused.

“I’m glad, then, for it makes it easier to explain the rest. I don’t think I always did my best to be nice

to Leven. You see, he soon grew tired of me, and went astray after strange goddesses. Still, I might have tried harder to keep him if I had cared what he did, but I was faithful to him, in my own way, and it was much harder than you can guess, or anyone. Oh, it was not any living man that made it hard—not that! It was the other. He came back—dead men do sometimes—and he told me I was his, and not Leven's wife; and I fought against that, just as if a man had made love to me in society. It didn't seem honest and true to my real husband, in my thoughts, you know, and in some things thoughts are everything. I fought with all my might against that one, that dear one. I think that was the beginning of my work—being sorry for other women who perhaps had tried to fight too, and wondering whether I should do much better if my dead man came back alive. Do you see? I'm telling you things I've hardly ever told myself, let alone anyone else."

"Yes, I see. I didn't know anyone could be as good as that."

"You can guess the rest," Lady Maud went on, not heeding what he said. "When I believed that Leven was dead the fight was over, and I took my dead man

back, because I was really free. But now, if Leven is alive after all, it must begin again. I ought to be brave and fight against it; I must—but I can't, I can't! It's too hard, now! These two months have been the happiest in my life since the day he was killed! How can I go back again! And yet, if I cannot be an honest woman in my thoughts I'm not an honest woman at all—I'm no better than if I deserved to be divorced. I never believed in technical virtue."

Van Torp had seen many sides of human nature, good and bad, but he had never dreamed of anything like this, even in the clear depths of this good woman's heart, and what he heard moved him. Men born with great natures often have a tender side which the world does not dream of; call it nervousness, call it degeneracy, call it hysterical who will; it is there. While Lady Maud was finishing her poor little story in broken phrases, with her heart quivering in her voice, Mr. Rufus Van Torp's eyes became suddenly so very moist that he had to pass his hand over them hastily lest a drop or two should run down upon his flat cheeks. He hoped she would not notice it.

But she did, for at that moment she turned and

looked at his face, and her own eyes were dry, though they burned. She saw that his glistened, and she looked at him in surprise.

"I'm sorry," he said, apologising as if he had done something rude. "I can't help it."

Their hands were hanging near together as they walked, and hers touched his affectionately and gratefully, but she said nothing, and they went on in silence for some time before she spoke again.

"You know everything now. I must be positively sure whether Leven is alive or dead, for what I have got back in these last two months is my whole life. A mere recognition at first sight and at ten yards is not enough. It may be only a marvellous resemblance, for they say everyone has a 'double' somewhere in the world."

"They used to say, too, that if you met your 'double' one of you would die," observed Van Torp. "Those things are all stuff and nonsense, of course. I was just thinking. Well," he continued, dwelling on his favourite monosyllable, "if you decide to come on the yacht, and if the man doesn't blow away, we shall know the truth in three or four days from now, and that's a comfort.

And even if he turns out to be Leven, maybe we can manage something."

Lady Maud chose not to ask what her friend thought he could "manage;" for she had glanced at his face when he had spoken, and though it was half turned away from her, she saw his expression, and it would have scared a nervous person. She did not like him to be in that mood, and was sorry that she had brought him to it.

But Mr. Van Torp, who was a strong man, and had seen more than one affray in his ranching days, could not help thinking how uncommonly easy it would be to pick up Count Kralinsky and drop him overboard on a dark night next week, when the *Lancashire Lass* would be doing twenty-two knots, and there might be a little weather about to drown the splash.

CHAPTER VI.

THE millionaire did things handsomely. He offered to motor his party to Venice, and as Margaret declined, because motoring was bad for her voice, he telegraphed for a comfortable special carriage, and took his friends down by railway, managing everything alone, in some unaccountable way, since the invaluable Stemp was already gone in search of something for Mrs. Rushmore to eat; and they were all very luxuriously comfortable.

Kralinsky was not on board the yacht when they came alongside at sunset in two gondolas, following the steam-launch, which carried a load of luggage and the two maids. The Primadonna's trunks and hat-boxes towered above Mrs. Rushmore's, and Mrs. Rushmore's above Lady Maud's modest belongings, as the Alps lift their heads above the lower mountains, and the mountains look down upon the Italian foot-hills; and Potts

sat in one corner of the stern-sheets with Margaret's jewel-case on her knee, and Justine, with Mrs. Rushmore's, glared at her viciously from the other corner. For the fierce Justine knew that she was going to be sea-sick on the yacht, and the meek Potts never was, though she had crossed the ocean with the Diva in rough weather.

Stemp led the way, and Mr. Van Torp took the three ladies to their cabins: first, Mrs. Rushmore, who was surprised and delighted by the rich and gay appearance of hers, for it was entirely decorated in pink and gold, that combination being Stemp's favourite one. The brass bedstead had pink silk curtains held back by broad gold ribbands; there was a pink silk coverlet with a gold fringe; everything that could be gold was gilt, and everything that could be pink was rosy, including the carpet.

Mr. Van Torp looked at Stemp with approval, and Stemp acknowledged unspoken praise with silent modesty.

"Beg pardon, madam," he said, addressing Mrs. Rushmore, "this is not exactly the largest cabin on the

yacht, but it is the one in which you will find the least motion."

"It's very sweet," said the American lady. "Very dainty, I'm sure."

On the writing-table stood a tall gilt vase full of immense pink roses, with stems nearer four feet long than three. Mrs. Rushmore admired them very much.

"How did you know that I love roses above all other flowers?" she asked. "My dear Mr. Van Torp, you are a wizard, I'm sure!"

Lady Maud and Margaret had entered, and kept up a polite little chorus of admiration; but they both felt uneasy as to what they might find in their respective cabins, for Margaret hated pink, and Lady Maud detested gilding, and neither of them was especially fond of roses. They left Mrs. Rushmore very happy in her quarters and went on. Lady Maud's turn came next, and she began to understand, when she saw a quantity of sweet wood violets on her table, just loosened, in an old Murano glass beaker.

"Thank you," she said, bending to smell them. "How kind of you!"

There was not a trace of gilding or pink silk. The

cabin was panelled and fitted in a rare natural wood of a creamy-white tint.

"Beg pardon, my lady," said Stemp. "This and Miss Donne's cabin communicate by this door, and the door aft goes to the dressing-room. Each cabin has one quite independent, and this bell rings the pantry, my lady, and this one rings Miss Donne's maid's cabin, as I understand that your ladyship has not brought her own maid with her."

"Very nice," said Lady Maud, smelling the violets again.

Mr. Van Torp looked at Stemp as he would have looked at a horse that had turned out even better than he had expected. Stemp threw open the door of communication to the cabin he had prepared for the Prima-donna. The two cabins occupied the whole beam of the vessel, excepting the six-foot gangway on each side, and as she was one of the largest yachts afloat at the time, there was no lack of room.

"Carnations, at this time of year!" cried Margaret, seeing half an armful of her favourite dark red ones, in a silver wine-cooler before the mirror. "You really seem to know everything! Thank you so much!"

She buried her handsome face in the splendid flowers and drew in a deep, warm breath, full of their sensuous perfume, the spicy scent of a laden clove-tree under a tropical sun.

"Thank you again!" she said enthusiastically. "Thank you for everything, the delightful journey, and this lovely room, and the carnations!"

She stood up suddenly to her height, in sheer pleasure, and held out her hand to him. He pressed it quietly, and smiled.

"Do as you would be done by," he said. "That's the Company's rule."

She laughed at the allusion to their agreement, of which Lady Maud knew nothing, for they had determined to keep it secret for the present.

Mr. Van Torp had not found an opportunity of speaking to Lady Maud alone, but he wished her to know when Kralinsky might be expected.

"Stemp," he said, before leaving the cabin, "have you heard from the Count?"

"Yes, sir. He got here this morning from Vienna in his motor, sir, and sent his things with his man, and his compliments to you and the ladies, and he will

come on board in time for dinner. That was all, I think, sir."

Lady Maud heard, and made a scarcely perceptible movement of the head by way of thanks to her friend, while listening to Margaret's enthusiastic praise of everything she saw. Mr. Van Torp and his man departed, just as Potts appeared, accompanied by a very neat-looking English stewardess in a smart white cap. Lady Maud was unusually silent, but she smiled pleasantly at what Margaret said, and the latter made up her mind to drown her anger against Logotheti, and at the same time to be avenged on him, in an orgy of luxurious comfort, sea-air, and sunshine. The capacity of a perfectly healthy and successful singer for enjoying everything, from a halfpenny bun and a drive in a hansom to a millionaire's yacht and the most expensive fat of the land, or sea, has never been measured. And if they do have terrible fits of temper now and then, who shall blame them? They are always sorry for it, because it is bad for the voice.

Mr. Van Torp reached his quarters, and prepared to scrub and dress comfortably after a week at Bayreuth and a railway journey.

"Stemp."

"Yes, sir."

"That was quite nicely done. You must have had a lively time."

"Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. Hope everything is tolerably satisfactory to you, sir."

"Yes. Find anything good to eat? Chickens don't take gilding well, you know—doesn't taste together. But I suppose you found something. Seen the cook?"

"Yes, sir. I think things will be tolerable, sir, though this is not London, I must say."

Mr. Van Torp showed no surprise at the statement, and disappeared into his bath-room, well pleased with himself and his man. But a moment later he opened the door again and thrust out his square sandy head.

"Stemp, where have you put the Count? Far from here? I don't want him near me."

"Last cabin forward on the port side, sir, next to the smoking-room. Very good cabin, sir."

"Whereabouts is port, right or left?"

"Left-hand side of the vessel, sir," answered Stemp,

who had been on many yachts. "There are ten more cabins empty, sir, between large and small, if you should think of asking any ladies and gentlemen to join at another point, sir."

"May pick up a couple somewhere. Can't tell yet." And Mr. Van Torp disappeared definitely.

Lady Maud did not begin to dress at once, as there was plenty of time before dinner; she left the stewardess to unpack her things, and came out upon the six-foot gangway outside her cabin door to breathe the air, for it was warm. The city lay half a mile away in the afterglow of the sunset. The water was very green that evening, as it sometimes is in the Lagoons, though not always, and it was shaded off through many opalescent tints to heliotrope; then it was suddenly black below the steps of the Piazzetta and the Ducal Palace. Within the mysterious canal to the right she could make out the Bridge of Sighs, and there was the Ponte della Paglia, and the long line of irregular buildings to the eastward of the Prisons, as far as the Public Gardens. To the left there was the wide mouth of the Grand Canal, the Salute and the Custom-House, and the broad opening of the Giudecca. It was familiar to her, for

she had seen it several times. She missed the Campanile, which she had been made to climb by an energetic governess when she was twelve years old, but all the rest was there and unchanged, a dream of evening colour, an Eastern city rising out of an enchanted water, under an Italian sky.

At any other time she would have enjoyed the sight almost without a thought, as she enjoyed everything that seemed to her beautiful or even pretty, though she had no pretensions to cultivated artistic taste or knowledge. But now she felt none of that healthy pleasure which a lovely sight naturally gave her. She was at a crisis of her life, and the exquisite evening scene was the battlefield of a coming struggle, with herself, or with another, she hardly knew. In half an hour, or in an hour, at most, she was to sit at table with a man she fully believed to be the husband for whom she had been wearing mourning, out of mere decency, but with the profound inward satisfaction of being free.

She was brave, and could try to think of what was before her if it turned out that she was not mistaken, and she could attempt to understand what had happened. She had already come to the conclusion that if

Kralinsky was really Leven, the latter had seized the opportunity offered him by his own supposed death to disappear from Saint Petersburg, and had taken another name. Leven had been a ruined man when he had tried to divorce her; when he died, or disappeared, he left nothing but debts, which were extinguished with him, for no one attempted to make his widow responsible for them, since there was no estate and she had no fortune beyond the allowance her father made her. Lord Creedmore was far from being a rich peer, too, and what he gave her was not much, although it would more than suffice for her simple wants, now that she intended to live with him again.

But if Leven had not been killed and had turned into Kralinsky, he now had plenty of ready money, though it was not easy to guess how he had obtained possession of a quantity of valuable Asiatic rubies within the few weeks that had elapsed between his supposed destruction by the bomb and the date of Van Torp's transaction with him in New York. That was a mystery. So was his possible acquaintance, or connexion, with the Eastern girl who was looking for him, if there was a shadow of truth in Logotheti's story. Lady Maud did

not believe there was, and she felt morally sure that the tale had evolved itself out of the Greek's fertile brain, as a fantastic explanation of his atrocious conduct.

While she was thinking over these matters and rehearsing in her thoughts the scene that was before her, she saw a gondola making straight for the yacht across the fast-fading green of the lagoon that lay between the vessel and the Piazzetta. It came nearer, and she drew back from the rail against her cabin door, under the shadow of the promenade deck, which extended over the gangway and was supported by stanchions, as on an ocean liner. The *Lancashire Lass*, with her single huge yellow funnel, her one short signal mast, her turret-shaped wheel-house, and her generally business-like appearance, looked more like a cross between a fast modern cruiser and an ocean "greyhound" than like a private yacht. She even had a couple of quick-firing guns mounted just above her rail.

Lady Maud looked at the gondola, and as it came still nearer, she saw that it brought only one passenger, and that he had a fair beard. She quietly opened her cabin door, and went in to dress for dinner.

Meanwhile Mr. Van Torp had completed his toilet,

and was rather surprised to find himself magnificently arrayed in a dark-blue dinner-jacket, with perfectly new gilt buttons, and an unfamiliar feeling about the pockets. He had belonged to a yacht club for years, because it seemed to be expected of him, and Stemp and the tailor had thought fit that he should possess the proper things for a yachtsman.

"Stemp," he said, "is this the correct thing? I suppose you know."

"Yes, sir. Very smart indeed, sir. White caps are usually worn by yachting gentlemen in the Mediterranean, sir." Stemp offered him the cap in question, resplendent with a new enamelled badge. "Beg pardon, sir, but as to caps, most gentlemen lift them to ladies, just like hats, sir, but the captain and the officers touch theirs. His Grace always lifted his cap, sir."

"I guess that'll be all right," answered Mr. Van Torp, trying on the cap. "Send the captain to my study, Stemp, and find out about when the ladies will be ready for dinner."

Stemp disappeared, and in a few moments pink-faced Captain Brown appeared, quiet, round, and smart.

"I suppose you're ready at any moment, Captain?" inquired the millionaire.

"Yes, sir. The pilot is on board, and the gentleman you expected is just coming alongside."

"Oh, he is, is he?"

Mr. Van Torp evidently expected no answer to his favourite form of question when he was thinking over what had just been said; and the captain was silent.

"Then you can start now," said the owner, after a moment's thought.

"Where are we bound, sir?"

"Oh, well, I don't know. I wanted to say a few words about that, Captain. Do you happen to know anything about a yacht called the *Erinna*, belonging to a Mr. Logotheti, a Greek gentleman who lives in Paris?"

"Yes, sir," answered Captain Brown, for it was a part of his business to read the yachting news. "She was at Cowes when we sailed. She was reported the other day from Gibraltar as having entered the Mediterranean after taking fresh provisions, owner and party on board. There is no further word of her."

"Well," said Mr. Van Torp, "I have an idea she's

gone to Naples, but I want you to find her right away wherever she is, owner and party on board. That's all, Captain. If you happen to see her anywhere, you just come and tell me if I'm alone, and if I'm not, why send one of your young men to say you want to know something,—anything you happen to think of, and I'll come to your room and tell you what to do. See? That's all, and now let's start, please."

"All right, sir."

So Captain Brown went off with his instructions, and in a few moments his owner heard the distant sound of the chain coming in over the most noiseless of modern patent steam capstans; and the side-lights and masthead and stern lights shone out as the anchor light went down, and the twin screws began to turn over slowly, well below the water; and the *Lancashire Lass* was under way, with the captain, the pilot, and the two junior officers all in a row on the bridge, while the chief mate was seeing the anchor got inboard and stowed. But while the captain was silently looking ahead into the warm dusk and listening to the orders the pilot gave for the wheel in good English, but with a marvellous Venetian accent, he was also considering

how he might most quickly find the *Erinna*, and he reflected that it would be an easier task if he knew a little more definitely where she was. He was not at all disturbed by the orders he had received, however, and was only anxious to get all the speed he could out of his vessel as far as the Straits of Messina, through which the yacht he was to find would almost certainly pass, in preference to the Malta Channel, if she were going to Greece and the East. If she kept to the waters west of Italy, it would not be so very hard to hear of her, as the coast is dotted with excellent marine signal stations, and official information as to the movements of yachts is easily obtained.

When the party assembled in the deck saloon for dinner, Lady Maud was missing. Stemp, who did not intend that his master should dine without his personal attention, no matter how much the chief steward might object to his presence, approached Mr. Van Torp and whispered something. Lady Maud begged that the party would sit down without her, and she would join them in a moment.

So they took their places, and the vacant one was on the owner's right, between him and the Primadonna.

"You see," said Mr. Van Torp, explaining to Mrs. Rushmore, which was wholly unnecessary, "we are Americans, and this ship is America, so the English guest goes first."

But Mrs. Rushmore knew these things, for she was used to handling lions in numbers; and the little lions and the middle-sized ones are very particular about their places at table, but the great big ones do not care "one dingle Sam," as Mr. Van Torp would have elegantly expressed their indifference. For he was a great big lion himself.

"Did you ever meet Lady Maud?" he inquired, speaking to Kralinsky.

"Which Lady Maud?" asked the foreigner in his rather oily voice. "There are several."

"Countess Leven, who was Lady Maud Foxwell," explained Mrs. Rushmore.

Kralinsky turned quietly to her, his single eyeglass fixed and glittering.

"No," he answered. "I knew poor Leven well, but I was never introduced to his wife. I have heard that she is very beautiful."

"You say you knew the late Count Leven?" ob-

served Mrs. Rushmore, with an encouraging and interrogatory smile.

"Intimately," answered Kralinsky with perfect self-possession. "We were in the same regiment in the Caucasus. I daresay you remember that he began life as a cavalry officer and then entered the diplomacy. Gifted man, very," the Russian added in a thoughtful tone, "but no balance! It seems to me that I have heard he did not treat his wife very well."

Mr. Van Torp had met several very cool characters in his interesting and profitable career, but he thought that if the man before him was Leven himself, as he seemed to be, he beat them all for calm effrontery.

"Were you ever told that you looked like him?" asked Mr. Van Torp carelessly.

Even at this question Kralinsky showed no embarrassment.

"To tell the truth," he replied, "I remember that one or two in the regiment saw a slight resemblance, and we were of nearly the same height, I should say. But when I last saw Leven he did not wear a beard."

At this point Lady Maud came in quietly and made

directly for the vacant place. The two men rose as soon as she appeared, and she found herself face to face with Kralinsky, with the table between them. Their eyes met, but Lady Maud could not detect the slightest look of recognition in his. Van Torp introduced him, and also watched his face narrowly, but there was not the least change of expression, nor any quick glance of surprise.

Yet Kralinsky possibly did not know that Lady Maud was on the yacht, for he had not been told previously that she was to be of the party, and in the short conversation which had preceded her appearance, no one had actually mentioned the fact. She herself had come to dinner late with the express purpose of presenting herself before him suddenly, but she had to admit that the intended surprise did not take place.

She was not astonished, however, for she had more than once seen her husband placed in very difficult situations, from which he had generally extricated himself by his amazing power of concealing the truth. Being seated nearly opposite to him, it was not easy to study his features without seeming either to stare at him rudely or to be bestowing more attention on him

than on any of the others. Her eyes were very good, and her memory for details was fair, and if she did not look often at his face, she watched his hands and listened to the intonations of his voice, and her conviction that he was Leven grew during dinner. Yet there was still a shadow of doubt, though she could not have told exactly where it lay.

She longed to lead him into a trap by asking some question to which, if he were Leven, he would know the answer, though not if he were anyone else, a question to which he would not hesitate to reply unsuspectingly if the answer were known to him. But Lady Maud was not ingenious in such conversational tricks, and could not think of anything that would do.

The outward difference of appearance between him and the man she had married was so small that she could assuredly not have sworn in evidence that Kralinsky was not her husband. There was the beard, and she had not seen Leven with a beard since the first months of her marriage four years ago, when he had cut it off for some reason known only to himself. Of course a recollection, already four years old, could not be trusted like one that dated only as far back as

three months; for he had left her not long before his supposed death.

There were the hands, and there was the left hand especially. That might be the seat of the doubt. Possibly she had never noticed that Leven had a way of keeping his left little finger almost constantly crooked and turned inward as if it were lame. But she was not sure even of that, for she was not one of those people who study the hands of everyone they know, and can recognise them at a glance. She had certainly never watched her husband's as closely as she was watching Kralinsky's now.

Margaret was in the best of spirits, and talked more than usual, not stopping to think how Van Torp's mere presence would have chilled and silenced her three or four months earlier. If Lady Maud had time to spare from her own affairs, it probably occurred to her that the Primadonna's head was slightly turned by the devotion of a financier considerably bigger and more serious than Logotheti; but if she had known of the "business agreement" between the two, she would have smiled at Van Torp's wisdom in offering a woman who seemed to have everything just the one thing in the world which

she desired and had not. Yet for all that, he might be far from his goal. It was possible that Margaret might look upon him as Lady Maud herself did, and wish to make him her best friend. Lady Maud would not be jealous if she succeeded.

On the whole it was a gay dinner, and Mrs. Rushmore and Kralinsky knew that it was a very good one, and told each other so afterwards as they walked slowly up and down the great promenade deck in the starlight. For people who are very fond of good eating can chatter pleasantly about their food for hours, recalling the recent delights of a perfect *chaud-froid* or a faultless sauce; and it was soon evident that there was nothing connected with such subjects which Kralinsky did not understand and appreciate, from a Chinese bird's-nest soup to the rules of the great Marie-Antoine Carême and Brillat-Savarin's *Physiology of Taste*. Kralinsky also knew everybody. Between gastronomy and society, he appeared to Mrs. Rushmore to know everything there was to be known.

Lady Maud caught snatches of the conversation as the two came near her and then turned back; and she remembered that Leven used to talk on the same sub-

jects with elderly women on whom he wished to make a pleasant impression. The voice was his to the very least intonation, and the walk was his, too, and yet she knew she had a doubt somewhere, a very small doubt, which it was a sort of slow torture to feel was still unsatisfied.

Mr. Van Torp sat between her and Lady Margaret, while the two others walked. The deep cushioned straw chairs stood round a low fixed table on which there had been coffee, and at Margaret's request the light had been put out, though it was only a small opalescent one, placed under the awning abaft the wheel-house and bridge.

"We must be going very fast," said Lady Maud, "for the sea is flat as a millpond, and yet there's a gale as soon as one gets out of the lee of things."

"She's doing twenty-two, I believe," replied Van Torp, "and she can do twenty-three if pressed. She will, by-and-by, when she gets warmed up."

"Where are we going?" Margaret asked. "At this rate we are sure to get somewhere!"

"I don't know where we're going, I'm sure." The millionaire smiled in the gloom. "But as you say, it

doesn't take more than five minutes to get somewhere in a ship like this."

"You must have told the captain what you wanted him to do! You must have given some orders!"

"Why, certainly. I told him to look around and see if he could find another yacht anything like this, anywhere in the Mediterranean. So he's just looking around, like that, I suppose. And if he finds another yacht anything like this, we'll see which of us can go fastest. You see I don't know anything about ships, or where to go, so I just thought of that way of passing the time, and when you're tired of rushing about and want to go anywhere in particular, why, I'll take you there. If the weather cuts up we'll go in somewhere and wait, and see things on shore. Will that do?"

Margaret laughed at the vagueness of such a roving commission, but Lady Maud looked towards her friend in the starlight and tried to see his expression, for she was sure that he had a settled plan in his mind, which he would probably put into execution.

"I've figured it out," he continued presently. "This thing will go over five hundred and twenty miles a day for eight days without stopping for coal, and that makes

more than four thousand miles, and I call that a pretty nice trip, don't you? Time to cool off before going to Paris. Of course if I chose to take you to New York you couldn't get out and walk. You'd have to go."

"I've no idea of offering any resistance, I assure you!" said Margaret. "I'm too perfectly, completely, and unutterably comfortable on your yacht; and I don't suppose it will be any rougher than it was last March when we crossed in the *Leofric* together."

"Seems a long time, doesn't it?" Van Torp's tone was thoughtful, but expressed anything rather than regret. "I prefer this trip, myself."

"Oh, so do I, infinitely! You're so much nicer than you used to be, or than I thought you were. Isn't he, Maud?"

"Far!" answered Lady Maud. "I always told you so. Do you mind very much if I go to bed? I'm rather sleepy after the journey." She rose. "Oh, I mustn't forget to tell you," she added, speaking to Margaret, "I always lock my door at night, so don't be surprised! If you want to come in and talk when you come down just call, or knock, and I'll let you in directly."

"All right," Margaret answered.

Lady Maud disappeared below, leaving the two together, for Mrs. Rushmore and Kralinsky had found a pleasant sheltered place to sit, further aft, and the Count was explaining to the good American lady the delicious Russian mysteries of "Borshtsh," "Shtshi," "Kasha" and "Smyetany," after extolling the unapproachable flavour of fresh sturgeon's roe, and explaining that "caviare" is not at all the Russian name for it and is not even a Russian word; and Mrs. Rushmore listened with intense interest and stood up for her country, on a basis of Blue Point oysters, planked shad, canvas-backs and ter-rapin done in the Philadelphian manner, which she maintained to be vastly superior to the Baltimorian; and each listened to the other with real interest.

Van Torp and Margaret had not been alone together for five minutes since they had left Bayreuth on the previous day, but instead of talking, after Lady Maud was gone, the Primadonna began to sing very softly and beautifully, and not quite for herself only, for she well knew what pleasure her voice gave her companion, and she was the more ready to sing because he had never asked her to do so. Moreover, it cost her nothing, in the warm evening air under the awning, and

like all great singers she loved the sound of her own voice. To be able to do almost anything supremely well, one must do it with real delight, and without the smallest effort which it is not a real pleasure to make.

So Margaret leaned back comfortably in her cushioned chair, with her head inclined a little forward, and the magic notes floated from her lips through the soft moving night; for as the yacht ran on through the calm sea at her great speed, it was as if she lay still and the night itself were flying over her with muffled wings.

Margaret sang nothing grand nor very difficult; not the Waltz Song that had made her famous, nor the Good Friday music which she could never sing to the world, but sweet old melodious songs she had learned when a girl; Schubert's "Serenade" and "Ave Maria," and Tosti's "Malia," and then Beethoven's "Adelaide"; and Van Torp was silent and perfectly happy, as well he might be. Moreover, Margaret was happy too, which was really more surprising, considering how very angry she had been with Logotheti for a whole week, and that she was quite aware of the manner in which he was passing his time in spite of her urgent message. But

before the magnificent possibilities which the "business agreement" had suddenly opened to her, the probability of her again sending him any word, within a reasonable time, had diminished greatly, and the prospect of flying into a rage and telling him her mind when she saw him was not attractive. She had always felt his influence over her more strongly when they had been together; and it had always lost its power when he was away, till she asked herself why she should even think of marrying him. She would not be the first woman who had thought better of an engagement and had broken it for the greater good of herself and her betrothed. In all probability she had never been really and truly in love, though she had been very sincerely fond of Edmund Lushington the English writer, who had discovered rather late that the magnificent and successful Margarita da Cordova was not at all the same person as the "nice English girl," Margaret Donne, whom he had worshipped before she had gone upon the stage. So far as he was concerned, she had received his change of mind as a slight; as for Logotheti, she would never forgive him for not having remained faithful even during the few weeks since they had called themselves

engaged; but Van Torp's position as a suitor was different. At all events, she said to herself, he was a man; and he did not offer her romantic affection, but power, and a future which should soon give her the first position in the musical world, if she knew how to use it. She was accustomed to the idea of great wealth and of the ordinary things it could give; mere money impressed her no more than it does most very successful artists, unless they are miserly and fond of it for its own sake, which is comparatively unusual. She wasted most of what she earned, in a sort of half-secret luxury and extravagance which made little show but cost a great deal and gave her infinite satisfaction. Even Lady Maud did not dream of the waste that was a pleasure to the Prima-donna, and the meek Potts was as reticent as the fierce Justine was garrulous. It was a secret joy to Potts, besides being a large source of revenue, to live with a mistress who flatly refused ever to wear a pair of silk stockings more than once, much less a pair of gloves. Mrs. Rushmore would have held up her elderly hands at such reckless doings. Margaret herself, trusting to her private fortune for her old age in case she never married, did as she pleased with her money, and never

thought of investing it; but now and then, in moments of depression, it had occurred to her that when she left the stage, as she must some day, she would not be able to live as she did now, and the thought vaguely disturbed her for a few minutes, but that was all, and she had always within reach the easy remedy of marrying a millionaire, to whom such a sum as five hundred pounds a year for silk stockings would be an insignificant trifle; and while her voice lasted she could make more than that by giving one concert in Chicago, for instance, or by singing two nights in opera.

This is not a digression. The Diva cared nothing for money in itself, but she could use a vast amount of it with great satisfaction and quite without show or noise. Mr. Van Torp's income was probably twenty or thirty times as large as the most she could possibly use, and that was a considerable asset in his favour.

He was not a cultivated man, like Logotheti; he had never known a word of Latin or Greek in his life, his acquaintance with history was lacunous—to borrow a convenient Latin word—and he knew very little about the lives of interesting people long dead. He had once read part of a translation of the *Iliad* and had declared

it to be nonsense. There never were such people, he had said, and if there had been, there was no reason for writing about them, which was a practical view of the case, if not an æsthetic one. On the other hand, he was oddly gifted in many ways and without realising it in the least. For instance, he possessed a remarkable musical ear and musical memory, which surprised and pleased even the Diva, whenever they showed themselves. He could whistle her parts almost without a fault, and much more difficult music, too.

For everyday life he spoke like a Western farmer, and at first this had been intensely disagreeable to the daughter of the scholarly Oxford classic; but she had grown used to it quickly since she had begun to like him, till his way of putting things even amused her; and moreover, on that night by the gate of the field outside Bayreuth, she had found out that he could speak well enough, when he chose, in grave, strong words that few women could hear quite indifferently. Never, in all her acquaintance with Logotheti, had she heard from the Greek one phrase that carried such conviction of his purpose with it, as Van Torp's few simple words had done then.

Big natures are usually most drawn to those that are even bigger than themselves, either to love them, or to strive with them. It is the Second-Rates who take kindly to the little people, and are happy in the adulation of the small-fry.

So Margaret was drawn away from Logotheti, the clever spoilt child of fortune, the loving, unproductive worshipper of his own Greek Muses, by the Crown-Grasper, the ruthless, uncultured hard-hitter, who had cared first for power, and had got it unhelpt, but who now desired one woman, to the exclusion of all others, for his mate.

Vaguely, the Diva remembered how, when Van Torp had asked her to walk with him on the deck of the *Leofric* and she had at first refused and then consented, Paul Griggs, looking on with a smile, had quoted an old French proverb: "A fortress that parleys, and a woman who listens, will soon surrender."

When she was silent after singing "Adelaide," association brought back the saying of the veteran man of letters, for Van Torp asked her if she cared to walk a little on the quiet deck, where there was a lee; and the sea-air and even the chairs recalled the rest, with a little

wonder, but no displeasure, nor self-contempt. Was she not her own mistress? What had anyone to say, if she chose to change her mind and take the stronger man, supposing that she took either? Had Logotheti established any claim on her but that of constancy? Since that was gone, here was a man who seemed to be as much more enduring than his rival, as he was stronger in every other way. What were small refinements of speech and culture, compared with wide-reaching power? What availed it to possess in memory the passionate love-roses of Sappho's heart, if you would not follow her to the Leucadian cliff? Or to quote torrents of Pindar's deep-mouthed song, if you had not the constancy to run one little race to the end without swerving aside? Logotheti's own words and epithets came back to Margaret, from many a pleasant talk in the past, and she cared for them no longer. Full of life himself, he lived half among the dead, and his waking was only a dream of pleasure; but this rough-hewn American was more alive than he, and his dreams were of the living and came true.

When Margaret bade Van Torp good night she pressed his hand, frankly, as she had never done be-

fore, but he took no sudden advantage of what he felt in her touch, and he returned the pressure so discreetly that she was almost disappointed, though not quite, for there was just a little something more than usual there.

She did not disturb Lady Maud, either, when she went to her cabin, though if she had known that her beautiful neighbour was wide awake and restless, she would at least have said good night, and asked her if she was still so very tired.

But Lady Maud slept, too, at last, though not very long, and was the only one who appeared at breakfast to keep Van Torp company, for Margaret slept the sleep of a singer, which is deep and long as that of the healthy dormouse, and Mrs. Rushmore had her first tea and toast happily in her cheerful surroundings of pink and gilding. As for Kralinsky, his man informed Stemp and the chief steward that the Count never thought of getting up till between nine and ten o'clock, when he took a cup of chocolate and a slice or two of sponge cake in his own room before dressing. So Lady Maud and Van Torp had the yacht to themselves for some time that morning.

"I fancy from what you said last night that your plan is to catch Logotheti and the Tartar girl at sea," said Lady Maud, when they were alone.

"I supposed you'd understand," answered Van Torp. "Do you see any harm in that? It occurred to me that it might be quite a drastic form of demonstration. How does it strike you? At all low-down?"

"No, frankly not!" Lady Maud was still incensed at Logotheti's conduct. "A man who does such things deserves anything that his rival can do to him. I hope you may overhaul the yacht, run alongside of her and show Margaret the two, making love to each other in Tartar on deck! That's the least that ought to happen to him!"

"Thank you. I like to hear you talk like that. Captain Brown will do his level best, I think. And now, tell me," he lowered his voice a little more, "is that man Leven, or not?"

"I am sure he is," Lady Maud answered, "and yet I feel as if there ought to be a little doubt still. I don't know how to express it, for it's rather an odd sensation."

"I should think it might be! Is there anything I

can say or do? I'll ask the man any question you suggest. I'm certain he's not old Levi Longlegs, and if he's not Leven, who on earth is he? That's what I should like to know."

"I shall find out, never fear! I know I shall, because I must, if I am ever to have any peace again. I'm not a very nervous person, you know, am I? But it's more than I can bear long, to sit opposite a man at table, again and again, as I shall have to, and not be sure whether he's my husband, come back from the dead, or someone else!" She paused, and her nostrils dilated a little, but Van Torp only nodded slowly and sympathetically. "I mean to know before I go to bed to-night," she said, with a little desperation in her voice. "I shall talk to him till I am sure of one thing or the other. At table, I cannot tell, but if we are alone together I know I can settle the question. If you see that we are talking at the other end of the deck, try to keep Mrs. Rushmore and Margaret from coming near us. Will you?"

To Mrs. Rushmore's amazement and Margaret's surprise, Lady Maud made a dead set at Kralinsky all that day, an attention which he seemed to appreciate

as it deserved. Before breakfast was over, Van Torp had repeated to her what Kralinsky had said about having formerly been intimate with Leven, and Lady Maud took this statement as a basis of operations for finding out just how much he knew of her own life; she judged that if he were not Leven himself, he must soon betray the fact by his ignorance.

That was the strangest day she had ever passed. She found it very easy to talk with Kralinsky, as it always is when there has been long familiarity, even if it has been only the familiar intercourse of domestic discord. He knew many details of her life in London. That was clear after half an hour's conversation. She alluded to the idle talk there had been about her and Van Torp; Kralinsky knew all about that and had heard, as he said, some silly story about Leven having found her with the American in certain rooms in the Temple, and about an envelope which was said to have contained over four thousand and one hundred pounds in bank-notes. He politely scouted the story as nonsense, but he had heard it, and Lady Maud knew that every word of it was true. He knew of Leven's unsuccessful attempt to divorce her on that ground, too,

and he knew the number of her house in Charles Street, Berkeley Square.

On the other hand, there were many things of which he knew nothing, or pretended to be ignorant, such as the names of her brothers and sisters, her father's favourite pursuits and the like. But she understood very well that if he thought she suspected his identity under the disguise of his beard, and if he wished to avoid recognition, he was just the man to pretend blank ignorance of some vital matters, after admitting his acquaintance with many others. He had been very intimate with Leven, to the last, he said; Leven had always written to him very fully about his life, very wittily sometimes, but always without balance! That was it; he had no "balance." Yes, he himself had been in Petersburg when Leven was killed and had seen him on the previous day. Within a week he had made a rapid trip to New York, whence he had now just returned. He had crossed on five-day boats both going and coming, and he named them.

"I am naturally interested in meeting anyone who knew my husband so well," Lady Maud said, making a bold dash at a possibility. "We had many differences,

as you seem to know, but I daresay that if he could come back to life and know the real truth, we should forgive each other."

She looked up to him with a gentle smile as she said this, for she had often felt it; and in that instant a flash of light came into his usually rather uncertain eyes. Her heart stood still; she looked at the sea again directly, for she was leaning against the rail; then she drew breath, as if from an effort. She had seen a look that could only mean recognition. Leven was alive and was standing beside her. But she had the courage to go on talking, after a moment, and she tried to change the subject, though not very adroitly.

During the afternoon Mr. Van Torp had a revelation, sudden and clear, for he had watched Lady Maud and Kralinsky all day and had thought about them a good deal, considering how his mind was occupied with other matters even nearer to his heart than his best friend's welfare. As soon as the revelation came upon him he rang for his own man.

"Stemp, see here!" he began. "You've valeted around with all sorts of different-looking men. How

long does it take to grow a beard like Count Krainsky's?"

"A year, sir. Not a day less, and longer with most gentlemen. If you were thinking of it, sir——"

"You don't believe it could be managed in three months, by taking an expert around with you to work on your face?"

"That's out of the question, sir. Gentlemen's beards that have shaved all their lives, as I suppose you have, sir, do grow faster, but I should consider a year a short time for such a fine one as the Count's. Indeed I should, sir."

"Do you suppose you could stick it on fresh every day, the way they do for the stage?"

"Not so that it wouldn't show in broad daylight, sir."

"Well, that's all. I wasn't exactly thinking of trying a beard. I was only thinking—just like that. What I rang for was a cap. Got any more like this? You see I've managed to get a spot of ink on this one. Had it on the table when I was writing, I suppose. That's the worst of white caps, they spot so."

A little later, Mr. Van Torp was looking out for a

chance to speak alone with Lady Maud, and as soon as he found his opportunity, he told her what Stemp had said. Strangely enough, it had never occurred to him that such a remarkable beard as Kralinsky's must have taken a long time to grow, and that Leven, who had none, had not left London more than three months ago. He watched the effect of this statement on his friend's face, but to his surprise she remained grave and sad.

"I cannot help it," she said in a tone of conviction. "He must be Leven, whatever Stemp tells you about his beard."

"Well, then it's a false beard, and will come off," observed Mr. Van Torp, with at least equal gravity. "Stemp says that's impossible, but he must be wrong, unless you are."

"It's real," Lady Maud said, "and he is my husband. I've talked to him all day, and he knows things about my life that no one else could, and if there are others about which he is vague, that must be because he is pretending, and does not want to show that he knows everything."

Van Torp shook his head, but remained uncon-

vinced; Lady Maud did not change her mind either, and was already debating with herself as to whether it would not be really wiser to speak out and tell Kra-linsky that she had recognised him under his transparent disguise. She felt that she must know the worst, if she was ever to rest again.

Neither Margaret nor Mrs. Rushmore had ever seen Leven, and they had not the least idea of what was really going on under their eyes. They only saw that Lady Maud was making a dead set at the Count, and if Margaret wondered whether she had misjudged her friend's character, the elder lady had no doubt as to what was happening.

"My dear child," she said to Margaret, "your friend is going to console herself. Widows of that age generally do, my dear. I myself could never understand how one could marry again. I should always feel that dear Mr. Rushmore was in the room. It quite makes me blush to think of it! Yet it is an undeniable fact that many young widows marry again. Mark my words, Margaret, your friend is going to console herself before long. If it is not this one, it will be another. My dear, I am quite positive about it."

When the sun went down that evening the yacht had passed Otranto and the Cape, and her course had been changed, to head her for Cape Spartivento and the Straits of Messina, having done in twenty-four hours as much as the little Italian mail-steamers do in forty-eight, and nearly half as much again as the *Erinna* could have done at her highest speed. As Mr. Van Torp had predicted, his engines had "warmed up," and were beating their own record. The gale made by the vessel's way was stronger than a woman could stand in with any regard to her appearance, but as the weather continued to be calm it was from dead-ahead, and there was plenty of shelter on the promenade deck abaft the wheel-house, on condition of not going too near the rail.

After dinner Kralinsky and Mrs. Rushmore walked a little, as on the previous evening, and Lady Maud sat with Margaret and Van Torp. But before the two walkers went off to sit down in the quiet corner they had found yesterday, Lady Maud rose, went half-way aft, and deliberately placed herself where they were obliged to pass close to her at each turn, standing and leaning against the bright white side of the engine

skylight, which was as high as the wheel-house itself, and broke in aft, where the big ventilating fans were situated, making a square corner inward.

She stood there, and as it was not very dark in the clear starlight, Kralinsky saw in passing that she followed his face with her eyes, turning her head to look at him when he was coming towards her, and turning it very slowly back again as he came near and went by. It was impossible to convey more clearly an invitation to get rid of his companion and join her, and he was the last man in the world to misunderstand it.

But Mrs. Rushmore saw it too, and as she considered him a lion, and therefore entitled to have his own way, she made it easy for him.

"My dear Count," she said blandly, after passing Lady Maud twice, "I have really had enough now, and if you will promise to finish your walk alone, I think I will go and sit with the others."

He left her with Margaret and Van Torp and went back to Lady Maud, who moved as he came up to her, made two steps beside him, and then suddenly slipped into the recess where the fan-house

joined the engine skylight. She stood still, and he instantly ranged himself beside her. They were quite out of sight of the others, and of the bridge, and even if it had been daylight they could not have been seen except by someone coming from aft.

"I want to speak to you," she said, in a low, steady voice. "Please listen quite quietly, for some of them may begin to walk again."

Kralinsky bent his head twice, and then inclined it towards her, to hear better what she was going to say.

"It has pleased you to keep up this comedy for twenty-four hours," she began.

He made a slight movement, which was natural under the circumstances.

"I do not understand," he said, in his oily voice. "What comedy? I really have no——"

"Don't go on," she answered, interrupting him sharply. "Listen to what I am going to tell you, and then decide what you will do. I don't think your decision will make very much difference to me, but it will make a difference to the world and to yourself. I saw you from a window when you brought Mr. Van

Torp to the hotel in Bayreuth, and I recognised you at once. Since this afternoon I have no doubt left."

"I never saw you till last night," said Kralinsky, with some little surprise in his tone, and with perfect assurance.

"Do you really think you can deceive me any longer?" she asked. "I told you this afternoon that if you could come back from the dead, and know the whole truth, we should probably forgive each other, though we had many differences. Shall we?" She paused a moment, and by his quick change of position she saw that he was much moved. "I don't mean that we should ever go back to the old life, for we were not suited to each other from the first, you and I. You wanted to marry me because I was pretty and smart, and I married you because I wanted to be married, and you were better-looking than most men, and seemed to have what I thought was necessary—fortune and a decent position. No, don't interrupt me. We soon found out that we did not care for each other. You went your way, and I went mine. I don't mean to reproach you, for when I saw you were beginning to be tired of me I did nothing to keep you. I myself

was tired of it already. But whatever you may have thought, I was a faithful wife. Mr. Van Torp had given me a great deal of money for my charity, and does still. I can account for it. I never used a penny of it for myself, and never shall; and he never was, and never will be, any more than a trusted friend. I don't know why you chose to disappear when the man who had your pocket-book was killed and you were said to be dead. It's not my business, and if you choose to go on living under another name, now that you are rich again, I shall not betray you, and few people will recognise you, at least in England, so long as you wear that beard. But you had it when we were married, and I knew you at once, and when I heard you were to be of the party here, I made up my mind at once that I would accept the invitation and come too, and speak to you as I'm speaking now. When I believed you were dead I forgave you everything, though I was glad you were gone; frankly, I did not wish you alive again, but since you are, God forbid that I should wish you dead. You owe me two things in exchange for my forgiveness: first, yours, if I treated you ungenerously or unkindly; and, secondly, you ought

to take back every word you ever said to me about Mr. Van Torp, for there was not a shadow of truth in what you thought. Will you do that? I ask nothing else."

"Indeed I will, my dear Maud," said Count Kralinsky, in a voice full of emotion.

Lady Maud drew a long breath, that trembled a little as it left her heated lips again. She had done what she believed most firmly to be right, and it had not been easy. She had not been surprised by his patient silence while she had been talking; for she had felt that it was hers to speak and his to listen.

"Thank you," she said now. "I shall never go back to what I have said, and neither of us need ever allude to old times again during this trip. It will not last long, for I shall probably go home by land from the first port we touch, and it is not likely that we shall ever meet again. If we do, I shall behave as if you were Count Kralinsky whom I have met abroad, neither more nor less. I suppose you will have conscience enough not to marry. Perhaps, if I thought another woman's happiness depended on it,

I would consent to divorce you, but you shall never divorce me."

"No power could make me wish to," Kralinsky answered, still deeply moved. "I was mad in those days, Maud; I was beside myself, between my debts and my entanglements with women not fit to touch your shoes. I've seen it all since. That is the chief reason why I chose to disappear from society when I had the chance, and become someone else! I swear to you, on my mother's soul in heaven, that I thought of nothing but that—to set you free and begin life over again as another man. No thought of marrying has ever crossed my mind! Do you think I could be as bad as that? But I'm not defending myself—how could I? All the right is on your side, and all the wrong on mine. And now—I would give heaven and earth to undo it all and to come back to you!"

Lady Maud drew as far as she could into the corner where the fan-house joined the engine skylight. She had not expected this; it was too much repentance; it was too like a real attempt to win her again. He had not seen her for more than three months; she knew she was very beautiful; his fleeting passion had

come to life again, as he had. But her old repulsion for him was ten times stronger than when they had parted, and she shrank back as far as she could, without speaking. From far below the noiseless engines sent a quick vibration up to the ironwork of the skylight. She felt it, but could hardly tell it from the beatings of her own heart. He saw her shrinking from him and was wise.

“Don't be afraid of me!” he cried, in a low and pleading tone. “Not that! Oh, please not that! I will not come nearer; I will not put out my hand to touch yours, I swear it to you! But I love you as I never loved you before; I never knew how beautiful you were till I had lost you, and now that I have found you again you are a thousand times more beautiful than in my dreams! No, I ask nothing! I have no right to ask for what I have thrown away! You do not even pity me, I think! Why should you? You were free when you thought me dead, and I have come back to be a burden and a weight on your life. Forgive me, forgive me, my lost darling, for the sake of all that might have been, but don't fear me! Pity me, if you can, but don't be afraid of me! Say that you

pity me a little, and I shall be satisfied, and grateful too!"

Lady Maud was silent for a few seconds, while he stood turned towards her, his hands clasped in a dramatic gesture, as if still imploring her commiseration.

"I do pity you," she said at last, quite steadily, for just then she did not fear that he would try to touch even her hand. "I pity you, if you are really in love with me again. I pity you still more if this is a passing thing that has taken hold of you merely because you still think me handsome. But I will never take you back to be my husband again. Never. That is finished, for good and all."

"Ah, Maud, listen to me——"

But she had already slipped out of the corner and was walking slowly away from him, not towards the others, but aft, so that he might join her quietly before going back to them. He was a man of the world and understood her, and did what was expected of him. Almost as soon as he was beside her, she turned to go forward with her leisurely, careless grace.

"We've been standing a long time," said she, as if

the conversation had been about the weather. "I want to sit down."

"I am in earnest," he said, very low.

"So am I," answered Lady Maud.

They went on towards the wheel-house side by side, without haste, and not very near together, like two ordinary acquaintances.

CHAPTER VII.

WHILE the *Lancashire Lass* was racing down to the Straits of Messina the *Erinna* was heading for the same point from the opposite direction, no longer dawdling along at half-speed, but going her full sixteen knots, after coaling in Naples, and any navigator who knew the positions and respective speeds of the two yachts could have calculated with approximate precision the point at which they would probably sight each other.

Logotheti had given up the idea of taking Baraka to Paris, if he had ever really entertained it at all. He assured her that Naples was a great city, too, and that there was a first-rate French dressmaking establishment there, and that the Ville de Lyon would turn her out almost as smartly as the Rue de la Paix itself. He took Baraka ashore and placed her for half a day in the hands of Madame Anna, who undertook to do all that money could do in about a fortnight. He had the

effrontery to say that Baraka was a niece of his from Constantinople, whose mother was on board the yacht, but had unfortunately sprained her ankle in falling down the companion during a gale, and could therefore not accompany her daughter on shore. The young lady, he said, spoke only Turkish. Madame Anna, grave and magnificently calm under all circumstances, had a vague recollection of having seen the handsome Oriental gentleman already with another niece, who spoke only French; but that was none of her business. When would the young lady try on the things? On any day Madame Anna chose to name; but in the meantime her uncle would take her down to Sicily, as the weather was so wonderfully fine and it was still so hot. Madame Anna therefore named a day, and promised, moreover, to see the best linen-drapers and sempstresses herself, and to provide the young lady with as complete an outfit as if she were going to be married. She should have all things visible and invisible in the shortest possible time. Logotheti, who considered himself a stranger, insisted on putting down a thousand-franc note merely as a guarantee of good faith. The dressmaker protested almost furiously and took the money, still protesting.

So that was settled, and Baraka was to be outwardly changed into a beautiful Feringhi lady without delay. To tell the truth, the establishment is really a smart one, and she was favourably impressed by the many pretty frocks and gowns that were tried on several pretty young women in order that she might make her choice.

Baraka would have liked a blue satin skirt with a yellow train and a bright green silk body, but in her travels she had noticed that the taste of Feringhi ladies was for very sober or gentle colours, compared with the fashionable standards of Samarkand, Tiflis and Constantinople, and she meekly acquiesced to everything that Logotheti and Madame Anna proposed, after putting their heads together. Logotheti seemed to know a great deal about it.

He took Baraka for a long drive in the afternoon, out by Pozzuoli to Baia and back. The girl loved the sea; it was the only thing in the western world that looked big to her, and she laughed at wretched little mountains only four or five thousand feet high, for she had dwelt at the feet of the lofty Altai and had sojourned in Tiflis under the mighty peak of Kasbek. But the

sea was always the sea, and to her mountain sight it was always a new wonder beyond measure, vast, moving, alive. She gazed out with wide eyes at the purpled bay, streaked by winding currents of silver, and crisped here and there by the failing summer breeze. Logotheti saw her delight, and musical lines came back to him out of his reading, how the ocean is ever the ocean, and the things of the sea are the sea's; but he knew that he could not turn Greek verse into Turkish, try as he might, much less into that primeval, rough-hewn form of it which was Baraka's native tongue.

It was nearly dark when the naphtha launch took them out to the yacht, which lay under the mole where the big English and German passenger steamers and the men-of-war are moored.

Logotheti had at last received Margaret's telegram asking him to meet her at once. It had failed to reach him in Gibraltar, and had been telegraphed on thence to Naples, and when he read it he was considerably disturbed. He wrote a long message of explanations and excuses, and sent it to the Primadonna at Bayreuth, tripling the number of words she had prepaid for his answer. But no reply came, for Margaret was herself

at sea and nothing could reach her. He sent one of his own men from the yacht to spend the day at the telegraph office, with instructions for finding him if any message came. The man found him three times, and brought three telegrams; and each time as he tore open the little folded brown paper he felt more uncomfortable, but he was relieved to find each time that the message was only a business one from London or Paris, giving him the latest confidential news about a Government loan in which he was largely interested. When he reached the yacht he sent another man to wait till midnight at the office.

The Diva was angry, he thought; that was clear, and perhaps she had some right to be. The tone of her telegram had been peremptory in the extreme, and now that he had answered it after a delay of several days, she refused to take any notice of him. It was not possible that such a personage as she was should have left Bayreuth without leaving clear instructions for sending on any telegrams that might come after she left. At this time of year, as he knew, she was beset with offers of engagements to sing, and they had to be answered. From eight o'clock in the morning to mid-

night there were sixteen hours, ample time for a retransmitted message to reach her anywhere in Europe and to be answered. Logotheti felt a sensation of deep relief when the man came aboard at a quarter-past midnight and reported himself empty-handed; but he resolved to wait till the following evening before definitely leaving Naples for the ten days which must elapse before Baraka could try on her beautiful Feringhi clothes.

He told her anything he liked, and she believed him, or was indifferent; for the idea that she must be as well dressed as any European woman when she met the man she was seeking had appealed strongly to her, and the sight of the pretty things at Madame Anna's had made her ashamed of her simple little ready-made serges and blouses. Logotheti assured her that Kralinsky was within easy reach, and showed no inclination to travel far. There was news of him in the telegrams received that day, the Greek said. Spies were about him and were watching him for her, and so far he had shown no inclination to admire any Feringhi beauty.

Baraka accepted all these inventions without doubting their veracity. In her eyes Logotheti was a great

man, something like a king, and vastly more than a Tartar chieftain. He could send men to the ends of the earth if he chose. Now that he was sure of where Kralinsky was, he could no doubt have him seized secretly and brought to her, if she desired it earnestly of him. But she did not wish to see the man, free or a prisoner, till she had her beautiful new clothes. Then he should look upon her, and judge whether he had done well to despise her love, and to leave her to be done to death by her own people and her body left to the vulture that had waited so long on a jutting point of rock over her head three years ago.

Meanwhile, also, there were good things in life; there were very fat quails and marvellous muscatel grapes, and such fish as she had never eaten in Europe during her travels, and there was the real coffee of the Sheikhs, and an unlimited supply of rose-leaf preserve. Her friend was a king, and she was treated like a queen on the yacht. Every day, when Gula had rubbed her small feet quite dry after the luxurious bath, Gula kissed them and said they were like little tame white mice. Saving her one preoccupation, Baraka was in an Eastern paradise, where all things were perfect, and

Kêf descended upon her every day after luncheon. Even the thought of the future was brighter now, for though she never left her cabin without her long bodkin, she was quite sure that she should never need it. In imagination she saw herself even more beautifully arrayed in Feringhi clothes than the pretty ladies with champagne hair whom she had seen driving in the Bois de Boulogne not long ago when she walked there with Spiro. She wondered why Logotheti and Gula were both so much opposed to her dyeing her hair or wearing a wig. They told her that ladies with champagne hair were not always good ladies; but what did that matter? She thought them pretty. But she wondered gravely how Gula knew that they were not good. Gula knew a great many things.

Besides, Baraka was "good" herself, and was extremely well aware of the fact, and of its intrinsic value, if not of its moral importance. If she had crossed a quarter of the world in spite of dangers and obstacles which no European girl could pass unharmed, if alive at all, it was not to offer a stained flower to the man she sought when she found him at last.

As for Logotheti, though he was not a Musulman,

and not even an Asiatic, she felt herself safe with him, and trusted him as she would certainly not have trusted Van Torp, or any other European she had chanced to meet in the course of selling precious stones. He was more like one of her own people than the Greeks and Armenians of Constantinople or even the Georgians of the Caucasus.

She was not wrong in that, either. Logotheti was beginning to wonder what he should do with her, and was vaguely surprised to find that he did not like the idea of parting with her at all; but beyond that he had no more thought of harming her than if she had been confided to his care and keeping by his own mother.

Few Latins, whether Italians, French, or Spanish, could comprehend that, and most of them would think Logotheti a milksop and a sentimental fool. Many northern men, on the other hand, will think he did right, but would prefer not to be placed in such a trying position, for their own part, because beauty is beauty and human nature is weak, and the most exasperating difficulty in which an honest northern man can find himself where a woman is concerned is that dilemma of which honour and temptation are the two horns.

But the best sort of Orientals look on these things differently, even when they are young, and their own women are safer with them than European women generally are among European men. I think that most men who have really known the East will agree with me in this opinion.

And besides, this is fiction, even though it be founded on facts; and fiction is an art; and the end and aim of art is always to discover and present some relation between the true and the beautiful—as perhaps the aim of all religions has been to show men the possible connexion between earth and heaven. Nothing is so easily misunderstood and misapplied as bare truth without comment, most especially when it is an ugly truth about the worst side of humanity. We know that all men are not mere animals; for heaven's sake let us believe that very few, if any, must be! Even Dēmopithēkos, the mob-monkey, may have a conscience, when he is not haranguing the people.

Logotheti certainly had one, of its kind, though he seemed to Margaret Donne and Lady Maud to be behaving in such an outrageous manner as to have forfeited all claim to the Diva's hand; and Baraka, who

was a natural young woman, though a remarkably gifted and courageous one, felt instinctively that she was safe with him, and that she would not need to draw out her sharp bodkin in order to make her position clear, as she had been obliged to do at least twice already during her travels.

Yet it was a dreamy and sense-compelling life that she led on the yacht, surrounded with every luxury she had ever heard of, and constantly waited on by the only clever man she had ever really talked with, excepting the old Persian merchant in Stamboul. The vision of the golden-bearded giant who had left her to her fate after treating her with stony indifference was still before her, but the reality was nearer in the shape of a visible "great man," who could do anything he chose, who caused her to be treated like a queen, and who was undeniably handsome.

She wondered whether he had a wife. Judging marriage from her point of view, there probably had been one put away in that beautiful house in Paris. He was an Oriental, she told herself, and he would not parade his wife as the Feringhis did. But she was one, too, and she considered that it would be an insult to ask

him about such things. Spiro knew, no doubt, but she could not demean herself to inquire of a servant. Perhaps Gula had found out already, for the girl had a way of finding out whatever she wanted to know, apparently by explaining things to the second mate. Possibly Gula could be made to tell what she had learned, without being directly questioned. But, after all, Baraka decided that it did not matter, since she meant to marry the fair-beard as soon as she had her pretty clothes. Yet she became conscious that if he had not existed, she would think it very satisfactory to marry the great man who could do anything he liked, though if he had a wife already, as he probably had, she would refuse to be the second in his house. The Koran allowed a man four, it was said, but the idea was hateful to her, and moreover the Persian merchant's wife had told her that it was old-fashioned to have more than one, mainly because living had grown so expensive.

Logotheti sat beside her for hours under the awnings, talking or not, as she chose, and always reading when she was silent, though he often looked up to see if she wanted anything. He told her when they left Naples that he would show her beautiful islands and other

sights, and the great fire-mountains of the South, *Ætna* and *Stromboli*, which she had heard of on her voyage to *Marseilles* but had not seen because the steamer had passed them at night. The fire-mountain at *Naples* had been quiet, only sending out thin wreaths of smoke, which *Baraka* insisted came from fires made by shepherds.

"Moreover," she said, as they watched *Vesuvius* receding when they left *Naples*, "your mountains are not mountains, but ant-hills, and I do not care for them. But your sea has the colours of many sherbets, rose-leaf and violet, and lemon and orange, and sometimes even of pale yellow peach-sherbet, which is good. Let me always see the sea till the fine dresses are ready to be tried on."

"This sea," answered *Logothesi*, "is always most beautiful near land and amongst islands, and the big fire-mountain of *Sicily* looks as tall as *Kasbek*, because it rises from the water's edge to the sky."

"Then take me to it, and I will tell you, for my eyes have looked on the *Altai*, and I wish to see a real mountain again. After that we will go back and get the fine dresses. Will *Gula* know how to fasten the fine dresses at the back, do you think?"

"You shall have a woman who does, and who can talk with Gula, and the two will fasten the fine dresses for you." Logotheti spoke with becoming gravity.

"Yes," Baraka answered. "Spend money for me, that I may be good to see. Also, I wish to have many servants. My father has a hundred, perhaps a thousand, but now I have only two, Gula and Spiro. The man I seek will think I am poor, and that will be a shame. While I was searching for him, it was different; and besides, you are teaching me how the rich Franks live in their world. It is not like ours. You know, for you are more like us, though you are a king here."

She spoke slowly and lazily, pausing between her phrases, and turning her eyes to him now and then without moving her head; and her talk amused him much more than that of European women, though it was so very simple, like that of a gifted child brought suddenly to a new country, or to see a fairy pantomime.

"Tell me," he said after a time, "if it were the portion of Kralinsky to be gathered to his fathers before you saw him, what would you do?"

Baraka now turned not only her eyes to him but her face.

"Why do you ask me this? Is it because he is dead, and you are afraid to tell me?"

"He was alive this morning," Logotheti answered, "and he is a strong man. But the strong die sometimes suddenly, by accident if not of a fever."

"It is emptiness," said Baraka, still looking at him. "He will not die before I see him."

"Allah forbid! But if such a thing happened, should you wish to go back to your own people? Or would you learn to speak the Frank and live in Europe?"

"If he were dead, which may Allah avert," Baraka answered calmly, "I think I would ask you to find me a husband."

"Ah!" Logotheti could not repress the little exclamation of surprise.

"Yes. It is a shame for a woman not to be married. Am I an evil sight, or poor, that I should go down to the grave childless? Or is there any reproach upon

me? Therefore I would ask you for a husband, because I have no other friend but only you among the Feringhis. But if you would not, I would go to Constantinople again, and to the Persian merchant's house, and I would say to his wife: 'Get me a husband, for I am not a cripple, nor a monster, nor is there any reproach upon me, and why should I go childless?' Moreover, I would say to the merchant's wife: 'Behold, I have great wealth, and I will have a rich husband, and one who is young and pleasing to me, and who will not take another wife; and if you bring me such a man, for whatsoever his riches may be, I will pay you five per cent.'"

Having made this remarkable statement of her intentions, Baraka was silent, expecting Logotheti to say something. What struck him was not the concluding sentence, for Asiatic match-makers and peace-makers are generally paid on some such basis, and the slim Tartar girl had proved long ago that she was a woman of business. What impressed Logotheti much more was what seemed the cool cynicism of her point of view. It was evidently not a romantic passion for Kralinsky that had brought her from beyond Turkestan to London

and Paris; her view had been simpler and more practical; she had seen the man who suited her, she had told him so, and had given him the secret of great wealth, and in return she expected him to marry her, if she found him alive. But if not, she would immediately take steps to obtain another to fill his place and be her husband, and she was willing to pay a high price to anyone who could find one for her.

Logotheti had half expected some such thing, but was not prepared for her extreme directness, still less had he thought of becoming the matrimonial agent who was to find a match worthy of her hand and fortune. She was sitting beside him in a little ready-made French dress, open at the throat, and only a bit of veil twisted round her hair, as any European woman might wear it; possibly it was her dress that made what she said sound strangely in his ears, though it would have struck him as natural enough if she had been muffled in a *yashmak* and *ferajeh*, on the deck of a Bosphorus ferry-boat.

He said nothing in answer, and sat thinking the matter over.

"I could not offer to pay you five per cent," she said after a time, "because you are a king, but I could give you one of the fine rubies I have left, and you would look at it sometimes and rejoice because you had found Baraka a good husband."

Logotheti laughed low. She amused him exceedingly, and there were moments when he felt a new charm he had never known before.

"Why do you laugh?" Baraka asked, a little disturbed. "I would give you a good ruby. A king may receive a good ruby as a gift, and not despise it. Why do you laugh at me? There came two German merchants to me in Paris to see my rubies, and when they had looked, they bought a good one, but not better than the one I would give you, and Spiro heard them say to each other in their own language that it was for their King, for Spiro understands all tongues. Then do you think that their King would not have been glad if I had given him the ruby as a gift? You cannot mock Baraka. Baraka knows what rubies are worth, and has some still."

"I do not mock you," Logotheti answered, with per-

fect gravity. "I laughed at my own thoughts. I said in my heart, 'If Baraka asks me for a husband, what will she say if I answer, Behold, I am the man, if you are satisfied!' This was my thought."

She was appeased at once, for she saw nothing extraordinary in his suggestion. She looked at him quietly and smiled, for she saw her chance.

"It is emptiness," she said. "I will have a man who has no other wife."

"Precisely," Logotheti answered, smiling. "I never had one."

"Now you are indeed mocking me!" she said, bending her sharp-drawn eyebrows.

"No. Everyone knows it who knows me. In Europe, men do not always marry very young. It is not a fixed custom."

"I have heard so," Baraka answered, her anger subsiding, "but it is very strange. If it be so, and if all things should happen as we said, which Allah avert, and if you desired me for your wife, I would marry you without doubt. You are a great man, and rich, and

you are good to look at, as Saäd was. Also you are kind, but Saäd would probably have beaten me, for he beat everyone, every day, and I should have gone back to my father's house. Truly," she added, in a thoughtful tone, "you would make a desirable husband for Baraka. But the man I seek must marry me if I find him alive, for I gave him the riches of the earth and he gave me nothing and departed, leaving me to die. I have told you, and you understand. Therefore let us not jest about these things any more. What will be, will be, and if he must die, it is his portion, and mine also, though it is a pity."

Thereupon the noble little features became very grave, and she leaned back in her chair and folded her hands in her lap, looking out at the violet light on the distant volcano. After that, at dinner and in the evening, they talked pleasantly. She told him tales of her own land, and of her childhood, with legends of the Altai, of *genii* and enchanted princesses; and he, in return, told her about the great world in which he lived; but of the two, she talked the more, no doubt because he was not speaking his own language. Yet there was a bond of sympathy between them more natural and

instinctive than any that had ever drawn him and Margaret together.

When the sun was up the next morning and Logotheti came on deck to drink his coffee alone, he saw the magic Straits not many miles ahead, in an opalescent haze that sent up a vapour of pure gold to the pale blue enamel of the sky. He had been just where he was now more than once before, and few sights of nature had ever given him keener delight. On the left, the beautiful outline of the Calabrian hills descended softly into the still sea, on the right the mountains of Sicily reared their lofty crests; and far above them all, twice as high as the highest, and nobler in form than the greatest, *Ætna* towered to the very sky, and a vast cloud of smoke rose from the summit, and unfolded itself like a standard, in flowing draperies that streamed westward as far as the eye could reach.

"Let her go half-speed, Captain," said Logotheti, as his sailing-master came up to bid him good morning. "I should like my guest to see the Straits."

"Very good, sir. We shall not go through very fast in any case, for the tide is just turning against us."

"Never mind," Logotheti answered. "The slower the better to-day, till we have *Ætna* well astern."

Now the tide in the Straits of Messina is as regular and easy to calculate as the tide in the Ocean, and at full and change of the moon the current runs six knots an hour, flowing or ebbing; it turns so suddenly that small freight steamers sometimes get into difficulties, and no sailing vessel I have ever seen has a chance of getting through against it unless the wind is both fresh and free.

Furthermore, for the benefit of landsmen, it is as well to explain here that when a steamer has the current ahead, her speed is the difference between her speed in slack water and that of the current or tide, whereas, if the latter is with her, its speed increases her own.

Consequently, though the *Erinna* could run sixteen knots, she would only be able to make ten against the tide; for it chanced that it was a spring tide, the moon

being new on that very day. Similarly the *Lancashire Lass*, running her twenty-three knots like a torpedo boat, would only do seventeen under the same conditions.

CHAPTER VIII

At two o'clock in the morning Captain Brown was called by the officer of the watch, who told him that he was overhauling a good-sized steam yacht. The latter was heading up for the straits from the south-west, and the officer judged her to be not more than three or four miles on the port bow.

Captain Brown, who meant business, was stepping in his clothes in the chart-room, and was on the bridge in ten seconds, peering over the search-light with his big binoculars. At two in the morning even the largest yachts do not show such a blaze of lights as passenger steamers generally do all night, and the one Captain Brown was watching had only two or three besides the regulator ones. She might be white, too, though she might be a light grey, but he thought on the whole that she was painted white. She was rigged as a two-masted ketch-and-a-half schooner. So was the *Annua* now.

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though she had once carried square topsails at the fore. She was also of about the same size, as far as it was possible to judge under the search-light. Captain Brown did not feel sure that he recognised her, but considering what his orders were he knew it was his duty to settle the question of her identity, which would be an easy matter in a quarter of an hour or less, as the course of the two vessels converged.

He had been told to find the *Erinna*, but for what purpose he knew not, and he naturally supposed it to be a friendly one. As a first step, he ordered the Coston signal of his owner's yacht club to be burned, turned off the search-light, and waited for an answer. None came, however. Foreign yachts do not always burn signals to please vessels of other nations.

A couple of minutes later, however, the white beam of a search-light shot out and enveloped Captain Brown and his ship. The other man was evidently having a good look at him, for the light was kept full on for some time. But no signal was burned after it went out. Then Captain Brown turned on his own light again, and looked once more; and he had almost made up his mind that the other yacht was not quite as long as the

Erinna, when she suddenly starboarded her helm, made a wide sweep away from him, and headed down the Sicilian coast in the direction of Catania.

Captain Brown was so much surprised that he lowered his glasses and looked at his chief mate, whose watch it was, and who was standing beside him. It really looked very much as if the other vessel had recognised him and were running away. The chief mate also looked at him, but as they were more or less dazzled by the search-light that had been played on them, they could hardly see one another's faces at all. The captain wished his owner were on deck, instead of being sound asleep below. Owners who are not at all nautical characters do not like to be waked up at two o'clock in the morning by inquiries for instructions. Captain Brown considered the situation for two or three minutes before he made up his mind. He might be mistaken about the length and the bows of the *Erinna*, and if by any possibility it were she, he would not lose much by making sure of her. No other steamer could now pass out of the Straits without being seen by him.

"Hard-a-starboard," he said to the mate.

"Hard-a-starboard," said the mate to the wheel.

The big *Lancashire Lass* described a vast curve at her racing speed, while the captain kept his eye on the steamer he was going to chase. Before she was dead ahead the mate ordered the wheel amidships, and the *Lancashire Lass* did the rest herself.

"That will do for a course," the captain said, when he had the vessel one point on the starboard bow.

"Keep her so," said the mate to the wheel.

"Keep her so, sir," answered the quartermaster.

It soon became clear to Captain Brown that he was chasing an uncommonly fast vessel, though he was willing to admit that he might have been a little out in judging the distance that separated him from her. Allowing that she might do sixteen knots, and even that is a high speed for yachts, he ought to have overtaken her in half an hour at the outside. But he did not, and he was much puzzled to find that he had gained very little on her when six bells were struck. Twice already he had given a little more starboard helm, and the pursued vessel was now right ahead, showing only her stern-light and the glare of her after-masthead light.

"Didn't I hear four bells go just after you called me?" he asked of the mate. "Or was it five?"

"Four bells, sir. I logged it. At two-twenty we gave chase."

"Mr. Johnson," said the captain solemnly, "he's doing at least twenty."

"At least that."

The quartermaster who came to relieve the wheel at the hour, touched his cap, and reported eighty-five and eighty-six revolutions of the port and starboard engines respectively, which meant that the *Lancashire Lass* was doing her best. Then he took the other quartermaster's place.

"Chase," said the man relieved. "Keep her so."

"Keep her so," answered the other, taking over the wheel.

Captain Brown spoke to his officer.

"Tell them to try and work the port engine up to eighty-six, Mr. Johnson."

The chief mate went to the engine telephone, delivered the message, and reported that the engineer of the watch in the port engine said he would do his best, but that the port engine had not given

quite such a good diagram as the starboard one that morning.

Then something happened which surprised and annoyed Captain Brown; and if he had not been a religious man, and, moreover, in charge of a vessel which was so very high-class that she ranked as third in the world amongst steam yachts, and perhaps second, a fact which gave him a position requiring great dignity of bearing with his officers, he would certainly have said things.

The chased vessel had put out her lights and disappeared into complete darkness under the Sicilian coast. Again he and his officer looked at one another, but neither spoke. They were outside the wheel-house on the bridge on the starboard side, behind a heavy plate-glass screen. The captain made one step to the right, the mate made one to the left, and both put up their glasses in the teeth of the gale made by the yacht's tremendous way. In less than a minute they stepped back into their places, and glanced at each other again.

Now it occurred to Captain Brown that such a financier as his owner might be looking out for such an-

other financier as the owner of the *Erinna* for some reason which would not please the latter, whose sailing-master had without doubt recognised the *Lancashire Lass* at once, because she was very differently built from most yachts.

"Search-light again, Mr. Johnson," said the captain.

The great beacon ran out instantly like a comet's tail, and he stood behind it with his glasses. Instead of a steamer, he saw a rocky islet sticking up sharp and clear, half a point on the starboard bow, about three miles off. It was the largest of the Isles of the Cyclops, as he very well knew, off *Aci Reale*, and it was perfectly evident that the chased vessel had first put out her lights and had then at once run behind the islands, close inshore. Captain Brown reflected that the captain he was after must know the waters well to do such a thing, and that the deep draught of his own ship made it the height of folly to think of imitating such a trick at night. Yet so long as the other stayed where she was, she could not come out without showing herself under his search-light.

"Half-speed both engines," he said quickly.

The mate worked the engine telegraph almost as soon as the captain began to speak.

"Starboard five degrees more," said Captain Brown.

The order was repeated to the wheel, and the quartermaster gave it back, and repeated it a second time when the vessel's head had gone off to port exactly to the required degree.

"Slow," said Captain Brown. "Stop her," he said a moment later.

Twin-screw steamers cannot be stopped as quickly by reversing as those with a single screw can, and the *Lancashire Lass* would keep way on for three miles or more, by which time she would be abreast of the islands, and at a safe distance from them. Besides, the spring-tide was now running fresh down the Straits, making a current along the coast, as Captain Brown knew. The instant the engines stopped, the third mate came round from the chart-room, where he had been sent to work a sight for longitude by Aldebaran for the good of his young nautical soul.

A moment later Mr. Van Torp himself appeared on the bridge in pyjamas.

"Got her?" he asked eagerly.

Captain Brown explained that he thought he had cornered the *Erinna* behind the islet, but was not quite sure of her. Mr. Van Torp waited and said nothing, and the chief mate kept the search-light steadily on the rocks. The yacht lost way rapidly, and lay quite still with the islet exactly abeam, half a mile off, as the captain had calculated. He then gave the order to go slow ahead.

A minute had not passed when the vessel that had lain concealed behind the island ran out suddenly with all her regulation lights up, apparently making directly across the bows of the *Lancashire Lass*. Now the rule of the road at sea requires every steamer under way to keep out of the way of any steamer that appears on her starboard side forward of the beam. At such a short distance Captain Brown had hardly any choice but to stop his ship again and order "half-speed astern" till she had no way, and he did so. She was barely moving when the order was given, and a few turns of the engines stopped her altogether.

"Is that the *Erinna*, Captain?" asked Mr. Van Torp.

Captain Brown had his glasses up and did not

answer at once. After nearly a minute he laid them down on the lid of the small box fastened to the bridge-rail.

"No, sir," he answered in a tone of considerable disappointment. "At four miles" distance she looked so much like her that I didn't dare to let her slip through my fingers, but we have not lost more than a couple of hours."

"What is this thing, anyway? She's coming towards us pretty quick."

"She's one of those new fast twin-screw revenue-cutters the Italians have lately built, sir. They look very like yachts at night. There's a deal of smuggling on this coast, over from Malta. She's coming alongside to ask what we mean by giving chase to a Government vessel."

Captain Brown was right, and when the big cutter had crossed his bows, she ran all round him while she slowed down, and she stopped within speaking distance on his starboard side. The usual questions were asked and answered.

"English yacht *Lancashire Lass*, from Venice for Messina, expecting to meet a friend's yacht at sea.

Thought the revenue-cutter was she. Regretted mistake. Had the captain of the cutter seen or heard of English yacht *Erinna*?"

He had not. There was no harm done. It was his duty to watch all vessels. He wished Captain Brown a pleasant trip and good night.

The Italian officer spoke English well, and there was no trouble. Revenue-cutters are very civil to all respectable yachts.

"Hard-a-starboard. Port engine slow astern, starboard engine half-speed ahead."

That was all Captain Brown said, but no one could guess what he was thinking as his big vessel turned quickly to port on her heel, and he headed her up for the Straits again. Mr. Van Torp said nothing at all, but his lips moved as he left the bridge and went off to his own quarters. It was now nearly four o'clock and the eastern sky was grey.

The current was dead against the yacht through the Straits, which were, moreover, crowded with all sorts of large and small craft under sail, taking advantage of the tide to get through; many of them steered very badly under the circumstances, of course,

and it was out of the question to run between them at full speed. The consequence was that it was eight o'clock when the *Lancashire Lass* steamed slowly into Messina and dropped anchor out in the middle of the harbour, to wait while Captain Brown got information about the *Erinna*, if there were any to be had at the harbour-master's office. It would have been folly to run out of the Straits without at least looking in to see if she were there, lying quietly moored behind the fortress of San Salvatore and the very high mole.

She was not there, and had not been heard of, but a Paris *Herald* was procured in which it was stated that the *Erinna* had arrived in Naples, "owner and party on board."

"Well," said Mr. Van Torp, "let's get to Naples, quick. How long will it take, Captain?"

"About eight hours, sir, counting our getting under way and out of this crowded water, which won't take long, for the tide will soon turn."

"Go ahead," said Mr. Van Torp.

Captain Brown prepared to get under way again as quickly as possible. The entrance to Messina harbour

is narrow, and it was natural that, as he was in a hurry, a huge Italian man-of-war should enter the harbour at that very moment, with the solemn and safe deliberation which the movements of line-of-battle ships require when going in and out of port. There was nothing to be done but to wait patiently till the fairway was clear. It was not more than a quarter of an hour, but Captain Brown was in a hurry, and as there was a fresh morning breeze blowing across the harbour he could not even get his anchor up with safety before he was ready to start.

The result of all these delays was that at about nine o'clock he saw the *Erinna* right ahead, bows on and only half a mile away, just between Scylla and Faro, where the whirlpool is still a danger to sailing-vessels and slow steamers, and just as the tide was turning against her and in his own favour. He did not like to leave the bridge, even for a moment, and sent the second mate with an urgent message requesting Mr. Van Torp to come up as soon as he could.

Five minutes earlier the owner had sat down to breakfast opposite Lady Maud, who was very pale and had dark shadows under her eyes for the first time since

he had known her. As soon as the steward left them alone, she spoke.

"It is Leven," she said, "and he wants me to take him back."

Mr. Van Torp set down his tea untasted and stared at her. He was not often completely taken by surprise, but for once he was almost speechless. His lips did not even move silently.

"I was sure it was he," Lady Maud said, "but I did not expect that."

"Well," said Mr. Van Torp, finding his voice, "he sha'n't. That's all."

"No. I told him so. If I had been dressed I would have asked you to put me ashore at Messina. I thought you were going to stop there—the stewardess told me where we were, but she knew nothing else; and now we're off again."

"I can't help it, Maud," said Van Torp, almost in a whisper, "I don't believe it. I don't believe in impossibilities like that beard of his. It may sound ridiculous in the face of your recognising your own husband, but it's a solid fact, and you can't get over it. I wish I could catch the *Erinna* and show him to

that Tartar girl. She'd know in a minute. He can't be her man and Leven too. There's only one thing to be done that I can see."

"What?" asked Lady Maud sadly and incredulously.

"Tell him you'll take him back on condition that he'll shave."

Mr. Van Torp, who was in dead earnest, had just given his best friend this piece of sound practical advice when the door opened, though he had not rung, and the steward announced that the second mate had a message for Mr. Van Torp. He was admitted, and he delivered it.

The owner sprang to his feet.

"By thunder, we've caught 'em!" he cried, as he rushed out of the deck saloon.

Lady Maud leaned back and stared at his empty chair, wondering what was going to happen next.

This was what happened. The *Lancashire Lass* reversed her starboard engine with full speed astern, put her helm hard over to port, and turned back towards the Straits in the smallest space possible for her, passing less than a cable's length from the Scylla rock,

and nearly running down half a dozen fishing-boats that pulled like mad to get out of her way; for they supposed that her steering-gear had broken down, unless her captain had gone raving mad.

While this was going on, Captain Brown himself, with the International Signal Code in his hand, was calling out letters of the alphabet to a quartermaster, and before his ship had made half a circle the flags ran up the single stick the yacht carried.

"My owner has urgent business with your owner," was what the flags meant in plain English.

The *Erinna* was going slow, for Baraka was only just ready to come on deck, haste being, in her opinion, an invention of Shaitan's. Logotheti, who wished her to see the Straits, was just inside the door of the deck saloon, waiting for her to come out of her cabin. The officer of the watch read off the signals of the other yacht, ran up the answering pennant, and sent for the sailing-master, but could of course do nothing else without orders. So the *Erinna* continued to go slow. All this took some minutes, for the officer had naturally been obliged to look up the signal in the Code before answering that he understood it; and in that time Van

Torp's yacht had completed her turn and was nearly alongside. The *Lancashire Lass* slowed down to the *Erinna's* speed, and the two captains aimed their megaphones accurately at each other from their respective bridges for a little pleasant conversation. Captain Brown, instructed by Mr. Van Torp at his elbow, repeated what his signals had meant. The other sailing-master answered that he had already informed his owner, who was coming to the bridge directly.

At that moment Logotheti appeared. There was not much more than a cable's length between the two yachts, which in land-talk means two hundred yards. Van Torp also saw a slim young lady in blue serge, with a veil tied over her hair, leaning on the rail of the promenade deck and looking towards him. With his glasses he recognised the features of Baraka.

"Got 'em!" he ejaculated in a low but audible tone of intense satisfaction.

Logotheti had also seen Van Torp, and waved his hand in a friendly manner.

"Ask the gentleman if he'll come aboard, Captain," said the American. "I can't talk through your corneopean

anyway. I suppose we can send the naphtha launch for him if we stop, can't we?"

"Can't stop here," answered Captain Brown. "The currents might jam us into each other, and we should most likely get aground in any case. This is not even a safe place for going slow, when the tide is running."

"Well, you know your business, and I don't. Tell him we don't want to interfere with any arrangements he's made, and that if he'll kindly set the pace he likes we'll trot along behind him till we get to a nice place, somewhere where we can stop. I suppose he can't run away from us now, can he?"

Captain Brown smiled the smile of a man who commands a twenty-three-knot boat, and proceeded to deliver the message in a more concise form. Logotheti heard every word, and the answer was that he was in no hurry and was quite at Mr. Van Torp's disposal. He would be glad to know whom the latter had on board with him.

"Lady Maud Leven, Miss Margaret Donne, Mrs. Rushmore, and Count Kralinsky," answered Captain Brown, prompted by Van Torp.

The latter was watching the Greek through a pair of deer-stalking glasses, and saw distinctly the expression of surprise that came into his face when he heard the last of the names.

"Tell the gentleman," said Van Torp, "that if he'll bring his party with him when we stop, I'll be very glad to have them all take lunch with me."

Captain Brown delivered the message. At such a short distance he did not even have to raise his voice to be heard through the six-foot megaphone.

To Van Torp's surprise, Logotheti nodded with alacrity, and the answer came that he would bring his party with pleasure, but thought that his visit would be over long before luncheon time.

"All right, good-bye," said Van Torp, as if he were at the telephone. "Ring off, Captain. That's all. Just let him give us a lead now and we'll follow him through this creek again, since you say you can't stop here."

As he went off the bridge to return to his breakfast he passed close to the chief mate, who had turned out again, though it was his watch below.

"I say, Mr. Johnson," he asked, "have we got a barber-shop on board this ship?"

"No, sir," answered the mate, who knew better than to be surprised at anything.

"It's no matter," said Mr. Van Torp. "I was only asking."

He went back to his breakfast with an improved appetite. When he re-entered the saloon Lady Maud was still leaning back in her chair, staring at his empty place.

"Well," he said, "they're both coming on board as soon as we get to a place where we can stop."

"Have you really seen the girl?" Lady Maud sat up, as if she were waking from sleep.

"Oh yes! There she was, looking over the rail, as neat as a pin, in a blue serge dress, with a white veil tied over her hair, watching me. We've got 'em right enough, and that's going to be the end of this mystery!"

"Did you see anyone else on the yacht?"

"Logo. That's all. He and I talked. At least, our captains talked for us. They do know how to yell,

those men! If the girl's the party, Logo beats the band for brass, that's all I can say!"

"It is rather cool," said Lady Maud thoughtfully. "If he's alone with her, it will be all up with his engagement."

"Well, if that's the way he's going on, it's about time." His tone was all at once serious. "Now, see here, have I done anything you consider unfair to make this happen? I want your opinion right away, for if you think I have, I'll stand up for Logo to Miss Donne as hard as I can. Just think it over, please, and tell me your honest opinion. If I've done anything low-down, I want to go right back and begin over again."

He was thoroughly in earnest, and awaited her answer with evident anxiety. Knowing the man as she did, she would not give it hastily, though it was hard to concentrate her thoughts just then on anything but her own trouble; for she was quite convinced that Baraka would not recognise Kralinsky as the man she was looking for, and that this final proof would settle his identity as Leven, which she already did not doubt.

She asked one or two questions.

"Before I answer you," she said, "tell me something,

as you tell me things, when you do. Have you any entanglement with another woman from which you feel that you're not perfectly free? I don't like to ask such a question, and I wouldn't if you had not put me on my honour for my opinion."

"No," answered Van Torp very gravely, "I have not. No living woman has any claim on me, and no dead woman could have, if she came to life again."

"Then I think you had a right to do what you've done, and what you are going to do. When a man behaves in that way he deserves no pity, and now that the crisis is coming I may as well tell you that I've done everything in my power to make Margaret give him up, ever since I have been sure that he had taken the girl with him on his yacht. So far as catching them under Margaret's very eyes is concerned, I'm glad you have succeeded—very glad!"

On certain points Lady Maud was inflexible as to the conduct of men and women, but especially of men. "Mrs. Foxwell" spent much time behind the Virtue-Curtain, seeking for poor souls who were willing to be helped, and her experiences had led her to believe a modified version of the story of Adam and Eve and the

Apple-tree which was quite her own. In her opinion Adam had been in the habit of talking to his wife about the tree for some time, and when the serpent presented itself to explain things he discreetly withdrew till the interview was over. Therefore "Mrs. Foxwell" was, on the whole, more charitably inclined to her own sex than the other, and when she was "Lady Maud" she held very strong views indeed about the obligations of men who meant to marry, and she expressed them when the intended bride was a friend of hers.

"Thank you," said Mr. Van Torp, after she had finished her speech. "I'm glad you don't disapprove, for if you did I'd try to begin all over again, as I told you. Any other question? You said 'one or two,' and I'd like to have them all now."

"Only one more, though perhaps I've no business to ask it. If Margaret marries you, shall you want her to leave the stage?"

"Why, no!" answered Mr. Van Torp with alacrity. "That wouldn't suit my plans at all. Besides, we're a Company, she and I."

"What do you mean?" Lady Maud thought he was joking.

"Well, I wasn't going to tell you till we'd organised, but you're as good as a deaf and dumb asylum about business things. Yes. We're organising as 'The Madame da Cordova and Rufus Van Torp Company.' I'm going to build an opera-house in New York on some land I've got on Fifth Avenue, and Miss Donne is going to run it, and we mean to have Wagner festivals and things, besides regular grand opera, in which she's engaged to sing as often as she likes. There's never been an opera-house on Fifth Avenue, but there's going to be, and people will go to it. Miss Donne caught on to the scheme right away, so you see she's not going to leave the stage anyhow. As for her accepting me, I can't tell you, because I don't know. Maybe she will, maybe she won't. That isn't going to interfere with the Company either way. Good scheme, isn't it?"

"You're a wonderful man," said Lady Maud, with genuine admiration. "Do you mean to say that you have settled all that between you already?"

"She signed the preliminary agreement in Bayreuth, and the papers are being made out by my lawyer in New York. You don't think it was unfair to offer to

build a theatre and call it after her, do you? That isn't 'exercising undue influence,' I suppose?"

"No, and I think you're going to win. The other man hasn't had a chance since you got into your stride."

"When a man chucks his chances, I'm not going to pick them up for him. Charity begins at home."

"Even if 'home' is a bachelor establishment?" Lady Maud smiled for the first time that day.

They talked a few minutes longer, agreeing that she should tell Margaret what was going to happen; but that Mrs. Rushmore and Kralinsky should be kept in ignorance of the plan, the American lady because she might possibly yield to temptation and tell the Count, and the latter for obvious reasons. It was not likely that any of them would be on deck much before Logotheti came on board.

There is good anchorage out of the tidal current at Scaletta, some few miles below Messina, on the Sicilian side, and towards this well-known water the *Erinna* led the way, followed at a short distance by the *Lancashire Lass*.

Logotheti and Baraka watched her, and the girl

recognised Van Torp on the bridge of his yacht, without even using glasses, for she had eyes like an eagle's, and the American millionaire stood alone at one end of the bridge looking towards her.

Logotheti had told her that Kralinsky was on board, and that she should see him as soon as both yachts could anchor. He explained that it was an unforeseen coincidence, and that Mr. Van Torp must have taken him on board somewhere on the previous day. To the Greek's surprise, Baraka showed no outward sign of emotion. He had promised to take her to the man, and had said that he was near at hand; that the meeting should take place sooner than had been intended hardly surprised her, because she had been so perfectly sure that it was near. Her only pre-occupation now was about her appearance in her ready-made serge and blouse, when she had meant to show herself to Kralinsky in the glory of a beautiful and expensive Feringhi dress.

But Logotheti explained that even the richest Feringhi ladies often wore little blue serge frocks on yachts, and told her to watch the *Lancashire Lass* with her glasses, as there were three very great Feringhi

ladies on board, and she might see one, and be reassured; and presently she saw Lady Maud walking alone on the promenade deck, in clothes very like her own, excepting that they were black instead of dark blue. So Baraka was satisfied, but she never took her eyes from the following yacht, for she hoped that Kralinsky would come out and show himself.

All at once he was there, taking off his white cap to Lady Maud, and they stood still facing each other, and talking.

"I see him," Baraka said in a low voice, without lowering her glasses. "It is he."

Logotheti, who had been much absorbed in thinking about his coming interview with Margaret, raised his glasses too, for he was curious to see the man at last. He had known Leven for years, though never intimately, as he knew a vast number of people in London, and he was struck at once by the resemblance in size, build, and complexion.

"He is fatter than he was, and paler," Baraka said quietly, "but it is he. He is speaking earnestly with the beautiful woman in black. I can see well. He likes her, but she does not like him. I think she is telling

him so. I am glad. But she is more beautiful than Baraka, even in those poor clothes. When he sees me, he will deny me, because he likes the beautiful woman in black. I will tell Spiro to be ready. It is a pity, but I see there will be no other way. It is his portion and mine. It is a great pity, for I have been happy with you."

Instead of any look of anger, Logotheti now saw an expression of profound resignation in her lovely young features. If he had been less anxious about his own affairs, he would have smiled at her simplicity.

"When we are on that ship you will let me talk with him a little apart from the rest, and Spiro shall go behind him and wait, looking at me. If he denies me, I will make a sign, and Spiro shall shoot him, and then kill me. It will be very easy and quick."

"And what will become of Spiro?" inquired Logotheti gravely.

"I do not know," Baraka said quietly. "Perhaps he will lose his head. How can I tell? But he is a good servant, and will obey me. Afterwards it will not matter, for he is really a Musulman, and will go at

once to paradise if he dies, because he has killed a Christian."

"But you are a Musulman, and he is to kill you also. What about that?"

"I am only a woman," answered Baraka with supreme indifference. "Now I will call Spiro and tell him what he is to do. He has a good revolver."

Logotheti let her clap her hands and send the steward for her man, and she rose when he appeared and made him follow her a little way along the deck. The interview did not last long. She handed him her glasses and made him look carefully at the intended victim; then she apparently repeated her brief instructions again, pointing here and there to the deck at her feet, to show him how they were to stand; after which she turned quietly, came back to Logotheti's side, and sat down again.

"He understands," she said. "It will be quite easy."

But Logotheti, looking past her as she came forward, had met Spiro's eyes; and he felt not even the slightest anxiety for Kralinsky's safety, nor for Baraka's. He was still wondering what he should say to Margaret, but

while he tried to think it over, his eyes dwelt on the noble little profile of the slender Asiatic girl at his side; and it occurred to him that, although she had worn men's clothes and done things that few women would dare to do, for the one purpose of her life, she would much rather die than show herself on the stage in a very low dress before thousands of people and sing to them, and take money for doing it; and he remembered a time, not much more than two years past, when the mere thought had driven the idea of marrying the Primadonna quite out of his head for awhile, and that, after all, it had been her physical attraction that had overcome the prejudice, making him say that he was as much in love with the Cordova as he had been with Margaret Donne, that "very nice English girl." For men are changeable creatures after they think they have changed themselves to suit their tastes or their ideals, and the original man in them, good or bad, fine or coarse, generally comes back in the great moments.

At a distance, Logotheti had supposed that he could somehow account to the Diva for the position in which he had foolishly placed himself, because he had done

nothing and said nothing that he would have been ashamed of before her, if she knew the whole truth; and he fancied that even if they quarrelled she would make up with him before long, and marry him in the end. He had a good opinion of himself as a desirable husband; and with reason, since he had been persecuted for years with offers of excellent marriages from mothers of high degree who had daughters to dispose of. And beneath that conviction there lurked, in spite of him, the less worthy thought, that singers and actresses were generally less squeamish than women of the world about the little entanglements of their intended husbands.

But now, at the very moment of meeting Margaret, he knew that if he found her very angry with him, he would simply listen to what she had to say, make a humble apology, state the truth coldly, and return to his own yacht with Baraka, under her very eyes, and in full sight of Lady Maud and Mrs. Rushmore. Besides, he felt tolerably sure that when Spiro failed to carry out the young Tartar girl's murderous instructions, she would forget all about the oath she had sworn by the "inviolable water of the Styx," and try to kill him with her

own hands, so that it would be necessary to take her away abruptly, and even forcibly.

Matters did not turn out as he expected, however, after the two yachts stopped their engines in the quiet waters off Scaletta, under the Sicilian mountains.

Before the *Erinna* had quite lost her way, Logotheti had his naphtha launch puffing alongside, and he got into it with Baraka and Spiro, and the *Lancashire Lass* had barely time to lower her ladder, while still moving slowly, before the visitors were there.

Baraka bade Logotheti go up first, and trod daintily on the grated steps as she followed him. The chief mate and chief steward were waiting at the gangway. The mate saluted; the steward led the visitors to the main saloon, ushered them in, and shut the door. Spiro was left outside, of course.

Lady Maud was there, sitting in an easy-chair in the farthest corner. She nodded to Logotheti, but did not rise, and paid no more attention to Baraka than if she had not existed.

Mr. Van Torp shook hands coldly with Logotheti; Baraka walked directly to Kralinsky, and then stood stone-still before him, gazing up steadily into his eyes.

Neither Margaret nor Mrs. Rushmore were to be seen. Van Torp and Logotheti both watched the other two, looking from one face to the other. Kralinsky, with his eyeglass in his eye, surveyed the lovely young barbarian unmoved, and the silence lasted half a minute. Then she spoke in her own language and Kralinsky answered her, and only Logotheti understood what they said to each other. Probably it did not occur to Kralinsky that the Greek knew Tartar.

"You are not Ivan. You are fatter, and you have not his eyes."

Logotheti drew a long breath.

"No," answered Kralinsky. "I am Yuri, his brother. I never saw you, but he told me of you."

"Where is Ivan?"

"Dead."

The proud little head was bowed down for a moment and Baraka did not speak till several seconds had passed. Then she looked up again suddenly. Her dark eyes were quite dry.

"How long?"

"More than four months."

"You know it?"

"I was with him and buried him."

"It is enough."

She turned, her head high, and went to the door, and no one hindered her from going out.

"Monsieur Logotheti!" Lady Maud called him, and the Greek crossed the saloon and stood by her. "He is not the man, I see," she said, with a vague doubt in her voice.

"No."

Van Torp was speaking with Kralinsky in low tones. Lady Maud spoke to Logotheti again, after an instant, in which she drew a painful breath and grew paler.

"Miss Donne knows that you are on board," she said, "but she wishes me to say that she will not see you, and that she considers her engagement at an end, after what you have done."

Logotheti did not hesitate.

"Will you kindly give a message to Miss Donne from me?" he asked.

"That quite depends on what it is," Lady Maud answered coldly.

She felt that she herself had got something near a death-wound, but she would not break down.

"I beg you to tell Miss Donne that I yield to her decision," said Logotheti with dignity. "We are not suited to each other, and it is better that we should part. But I cannot accept as the cause of our parting the fact that I have given my protection to a young girl whom I have extricated from great trouble and have treated, and still treat, precisely as I should have treated Miss Donne if she had been my guest. Will you tell her that?"

"I will tell her that."

"Thank you. Good morning."

"Good morning," said Lady Maud icily.

He turned and went towards the door, but stopped to speak to Van Torp.

"This gentleman," he said, "is not the man my guest was anxious to find, though he is strikingly like him. I have to thank you for giving her an opportunity of satisfying herself. Good morning."

Mr. Van Torp was extremely grateful to Logotheti for having ruined himself in Margaret's eyes, and would in any case have seen him to the gangway, but he was

also very anxious to know what Kralinsky and Baraka had said to each other in Tartar. He therefore opened the door for the Greek, followed him out and shut it behind him. Baraka and Spiro had disappeared; they were already in the launch, waiting.

"Now what did they say, if it isn't a rude question?" asked the American.

Logotheti repeated the short conversation almost word for word.

"He said that his name was Yuri," he concluded. "That is George in English."

"Oh, he's George, is he? And what's his dead brother's name again, please?"

"Ivan. That is John. Before we part, Van Torp, I may as well tell you that my engagement with Miss Donne is at an end. She was good enough to inform me of her decision through Lady Maud. One thing more, please. I wish you to know, as between man and man, that I have treated Baraka as I would my own sister since I got her out of prison, and I beg that you won't encourage any disagreeable talk about her."

"Well, now," said the American slowly, "I'm glad to

hear you say that, just in that way. I guess it'll be all right about any remarks on board my ship, now you've spoken."

"Thank you," said Logotheti, moving towards the gangway.

They shook hands with some cordiality, and Logotheti ran down the steps like a sailor, without laying his hand on the man-rope, stepped on board his launch, and was off in a moment.

"Good-bye! good-bye, Miss Barrack, and good luck to you!" cried Van Torp, waving his cap.

Logotheti translated his words to Baraka, who looked back with a grateful smile, as if she had not just heard that the man she had risked her life to find in two continents had been dead four months.

"It was his portion," she said gravely, when she was alone with Logotheti on the *Erinna*, and the chain was coming in fast.

Van Torp went back to the main saloon and found Lady Maud and Kralinsky there. She was apparently about to leave the Count, for she was coming towards the door, and her eyes were dark and angry.

"Rufus," she said, "this man is my husband, and

insists that I should take him back. I will not. Will you kindly have me put ashore before you start again? My things are ready now."

"Excuse me," answered Mr. Van Torp, digging his large thumbs into his waistcoat pockets, "there's a mistake. He's not your husband."

"He is, indeed!" cried Lady Maud, in a tone her friend never forgot.

"I am Boris Leven," said Kralinsky in an authoritative tone, and coming forward almost defiantly.

"Then why did you tell the Tartar girl that your name was George?" asked Mr. Van Torp, unmoved.

"I did not."

"You've evidently forgotten. That Greek gentleman speaks Tartar better than you. I wonder where you learned it! He's just told me you said your name was George."

"My name is George Boris," answered Kralinsky, less confidently.

He was not a coward, but he had never been face to face with Van Torp when he meant business, and the terrible American cowed him.

"My husband's name is only Boris—nothing else," said Lady Maud.

"Well, this isn't your husband; this is George, whoever he is, and if you don't believe it, I'm going to give you an object-lesson."

Thereupon Mr. Van Torp pressed the button of a bell in the bulkhead near the door, which he opened, and he stood looking out. A steward came at once.

"Send me Stemp," said Van Torp in a low voice, as he stepped outside.

"Yes, sir."

"And, see here, send six sailors with him."

"Six, sir?"

"Yes. Big fellows who can handle a man."

"Very good, sir."

Mr. Van Torp went in again and shut the door. Kralinsky disdained flight, and was looking out of a window. Lady Maud had sat down again. For the first time in her life she felt weak.

In less than one minute the door opened and Stemp appeared, impassive and respectful. Behind him was the boatswain, a huge Northumbrian, and five young

seamen in perfectly new guernseys, with fair quiet faces.

"Stemp."

"Yes, sir."

"Take that man somewhere and shave him. Leave his moustache on." Van Torp pointed to Kralinsky.

For once in his life Stemp gasped for breath. Kralinsky turned a greenish white, and seemed paralysed with rage.

"Take his beard off, sir, you mean?"

"Yes. Leave his moustache. Here, men," added Van Torp, "take that fellow outside and hold him down in a chair while Stemp shaves him. See?" The boatswain looked doubtful. "He's pretending to be somebody he's not," said Van Torp, "on my ship, and I want to see his face. It's mutiny if you don't obey orders!"

"Aye, aye, sir," responded the boatswain cheerfully, for he rather liked the job since there was a good reason for it.

But instead of going about his business gently, the Northumbrian giant suddenly dashed past Van Torp in a flash, and jumped and hurled himself head foremost

at Kralinsky's legs, exactly as if he were diving. In the Count's violent fall the revolver he had drawn was thrown from his hand and went off in the air. The boatswain had seen it in time. The big man struggled a little, but the five seamen held him fast and carried him out kicking.

"Stemp."

The valet was preparing to follow the prisoner, and was quite calm again.

"Yes, sir."

"If he won't sit still to be shaved, cut his head off."

"Yes, sir."

Van Torp's eyes were awful to see. He had never been so angry in his life. He turned and saw Lady Maud pressing her handkerchief to her right temple. The ball had grazed it, though it had certainly not been meant for her.

"Rufus!" she cried in great distress, "what have you done?"

"The question is what he's done to you," answered Van Torp. "I believe the blackguard has shot you!"

"It's nothing. Thank God it hit me! It was meant for you."

Van Torp's rage instantly turned into tender care, and he insisted on examining the wound, which was slight but would leave a scar. By a miracle the ball had grazed the angle of the temple without going near the temporal artery, and scarcely singeing the thick brown hair.

Van Torp rang and sent for water and absorbent cotton, and made a very neat dressing, over which Lady Maud tied her big veil. Just as this was done, Stemp appeared at the door.

"It's ready, sir, if you would like to come and see. I've not scratched him once, sir."

"All right." Van Torp turned to Lady Maud. "Do you feel faint? Lean on my arm."

But she would not, and she walked bravely, holding herself so straight that she looked much taller than he, though she felt as if she were going to execution.

A moment later she uttered a loud cry and clung to Van Torp's shoulder with both hands. But as for him, he said only two words.

"You hellhound!"

The man was not Boris Leven.

The eyes, the upper part of the face, the hair, even the flowing moustaches were his, but not the small retreating chin crossed by the sharp, thin scar of a sword-cut long healed.

"I know who you are," said Van Torp, surveying him gravely. "You're Levi Longlegs' brother, that disappeared before he did. I remember that scar."

The sham Kralinsky was securely tied down in a chair and the boatswain and the five seamen stood round him, an admiring public. Captain Brown had been informed of what had happened and was going on, and the discipline he maintained on board was so perfect that every man on the watch was at his post, and the steamer was already under way again. The boatswain and his contingent belonged to the watch below, which had not been called for the start.

"Let me off easy," said Levi Longlegs' brother. "I've not done you any harm."

"Beyond wounding Lady Maud, after trying to pass yourself off as her dead husband. No. I won't let you off. Boatswain, I want this man arrested, and we'll

take him and all his belongings before the British Consul in Messina in less than an hour. You just attend to that, will you? Somebody go and tell the captain."

"Aye, aye, sir."

For the boatswain and the men had seen and heard, and they knew that Mr. Van Torp was right, and they respected him, and the foreign impostor had wounded an Englishwoman; and having given his orders, the owner and Lady Maud turned and left Levi Long-legs' brother tied to the chair, in a very dejected state, and his uncertain eyes did not even follow them.

The rest is soon told. A long inquiry followed, which led to the solution of the mystery and sent Count Yuryi Leven to Siberia; for he was Boris Leven's twin brother.

The truth turned out to be that there had been three brothers, the youngest being Ivan, and they had all entered the same Cossack regiment, and had served in the Caucasus, where most officers learn the Tartar language, which is spoken by all the different tribes.

It will be simpler to designate them by the English equivalents for their names.

Boris behaved himself tolerably well in the army, but both his brothers, John and George, who was his twin, were broken for cheating at cards, and emigrated to America. So long as they all wore their beards, as officers of Cossack regiments usually do, they were very much alike. They were all educated men of refined tastes, and particularly fond of music.

When his two brothers were cashiered, Boris resigned, entered the diplomatic service, married Lady Maud Foxwell, and was killed by a bomb in Saint Petersburg.

John and George separated in America when they were tired of punching cattle.

John was something of a naturalist and was by far the most gifted of the three as well as the most daring. He gravitated to China and at last to Mongolia, wandering alone in search of plants and minerals, and it was to him that Baraka showed the ruby mine. He got back to civilisation with his treasure and took it to Petersburg unmolested.

There he found George earning a poor living in an

obscure position in the public service, his conduct in the army having been condoned or overlooked. John, who was the incarnation of selfishness, would do nothing for him. George, exasperated by him, and half starved, murdered him in such a way that he was supposed to have died by an accident, took possession of his hoard of unsold rubies, and wrote to his twin brother to come and share the fortune John had left them.

George and Boris had been in constant correspondence, and had even helped each other with money from time to time. Some weeks elapsed after Boris's return to Saint Petersburg before his death, and during that time, he told George, who knew London well and had moreover helped him in his attempt to get a divorce, a vast number of details about his married life and his wife's behaviour, her character and tastes. Then Boris was killed in the street, and George left the country and changed his name, with the vague idea that his own was not a very creditable one and that if he kept it he might be troubled by his brother Boris's numerous creditors. He began life over again as Kralinsky.

He had not entertained the least intention of passing

himself for Boris and claiming Lady Maud as his wife, till he met her, and her beauty made him lose his head completely when he saw that she took him for her husband. He would have been found out inevitably sooner or later, but Van Torp's vigorous action shortened Lady Maud's torments.

George was tried, and Russian justice awoke, possibly under pressure from England. The family history of the Levens was exhumed and dissected before the courts. The creditors of Boris Leven appeared in legions and claimed that in proper course he should have inherited the rubies from his murdered brother, who would then have been able to pay his debts. The court thought so too, and ordered the confiscated treasure to be sold.

But since it had been Boris's, the law was obliged to declare that the residue of the money, after paying the debts, was the property of Countess Leven, Boris's widow.

Lady Maud thus found herself in possession of a considerable fortune, for she accepted the inheritance when she was assured that it would go to the Russian Crown if she refused it. But there was a fall in the

price of rubies, and the Russian Government at once sent an expensive expedition to find the mine, an attempt which altogether failed, because Ivan Leven had never told anyone where it was, nor anything about it, and the court only knew from certain jewellers who had dealt both with Kralinsky and Baraka, that it was "somewhere in Central Asia," which is an insufficient direction, even for a ruby mine.

The wealth Lady Maud thus commands enables her to carry much further than formerly the peculiar form of charity which she believes to be her own invention, if it may be properly called charity at all, and which consists in making it worth while and agreeable to certain unfortunate people to live decent lives in quiet corners without starving, instead of calling to them to come out from behind the Virtue-Curtain and be reformed in public. It is a very expensive charity, however, and very hard to exercise, and will never be popular; for the popular charities are those that cost least and are no trouble.

Madame Konstantinos Logotheti is learning French and English, on the Bosphorus, with her husband, and

will make a sensation when he brings her to London and Paris. On the day of his marriage, in Constantinople, Logotheti received a letter from Lady Maud, telling him how sorry she was that she had not believed him, that day on the yacht at Scaletta, and saying that she hoped to meet his wife soon. It was an honest apology from an honest woman.

He received a letter a few days later from Margaret, and on the same day a magnificently printed and recklessly illustrated booklet reached him, forwarded from Paris. The letter was from Margaret to tell him that she also took back what she had thought about Baraka and hoped to see him and her before long. She said she was glad, on the whole, that he had acted like a lunatic, because it was likely that they would both be happier. She herself, she said, was going to be married to Mr. Van Torp, at Saint George's, Hanover Square, before sailing for New York, where she was going to sing at the Opera after Christmas. If he should be in town then, she hoped he would come, and bring his wife.

The booklet was an announcement, interleaved with

fine etchings, to the effect that "The Madame da Cordova and Rufus Van Torp Company" would open their new Opera House in Fifth Avenue less than two years hence, with a grand Wagner Festival, to last two months, and to include the performance of *Parsifal* with entirely new scenery, and the greatest living artistes, whose names were given. There was a plan of the house at the end of the booklet for the benefit of those who wished to make arrangements for being at the festival, and such persons were admonished that they must apply early if they expected to get seats.

Mr. Van Torp had told the Diva that he would like her to choose a wedding present which she really wanted, adding that he had a few little things for her already. He produced some of them, but some were on paper. Among the latter was a house in New York, overlooking the Park and copied exactly from her own in London, the English architect having been sent to New York himself to build it. Two small items were two luxurious private cars of entirely different patterns, one for America and one for Europe, which she was always to use when she travelled, professionally or other-

wise. He said he did not give her the *Lancashire Lass* because "it wasn't quite new"—having been about ten months in the water—but he had his own reasons, one of which was that the yacht represented a sentiment to him, and was what he would have called a "souvenir." But if she could think of anything else she fancied, "now was the time."

She said that there was only one thing she should really like, but that she could not have it, because it was not in the market. He asked what it was, and it turned out to be the ruby which Logotheti had given her, and had taken to Pinney's to be cut, and which had been the cause of so many unexpected events, including her marriage. Logotheti had it in his possession, she supposed, but he had shown good taste in not trying to press it on her as a wedding present, for she could not have accepted it. Nevertheless, she wanted it very much, more as a remembrance than for its beauty.

Mr. Van Torp said he "thought he could fix that," and he did. He went directly to Mr. Pinney and asked what had become of the stone. Mr. Pinney answered that it was now cut, and was in his safe, for sale. The

good man had felt that it would not be tactful to offer it to Mr. Van Torp. Logotheti, who was a fine gentleman in his way, had ordered it to be sold, when a good opportunity offered, and directed that the money should be given to the poor Greeks in London, under the supervision of Lady Maud Leven, the Turkish Ambassador and the Greek Minister, as a committee. Mr. Pinney, after consultation with the best experts, valued it at fourteen thousand pounds sterling. Mr. Van Torp wrote a cheque for the money, put the stone into an inner pocket and took it to the Diva.

"Well," he said, smiling, "here's your ruby, anyway. Anything else to-day?"

Margaret looked at him wonderingly, and then opened the small morocco case.

"Oh—oh—oh!" she cried, in rising intonations of delight. "I never saw anything so beautiful in my life! It's ever so much more glorious than when I last saw it!"

"It's been cut since then," observed Mr. Van Torp.

"It ought to have a name of its own! I'm sure it's more beautiful than many of the named crown jewels!"

She felt half hypnotised as she gazed into the glorious depths of the great stone. "Thank you," she cried, "thank you so very much. I'm gladder to have it than all the other things."

And thereupon she threw her magnificent arms round Rufus Van Torp's solid neck, and kissed his cool flat cheek several times; and it seemed quite natural to her to do so; and she wished to forget how she had once kissed one other man, who had kissed her.

"It wants a name, doesn't it?" assented Mr. Van Torp.

"Yes. You must find one for it."

"Well," he said, "after what's happened, I suppose we'd better call it 'The Diva's Ruby.'"

THE END.

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(Old Curiosity Shop; Barnaby Rudge, etc.) 3 v. — Pictures from Italy 1 v. — Dombey and Son 3 v. — David Copperfield 3 v. — Bleak House 4 v. — A Child's History of England (2 v. 80 M. 2,70.) — Hard Times 1 v. — Little Dorrit (with Illustrations) 4 v. — The Battle of Life; The Haunted Man 1 v. — A Tale of two Cities 2 v. — Hunted Down; The Uncommercial Traveller 1 v. — Great Expectations 2 v. — Christmas Stories, etc. 1 v. — Our Mutual Friend (with Illustrations) 4 v. — Somebody's Luggage; Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings; Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy 1 v. — Doctor Mari-gold's Prescriptions; Mugby Junction 1 v. — The Mystery of Edwin Drood (with Illustrations) 2 v. — The Mudfog Papers, 1 v. — The Letters of Charles Dickens, ed. by his Sister-in-law and his eldest Daughter 4 v. — *Vide* also Household Words, Novels and Tales, and John Forster.

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No Thoroughfare; The Late Miss Holingford 1 v.

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Coningsby 1 v. — Sybil 1 v. — Contarini Fleming (with Portrait) 1 v. — Alroy 1 v. — Tancred 2 v. — Venetia 2 v. — Vivian Grey 2 v. — Henrietta Temple 1 v. — Lothair 2 v. — Endymion 2 v.

Dixon, Ella Hepworth.

The Story of a Modern Woman 1 v. — One Doubtful Hour 1 v.

Dixon, W. Hepworth, † 1879.

Personal History of Lord Bacon 1 v. — The Holy Land 2 v. — New America 2 v. — Spiritual Wives 2 v. — Her Majesty's Tower 4 v. — Free Russia 2 v. — History of two Queens 6 v. — White Conquest 2 v. — Diana, Lady Lyle 2 v.

Dixon, Jr., Thomas, (Am.).

The Leopard's Spots 2 v.

Dougall, L. (Am.).

Beggars All 2 v.

Dowie, Mémie Muriel.

A Girl in the Karpathians 1 v.

Doyle, Sir A. Conan.

The Sign of Four 1 v. — Micah Clarke 2 v. — The Captain of the Pole-Star, and other Tales 1 v. — The White Company 2 v. — A Study in Scarlet 1 v. — The

Great Shadow, and Beyond the City 1 v. — The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes 2 v. — The Refugees 2 v. — The Firm of Girdlestone 2 v. — The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes 2 v. — Round the Red Lamp 1 v. — The Stark Munro Letters 1 v. — The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard 1 v. — Rodney Stone 2 v. — Uncle Bernac 1 v. — The Tragedy of the Korosko 1 v. — A Duet 1 v. — The Green Flag 1 v. — The Great Boer War 2 v. — The War in South Africa 1 v. — The Hound of the Baskervilles 1 v. — Adventures of Gerard 1 v. — The Return of Sherlock Holmes 2 v. — Sir Nigel 2 v. — Through the Magic Door 1 v. — Round the Fire Stories 1 v.

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† 1897.

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Dufferin, the Earl of.

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Duncan, Sara Jeannette: *vide* Mrs. Cotes.

Dunton: *vide* Th. Watts-Dun-ton.

Earl, the, and the Doctor.

South Sea Bubbles 1 v.

Eastwick, Edward B., † 1883.

Autobiography of Lutfullah 1 v.

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Edwardes, Mrs. Annie.

Archie Lovell 2 v. — Steven Lawrence, Yeoman 2 v. — Ought we to visit her? 2 v. — A Vagabond Heroine 1 v. — Leah: A Woman of Fashion 2 v. — A Blue-Stocking 1 v. — Jet: Her Face or Her Fortune? 1 v. — Vivian the Beauty 1 v. — A Ball-room Repentance 2 v. — A Girton Girl 2 v. — A Playwright's Daughter, and Bertie Griffiths 1 v. — Pearl-Powder 1 v. The Adventuress 1 v.

Edwards, Amelia B., † 1892.

Barbara's History 2 v. — Miss Carew 2 v. — Hand and Glove 1 v. — Half a Million of Money 2 v. — Debenham's Vow 2 v. — In the Days of my Youth 2 v. — Untrodden Peaks and Unfrequented Valleys 1 v. — Monsieur Maurice 1 v. — A Night on the Borders of the Black Forest 1 v. — A Poetry-Book of Elder Poets

1 v. — A Thousand Miles up the Nile 2 v.
— A Poetry-Book of Modern Poets 1 v. —
Lord Brackenbury 2 v.

Edwards, M. Betham: *vide*
Betham.

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The Faith Doctor 2 v.

Elbon, Barbara (Am.).
Bethesda 2 v.

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Mrs. Cross), † 1880.
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Bede 2 v. — The Mill on the Floss 2 v. —
Silas Marner 1 v. — Romola 2 v. — Felix
Holt 2 v. — Daniel Deronda 4 v. — The
Lifted Veil, and Brother Jacob 1 v. —
Impressions of Theophrastus Such 1 v. —
Essays and Leaves from a Note-Book
1 v. — George Eliot's Life, edited by her
Husband, J. W. Cross 4 v.

"Elizabeth and her German
Garden," Author of.

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The Solitary Summer 1 v. — The Bene-
factress 2 v. — Princess Priscilla's Fort-
night 1 v. — The Adventures of Elizabeth
in Rügen 1 v. — Fräulein Schmidt and Mr.
Anstruther 1 v.

Elliot, Mrs. Frances, † 1898.
Diary of an Idle Woman in Italy 2 v. —
Old Court Life in France 2 v. — The
Italians 2 v. — The Diary of an Idle
Woman in Sicily 1 v. — Pictures of Old
Rome 1 v. — The Diary of an Idle Woman in
Spain 2 v. — The Red Cardinal 1 v. —
The Story of Sophia 1 v. — Diary of an
Idle Woman in Constantinople 1 v. —
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Gossip 1 v.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo, † 1882.
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ters, an," Author of.
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Erroll, Henry.
An Ugly Duckling 1 v.

Esler, E. Rentoul.
The Way they loved at Grimpat 1 v.

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Authors of.
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1 v.

"Estelle Russell," Author of.
Estelle Russell 2 v.

Esterre-Keeling, Elsa D'.
Three Sisters 1 v. — A Laughing Philo-
sopher 1 v. — The Professor's Wooing 1 v.
— In Thoughtland and in Dreamland
1 v. — Orchardscroft 1 v. — Appassionata
1 v. — Old Maids and Young 2 v. — The
Queen's Serf 1 v.

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Daddy Darwin's Dovecot 1 v. — A Flat
Iron for a Farthing 1 v. — The Brownies,
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way.

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Darkness and Dawn 3 v.

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of.
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Felkin, Alfred Laurence: *vide*
E. T. Fowler.

Felkin, Mrs.: *vide* E. T. Fowler.

Fendall, Percy: *vide* F. C.
Phillips.

Fenn, George Manville.
The Parson o' Dumford 2 v. — The
Clerk of Portwick 2 v.

Fielding, Henry, † 1754.
Tom Jones 2 v.

Findlater, Mary and Jane: *vide*
Kate Douglas Wiggin.

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John Wycliffe. — Geoffrey Chaucer. —
Stephen Hawes. — Sir Thomas More. —
Edmund Spenser. — Ben Jonson. — John
Locke. — Thomas Gray (vol. 500, published
1860) 1 v.

Fleming, George (Am.).
Kismet 1 v. — Andromeda 2 v.
Forbes, Archibald, † 1900.
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Eight Days 2 v.

Forrester, Mrs.
Viva 2 v. — Rhona 2 v. — Roy and Viola 2 v. — My Lord and My Lady 2 v. — I have Lived and Loved 2 v. — June 2 v. — Omnia Vanitas 1 v. — Although he was a Lord, and other Tales 1 v. — Corisande, and other Tales 1 v. — Once Again 2 v. — Of the World, Worldly 1 v. — Dearest 2 v. — The Light of other Days 1 v. — Too Late Repented 1 v.

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The First Violin 2 v. — Probation 2 v. — Made or Marred, and "One of Three" 1 v. — Kith and Kin 2 v. — Peril 2 v. — Borderland 2 v.

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James Payn.

Fowler, Ellen Thorneycroft
(Mrs. Alfred Laurence Felkin).
A Double Thread 2 v. — The Farringtons 2 v. — Fuel of Fire 1 v. — Place and Power 2 v. — In Subjection 2 v.

Fowler, Ellen Thorneycroft
(Mrs. A. L. Felkin) & Alfred
Laurence Felkin.
Kate of Kate Hall 2 v.

Fox, Caroline, † 1871.
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(F. E. Smedley), † 1864.
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Francis, M. E.
The Duenna of a Genius 1 v.

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Oceana 1 v. — The Spanish Story of the Armada, and other Essays 1 v.

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† 1885.

Ellen Middleton 1 v. — Grantley Manor 2 v. — Lady Bird 2 v. — Too Strange not to be True 2 v. — Constance Sherwood 2 v. — A Stormy Life 2 v. — Mrs. Gerald's Niece 2 v. — The Notary's Daughter 1 v. — The Lilies of the Valley, and The House of Penarvan 1 v. — The Countess de Bonneval 1 v. — Rose Leblanc 1 v. — Seven Stories 1 v. — The Life of Luisa de Carvajal 1 v. — A Will and a Way, and The Handkerchief at the Window 2 v. — Eliane 2 v. (by Mrs. Augustus Craven, translated by Lady Fullerton). — Laurentia 1 v.

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Gaskell, Mrs., † 1865.
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of: *vide* Author of "Miss
Molly."

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- Gissing, George, † 1903.
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— New Grub Street 2 v.
- Gladstone, Rt. Hon. W. E.,
† 1898.
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- Glyn, Elinor.
The Visits of Elizabeth 1 v. — The Reflections of Ambrosine 1 v. — The Vicissitudes of Evangeline 1 v. — Beyond the Rocks 1 v. — Three Weeks 1 v.
- Godfrey, Hal: *vide* Charlotte O'Connor Eccles.
- Goldsmith, Oliver, † 1774.
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- Goodman, Edward J.
Too Curious 1 v.
- Gordon, Julien (Am.).
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- Gordon, Major-Gen. C. G.,
† 1885.
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- Gore, Mrs., † 1861.
Castles in the Air 1 v. — The Dean's Daughter 2 v. — Progress and Prejudice 2 v. — Mammon 2 v. — A Life's Lessons 2 v. — The Two Aristocracies 2 v. — Heckington 2 v.
- Grand, Sarah.
Our Manifold Nature 1 v. — Babs the Impossible 2 v. — Emotional Moments 1 v.
- Grant, Miss.
Victor Lescar 2 v. — The Sun-Maid 2 v. — My Heart's in the Highlands 2 v. — Artiste 2 v. — Prince Hugo 2 v. — Cara Roma 2 v.
- Gray, Maxwell.
The Silence of Dean Maitland 2 v. — The Reproach of Annesley 2 v.
- Grenville: Murray, E. C. (Trois-Etoiles), † 1881.
The Member for Paris 2 v. — Young Brown 2 v. — The Boudoir Cabal 3 v. — French Pictures in English Chalk (*First Series*) 2 v. — The Russians of To-day 1 v. — French Pictures in English Chalk (*Second Series*) 2 v. — Strange Tales 1 v. — That Artful Vicar 2 v. — Six Months in the Ranks 1 v. — People I have met 1 v.
- Grimwood, Ethel St. Clair.
My Three Years in Manipur (with Portrait) 1 v.
- Grohman, W. A. Baillie.
Tyrol and the Tyrolese 1 v.
- Gunter, Archibald Clavering (Am.), † 1907.
Mr. Barnes of New York 1 v.
- Guthrie, F. Anstey: *vide* Anstey.
"Guy Livingstone," Author of (George Alfred Laurence),
† 1876.
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- Habberton, John (Am.).
Helen's Babies & Other People's Children 1 v. — The Bowsham Puzzle 1 v. — One Tramp; Mrs. Mayburn's Twins 1 v.
- Haggard, H. Rider.
King Solomon's Mines 1 v. — She 2 v. — Jess 2 v. — Allan Quatermain 2 v. — The Witch's Head 2 v. — Maiwa's Revenge 1 v. — Mr. Meeson's Will 1 v. — Colonel Quaritch, V. C. 2 v. — Cleopatra 2 v. — Allan's Wife 1 v. — Beatrice 2 v. — Dawn 2 v. — Montezuma's Daughter 2 v. — The People of the Mist 2 v. — Joan Haste 2 v. — Heart of the World 2 v. — The Wizard 1 v. — Doctor Therne 1 v. — Swallow 2 v. — Black Heart and White Heart, and Elissa 1 v. — Lysbeth 2 v. — A Winter Pilgrimage 2 v. — Pearl-Maiden 2 v. — Stella Fregelius 2 v. — The Brethren 2 v. — Ayesha. The Return of 'She' 2 v. — The Way of the Spirit 2 v. — Benita 1 v. — Fair Margaret 2 v.
- Haggard, H. Rider, & Andrew Lang.
The World's Desire 2 v.

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 Hall, Mrs. S. C., † 1881.
 Can Wrong be Right? 1 v. — Marian 2 v.
 Hamerton, Philip Gilbert,
 † 1894.
 Marmorne 1 v. — French and English 2 v.
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 "Not Easily Jealous."

Hardy, Thomas.
 The Hand of Ethelberta 2 v. — Far
 from the Madding Crowd 2 v. — The Return
 of the Native 2 v. — The Trumpet-
 Major 2 v. — A Laodicean 2 v. — Two on
 a Tower 2 v. — A Pair of Blue Eyes 2 v.
 — A Group of Noble Dames 1 v. — Tess
 of the D'Urbervilles 2 v. — Life's Little
 Ironies 1 v. — Jude the Obscure 2 v.

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 Lady Paramount 1 v. — My Friend Prospero
 1 v.

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 Ships that pass in the Night 1 v. — In
 Varying Moods 1 v. — Hilda Strafford,
 and The Remittance Man 1 v. — The
 Fowler 2 v. — Katharine Frensham 2 v.
 — The Scholar's Daughter 1 v.

Harrison, Agnes.
 Martin's Vineyard 1 v.

Harrison, Mrs. Mary St. Leger:
vide Lucas Malet.

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 The Outcasts of Poker Flat, etc. —
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 Sketches; Poems) 2 v. — Idyls of the
 Foothills 1 v. — Gabriel Conroy 2 v. —
 Two Men of Sandy Bar 1 v. — Thankful
 Blossom, and other Tales 1 v. — The
 Story of a Mine 1 v. — Drift from Two
 Shores 1 v. — An Heiress of Red Dog,
 and other Sketches 1 v. — The Twins of
 Table Mountain, and other Tales 1 v. —
 Jeff Briggs's Love Story, and other Tales
 1 v. — Flip, and other Stories 1 v. — On
 the Frontier 1 v. — By Shore and Sedgo
 1 v. — Maruja 1 v. — Snow-bound at
 Eagle's, and Devil's Ford 1 v. — The
 Crusade of the "Excelsior" 1 v. — A

Millionaire of Rough-and-Ready, and
 other Tales 1 v. — Captain Jim's Friend,
 and the Argonauts of North Liberty 1 v.
 — Cressy 1 v. — The Heritage of Dedlow
 Marsh, and other Tales 1 v. — A Waif of
 the Plains 1 v. — A Ward of the Golden
 Gate 1 v. — A Sappho of Green Springs,
 and other Tales 1 v. — A First Family of
 Tasajara 1 v. — Colonel Starbottle's Client,
 and some other People 1 v. — Susy 1 v. —
 Sally Dows, etc. 1 v. — A Protégée of
 Jack Hamlin's, etc. 1 v. — The Bell-
 Ringer of Angel's, etc. 1 v. — Clarence
 1 v. — In a Hollow of the Hills, and The
 Devotion of Enriquez 1 v. — The Ancestors
 of Peter Atherly, etc. 1 v. — Three Partners
 1 v. — Tales of Trail and Town 1 v. —
 Stories in Light and Shadow 1 v. — Mr.
 Jack Hamlin's Mediation, and other Stories
 1 v. — From Sand-Hill to Pine 1 v. —
 Under the Redwoods 1 v. — On the Old
 Trail 1 v. — Trent's Trust 1 v.

Havelock, Sir Henry: *vide* Rev.
 W. Brock.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel (Am.),
 † 1864.

The Scarlet Letter 1 v. — Transfor-
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 Hawthorne 2 v.

Hearn, Lafcadio, † 1906.
 Kokoro 1 v. — Kwaidan 1 v. — Glimpses
 of Unfamiliar Japan 1 v.

Hector, Mrs.: *vide* Mrs. Alex-
 ander.

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 of: *vide* Charlotte M. Yonge.

Helps, Sir Arthur, † 1875.
 Friends in Council 2 v. — Ivan de Biron
 2 v.

Hemans, Mrs. Felicia, † 1835.
 Select Poetical Works 1 v.

Hewlett, Maurice.
 The Forest Lovers 1 v. — Little Novels
 of Italy 1 v. — The Life and Death of
 Richard Yea-and-Nay 2 v. — New Can-
 terbury Tales 1 v. — The Queen's Quair;
 or, The Six Years' Tragedy 2 v. — Pond
 Adventures 1 v. — The Fool Errant 2 v.
 — The Stoooping Lady 1 v. — The Spanish
 Jade 1 v.

Hichens, Robert.
 Flames 2 v. — The Slave 2 v. — Felix 2 v.
 — The Woman with the Fan 2 v. — The

Garden of Allah 2 v. — The Black Spaniel, and Other Stories 1 v. — The Call of the Blood 2 v. — A Spirit in Prison 2 v.

Hobart Pasha, Admiral, † 1886.
Sketches from my Life 1 v.

Hobbes, John Oliver (Mrs. Craigie), † 1906.

The Gods, Some Mortals and Lord Wickenham 1 v. — The Serious Wooing 1 v. — The Dream and the Business 2 v.

Hoey, Mrs. Cashel.
A Golden Sorrow 2 v. — Out of Court 2 v.

Holdsworth, Annie E.
The Years that the Locust hath Eaten 1 v. — The Gods Arrive 1 v. — The Valley of the Great Shadow 1 v. — Great Lowlands 1 v. — A Garden of Spinsters 1 v.

Holme Lee: *vide* Harriet Parr.

Holmes, Oliver Wendell (Am.), † 1894.
The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — The Professor at the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — The Poet at the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — Over the Teacups 1 v.

Hope, Anthony (Hawkins).
Mr. Witt's Widow 1 v. — A Change of Air 1 v. — Half a Hero 1 v. — The Indiscretion of the Duchess 1 v. — The God in the Car 1 v. — The Chronicles of Count Antonio 1 v. — Comedies of Courtship 1 v. — The Heart of Princess Osra 1 v. — Phroso 2 v. — Simon Dale 2 v. — Rupert of Hentzau 1 v. — The King's Mirror 2 v. — Quisanté 1 v. — Tristram of Blent 2 v. — The Intrusions of Peggy 2 v. — Double Harness 2 v. — A Servant of the Public 2 v. — Sophy of Kravonia 2 v. — Tales of Two People 2 v.

Hopkins, Tighe.
An Idler in Old France 1 v. — The Man in the Iron Mask 1 v. — The Dungeons of Old Paris 1 v. — The Silent Gate 1 v.

"Horace Templeton," Author of.
Diary and Notes 1 v.

Hornung, Ernest William.
A Bride from the Bush 1 v. — Under Two Skies 1 v. — Tiny Luttrell 1 v. — The Boss of Taroomba 1 v. — My Lord Duke 1 v. — Young Blood 1 v. — Some Persons Unknown 1 v. — The Amateur Cracksman 1 v. — The Rogue's March 1 v. — The Belle of Toorak 1 v. — Peccavi 1 v. — The Black Mask 1 v. — The Shadow of

the Rope 1 v. — No Hero 1 v. — Denis Dent 1 v. — Irralie's Bushranger and The Unbidden Guest 1 v. — Stingaree 1 v. — A Thief in the Night 1 v.

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How to be Happy though Married 1 v.

Howard, Blanche Willis (Am.), † 1899.

One Summer 1 v. — Aunt Serena 1 v. — Guenn 2 v. — Tony, the Maid, etc. 1 v. — The Open Door 2 v.

Howard, Blanche Willis, † 1899,
& William Sharp, † 1905.
A Fellowe and His Wife 1 v.

Howells, William Dean (Am.).
A Foregone Conclusion 1 v. — The Lady of the Aroostook 1 v. — A Modern Instance 2 v. — The Undiscovered Country 1 v. — Venetian Life (with Portrait) 1 v. — Italian Journeys 1 v. — A Chance Acquaintance 1 v. — Their Wedding Journey 1 v. — A Fearful Responsibility, and Tonelli's Marriage 1 v. — A Woman's Reason 2 v. — Dr. Breen's Practice 1 v. — The Rise of Silas Lapham 2 v. — A Pair of Patient Lovers 1 v. — Miss Bellard's Inspiration 1 v.

Hughes, Thomas, † 1898.
Tom Brown's School-Days 1 v.

Hungerford, Mrs. (Mrs. Argles), † 1897.

Molly Bawn 2 v. — Mrs. Geoffrey 2 v. — Faith and Unfaith 2 v. — Portia 2 v. — Loÿs, Lord Berresford, and other Tales 1 v. — Her First Appearance, and other Tales 1 v. — Phyllis 2 v. — Rossmoyne 2 v. — Doris 2 v. — A Maiden all Forlorn, etc. 1 v. — A Passive Crime, and other Stories 1 v. — Green Pleasure and Grey Grief 2 v. — A Mental Struggle 2 v. — Her Week's Amusement, and Ugly Barrington 1 v. — Lady Brankmere 2 v. — Lady Valworth's Diamonds 1 v. — A Modern Circe 2 v. — Marvel 2 v. — The

Hon. Mrs. Vereker 1 v. — Under-Currents 2 v. — In Durance Vile, etc. 1 v. — A Troublesome Girl, and other Stories 1 v. — A Life's Remorse 2 v. — A Born Coquette 2 v. — The Duchess 1 v. — Lady Verner's Flight 1 v. — A Conquering Heroine, and "When in Doubt" 1 v. — Nora Creina 2 v. — A Mad Prank, and other Stories 1 v. — The Hoyden 2 v. — The Red House Mystery 1 v. — An Unsatisfactory Lover 1 v. — Peter's Wife 2 v. — The Three Graces 1 v. — A Tug of War 1 v. — The Professor's Experiment 2 v. — A Point of Conscience 2 v. — A Lonely Girl 1 v. — Lovice 1 v. — The Coming of Chloe 1 v.

Hunt, Mrs.: *vide* Averil Beaumont.

Hunt, Violet.

The Human Interest 1 v. — White Rose of Weary Leaf 2 v.

Hutten, Baroness von (Am.).

The Halo 1 v.

Ingelow, Jean, † 1897.

Off the Skelligs 3 v. — Poems 2 v. — Fated to be Free 2 v. — Sarah de Berenger 2 v. — Don John 2 v.

Inglis, the Hon. Lady.

The Siege of Lucknow 1 v.

Ingram, John H.: *vide* E. A. Poe.

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Irving, Washington (Am.).

† 1859.

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Jackson, Mrs. Helen (H. H.)

(Am.), † 1885.

Ramona 2 v.

Jacobs, W. W.

Many Cargoes 1 v. — The Skipper's Wooing, and The Brown Man's Servant 1 v. — Sea Urchins 1 v. — A Master of Craft 1 v. — Light Freights 1 v. — At Sun-
wich Port 1 v. — The Lady of the Barge 1 v. — Odd Craft 1 v. — Dialstone Lane 1 v. — Captains All 1 v. — Short Cruises 1 v.

James, Charles T. C.

Holy Wedlock 1 v.

James, G. P. R., † 1860.

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Author of: *vide* B. H. Buxton.

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Author of: *vide* Mrs. Craik
- Johnny Ludlow: *vide* Mrs. Henry Wood.
- Johnson, Samuel, † 1784.
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- Jolly, Emily.
Colonel Dacre 2 v.
- "Joshua Davidson," Author of:
vide Mrs. E. Lynn Linton.
- Kavanagh, Miss Julia, † 1877.
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- Keary, Annie, † 1879.
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- Keeling, D'Esterre: *vide* Esterre.
- Kempis, Thomas a.
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- Kinross, Albert.
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- Kipling, Rudyard.
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- Laffan, May.
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- Lee, Holme, † 1900: *vide* Harriet Parr.
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Patty 2 v. — Miriam's Marriage 2 v. —
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Lys 2 v. — In the Olden Time 2 v.

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P. G. Hamerton.

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Canada 1 v. — The Mission 1 v. — The
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own Child" 2 v. — Her Father's Name
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2 v. — Her World against a Lie 2 v. —
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3 v. — The Ladies Lindores 3 v. — Hester 3 v. — The Wizard's Son 3 v. — A Country Gentleman and his Family 2 v. — Neighbours on the Green 1 v. — The Duke's Daughter 1 v. — The Fugitives 1 v. — Kirsteen 2 v. — Life of Laurence Oliphant and of Alice Oliphant, his Wife 2 v. — The Little Pilgrim in the Unseen 1 v. — The Heir Presumptive and the Heir Apparent 2 v. — The Sorceress 2 v. — Sir Robert's Fortune 2 v. — The Ways of Life 1 v. — Old Mr. Tredgold 2 v.

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Parr, Harriet (Holme Lee),

† 1900.

Basil Godfrey's Caprice 2 v. — For Richer, for Poorer 2 v. — The Beautiful Miss Barrington 2 v. — Her Title of Honour 1 v. — Echoes of a Famous Year 1 v. — Katherine's Trial 1 v. — The Vicissitudes of Bessie Fairfax 2 v. — Ben Milner's Wooing 1 v. — Straightforward 2 v. — Mrs. Denys of Cote 2 v. — A Poor Squire 1 v.

Parr, Mrs.

Dorothy Fox 1 v. — The Prescotts of Pamphillton 2 v. — The Gosau Smithy, etc. 1 v. — Robin 2 v. — Loyalty George 2 v.

Paston, George.

A Study in Prejudices 1 v. — A Fair Deceiver 1 v.

Pasture, Mrs. Henry de la.

The Lonely Lady of Grosvenor Square 1 v. — The Grey Knight 1 v.

Paul, Mrs.: *vide* Author of "Still Waters."

"Paul Ferroll," Author of (Mrs.

Caroline Clive), † 1873.

Paul Ferroll 1 v. — Year after Year 1 v. — Why Paul Ferroll killed his Wife 1 v.

Payn, James, † 1898.

Found Dead 1 v. — Gwendoline's Harvest 1 v. — Like Father, like Son 2 v. — Not Wooded, but Won 2 v. — Cecil's Tryst 1 v. — A Woman's Vengeance 2 v. — Murphy's Master 1 v. — In the Heart of a Hill, and other Stories 1 v. — At Her Mercy 2 v. — The Best of Husbands 2 v. — Walter's Word 2 v. — Halves 2 v. — Fallen Fortunes 2 v. — What He cost Her 2 v. — By Proxy 2 v. — Less Black than we're Painted 2 v. — Under one Roof 2 v. — High Spirits 1 v. — High Spirits (*Second Series*) 1 v. — A Confidential Agent 2 v. — From Exile 2 v. — A Grape from a Thorn 2 v. — Some Private Views 1 v. — For Cash Only 2 v. — Kit: A Memory 2 v. — The Canon's Ward (with Portrait) 2 v. — Some Literary Recollections 1 v. — The Talk of the Town 1 v. — The Luck of the Darrells 2 v. — The Heir of the Ages 2 v. — Holiday Tasks 1 v. — Glow-Worm Tales (*First Series*) 1 v. — Glow-Worm Tales (*Second Series*) 1 v. — A Prince of the Blood 2 v. — The Mystery of Mirbridge 2 v. — The Burnt Million 2 v. — The Word and the Will 2 v. — Sunny Stories, and some Shady Ones 1 v. — A Modern Dick Whittington 2 v. — A Stumble on the Threshold

2 v. — A Trying Patient 1 v. — Gleams of Memory, and The Eavesdropper 1 v. — In Market Overt 1 v. — The Disappearance of George Driffell, and other Tales 1 v. — Another's Burden etc. 1 v. — The Backwater of Life, or Essays of a Literary Veteran 1 v.

Peard, Frances Mary.

One Year 2 v. — The Rose-Garden 1 v. — Unawares 1 v. — Thorpe Regis 1 v. — A Winter Story 1 v. — A Madrigal, and other Stories 1 v. — Cartouche 1 v. — Mother Molly 1 v. — Schloss and Town 2 v. — Contradictions 2 v. — Near Neighbours 1 v. — Alicia Tennant 1 v. — Madame's Granddaughter 1 v. — Donna Teresa 1 v. — Number One and Number Two 1 v. — The Ring from Jaipur 1 v.

Pemberton, Max.

The Impregnable City 1 v. — A Woman of Kronstadt 1 v. — The Phantom Army 1 v. — The Garden of Swords 1 v. — The Footsteps of a Throne 1 v. — Pro Patria 1 v. — The Giant's Gate 2 v. — I crown thee King 1 v. — The House under the Sea 1 v. — The Gold Wolf 1 v. — Doctor Xavier 1 v. — Red Morn 1 v. — Beatrice of Venice 2 v. — Mid the Thick Arrows 2 v. — My Sword for Lafayette 1 v. — The Lady Evelyn 1 v. — The Diamond Ship 1 v. — The Lodestar 1 v. — Wheels of Anarchy 1 v. — Love the Harvester 1 v.

Percy, Bishop Thomas, † 1811.

Reliques of Ancient English Poetry 3 v.

Philips, F. C.

As in a Looking Glass 1 v. — The Dean and his Daughter 1 v. — Lucy Smith 1 v. — A Lucky Young Woman 1 v. — Jack and Three Jills 1 v. — Little Mrs. Murray 1 v. — Young Mr. Ainslie's Courtship 1 v. — Social Vicissitudes 1 v. — Extenuating Circumstances, and A French Marriage 1 v. — More Social Vicissitudes 1 v. — Constance 2 v. — That Wicked Mad'emoiselle, etc. 1 v. — A Doctor in Difficulties, etc. 1 v. — Black and White 1 v. — "One Never Knows" 2 v. — Of Course 1 v. — Miss Ormerod's Protégé 1 v. — My little Husband 1 v. — Mrs. Bouverie 1 v. — A Question of Colour, and other Stories 1 v. — A Devil in Nun's Veiling 1 v. — A Full Confession, and other Stories 1 v. — The Luckiest of Three 1 v. — Poor Little Bella 1 v. — Eliza Clarke, Governess, and Other Stories 1 v. — Marriage, etc. 1 v. — School-girls of To-day, etc. 1 v. — If Only, etc. 1 v. — An Unfortunate Blend 1 v. — A Barrister's Courtship 1 v.

- Philips, F. C. & Percy Fendall.
A Daughter's Sacrifice 1 v. — Margaret Byng 1 v.
- Philips, F. C. & C. J. Wills.
The Fatal Phryne 1 v. — The Scudamores 1 v. — A Maiden Fair to See 1 v. — Sybil Ross's Marriage 1 v.
- Phillpotts, Eden.
Lying Prophets 2 v. — The Human Boy 1 v. — Sons of the Morning 2 v. — The Good Red Earth 1 v. — The Striking Hours 1 v. — The Farm of the Dagger 1 v. — The Golden Fetich 1 v. — The Whirlwind 2 v. — The Human Boy Again 1 v.
- Phillpotts, E. & Arnold Bennett.
The Sinews of War 1 v. — The Statue 1 v.
- Piddington, Miss: *vide* Author of
"The Last of the Cavaliers."
- Poe, Edgar Allan (Am.), † 1849.
Poems and Essays, edited with a new Memoir by John H. Ingram 1 v. — Tales, edited by John H. Ingram 1 v.
- Pope, Alexander, † 1744.
Select Poetical Works (with Portrait) 1 v.
- Poynter, Miss E. Frances.
My Little Lady 2 v. — Ersilia 2 v. — Among the Hills 1 v. — Madame de Presnel 1 v.
- Præd, Mrs. Campbell.
Zéro 1 v. — Affinities 1 v. — The Head Station 2 v.
- Prentiss, Mrs. E. (Am.), † 1878.
Stepping Heavenward 1 v.
- Prince Consort, the, † 1861.
His Principal Speeches and Addresses (with Portrait) 1 v.
- Pryce, Richard.
Miss Maxwell's Affections 1 v. — The Quiet Mrs. Fleming 1 v. — Time and the Woman 1 v.
- Pym, Hor. N.: *v.* Caroline Fox.
- Queen, H. M. the: *vide* Victoria R. I.
- Quiller-Couch, A. T. ("Q").
Noughts and Crosses 1 v. — I Saw Three Ships 1 v. — Dead Man's Rock 1 v. — Ia and other Tales 1 v. — The Ship of Stars 1 v. — The Adventures of Harry Revel 1 v. — Fort Amity 1 v. — Shakespeare's Christmas, and Other Stories 1 v. — The Mayor of Troy 1 v. — Merry-Garden, and Other Stories 1 v.
- Rae, W. Fraser, † 1905.
Westward by Rail 1 v. — Miss Bayle's Romance 2 v. — The Business of Travel 1 v.
- Raimond, C. E. (Miss Robins).
The Open Question 2 v. — The Magnetic North 2 v. — A Dark Lantern 2 v. — The Convert 2 v.
- "Rajah's Heir, the," Author of.
The Rajah's Heir 2 v.
- Reade, Charles, † 1884.
"It is never too late to mend" 2 v. — "Love me little, love me long" 1 v. — The Cloister and the Hearth 2 v. — Hard Cash 3 v. — Put Yourself in his Place 2 v. — A Terrible Temptation 2 v. — Peg Woffington 1 v. — Christie Johnstone 1 v. — A Simpleton 2 v. — The Wandering Heir 1 v. — A Woman-Hater 2 v. — Readiana 1 v. — Singleheart and Doubleface 1 v.
- "Recommended to Mercy,"
Author of (Mrs. Houstoun).
"Recommended to Mercy" 2 v. — Zoe's "Brand" 2 v.
- Reeves, Mrs.: *v.* Helen Mathers.
- Rhys, Grace.
Mary Dominic 1 v. — The Wooing of Sheila 1 v.
- Rice, James: *v.* Walter Besant.
- Richards, Alfred Bate, † 1876.
So very Human 3 v.
- Richardson, S., † 1761.
Clarissa Harlowe 4 v.
- Riddell, Mrs. (F. G. Trafford).
George Geith of Fen Court 2 v. — Maxwell Drewitt 2 v. — The Race for Wealth 2 v. — Far above Rubies 2 v. — The Earl's Promise 2 v. — Mortomley's Estate 2 v.
- Ridge, W. Pett.
Name of Garland 1 v.
- "Rita."
Souls 1 v. — The Jesters 1 v. — The Masqueraders 2 v. — Queer Lady Judas 2 v. — Prince Charming 1 v. — The Pointing Finger 1 v. — A Man of no Importance 1 v. — The Millionaire Girl, and Other Stories 1 v.
- Ritchie, Mrs. Anne Thackeray:
vide Miss Thackeray.
- Roberts, Miss: *vide* Author of
"Mademoiselle Mori."
- Robertson, Rev. Frederick W.,
† 1853.
Sermons 4 v.

- Robins, Miss: *vide* Raimond.
- Robinson, F.: *vide* Author of "No Church."
- Roosevelt, Theodore (Am.).
Outdoor Pastimes of an American Hunter (with Portrait) 1 v.
- Ross, Charles H.
The Pretty Widow 1 v. — A London Romance 2 v.
- Ross, Martin: *vide* Somerville.
- Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, † 1882.
Poems 1 v. — Ballads and Sonnets 1 v.
"Roy Tellet."
- The Outcasts 1 v. — A Draught of Lethe 1 v. — Pastor and Prelate 2 v.
- Ruffini, J., † 1881.
Lavinia 2 v. — Doctor Antonio 1 v. — Lorenzo Benoni 1 v. — Vincenzo 2 v. — A Quiet Nook in the Jura 1 v. — The Paragreens on a Visit to Paris 1 v. — Carlino, and other Stories 1 v.
- Ruskin, John, † 1902.
Sesame and Lilies 1 v. — The Stones of Venice (with Illustrations) 2 v. — Unto this Last and Munera Pulveris 1 v. — The Seven Lamps of Architecture (with 14 Illustrations) 1 v. — Mornings in Florence 1 v.
- Russell, W. Clark.
A Sailor's Sweetheart 2 v. — The "Lady Maud" 2 v. — A Sea Queen 2 v.
- Russell, George W. E.
Collections and Recollections. By One who has kept a Diary 2 v. — A Londoner's Log-Book 1 v.
- Sala, George Augustus, † 1895.
The Seven Sons of Mammon 2 v.
- Saunders, John.
Israel Mort, Overman 2 v. — The Shipowner's Daughter 2 v. — A Noble Wife 2 v.
- Saunders, Katherine (Mrs. Cooper).
Joan Merryweather, and other Tales 1 v. — Gideon's Rock, and other Tales 1 v. — The High Mills 2 v. — Sebastian 1 v.
- Savage, Richard Henry (Am.), † 1903.
My Official Wife 1 v. — The Little Lady of Lagunitas (with Portrait) 2 v. — Prince Schamyl's Wooing 1 v. — The Masked Venus 2 v. — Delilah of Harlem 2 v. — The Anarchist 2 v. — A Daughter of Judas 1 v. — In the Old Chateau 1 v. — Miss
- Devereux of the Mariquita 2 v. — Checked Through 2 v. — A Modern Corsair 2 v. — In the Swim 2 v. — The White Lady of Khaminavatka 2 v. — In the House of His Friends 2 v. — The Mystery of a Shipyard 2 v. — A Monte Cristo in Khaki 1 v.
- Schreiner, Olive.
Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland 1 v.
- Scott, Sir Walter, † 1832.
Waverley (with Portrait) 1 v. — The Antiquary 1 v. — Ivanhoe 1 v. — Kenilworth 1 v. — Quentin Durward 1 v. — Old Mortality 1 v. — Guy Mannering 1 v. — Rob Roy 1 v. — The Pirate 1 v. — The Fortunes of Nigel 1 v. — The Black Dwarf; A Legend of Montrose 1 v. — The Bride of Lammermoor 1 v. — The Heart of Mid-Lothian 2 v. — The Monastery 1 v. — The Abbot 1 v. — Peveril of the Peak 2 v. — Poetical Works 2 v. — Woodstock 1 v. — The Fair Maid of Perth 1 v. — Anne of Geierstein 1 v.
- Seeley, Prof. J. R., M.A., † 1895.
Life and Times of Stein (with a Portrait of Stein) 4 v. — The Expansion of England 1 v. — Goethe 1 v.
- Sewell, Elizabeth, † 1906.
Amy Herbert 2 v. — Ursula 2 v. — A Glimpse of the World 2 v. — The Journal of a Home Life 2 v. — After Life 2 v. — The Experience of Life 2 v.
- Shakespeare, William, † 1616.
Plays and Poems (with Portrait) (*Second Edition*) 7 v. — Doubtful Plays 1 v.
Shakespeare's Plays may also be had in 37 numbers, at *£* 0,30. each number.
- Sharp, William, † 1905: *v.* Miss Howard, Fiona Macleod and Swinburne.
- Shelley, Percy Bysshe, † 1822.
A Selection from his Poems 1 v.
- Sheppard, Nathan (Am.), † 1888.
Shut up in Paris 1 v.
- Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, † 1816.
The Dramatic Works 1 v.
- Shorthouse, J. Henry.
John Inglesant 2 v. — Blanche, Lady Falaise 1 v.
- Slatin Pasha, Rudolf C., C.B.
Fire and Sword in the Sudan (with two Maps in Colours) 3 v.

- Smedley, F. E.: *vide* Author of "Frank Fairlegh."
- Smollett, Tobias, † 1771.
Roderick Random 1 v. — Humphry Clinker 1 v. — Peregrine Pickle 2 v.
- "Society in London," Author of. Society in London. By a Foreign Resident 1 v.
- Somerville, E. CE., & Martin Ross.
Naboth's Vineyard 1 v. — All on the Irish Shore 1 v.
- "Spanish Brothers, the," Author of
The Spanish Brothers 2 v.
- Stanhope, Earl (Lord Mahon), † 1875.
The History of England 7 v. — Reign of Queen Anne 2 v.
- Steel, Flora Annie.
The Hosts of the Lord 2 v. — In the Guardianship of God 1 v.
- Steevens, G. W., † 1900.
From Capetown to Ladysmith 1 v.
- Sterne, Laurence, † 1768.
Tristram Shandy 1 v. — A Sentimental Journey (with Portrait) 1 v.
- Stevenson, Robert Louis, † 1894.
Treasure Island 1 v. — Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and An Inland Voyage 1 v. — Kidnapped 1 v. — The Black Arrow 1 v. — The Master of Ballantrae 1 v. — The Merry Men, etc. 1 v. — Across the Plains, etc. 1 v. — Island Nights' Entertainments 1 v. — Catriona 1 v. — Weir of Hermiston 1 v. — St. Ives 2 v. — In the South Seas 2 v. — Tales and Fantasies 1 v.
- "Still Waters," Author of (Mrs. Paul).
Still Waters 1 v. — Dorothy 1 v. — De Cressy 1 v. — Uncle Ralph 1 v. — Maiden Sisters 1 v. — Martha Brown 1 v. — Vanessa 1 v.
- Stirling, M. C.: *vide* G. M. Craik.
- Stockton, Frank R. (Am.).
The House of Martha 1 v.
- "Story of a Penitent Soul, the," Author of.
The Story of a Penitent Soul 1 v.
- "Story of Elizabeth, the," Author of: *vide* Miss Thackeray.
- Stowe, Mrs. Harriet Beecher (Am.), † 1896.
Uncle Tom's Cabin (with Portrait) 2 v. — A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin 2 v. — Dred 2 v. — The Minister's Wooing 1 v. — Old-town Folks 2 v.
- "Sunbeam Stories," Author of: *vide* Mrs. Mackarness.
- Swift, Jonathan (Dean Swift), † 1745.
Gulliver's Travels 1 v.
- Swinburne, Algernon Charles.
Atalanta in Calydon: and Lyrical Poems (edited, with an Introduction, by William Sharp) 1 v. — Love's Cross-Currents 1 v. — Chastelard and Mary Stuart 1 v.
- Symonds, John Addington, † 1893.
Sketches in Italy 1 v. — New Italian Sketches 1 v.
- Tallentyre, S. G.: *v.* H. S. Merri-man.
- Tasma.
Uncle Piper of Piper's Hill 2 v.
- Tautphoeus, Baroness, † 1893.
Cyrilla 2 v. — The Initials 2 v. — Quits 2 v. — At Odds 2 v.
- Taylor, Col. Meadows, † 1876.
Tara; a Mahratta Tale 3 v.
- Templeton: *vide* Author of "Horace Templeton."
- Tennyson, Alfred (Lord), † 1892.
Poetical Works 8 v. — Queen Mary 1 v. — Harold 1 v. — Becket; The Cup; The Falcon 1 v. — Locksley Hall, sixty Years after; The Promise of May; Tiresias and other Poems 1 v. — A Memoir. By His Son (with Portrait) 4 v.
- Testament, the New: *vide* New.
- Thackeray, William Makepeace, † 1863.
Vanity Fair 3 v. — Pendennis 3 v. — Miscellanies 8 v. — Henry Esmond 2 v. — The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century 1 v. — The Newcomes 4 v. — The Virginians 4 v. — The Four Georges; Lovel the Widower 1 v. — The Adventures of Philip 2 v. — Denis Duval 1 v. —

Roundabout Papers 2 v. — Catherine 1 v. — The Irish Sketch Book 2 v. — The Paris Sketch Book (with Portrait) 2 v.

Thackeray, Miss (Mrs. Ritchie).

The Story of Elizabeth 1 v. — The Village on the Cliff 1 v. — Old Kensington 2 v. — Bluebeard's Keys, and other Stories 1 v. — Five Old Friends 1 v. — Miss Angel 1 v. — Out of the World, and other Tales 1 v. — Fulham Lawn, and other Tales 1 v. — From an Island. A Story and some Essays 1 v. — Da Capo, and other Tales 1 v. — Madame de Sévigné; From a Stage Box; Miss Williamson's Divagations 1 v. — A Book of Sibyls 1 v. — Mrs. Dymond 2 v. — Chapters from some Memoirs 1 v.

Thomas a Kempis: v. Kempis.

Thomas, A. (Mrs. Pender Cudlip).

Denis Donne 2 v. — On Guard 2 v. — Walter Goring 2 v. — Played Out 2 v. — Called to Account 2 v. — Only Herself 2 v. — A Narrow Escape 2 v.

Thomson, James, † 1748.

Poetical Works (with Portrait) 1 v.

"**Thoth,**" Author of.

Thoth 1 v.

"**Tim,**" Author of.

Tim 1 v.

Trafford, F. G.: v. Mrs. Riddell.

Trevelyan, Right Hon. Sir George Otto.

The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay (with Portrait) 4 v. — Selections from the Writings of Lord Macaulay 2 v. — The American Revolution (with a Map) 2 v.

Trois-Etoiles, vide Grenville: Murray.

Trollope, Anthony, † 1882.

Doctor Thorne 2 v. — The Bertrams 2 v. — The Warden 1 v. — Barchester Towers 2 v. — Castle Richmond 2 v. — The West Indies 1 v. — Framley Parsonage 2 v. — North America 3 v. — Orley Farm 3 v. — Rachel Ray 2 v. — The Small House at Allington 3 v. — Can you forgive her? 3 v. — The Belton Estate 2 v. — Nina Balatka 1 v. — The Last Chronicle of Barset 3 v. — The Claverings 2 v. — Phineas Finn 3 v. — He knew he was right 3 v. — The Vicar of Bullhampton 2 v. — Sir Harry Hotspur of Humblethwaite 1 v. — Ralph the Heir 2 v. — The Golden Lion of Granpere 1 v. — Australia and New Zealand 3 v. — Lady Anna 2 v. — Harry

Heathcote of Gangoil 1 v. — The Way we live now 4 v. — The Prime Minister 4 v. — The American Senator 3 v. — South Africa 2 v. — Is He Popenjoy? 3 v. — An Eye for an Eye 1 v. — John Caldigate 3 v. — Cousin Henry 1 v. — The Duke's Children 3 v. — Dr. Wortle's School 1 v. — Ayala's Angel 3 v. — The Fixed Period 1 v. — Marion Fay 2 v. — Kept in the Dark 1 v. — Frau Frohmann, and other Stories 1 v. — Alice Dugdale, and other Stories 1 v. — La Mere Bauche, and other Stories 1 v. — The Mistletoe Bough, and other Stories 1 v. — An Autobiography 1 v. — An Old Man's Love 1 v.

Trollope, T. Adolphus, † 1892.

The Garstangs of Garstang Grange 2 v. — A Siren 2 v.

Trowbridge, W. R. H.

The Letters of Her Mother to Elizabeth 1 v. — A Girl of the Multitude 1 v. — That Little Marquis of Brandenburg 1 v. — A Dazzling Reprobate 1 v.

Twain, Mark (Samuel L. Clemens) (Am.).

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer 1 v. — The Innocents Abroad; or, The New Pilgrims' Progress 2 v. — A Tramp Abroad 2 v. — "Roughing it" 1 v. — The Innocents at Home 1 v. — The Prince and the Pauper 2 v. — The Stolen White Elephant, etc. 1 v. — Life on the Mississippi 2 v. — Sketches (with Portrait) 1 v. — Huckleberry Finn 2 v. — Selections from American Humour 1 v. — A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur 2 v. — The American Claimant 1 v. — The £ 1000000 Bank-Note and other new Stories 1 v. — Tom Sawyer Abroad 1 v. — Pudd'nhead Wilson 1 v. — Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc 2 v. — Tom Sawyer, Detective, and other Tales 1 v. — More Tramps Abroad 2 v. — The Man that corrupted Hadleyburg, etc. 2 v. — A Double-Barrelled Detective Story, etc. 1 v. — The \$30,000 Bequest, and Other Stories 1 v. — Christian Science 1 v.

"**Two Cosmos, the,**" Author of. The Two Cosmos 1 v.

Vachell, Horace Annesley.

Brothers 2 v. — The Face of Clay 1 v. — Her Son 1 v. — The Hill 1 v.

"**Venus and Cupid,**" Author of. Venus and Cupid 1 v.

"**Vera,**" Author of.

Vera 1 v. — The Hôtel du Petit St.

Jean 1 v. — Blue Roses 2 v. — Within Sound of the Sea 2 v. — The Maritime Alps and their Seaboard 2 v. — Ninette 1 v.

Victoria R. I.

Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands from 1848 to 1861 1 v. — More Leaves, etc. from 1862 to 1882 1 v.

"Virginia," Author of.

Virginia 1 v.

Vizetelly, Ernest Alfred.

With Zola in England 1 v.

Walford, L. B.

Mr. Smith 2 v. — Pauline 2 v. — Cousins 2 v. — Troublesome Daughters 2 v. — Leddy Marget 1 v.

Wallace, D. Mackenzie.

Russia 3 v.

Wallace, Lew. (Am.), † 1905.

Ben-Hur 2 v.

Warburton, Eliot, † 1852.

The Crescent and the Cross 2 v. — Darien 2 v.

Ward, Mrs. Humphry.

Robert Elsmere 3 v. — David Grieve 3 v. — Miss Bretherton 1 v. — Marcella 3 v. — Bessie Costrell 1 v. — Sir George Tressady 2 v. — Helbeck of Bannisdale 2 v. — Eleanor 2 v. — Lady Rose's Daughter 2 v. — The Marriage of William Ashe 2 v. — Fenwick's Career 2 v. — Diana Mallory 2 v.

Warner, Susan *vide*: Wetherell.

Warren, Samuel, † 1877.

Diary of a late Physician 2 v. — Ten Thousand a-Year 3 v. — Now and Then 1 v. — The Lily and the Bee 1 v.

"Waterdale Neighbours, the,"

Author of: *v.* Justin McCarthy.

Watts-Dunton, Theodore.

Aylwin 2 v.

Wells, H. G.

The Stolen Bacillus, etc. 1 v. — The War of the Worlds 1 v. — The Invisible Man 1 v. — The Time Machine, and The Island of Doctor Moreau 1 v. — When the Sleeper Wakes 1 v. — Tales of Space and Time 1 v. — The Plattner Story, and Others 1 v. — Love and Mr. Lewisham 1 v. — The Wheels of Chance 1 v. — Anticipations 1 v. — The First Men in the Moon 1 v. — The Sea Lady 1 v. — Mankind in the Making 2 v. — Twelve Stories and a Dream 1 v. — The Food of the Gods 1 v. — A Modern Utopia 1 v. — Kipps 2 v. — In the Days of the Comet 1 v. — The Future in America 1 v. — New Worlds for Old 1 v.

Westbury, Hugh.

Acte 2 v.

Wetherell, Elizabeth (Susan

Warner) (Am.), † 1885.

The wide, wide World 1 v. — Queechey 2 v. — The Hills of the Shatemuc 2 v. — Say and Seal 2 v. — The Old Helmet 2 v.

Weyman, Stanley J.

The House of the Wolf 1 v. — The Story of Francis Cludde 2 v. — A Gentleman of France 2 v. — The Man in Black 1 v. — Under the Red Robe 1 v. — My Lady Rotha 2 v. — From the Memoirs of a Minister of France 1 v. — The Red Cockade 2 v. — Shrewsbury 2 v. — The Castle Inn 2 v. — Sophia 2 v. — Count Hannibal 2 v. — In Kings' Byways 1 v. — The Long Night 2 v. — The Abbess of Vlaze 2 v. — Starvecrov Farm 2 v. — Chippinge 2 v. — Laid up in Lavender 1 v.

Wharton, Edith (Am.).

The House of Mirth 2 v. — The Fruit of the Tree 2 v.

"Whim, a, and its Consequences," Author of.

A Whim, and its Consequences 1 v.

Whitby, Beatrice.

The Awakening of Mary Fenwick 2 v. — In the Suntime of her Youth 2 v.

White, Percy.

Mr. Bailey-Martin 1 v. — The West End 2 v. — The New Christians 1 v. — Park Lane 2 v. — The Countess and The King's Diary 1 v. — The Triumph of Mrs. St. George 2 v. — A Millionaire's Daughter 1 v. — A Passionate Pilgrim 1 v. — The System 2 v. — The Patient Man 1 v. — Mr. John Stroud 1 v. — The Eight Guests 2 v. — Mr. Strudge 1 v. — Love and the Poor Suitor 1 v.

White, Walter.

Holidays in Tyrol 1 v.

Whiteing, Richard.

The Island; or, An Adventure of a Person of Quality 1 v. — No. 5 John Street 1 v. — The Life of Paris 1 v. — The Yellow Van 1 v. — Ring in the New 1 v. — All Moonshine 1 v.

Whitman, Sidney.

Imperial Germany 1 v. — The Realm of the Habsburgs 1 v. — Teuton Stories 1 v. — Reminiscences of the King of Roumania, edited by Sidney Whitman 1 v. — Conversations with Prince Bismarck, edited by Sidney Whitman 1 v. — Life of the Emperor Frederick 2 v.

- "Who Breaks—Pays," Author of: *vide* Mrs. Jenkin.
- Whyte Melville, George J.: *vide* Melville.
- Wiggin, Kate Douglas (Am.). Timothy's Quest 1 v. — A Cathedral Courtship, and Penelope's English Experiences 1 v. — Penelope's Irish Experiences 1 v. — Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm 1 v. — The Affair at the Inn 1 v. (By K. D. Wiggin, M. & J. Findlater, and Allan McAulay.) — Rose o' the River 1 v. — New Chronicles of Rebecca 1 v.
- Wilde, Oscar. The Picture of Dorian Gray 1 v. — De Profundis and The Ballad of Reading Gaol 1 v.
- Wilkins, Mary E. (Am.). Pembroke 1 v. — Madelon 1 v. — Jerome 2 v. — Silence, and other Stories 1 v. — The Love of Parson Lord, etc. 1 v.
- Williamson, C. N. & A. M. The Lightning Conductor 1 v.
- Wills, C. J., *vide* F. C. Philips.
- Winter, Mrs. J. S. Regimental Legends 1 v.
- Wood, Charles: *vide* Author of "Buried Alone."
- Wood, H. F. The Passenger from Scotland Yard 1 v.
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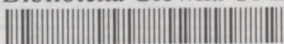
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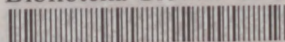
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