

THE GAME; The Secret of Dunraven Castle.

BY ANNIE ASHMORE,
Author of "Faithful Margaret," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER XIV.—Continued.

When she was nearly down she saw a boat close in shore, with a man standing by its bow, doing some kind of work. The storm's darkness, added to the shade of a clump of water willows, hid his features from her, but she seemed like a gentleman, perhaps one of the neighboring gentry who had been out fishing. The skiff was an elegant thing, such as a gentleman might use.

Almost delirious with the idea of Accrington's proximity, Lovelady galloped close up to him, dropped to the ground, and standing before him, blinded and dazed, gazed out.

"Will you—will you row me under the bridge and hide me until that person who is coming passes by?"

Even as she was speaking, he was leading the towing boat back with a hand behind the thick trunks of the clump of willows where she stood panting, with drooping neck and heaving sides; he then lifted Lovelady lightly into the cushioned stern of the skiff, fung a great white net over her, showed off the boat, and safe hidden under the low stone arch of the bridge, when the horseman thundered overhead, and up the road.

Then the skiff shot out into the swift current, and the gentleman plied the oars till they raved between the banks, and in a few minutes were out of sight of bridge and horse.

Lovelady had lain just where she was placed in something so nearly like a swoon that she took no note of anything for perhaps five minutes.

Then she heard the swift brush of the water against the planks, and felt the tremor of each mighty pull of the oars, and lifting her head from the dowry that she had thrown back with both languid hands, she clung close to her hair which had broken loose and fallen over her face, she looked at her deliverer, who faced her not three feet off.

It was Col. Accrington himself. The shock was enough to have killed her; quite oblivious of where she was, she started up in the frail boat, uttering a scream after a scream, so piercing in their heart-rending intensity that they echoed for miles around. Accrington seized her by the half of her neck, and with a deathly swing toward him, and drew her back just as she was plunging overboard, clasping her round with an exulting exclamation: "I have you at last, safe, poor frightened darling!"

She withdrew down from his breast, moaning and convulsed with horror—the frail boat rocked in the swirling current under their violent motions; he clasped her again with all his roused strength, blind and rhythmic, but the captain of the madly course to—she had her safe this time, when over surged the skiff, and they were struggling in the water.

Even the e held on to her with a grasp like a snake, and the instant that he released her, she swam with her few vigorous strokes to the boat, which floated near, bottom up, and flung his unoccupied arm over the keel; and thus braced, he could draw her head and shoulders up out of the water, and supply her with the strength of his deathly white face drooped on his shoulder, her dear eyes were closed.

its schemes to escape from their perilous situation. The cold was intense; the bitter winds furrowed the black waters, and a swirl of hail ones pat eared and splashed about them; dreary as death was the scene.

"Lovelady! Lovelady!" muttered Accrington, laying his cheek against her cold white one, as it lay on his shoulder, her long hair swathing and binding them together as it flowed over both forms in a mad, mad, mad way. How could he not love her when I love you so much?"

An expression of hopeless anguish came upon his face; he began to feel that to win this girl to love him, he could not afford to lose her.

Suddenly a great roar of fallow water reached his ear; he raised his head around. Not far below he saw a great low mill near the river, while along the bank, above him, ran a mill race, which opened on the river by means of a sluice. The sluice was now open, and the waste water from the flume was pouring into the river like a great cataract, stirring the waters into a boiling whirlpool, which must inevitably swamp the skiff and drag the castaways down to their death.

Accrington gazed in dismay, then shouted for help till the welkin rang again.

"Voice replied, and following its direction he saw through the slanting lines of blinding hail the vision of a horse stretched to the gallop on the opposite bank of the mill, and its rider waving his hand to him.

"That's the fellow, that's the fellow!" cried Accrington, "I have a horse! I have a horse!"

"Take me home to mamma—I want to be with her, I belong to no one else, yet!" said Lovelady, in a sudden over-whelming shame, and shrinking as far from him as his encircling arms would permit.

"That is true, and it's shameful for us to be wrangling over you instead of saving your life," said Auberon, privately. "Come, Colonel, a truce to private animosity; let us get out of this."

Accrington's look was dark enough to justify the suspicion that he would almost prefer to perish where he was, providing his two companions in danger perished with him, rather than escape to see his love carried off from his arms by his rival. But he graved his eyes in silence and possessed his rage in soul.

The two men raised a loud shout once more, and probably because they were somewhat revived by their brief rest, they began to shout again. The current swept them still further down the river, but they landed in safety on the mill bank, among an astonished crowd of men and boys.

While the explanations made while the half-frozen lady was being carried to the miller's house on Auberon's horse, supported on either side by a rival, Accrington was the explainer; being in the diplomatic line he felt quite at home in such a position.

Auberon stopped quick, and kissed the lips that uttered that delicate word; and kissed them again; this time a long kiss, during which the two spirits rushed together and were knitted in a bond that Death even cannot unloose.

"No one shall part us now!" said he, solemnly. "Thank God you are mine!"

"No one shall part us!" echoed she, with sweet dazed joy in her voice.

Accrington heard that voice, and started back, "at least of all you, sir, who are either playing with another lady's heart or with hers."

Auberon felt Lovelady win at that, and cried, indignantly: "What a false, Col Accrington. I have a love for this dark one, sir."

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summoned you home had I any inkling of your whereabouts."

Edgar thought his kinsman more worn and melancholy looking than before; and regarded him with such new perceptions of his secret selfishness that he read in every line of his gloomy face a revelation of the past.

He had traveled straight from Scotland, and chanced to have arrived on the morning of the hunt; he was astonished when the younger Lord Inchape, whom he would find his lordship at home, for hunting was Inchape's one pleasure, and he was seldom absent from the meet.

"And why am I particularly welcome to-day, my lord?" asked the young lord, seating himself in the chair before Lord Inchape, as he was desired.

With suppressed bitterness, Inchape told him that a powerful candidate had appeared to contest the borough with him.

"He has brought a caste and a wide domain," said Inchape; "he has a numerous tenantry, and can command great interests in Salford. Archerfield is his name, and he is a powerful man; he will be legion, no doubt. He has been indefatigable in conciliating the people, and he is far more popular to-day, stranger though he be, than you are. But then, my lord, you do not learn the art of beguiling men through their weaknesses, which is the favor to policy of Richard Accrington."

"It is Richard Accrington!" cried Edgar, springing to his feet—here, at the very door! Glorious news!

"What do you mean by that?" said the miscreant, for whom he had expected to search to the ends of the earth, was here, within his grasp.

"What do you know of that man?" demanded Lord Inchape, amazedly.

"I know him as a young man, my lord—that he has been the cause of Inchape. Dear kinsman," said Edgar, respectfully, "I would never have presumed to peer into your past afflictions had not accident thrown me strangely into your path, where I learned all, involuntarily."

Dark grew the proud Earl's brow. He gazed upon the unwelcome discoverer of his disgrace with painful earnestness.

Edgar then narrated the circumstances which had cast him upon Sleatna-Vreckin; his recognition of Dunraven Tower as one of Lord Inchape's properties which he had seen in the chart; his amazement upon discovering a young and lovely Lady Lovelady, and his involuntary identification of her. And he detailed this portion of his life at Sleatna-Vreckin, when he lay sick and helpless, visited daily by that gentle, melancholy lady—how tenderly he portrayed her in his private journal, and how the unutterable eloquence of her patient suffering, which pleased with him day to day to deliver her from her undesired misery!

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SOBER OR STARTLING, FAITHFULLY RECORDED.

Illinois Militia Matters—New Bank at East St. Louis—Determined to Dis—Masculine Assumes Metropolitan Airs—Trust Company in Trouble.

JOSEPH H. FERRIS was scolded to death in a rolling vat at Belleville.

PETER WOMBACHER was fatally injured at Mascoutah by being thrown from a wagon.

The Appellate Court of the Third District adjourned at Springfield on July 7, 1892.

REPORTS indicate that the grip is prevailing in Southern Illinois. There are 2,000 cases in St. Clair County.

The Rev. E. J. Hamell, of Jacksonville, fell dead on a train while en route to the South to spend the winter.

A SPECIAL committee reported to the level the City Council in favor of granting an electric street railway franchise.

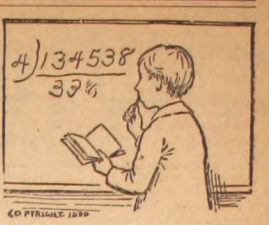
MRS. COLEMAN, of Mascoutah, broke several ribs and sustained probably fatal injuries by falling from a step-ladder.

ED WYATT, living at Murrayville, near Jacksonville, was struck by a train and frightfully mangled. He leaves a large family.

The public schools at Atlanta are closed on account of scarlet fever. There have been five deaths from the grip there within a week.

The Adjutant General issued an order honorably discharging Private C. C. Claver, Company G, Sixth Infantry.

MASCOUTAH is now lighted with electricity. There are fifty street lights and upward of 200 commercial lights.



CO. PRIVATE 1892

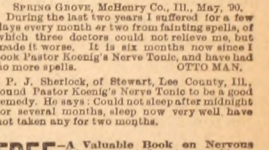
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