

# The Castle of Lies

BY ARTHUR HENRY VESSEY  
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CHAPTER XXXV.—Continued.

"That is not necessary," assured Starva. "Let all these candles be snuffed except those in the candelabrum that stands at the head of the staircase. Bring your man, Jacques, to that point and no farther. We shall see him; but he will not be able to see us."

Fortune was favoring us indeed. Locke and I silently bestrode ourselves. Now at last had come the moment for action. Still another grumbled; and still fortune favored us.

"That is all very well," objected Ignatieff. "And perhaps a trader may strike a blow in the dark. I for one refuse to grant the curiosity of Kuhn in this matter."

"But Starva was determined to have his way.

"To prevent that," he answered, "each of us will lay his weapons on the table at the end of the hall."

There were cries of fierce dissent. Starva silenced them with an angry gesture.

"One moment, friends," he purred. "You do not quite understand. When we first came into this room I suggested that lots should be drawn, and he who was favored with the lucky number should fire, concealed in the gloom, that none might be sure who had been chosen to snuff out Ferdinand's little candles."

"Kuhn had grown frightfully pale; he trembled. But he spoke no word.

"By this arrangement," continued Starva, "the loyalty of Kuhn of Macedonia will be established. And if, he was glaring at Gornal and Count Pitschli, "there are any mad enough to dream of disloyalty at this late hour, and harbor treachery, they will be powerless."

Starva's ruse was hailed with shouts of approval. Gornal, Ignatieff, and Gortsch'off strode to the table at the end of the hall and flung down their weapons defiantly. Ginzga's reluctance followed. Then, to the surprise of Pitschli, there was a faint, almost imperceptible nod of the head.

"This is child's play," he muttered, with pale lips.

"Nevertheless," whispered Brattinau in his ear, "you will obey, and quickly. By all the saints, Starva, I think your plan has proved a wise one. Come, sir, we are waiting. Or are you to ignore the fact that you are quite certain that you last in taking precedence over a king?"

With a gesture of despair Count Pitschli walked slowly to the table and left his revolver there.

"Now, friend Kuhn, we are waiting only for you!" cried Starva sharply.

"I have no arms," answered the poor wretch, with a sob.

"You shall be armed presently," cried Gornal.

"Now, Jacques, you may go. Out with the candles, Gornal and Ignatieff. The rest of you remain quietly as you value your lives. You will find your man defenseless, Jacques. But if he proves troublesome, you have only to call and I will come. You have taken care of Ignatieff?"

"I have put him to sleep," he chuckled.

As Jacques lifted the tapestry Locke choked him into silence. Together they carried him struggling up the hidden staircase and burst into the anteroom of the tower. Not until we had flung him breathless into the room of the safe, and had locked the door, did we answer Forbes's frenzied questions. Locke gripped his arm for silence.

"Quick, there is not a moment to lose. Have your arms?"

"No," growled Forbes, ready for action.

"In the first room to the right of the corridor," painted Madame de Varrier. "In the drawer of the cabinet near the door."

"Then come. And you two stay here. There is man's work below."

"We stole silently down the stairs, Locke and myself in the lead, to the cabinet, where both Locke and Forbes chose their revolvers.

"Do you, Capt. Forbes, make your way along the gallery until you come to the spiral staircase at the end of the hall," I commanded, briefly.

"When I appear at the main stairway with Locke, reach the hall with no delay. There is a table by the little stairway; there are five revolvers on it. Use one approach that table until Locke or myself have reached your side. Now then, Locke, are we ready?"

"We had fled silently into the corridor. Forbes sped with caution to his vantage ground. Locke was already approaching the main stairway when I setted him by the arm.

"I am going to fool Starva. I am going to call for help. He will think it Jacques. As he comes, I shall take care of him. Brattinau is your man. Wait till he shows himself, and mind you, aim straight!"

I raised my voice in a cry of distress.

"A fool, Starva!"

My trick succeeded admirably. Starva bounded up the staircase. As he showed himself in the light of the candelabrum I fired. He fell headlong without a groan. Locke stood at the head of the staircase waiting.

I peered down in the darkness below. Forbes' revolver rang out again and again. The uproar was terrible. "Kuh! Ginzga! Pitschli! To the staircase!" I cried in French. "That was the last I knew of our men."

I snuck gently to my knees behind the antique rug. Brattinau's bullet had struck me.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"Honor, My Sword."

I awoke to consciousness to find myself in the music room. I opened my eyes languidly. Helen was bending over me.

"What is it?" I murmured. "Yes, I remember—the fight on the staircase."

"I struggled to my feet, but sank back dizzily, my hands to my aching forehead.

"Thank God you are alive, and it is all over!" cried Helen, brokenly.

"And Ferdinand is dead?"

"Quite safe and unharmed. Already

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"Do!" he cried in pain. "How can you speak of love at such an hour?"

"Forgive me. What a selfish brute I am. But by the by—when time has softened your bitter pain—happy days may I come to you."

"Happier days!" She clasped her hands in quick despair, looking beyond me as if into a future that must be always dark for her.

"Yes," I said, passionately, "there shall yet be happier days for you and for me. Do you remember on the terrace the little beacon light in the far-off mountains? That was my star. It comforted me then; it bids me hope now; it tells me, Helena, you love me."

"Never!" She withdrew the hand I had held almost fiercely. Her vehemence brought me rudely to my senses. I had been mad with hope. I turned slowly from her, groping my way toward the door; for my head was still throbbing furiously.

She stopped me with a cry of distress. She clung to me in her eagerness.

"You don't understand," she pleaded. "You have saved my brother's honor as far as the world can know. But this shame that crushes me into this disgrace, can I forget it?"

"I would help you bear it."

"Mr. Haddon, you Brits have been a proud race. Our happiness we share with others. But disgrace we bear alone."

"Don't say that; you are bitter now, but—"

"If you had known me better," said Helena, quietly, "you would understand that I do not grieve to-morrow what I must grieve to-day."

"When I told her of Willoughby's tragic death, I had thought it pathetic that a woman should be so strong; it was her calm courage that had first awakened my love for her. I must not complain now if she was not to be moved by my entreaties. But this shame I did ask:

"If I could have proved that your brother had not, after all, shown himself false to the motto of your house, 'Honor, my Sword,' would you still have refused to listen to me?"

"Ah, if, Mr. Haddon!"

For almost the first time since I had known her she smiled; and that faint smile opened the gates of paradise to me. She would not be moved to declare her love for me, but she did love me; I was sure of it.

And then suddenly I thought of the woman before me, the Countess Sarahoff when I made my escape by the ladder of stones: "Go, and I swear by the cause I hold sacred, that if you can save Ferdinand, the honor of Sir Mortimer shall be saved. That promise might mean little. It might mean that she would show her gratitude by refusing to make public Sir Mortimer's disgrace. Or, had her words a deeper significance?"

"But," I cried eagerly, "nothing is quite impossible. I repeat now what I said to you when in your grief you asked me to meet the man who would open the gates of your brother's guilt. I cannot conceive how a man whose integrity has been undoubtedly during a brilliant career should suddenly stoop to the shame of taking bribes."

"A flash of hope arose in Helena's pale face, only to be followed by the deepest dejection. "But there are the proofs," she said, mournfully. "I cannot believe that I could, deny my brother's writing."

"I must see Madame de Varrier. A few hours ago she held us at her mercy. But now we have the upper hand; there are many things she must explain. Where is she?"

"She left the chateau with Ferdinand half an hour ago."

"Left the chateau!" I cried, aghast. "Why was she not held?"

"Prince Ferdinand insisted that she must go at once to Sofia. He has sent her on some secret mission. I think she must be one of his spies."

"And she left no message for me?" I demanded, in a hoarse voice.

"No," replied Helena, looking at me in wonder. "Why do you ask?"

"I did not tell her of Madame de Varrier's promise. I knew now that it had been made me quite readily to spare me to action. I was mad to expect mercy and gratitude from such a woman. She was too determined to see her revenge in the far-off mountains! That was my star. It comforted me then; it bids me hope now; it tells me, Helena, you love me; if they proved obstacles to her plans."

"I had hoped," I answered, vaguely, "now that Ferdinand was saved, that she might in some way be able to show us that your brother's dishonor is not so great as it appears."

"But could she explain away his writing?" asked Helena mournfully. "No; even if she feels remorse for her cruelty in torturing me, it is too late. I have eaten of the tree of knowledge. I know too much. I have seen Heaven has revealed my fate and yours. It is I who now have lost my self-respect, while you have gained—"

"No," I cried, bitterly, "I have failed utterly in my task. I dared hope for too much. I have dared too greatly in dreaming that I should find happiness in this Castle of Lies."

"But, when you have seen, have heard, Ernest, and I shall not forget."

"Helena!" I crushed her hands in mine. "Even now I refuse to despair. I am your enemy no longer. I will do the earth for her. She shall tell me everything, and perhaps even now—"

"Not even your love can bring about the impossible."

"It could—"

"If by a miracle your brother's honor were shown to be stainless?"

"Ah, if you could work miracles—you, she faltered.

"The door swung open brusquely. Locke stood at the threshold, his keen glance bent cynically on me.

"So you are quite yourself again!" He concealed his embarrassment in a smile. "I am glad to see you the better; for you must be off before the dawn, my friend."

"And where?" I demanded astonished and not a little piqued at his cool assurance.

"En route for America, if you are wise."

"You are settling my destiny in a rather high-handed manner," I cried, indignantly. "And why do you let my disposal of me so summarily?"

"Why," replied he, with a quiet laugh, "I have promoted you—"

"He became suddenly serious, glancing keenly at me.

"Miss Bret, Capt. Forbes and myself will accompany you to your hotel presently. Will you wait here while I say a few words to Mr. Haddon?"

"But it is not possible that you still mistrust him after to-night?" she demanded with indignation.

"No, no," he assured her. "I would spare you from embarrassment; that is all."

"Come, then," I said, shortly.

When we had reached the gallery I said to my astonishment that the hall had been empty. I listened and there was complete silence.

"What have Forbes and yourself done with your prisoners?" I demanded. "In my perplexity I was about to ask what Locke had meant in saying flippantly that he had promoted me."

"They are all gone but two," Locke answered coolly. He lit a cigarette and leaning against the wall, stared down into the hall. "Starva and Brattinau's bodies are in the dining-room, but their souls have been swiftly ferried across the Styx by old Countess Sarahoff. Nothing remains us but to fight except the dark stain on the staircase carpet panel. It was a good scrap while it lasted. Your shot winged Starva, as you probably know. I send Brattinau popping away in the dark, and had fair luck. The man called Go on or Geup, or something like that, got a shattered ankle, and the Serbian a rather nasty wound in the thigh. As for the rest of the gentry, three of them rallied to your slogan and joined me at the staircase; the other two were easily settled; but much too short—especially for you, old chap." He shook his head despondently.

"But your prisoners?" I demanded again, irritated by his supercilious comments.

"It was Prince Ferdinand who insisted on their release."

"Their release?" I interrupted, furiously. "What incredible folly!"

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## ROOT—GRANT WEDDING

YOUNG SOLDIER WEDS DAUGHTER OF SECRETARY OF STATE.

IS A BRILLIANT AFFAIR

President, Vice President and Other Distinguished Guests Present—Union is Purley's Love!

Washington.—In the presence of President and Mrs. Roosevelt, the Vice-President and Mrs. Fairbanks, the Justice of the Supreme Court and their wives, several senators, representatives and other distinguished guests, Miss Edith Root on Wednesday became the wife of Ulysses Simpson Grant 3d, Lieutenant United States Engineer corps.

The wedding was generally recognized as the capital as being the second in social and official importance that has taken place during the Roosevelt administration, there being only less interest in the marriage than that which centered about the marriage of Miss Roosevelt to Mr. Longworth.

The bride is the only daughter of Secretary of State and Mrs. Elihu Root, while the groom, as everyone knows from his name, is the grandson of General Grant, his father being General Frederick Dent Grant of the army.



MRS. U. S. GRANT.

army. Lieutenant Grant is a nephew of Mrs. Potter Palmer of Chicago.

The ceremony was performed by Rev. Dr. Stryker of Hamilton college, who was for several years the pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian church at Bush and Superior streets, Chicago, and who was a college friend of Secretary of State Root, a friendship that is to be made the closer by the marriage of the secretary's son to the college president's daughter.

The tying of the bonds united two young people who are very much in love with each other. There is not a quarrel in the company who have never been any too fond of it. He is studious, and so is his bride and both are of domestic inclinations. It was a good old-fashioned American wedding, with Cupid's heart-engaged in every detail.

The cards of invitation to the wedding read as follows:

The Secretary of State and Mrs. Root request the pleasure of the company at the marriage of their daughter EDITH

LIEUT. ULYSSES S. GRANT, 3d, United States Corps of Engineers, to Miss Edith Root, daughter of the late 27th of November, at four o'clock at 200 Rhode Island avenue, in the City of Washington.

Present at the wedding were Edith Root, Jr., an Miss Aldis Stryker, daughter of Dr. M. Woolsey Stryker, president of Hamilton college. Mr. Root, who is the oldest son of the secretary of state, will marry Miss Stryker just ten days from the date that saw his sister married to Lieutenant Grant.

The invitations to the wedding were restricted as far as Washington was concerned to the company who "must be invited." The local invitations were about 250 in number and they included only the closest family friends and those persons who hold such official positions that they had to of necessity be invited to be present.

The out-of-town invitations greatly outnumbered those given in Washington, but there were comparatively few of the out-of-town guests present. The

A Wireless Addenda.

Mr. Bacon—I see a Japanese electrician has invented a wireless system which is asserted to be superior to anything now in use.

Mr. Bacon—Greetings met! Are business comin' in style on me, really?—Yonkers Statesman.

World's Submarine Cables.

The world contains altogether 1,750 submarine cables, totaling 200,000 miles in length and dropped into their watery bed at a cost of \$276,000,000.

pink of the secretary of state and his family, too, for that matter, was to have the wedding company as small as possible, and the ceremony marked by attending simplicity.

Of the groom's family there were present the father and mother, General and Mrs. Grant; his sister, Mrs. Nellie Grant Sartoris and Mrs. Potter Palmer, and several of his first cousins, one of whom was the Secretary of State, Virvan, not long ago married Frederick Roosevelt Sevier, a cousin of President Roosevelt, and so, although rather indirectly, a connection is established between the Secretary of State and the Roosevelt families by the Root-Grant marriage.

The Root residence, where the ceremony took place, belongs to former Vice-President Levi F. Morton, who occupied it for months between the times of the leaving of Count Cassial, who leased it for the Russian embassy quarters, and its renting for residence purposes to the Secretary of State. While the wedding party was comparatively small, the house is big enough to hold a multitude. It stands on a triangular piece of ground with Scott Circle at the corner and Fifteenth street at the other end and a street on each side.

Lieutenant Grant and Miss Root were married in the largest south room on the first floor of the residence, a room which is as long as the house itself. It is a huge drawing-room known in the days when the Countess Cassial presided in the social affairs in the residence as the "piano room."

Miss Root had no bridesmaids. Several of Lieutenant Grant's classmates and other army officer friends were present at the wedding. And his cousin, Potter Palmer, Jr., of Chicago, was his best man.

After the wedding Lieutenant Grant and his bride left for a short honeymoon trip to the coast and to Clinton, N. Y., to be present, December 7, at the wedding of the bride's brother and Miss Stryker. From there Lieutenant Grant will take his bride directly to Boston, where in the suburb of Brookline there is a pretty little house awaiting their occupancy.

The house was selected by the bride whose mother recently has interested herself in furnishing it completely for housekeeping. Lieutenant Grant was ordered a short time ago from Washington to Boston to carry on his engineering duties under the direction of Major Edward Starva, who has charge of the river and harbor work along the Massachusetts coast.

York Root made her debut in New York several seasons ago and has been twice before a cabinet girl, although she was extremely young when her father was secretary of war in President McKinley's second administration. She is a gifted linguist, an accomplished pianist, and is devoted to outdoor sports. She is an expert horsewoman, and her smart trap is familiar to all the uptown sections of Washington.

Lieut. Grant has served as military aid at the white house during the last two seasons, acting with Capt. Fitzhugh Lee, Jr., and Lieut. Philip Sheridan.

He is a nephew of Mrs. Potter Palmer of Chicago, his mother being Miss Louise Honora, sister of Mrs. Palmer. He is a brother of Princess Cantacuzene of Russia, who was sister-in-law to the late Emperor Nicholas, although she was extremely young when her father was secretary of war in President McKinley's second administration. She is a gifted linguist, an accomplished pianist, and is devoted to outdoor sports. She is an expert horsewoman, and her smart trap is familiar to all the uptown sections of Washington.

Lieut. Grant's early education was obtained in Europe while his father was minister to Austria-Hungary and



LIEUT. U. S. GRANT 3d.

he then spent four years in a state military school founded by Empress Maria Theresa. He entered Columbia college in New York on his return to the United States and was graduated in 1898, when he at once joined his father in Porto Rico, where he had his first experience in warfare. At the end of a year he entered West Point, graduating sixth in his class of 1902. He was ordered at once to the Philippines, where he did good service for three years, and returned to the United States in 1905, where he was ordered to Washington barracks.

Plagues of Nerve Sufferers.

There is a class of well-defined "phobias," as they are called, which nerve sufferers are plagued with—"monophobia" or fear of being alone; "castrophobia," or fear of flooded-in crowds or of broad open spaces; "topophobia," or fear of not being surrounded by many others. The one great remedy for all these and similar mental miseries, writes Dr. Samuel McComb in Good Housekeeping, is auto-suggestion.