



THE FLUGE

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CHAPTER XXII.—Continued.

"You shouldn't," she hissed, her whole body shaking and her carefully-cultivated appearance of the gracious evening of youth swallowed up in a black cyclone of hate. "You gutter-plant! God will punish you for the shame you have brought upon!"

I opened the door and bowed, without a word, without even the desire to return insult for insult—had not Anita evidently again and finally rejected them and chosen me? As they passed into the private hall I rang for Sanders to come and led them out. When I turned back into the drawing-room, Anita was seated, was reading a book. I waited until I saw she was not going to speak. Then I said: "What will you have for dinner?" But my face must have been expressing some of the joy and gratitude that filled me. "She has chosen?" I was saying to myself over and over.

"Whenever you usually have it," she replied, without looking up.

"At seven o'clock, then. You had better tell Sanders."

I rang for him and went into my little smoking-room. She had resisted her parents' final appeal for her to return to them. She had cast in her lot with me. "The rest can be left to time," said I to myself, as I reviewed all that had happened, I felt a wild hope kind tenacious roots deep into me. How often ignorance is a blessing; how often knowledge would make the step falter and the heart quail!

XXIII.
BLACKLOCK ATTENDS FAMILY

During dinner I bore the whole burden of conversation—though burden I did not find it. Like most close-mouthed men, I am extremely talkative. Silence sets people to wondering and prying. I called my secrets best who hides them at the bottom of a river of words. If my spirits are high, I often talk aloud to myself when there is no one convenient. And how could my spirit be anything but high, with her sitting there opposite me, mine, mine for better or for worse, through good and evil report—my wife!

She was only formally responsive, reluctant and brief in answers, volunteering nothing. The servants waiting on us no doubt laid her manner to shyness; I understood it, or thought I did—I was not wrong. It is as natural for me to hope as to breathe; and with my knowledge of character, how could I take seriously the moods and impulses of one whom I regarded as a child-like girl, trained to false pride and false ideals? "She has chosen to stay with me," said I to myself. "Actions count, not words or manner. A few days or weeks, and she will be herself, and mine." And I went on gaily on with my efforts to interest her, to make her smile and forget the role she had commanded herself to play. Nor was I wholly unsuccessful. Again and again I thought I saw a glimmer of interest in her eyes or the beginnings of a smile about that sweet mouth of hers. I was careful not to overdo my part.

As soon as we finished dessert I said: "You loathe cigar smoke, so I'll hide myself in my den. Sanders will bring you the cigarettes." I had myself telephoned for a supply of her kind early in the evening.

She made a polite protest for the benefit of the servants; and I was firm, and left her free to think things over alone in the drawing-room—my sitting-room." It was a small room had not finished a small cigar when there came a timid knock at my door. I threw away the cigar and opened.

"I thought it was you," said I. "I'm familiar with the knock of all the others. And this was new—like a summer wind tapping with a flower for admission at a closed window." And I laughed with a little rally, and she smiled, colored, tried to seem cold and hostile again.

"Shall I go with you to your sitting-room?" I went on. "Perhaps the cigar smoke here—"

"No, no," she interrupted; "I don't really mind cigars—and the windows are wide open. Besides, I came for only a moment—just to say—"

As she cast about for words to carry her, I drew up a chair for her. She looked at it uncertainly, seated herself. "When mamma was here—this afternoon," she went on, "she was urging me to—to do what she wished. And after she had used several arguments, she said something like—'I've been thinking it over, and it seemed I ought in fairness to tell you.'"

I waited.

"She said: 'In a few days more'—that meant you—she will be ruined. He imagines the worst is over for him, when in fact they've only begun.'"

"They? The Langtons?"

"I think so," she replied with an effort. "She did not say—I've told

taken up with her, I must have been thinking, underneath, of the warning she had brought; for, perhaps half or three-quarters of an hour after she left, I felt as if I were being whirled out of my reverie at the window by a thought like a pistol thrust into my face. "What if they should include Roebuck? And just as a man he might be a defender, and might be in danger before he clearly sees what the danger is, so I began to act before I even questioned whether my suspicion was plausible or absurd. I went into the hall, rano the bell, slipped a light-weight coat over my evening dress and put on a hat. When Sanders appeared, I said: "I'm going out for a few minutes—perhaps an hour—if any one should ask." A moment later I was in a hansom and on the way to Roebuck's. The door of Roebuck's house was opened for me by a maid—a man-servant would have been a "stunt" luxury, a man-servant might be the hiring of plotters against his life. I added that she looked the cheap maid-work, and her manners were of the free and fresh sort that indicates a feeling that as high, or higher, wages, and less to do could be got elsewhere.

"I don't think you can see Mr. Roebuck," she said.

"Take my card to him," I ordered, "and I'll wait in the parlor."

"Parlor in use," she retorted with a sarcastic grin, which I was soon to understand.

So I stood by the old-fashioned coat and hat rack while she went in at the hall door of the back parlor. Soon Roebuck himself came out, his glasses on his nose, a family Bible under his arm. "Glad to see you, Matthew," said he with salient kindness, giving me a friendly hand. "We are just about to offer up our evening prayer. Come right in."

I followed him into the back parlor. Both it and the front parlor were lighted; in a sort of circle extending

ended. It has always been, and always shall be, my method to fight in the open. This, not from principle, but from expediency. Some men fight best in a brawl; and so I always begin battle by shelling the woods.

"No," he said, amazing me by his instant frankness. "The announcement has been postponed."

"Why did he not let me? Why did he not put me off the scent, as he might easily have done, with some slight evasion?" I suspected I owed it to my luck in catching him at family prayers.

"When will the reorganization be announced?" I asked.

"I can not say," he answered. "Some difficulties—chiefly labor difficulties—have arisen. Until they are settled, nothing can be done. Come to me to-morrow, and we'll talk it over."

"That is all I wished to know," said I, with a friendly, easy smile. "Good night."

It was his turn to be astonished—and he showed it, when I had given not a sign. "What was the report you heard?" he asked, to detain me.

"That you and Mowbray Langdon had conspired to ruin me," said I, laughing.

He echoed my laugh rather hollowly. "It was hardly necessary for you to come to me about such a statement."

"Hardly," I answered dryly. "Hardly, indeed! For I was seeing now all that I had been hiding from myself since I became infatuated with Anita and made marrying her my only reason for living."

We faced each other, each measuring the other. And as his glance yielded before mine, I turned away to conceal my exultation. In a comparison of resources this man who had planned to crush me was to me as a giant to a midget. But I had the joy of realizing that man to man, I was the stronger.

XXIV.
"MY WIFE MUST!"

As I drove away, I was proud of myself. I had listened to my death sentence with a face so smiling that he must almost have believed me unconscious; and also, I had not even entered my head, as I listened, to beg for mercy. Not that there would have been the least use in begging; for well try to give a statue a life, as try to soften that set will and purpose. Still, many a man would have weakened—and I had not weakened. But when I was once more in my apartment—I knocked the door of her sitting-room—a similar knock for me. No answer. I knocked again, more loudly—then a third time, still more loudly. The door opened and she stood there, like one of the angels that marked the gates of Eden after the fall. Only, instead of a flaming sword, hers was of ice. She was in a dressing-gown or tea gown, white and clinging and full of intoxicating glints and glimpses of the beauties of her figure. Her face softened as she continued to look at me, and I entered.

"No—please don't turn on any more lights," I said, as she moved toward the electric buttons. "I just came in to—to see if I could do anything for you." In fact, I had come, longing for her to do something for me, to show in look or tone or act some sympathy for me in my loneliness and trouble.

"No, thank you," she said. Her voice seemed that of a stranger who had been a stranger to me. And she was evidently waiting for me to go. You will see what a mood I was in when I say I felt as if I had not since I, a very small boy indeed, ran away from home, to escape being thrashed, and chillsly slight to take one last glimpse of the family that would soon be realizing how foolishly and wickedly unappreciative they had been of such a fine creature as she had been. And sitting about the big fire in the lamp-light, heartily comfortable and unobserved, it was all I could do to keep back the tears of strong self-pity that rose and ran down my face. "I've seen Roebuck," said I to Anita, because I must say something, it was to stay on.

"Roebuck?" she inquired. Her tone reminded me that his name conveys nothing to her.

"He and I are in an enterprise together," I explained. "He is the one man who could seriously cripple me."

"Oh," she said, and her indifference, forced though I thought it, wounded. "Well," said I, "your mother was right."

She turned full toward me, and even in the dimness I saw her quick sympathy—an impulsive flash instantly gone. But it had been there!

"I don't care why you say that," said Anita. "It doesn't in the least matter. No one in this world, no one and nothing, could hurt me except through you. So long as I have you, I shall not care of them together—can't touch me."

We were both silent for several minutes. Then she said, and her voice was like the smooth surface of the river where the biting rapids run deep: "But you must be so."

"I warned you long ago. No doubt you will pretend, and people will say, that I left you because you lost your money. But it won't be so."

"I was beside her instantly, was looking into her face. "What do you mean?" I asked, and I did not speak gently.

(To Be Continued.)

Illinois State News

Recent Happenings of Interest in the Various Cities and Towns.

BANKERS MEET IN CONVENTION.
Financial Men of Many Counties at Jacksonville.

Jacksonville.—Group No. 8 of the bankers of Illinois, including the counties of Adams, Hancock, Brown, Schuyler, Cass, Morgan, Scott, Greene, Jersey, Calhoun, Pike and Menard, held their first annual convention in this city. There were 100 bankers present and the meeting was one of much importance.

The following were the officers elected for the coming year: Permanent Chairman, E. J. Parker, cashier State Saving, Loan & Trust company of Quincy; permanent secretary and treasurer, S. H. Rube, cashier First National bank, Petersburg; member of executive council, from Adams county, Arthur E. Gay, Camp Point bank, Camp Point; Brown county, F. W. Crane, cashier First National bank, Mt. Sterling; Harrison county, J. C. Ferris, president of Hancock National bank, Carthage; Schuyler county, George Dyson, vice president of Bank of Schuyler County, Rushville; Cass county, W. K. Mux, State Bank and Cashier, Mazon; Morgan county, J. A. Ayers, president of Ayers National bank; Scott county, C. H. Condit, cashier, Neat, Condit & Grant, Winchester; Greene county, C. R. Sheffield, cashier of Jersey State bank, Jerseyville; Calhoun county, E. E. Williams, cashier of Bank of Calhoun County, Hardin; Pike county, F. H. Farrand, cashier of Illinois Valley bank, of Griggsville; Menard county, E. H. Brumman, cashier of H. Harboth & Co, Greenview.

The time and place of the next meeting was left to the executive committees.

WALSH TRIAL OCTOBER 15.
Banker Pleads Not Guilty to Federal Indictment.

Chicago.—John R. Walsh, through his chief counsel, John S. Miller, pleaded not guilty to the federal indictment charging him with the misapplication of the Chicago and State National bank when he appeared before United States District Judge A. R. Anderson.

Although District Attorney Sims had hoped to bring the banker's trial at an early date, Judge Anderson, after hearing the requests for extension by Attorney Miller, decided to set the case for trial for October 15. Judge Anderson refused to grant motion for a bill of particulars, as filed. The first motion had been withdrawn and a new one presented.

Kent Asks for Pardon.
Carlinville.—Willie Kent, of Carlinville, serving sentence in the Chester penitentiary for the murder of his brother, Noble Kent, has again petitioned for a pardon. Kent has several hearings, but a pardon has been denied. He murdered his brother on board a Chicago & Alton train near Girard seven years ago. At the time of the killing, Noble Kent was drunk, cuffed and shackled. He had been arrested in Springfield for an alleged assault on Willie Kent, and was en route to Carlinville for trial when he was shot.

Asked Layman for Funeral.
Havana.—Josiah Hartzel, aged 71 years, one of the best known men in central Illinois, died here. He was for four terms sheriff of Mason county and for two terms justice of the peace. A peculiar request to have his funeral in Havana, the county court house and to have C. E. Walsh, circuit clerk, or M. Bolan, former superintendent of schools, now editor of the Democrat, speak at the services, instead of a minister, was made by Mr. Hartzel some time ago. The request was carried out.

Get Options on Land.
Medora.—Options on 10,000 acres of land in Shipman township, Macoupin county, are being taken by the Western Illinois Gas & Oil company of St. Louis. Eight thousand acres have been secured and the remaining number, it is believed, will be secured in a few days. The purpose of the company is to prospect for gas and oil, which are believed to underlie the land.

Speedy Trial Promised.
Chicago.—Frank Constantine, under arrest in Havana, charged with killing Mrs. Arthur W. Gentry in her home in January, 1906, will be given a speedy trial in order that justice may be meted out for the appalling crime which he is said to have committed.

Many Candidates for Judge.
Danville.—A number of candidates are spoken of to fill the vacancy on the supreme bench occasioned by the death of Justice Jacob Wilkin. Gov. Deneen probably will issue a call for a special election in a short time.

Lincoln Druggist Fined.
Lincoln.—George Knoch, a local druggist, entered a plea of guilty to the charge of practicing medicine without a license. The penalty is \$100, which was paid by Mr. Knoch, in addition to the costs.

Justice J. W. Wilkin Dead.
Bright's Disease Fatal to Illinois Supreme Court Member.

Danville.—Justice Jacob W. Wilkin of the Illinois supreme court died from acute Bright's disease after an illness of two weeks.

Justice Wilkin was born in Licking county, Ohio, June 7, 1837. His parents moved to Crawford county, Illinois, when he was eight years of age, and his boyhood days were spent on the farm. He was educated at McKendree college.

In 1859, he enlisted in the One Hundred and Thirtieth Illinois volunteer infantry and served throughout the war. His devotion to the cause and personal bravery won for him the rank of major, which title he held when mustered out of the service at New Orleans in 1865. Immediately after the war young Wilkin studied law at Marshall, in the office of Judge Adams. He afterward studied in the law office of Justice of the supreme court. He was a partner of the latter for five years and later served with him on the supreme bench.

In 1882, he was elected Judge of the fourth circuit in 1879, was reelected in 1885, and moved to Danville soon afterward. Judge Wilkin was then assigned to duty on the bench in the appellate department of the fourth district, where he served until 1888, when he was elected to the supreme bench to succeed Justice Scott.

Justice Wilkin served as chief justice of the supreme court and wrote a few very profound decisions which are known to the legal profession in this and other states. He was a Republican and in 1872 was one of the electors who voted for Gen. Grant.

WANT EVIDENCE FROM TATE.
Peoria Officials Will Go Slow in the "Grant" Cases.

Peoria.—Eddie Tate, of Chicago, who is being held in Peoria for the blowing of the school board safe and theft of papers incriminating former Superintendent of Schools N. C. Dougherty, is seriously ill at St. Francis' hospital. Fearing that he may grow worse and be unable ever to unravel the mystery, the police officials have induced him to make a partial confession, which is said to incriminate prominent Peorians alleged to have engineered the theft of the papers.

Chief Justice of the State and State's Attorney Scholes has been working on the case for several weeks, and expect to be able to prove a damaging amount of evidence within a short time. It has been confessed that he was given \$1,000 by attorneys representing prominent Peorians, but the officers want to get further evidence before they cause any arrests to be made.

McReynolds Out of Jail.
Springfield.—On a writ of superedeas, granted by the Illinois supreme court, George S. McReynolds, who was found guilty of forgery in connection with his operations on the board of trade, was released from the Chicago county jail on bonds of \$10,000. The defendant was found guilty last January on the charge of having removed grain from his warehouse without permission of the holders of the warehouse receipts.

Last week he was sentenced by Judge Mark Taylor to the penitentiary for a term of from one to ten years.

Kerrick Estate Large.
Bloomington.—The inventory of the property belonging to the estate of the late Leonidas H. Kerrick has been received by the court and approved. The executor, Charles H. Ewing, asked for an order to sell personal property, which was granted. The estate of Mr. Kerrick includes, as has been before stated, real estate to the value of \$45,000 and a personalty of \$66,886, making a total of \$111,886.12. The personalty includes the grain and stock on the Kerrick farms.

Service Opens April 15.
Springfield.—April 15 is the date set by the State Interurban gas system for the opening of the through service between Bloomington and Peoria. A car has been running between Bloomington and Danvers for three months. The service has been going ahead pretty rapidly on the uncompleted portion of the line.

Rob Alton Depot at Petersburg.
Petersburg.—The Chicago & Alton station ticket office was broken into by safe blowers and the safe blown open and the office rifled. About \$25 in money was taken but no tickets or records were disturbed.

Permit for New Bank Issued.
Springfield.—Auditor McCullough issued a permit to organize "The State Bank of La Placa" at La Placa, Flat county, Ill., to John N. Dighton, Sr., John Kirby and Wade H. Ownby. The capital stock of the new institution is fixed at \$25,000.

Tie Vote Decided by Tossing Coin.
Sterling.—Lawrence Church became a school trustee here by winning the toss of a coin. He and Christian Lauff each received 51 votes for the office.



"I WAITED."

later, the difference between boasting and simple statement of fact. You will learn that I do not boast. What I will learn to me a boast than for a man with legs to say, 'I can walk.' Because you have known only leg, I mean, you exaggerate the difficulty of walking. It's as easy for me to make money as it is for some people to spend it."

"It is hardly necessary for me to say I was not instigating anything against her people. But she was just then superintending on the subject, though I did not suspect it. She flushed both. 'You will not have any cause to sneer at my people on that account hereafter,' she said. 'I settled that to-day.'"

"I was not sneering at them," I protested. "I wasn't even thinking of them. And you must know that it's a favor to me for anybody to ask me to do anything that will please you—Anita!"

She made a gesture of impatience. "I see I'd better tell you why I did not go with them to-day. I insisted that they give back all they have taken from you. And when they refused, I refused to go."

"I don't care why you refused, or imagine you refused," said I. "I am content with the fact that you are here."

"But you misunderstand it," she answered coldly. "I don't understand it, I don't understand it," was my reply. "I accept it."

She turned away from the window, lifted out of the room—yep, she loved or at least had loved, can imagine how it made me feel to see her moving about in those rooms of mine. White the surface of my mind was