A DAUGHTER OF THE MARIONIS

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

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CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

"I'm much obliged, but I must write some letters. Good-night, signor."

"Good-night, signor. Sleep well."

The golden light died out of the waning moon, and afar off in the east a long line of red clouds seemed to rise out of the sea. The air was still and calm and breathless. Even the sea seemed hushed as the yellow stars faded from the sky. Behind that bank of glowing clouds was the promise of the richer and fuller day. Amber was becoming golden, and pink purple, till through a very rainbow of coloring the sun's first rays shot across the chilled waters.

Lord St. Maurice had fallen asleep, with his head resting upon his arms, close to the open window. By his side, with the ink scarcely dry upon either, were his will, and his farewell letter to Adrienne. No one but himself would ever know the agony, the hopeless grief, which had rent his heart, as word after word, sentence after sentence of passionate leave taking had found their way on to those closely-written sheets of paper. But it was over now—over and done with. When some faint sound from below, or a breath of the morning breeze from the bosom of the sea awoke him, and he commenced making a few preparations for the start, he was surprised to find how calm he was. The passion of his grief had spent itself. He thought of those hours before sleep had fallen upon him with horror, but they seemed to him very far away. He was face to face with death, but he felt only that he was about to make a journey into an undiscovered land. His imagination was dulled. He remembered only that he was going out to meet death, and it behoved him to meet it as an honorable English gentleman.

He plunged his head into a basin of cold water and made a careful toilette, not forgetting even the buttonhole which Adrienne had fetched for him with her own fingers on the evening before. Then he quietly left the hotel and walked slowly up and down the Marina until Signor Pruccio arrived.

CHAPTER X.

A MARIONI'S OATH.

Two men stood facing one another on a narrow belt of sand, stripped to the shirt, and with rapiers in their hands. One was the Sicilian, Leonardo di Marioni, the other the Englishman, Lord St. Maurice. Their attitude spoke for itself. They were about to fight for each other's life.

It was a fair spot which their two seconds had chosen to stain with bloodshed. Close almost to their feet, the blue waters of the Mediterranean, glistening in the early morning sunlight, broke in tiny, rippling waves upon the firm white sand. Inland was a semicircle of steep cliffs, at the base of which there were great boulders of rock, fern-covered and with hyacinths of many colors growing out of the crevices, and lending a sweet fragrance to the fresh morning air. It was a spot shut off from the world, for the towering cliffs ran out into the sea on either side, completely enclosing the little cove. There was only one possible approach to it, save by boat, and that a difficult and tedious one, and, looking upwards from the shore, hard to discover. But on the northward side the cliffs suddenly dropped, and in the cleft was a thick plantation of aloes, through which a winding path led down to the beach.

Perhaps of all the little group gathered down there to witness and take part in the coming tragedy, Signor Pruccio, Lord St. Maurice's second, was looking the most disturbed and anxious. His man, he knew, must fall, and an ugly sickening dread was in his heart. It was so like a murder. He pictured to himself that fair boyish face—and in the clear morning sunlight the young Englishman's face showed marvellously few signs of the night of agony through which he had passed—ghastly and livid, with the stamp of death upon the forehead, and the deep blue eyes glazed and dull. It was an awful thing, yet what could he do? What hope was there? Leonardo di Marioni he knew to be a famous swordsman; Lord St. Maurice had never fenced since he had left Eton, and scarcely remembered the positions. It was doubtful even whether he had ever held a rapier. But what Signor Pruccio feared most was the pale, unflinching hate in the Sicilian's white face. He loathed it, and yet it fascinated him. He knew, alas! how easily, by one swift turn of the wrist, he would be able to pass his sword through the Englishman's body, mocking at his unskilled defence. He fancied that he could see the arms thrown up to heaven, the fixed, wild eyes, the red blood spurting out from the wound and staining the virgin earth; almost he fancied that he could hear the death-cry break from those agonized white lips. Horrible effort of the imagination! What evil chance had made him offer his services to this young English lord, and dragged him into assisting at a duel which could be but a farce—worse than a farce, a murder? He would have given half his fortune for an earthquake to have come and swallowed up that merciless Sicilian.

A few yards away Martin Briscoe was standing with his second. He and Lord St. Maurice, at this tragical moment of their lives, had been nearer a quarrel than ever before. Briscoe, with some justice, had claimed priority with the Sicilian, and had maintained his right in the face of Lord St. Maurice's opposition. But the Sicilian had stepped in and insisted upon his privilege to decide for himself whom he should first meet. The times had been distinctly stated, he reminded them, 6 o'clock by Lord St. Maurice's second, and half-past six by Mr. Briscoe's. He had arranged it so with a definite purpose, and he claimed that it should be carried out. There was no appeal from his decision. He was in the right, and Martin Briscoe, with a dull red glow of anger in his homely rugged cheeks, had been forced to retire and become a most unwilling spectator of what he feared could only be a butchery.

Signor Pruccio had delayed the duel as long as he could, under the pretext of waiting for the doctor who had been instructed to follow them, but who had not yet arrived. Twice the Sicilian had urged that they should commence, and each time he had pleaded that they might wait for a few minutes longer. To enter upon a duel a l'outrance, save in the presence of a medical man, was a thing unheard of, he declared. But at last this respite was exhausted, for the opposing second, with a pleasant smile, had remarked that he himself was skilled in surgery, and would be happy to officiate should any necessity arise. There was no longer any excuse. Lord St. Maurice himself insisted upon the signal being given. Sadly therefore he prepared to give it. Already both men had fallen into position. The word trembled upon his lips.

A flock of sea birds flew screaming over their heads, and he waited a moment until they should have passed. Then he raised his hand.

"Stop!"

The cry was a woman's. They all looked round. Only a few yards away from them stood Adrienne, her fair hair streaming loose in the morning breeze, and her gown torn and soiled. She had just issued from the sloping aloe plantation, and was trembling in every limb from the speed of her descent.

The cloud on the Sicilian's face grew black as night.

"This is no sight for you to look upon!" he cried, between his teeth. "You will not save your lover by waiting. You had better go, or I will kill him before your eyes!"

She walked calmly between them, and looked from one to the other.

"Lord St. Maurice, I need not ask you, I know! This duel is not of your seeking?"

"It is not!" he answered, lowering his sword. "This fellow insulted me, and I punished him publicly in the restaurant of the Hotel de l'Europe last night. In my opinion, that squared matters, but he demanded satisfaction, and from his point of view, I suppose he has a right to it. I am quite ready to give it to him."

The seconds had fallen back. They three were alone. She went up to the Sicilian and laid her hand upon his arm.

"Leonardo, we have been friends, have we not? Why should you seek to do that which will make us enemies forever? I have broken no faith with you; I never gave you one word of hope. I never loved you; I never could have loved you! Why should you seek to murder the man whom I do love, and make me miserable forever?"

His face was ghastly, but he showed no sign of being moved by her words.

"Bah! You talk as you feel—just now!" he said quickly. "I tell you that I do not believe one word. If he had not come between us, you would have been mine some day. Love like mine would have conquered in the end. Away! away!" he cried, pushing her back in growing excitement, and stamping on the ground with his feet. "The sight of you only maddens me, and nerves my arm to kill! Though you beg on your knees for his life, that man shall die!"

"I shall not beg upon my knees," she answered proudly. "Yet, Leonardo, for your own sake, for the sake of your own happiness, I bid you once more consider. You would stain your hand with the blood of the man who is more to me than you can ever be. Is this what you call love? Leonardo, beware! I am not a woman to be lightly robbed of what is dear to me. Put up your sword, or you will repent it to your dying day."

Her voice rang out clear and threatening upon the morning stillness, and her eyes were flashing with anger. It was a wonderful tableau which had grouped itself upon that little strip of sand.

The Sicilian was unmoved. The sight of the woman he loved championing his foe seemed to madden him.

"Out of my way!" he cried, grasping his sworn firmly. "Lord St. Maurice, are you not weary of skulking behind a woman's petticoats? On guard! I say. On guard!"

She suddenly flung her hands above her head, and there was what seemed to be a miraculous increase in the little group. Three men in plain, dark clothes sprang from behind a gigantic boulder, and, in an instant, the Sicilian was seized from behind.

He looked around at his captors, pale and furious. They were strangers to him. As yet, he did not realize what had happened.

"What does this mean?" he cried furiously. "Who dares to lay hands upon me? We are on free ground!"

She shook her head.

"Leonardo, you have brought this upon yourself," she said, firmly but compassionately. "You plotted to murder the man I love. I warned you that, to protect him, there was nothing which I would not dare. Only a moment ago, I gave you another chance. One word from you, and I would have thrown these papers into the sea," producing a packet from her bosom, "rather than have placed them where I do now!"

A fourth man had strolled out of the aloe grove, smoking a long cigarette. Into his hands Adrienne had placed the little packet of letters, which he accepted with a low bow.

Even now the Sicilian felt bewildered; but as his eyes fell upon the fourth man, he started and trembled violently, gazing at him as though fascinated.

"I do not understand!" he faltered.

The fourth man removed his cigarette from his teeth, and produced a paper.

"Permit me to explain," he said politely. "I have here a warrant for your arrest, Count di Marioni, alias Leonardo di Cortegi, on two counts; first, that you, being an exile, have returned to Italian soil; and secondly, on a further and separate charge of conspiracy against the Italian government, in collusion with a secret society, calling themselves 'Members of the Order of the White Hyacinth.' The proofs of the latter conspiracy, which were wanting at your first trial, have now been furnished."

He touched the little roll of papers which he had just received, and, with a low bow, fell back. There was an ominous silence.

At the mention of his first name a deathlike pallor had swept in upon the Sicilian's face. His manner suddenly became quite quiet and free from excitement. But there was a look in his dark eyes more awful than had been his previous fury.

To be Continued Tomorrow.

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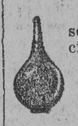

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Will actually keep the hair from growing darker and give to unattractive, drab or faded hair a golden sheen without dyeing or bleaching.

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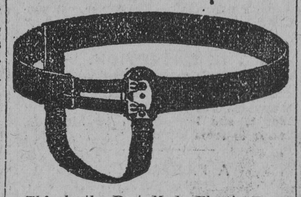

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7681 CHILD'S TUCKED DRESS, 1, 2 and 4 Years.

707 EMBROIDERY DESIGN.

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For the 2-year size, the dress will require 2 yards of material 36 or 44 inches wide, with 1⅞ yards of embroidery 3 inches wide and 2¾ yards of insertion.

The pattern 7681 is cut in sizes for children of 1, 2 and 4 years. It will be mailed to any address by the Pattern Department of this paper on receipt of 10 cents.

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No..... Street.....

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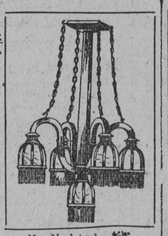

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In different mixtures—dark and medium shades; all knicker pants; guaranteed to give satisfaction or a new suit. A big assortment.

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Fine Flannel Blouses; made of good quality flannel; a fine Blouse for the price.

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Plain black and fancy mixtures; size 30 breast. A big lot to choose from.

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Black French Coney Scarfs. A fine assortment to select from.

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Black French Muffs—Muffs that will last more than one season.

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Lace and Button Shoes; old styles, but wide widths and all sizes; dongola kid.

Men's $1.50 Buckle Arctics Now Priced **79c**
"Brighton" Buckle Arctics; wool lined; absolutely perfect; sizes 6 to 11; sure to keep you warm.

60c Boys' & Children's Rubbers Now Priced **29c**
All sizes up to 2; fine, durable rubbers.

Women's $3.50 Shoes Now Priced **$1.29**
Hand-Sewed Shoes; all styles and sizes, in tans, patent colt, vici kid and gunmetal; a big variety to select from.

25c Work Baskets Now Priced..... **10c**
A large assortment of shapes and colors; the durable kind.

50c Furnace Scoops Now Priced..... **29c**
Coal or Furnace Scoops; made of heavy steel, with handle; made to fit in furnace door.

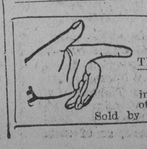
$1.75 Gas Radiators Now Priced..... **$1.29**
Four tubes, with aluminum top and hose.

$3.50 Oil Heating Stoves Now Priced **$2.75**
"Perfect" Oil Heaters; full nickel trimmed; with smokeless and odorless burner.

25c Coal Hods Now Priced..... **17c**
Made of gored steel; heavily japanned. Special.

19c GROCERY BARGAINS

15 3c. Armour's Chicken or Beef Cubes for..... 19c
4 pounds best Granulated Sugar for..... 19c
Quart finest Salt Water Oysters for..... 19c
6 5c. bars Sensible Borax Soap for..... 19c
40c. quality pure loose Breakfast Cocoa for..... 19c
4 10c. pkgs.—2 of B Brand Tapioca, 2 B Brand Gelatine—all for..... 19c
3 pounds California Evaporated Peaches..... 19c
5 10c. pckgs. MOTHERS' OATS; good only for chicken feed..... 19c
3 large cans of Tomatoes, Corn or Peas..... 19c
4 10c. cans Strawberries, in syrup..... 19c
6 5c. cans Mustard or Oil Sardines..... 19c
30c. quality pure Santos Coffee; 14 ounces for..... 19c
40c. quality delicious Mixed Tea; 14 ounces for..... 19c
10 warranted nearby selected Eggs..... 19c
Ready-for-the-table purest Butterine. Pound..... 19c
15-pound sack Maryland White Potatoes..... 19c
14 pounds best Dry Onions for..... 19c
3 10c. pckgs. Sunbeam Cornflakes for..... 19c
2 20c. pckgs. Washing Powder for..... 19c
3 pounds best Boneless Codfish for..... 19c
4 pounds best but broken Rice for..... 19c
3 10c. cans Van Camp's Soup for..... 19c
5 cans Tet Evaporated Milk for..... 19c
75c. five-pound bucket purest Shortening for..... 55c
Sugar-Cured Boneless Bacon. Pound..... 16⅔c
George's Famous Smithfield Style Hams. Pound..... 25½c
Prime Beef Round Steak
Porterhouse or Sirloin Steak
Forequarter of real Spring Lamb
Rib Roast of Prime Beef
Loins of City Dressed Pork
Sugar-Cured Picnics
} POUND, 14¾c
TURKEYS—Extra Fancy Fresh Dressed. Pound..... 23½c
CHICKENS—Young Boiling or Roasting. Pound..... 14½c



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