THE COURT OF ST. SIMON

By ANTHONY PARTRIDGE

Author of Passers-By, The Golden Webb, etc.

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CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued).

"It has occurred to your wife," the lawyer continued, "that she was, perhaps, a little unreasonable in saddling you with the care of your daughter. She was not, at the time, fully aware of the—er—straitened circumstances which your surroundings would seem to indicate. A recent visit of hers impressed her with this fact. She has accordingly given me certain instructions."

Valentin smiled. "Dear me," he said, "I begin to foresee what is coming! This is most interesting. Pray proceed, my dear friend Welgrove."

"Acquainted as I am," the lawyer proceeded, "with al the circumstances of your unfortunate matrimonial differences, you will not object to my speaking plainly. Your wife wishes to settle a certain sum, to be used for Sophy's benefit during her stay with you."

"Was any amount mentioned?" Valentin asked suavely.

"The Vicomtesse spoke of 600 a year," the lawyer replied. "This amount would enable you to remove into a more desirable locality, and to engage a governess for the child."

"Is that all?"

"All?"

"I mean, is that the whole purpose of your visit to me?"

"Those are my instructions," the lawyer replied.

Valentin moved toward the door. "If, my dear friend Welgrove," he said, "you came here as a stranger and a younger man, it might occur to me to emphasize my reply to madame by throwing you downstairs. In your case, however, such measures would, of course, be impossible. I charge you, therefore, simply to convey to madame my most profound appreciation of the generosity of her offer, and my emphatic and unalterable refusal of the same."

"Refusal!" the lawyer exclaimed gravely.

"I trust," Valentin said, "that my words are sufficiently distinct?"

Mr. Welgrove coughed. "Might I remind you, sir," he protested, "that this money is offered not to you but for the benefit of the child? For her sake, are you justified in refusing?"

"My wife," Valentin replied sternly, "should have thought of the child and the child's future before she sent her here. She ran her risk and she must abide by it. She did not take the trouble to find out in whit circumstances I was, or whether my life was of good or ill repute. She simply rid herself of the child because she stood a little in her way—limited, perhaps, a few of her amusements. Very well, the law of this country is on my side. I claim the child now and I shall hold her."

"But are you in a position——" the lawyer began.

"Whose business is that save mine?" Valentin interrupted. "You have had your answer, Mr. Welgrove."

Mr. Welgrove took up his hat. Valentin walked with him toward the door. Then suddenly he stopped. A curious expression flitted into his face. He hesitated for a moment and then stood still.

"Mr. Welgrove," he said, "let me remind you that you are also my lawyer, are you not? You are the person to whom I should confide any business of importance connected with my affairs?"

"That is quite true," the lawyer admitted. "Is there anything which I can do for you?"

Valentin turned back toward the bed. "Mr. Welgrove," he continued, "a strange adventure happened to me last night, the details of which I cannot tell you or any one else, but the whole result has been this: a very valuable piece of jewelry has come into my possession. I am going to charge you with the task of restoring it anonymously to its owner."

"My dear sir," Mr. Welgrove protested, "I scarcely see—indeed, I scarcely understand the circumstances."

Valentin was feeling under the mattress of his bed. Suddenly he drew out a little chain of diamonds. Mr. Welgrove opened his eyes and mouth. "My God," he exclaimed, "they look like the Transome diamonds!"

"Very likely," Valentin answered calmly. "It is to Lady Transome you must return them."

The lawyer plumped down heavily upon the side of the bed. He had lost his manner; he was like a man aghast. "From you!" he gasped. "You have them! You know what happened last night?"

"Do you?" Valentin asked quickly. "Is there anything in the papers, then?"

"Anything in the papers?" the lawyer cried. "Man alive, you stand there and ask me that! Don't you know that Lady Transome's maid was murdered at midnight?"

Valentin stood quite still. "Murdered!" he repeated softly. "Is this in the papers?"

"In every paper!" Welgrove replied. "Lady Transome and the girl arrived yesterday afternoon at Victoria from the Continent. Lady Transome and some friends left in her own carriage. The maid followed in a taxicab with a young man whose acquaintance she had made on the journey. The maid never returned. They rang up all the hospitals and the police station. She was found at last in a house—Pluman's Row, I think it was—murdered. Her mistress' dressing-bag was empty."

Valentin looked at the diamonds which he still held. "Well," he remarked, "in that case, the sooner they are returned, the better."

The lawyer thrust out his hands. "Don't give them to me!" he exclaimed. "If I have them, I must take them to Scotland Yard."

"You must do nothing of the sort," Valentin replied quietly. "This communication from me to you is privileged. I have a right to demand from you this service. Here, put them in your pocket."

The lawyer hesitated. He showed the strongest reluctance to touch the jewels. Valentin leaned a little toward him. His lighter manner was gone; his face was dark with menace, his tone commanding.

"Welgrove, do as I tell you," he ordered. "Put them in your pocket. They will be quite safe there. Who would suspect a paragon of respectability of walking about with forty thousand pounds' worth of stolen jewels. Go to your office, make a packet of them, and send them to Lady Transome. I leave it to your ingenuity to devise a means. I only tell you that you must do this."

The lawyer accepted the jewels with shaking fingers.

"Don't walk through the streets like a criminal," Valentin continued sharply. "No one will suspect you of being concerned in the affair, even if they see into your pockets."

"It isn't that," the lawyer answered, his voice shaking a little. "Your father was my best client, your family have been connected with my firm for over a hundred years. I have heard strange stories about you, alas!"

Valentin laughed. "My dear Welgrove," he said, "run along and don't be foolish. If you are really devoted to my family, remember that you are serving it now as well as any member of your firm has ever served it in their lives."

The lawyer walked silently away. Valentin heard his steps grow fainter and fainter, then drew a long breath and moved to the window. He saw Welgrove emerge into the street and pass the man in tweeds, who looked at him stealthily but did not attempt to follow him. In a minute or two he was out of sight.

CHAPTER IX.

AT THE FENCING ACADEMY.

Sophy, Vicomtesse de Souspennier, when in town abjured her country habits, and was by no means used to such early callers. Mr. Welgrove's message, however, was an urgent one, and by dint of great exertions she managed to keep the lawyer waiting only half an hour. When she entered her little morning room, he was walking up and down restlessly. He was in a state wholly foreign to his usual lethargic and ceremonious self.

"My dear Mr. Welgrove!" she exclaimed, holding out her hand. "I am ashamed to have kept you waiting. You will forgive me? It is not my custom to receive any one before lunch."

"I know it, madame," the lawyer answered. "The circumstances of my visit, however, will, I think, be sufficient cause. I have already carried out your commission with regard to your husband."

She looked up with sudden eagerness. "Did you see Sophy?"

The lawyer shook his head. "I did not. I only hope that she is better housed than your husband. I found him in a garret in the servants' quarters of a very unsavory lodging-house."

"That must be changed, of course," she admitted, frowning. "Sophy's room is at least clean and large, and Johnson's report is so far favorable. I had no idea, however, that my husband's means were so straitened. I trust that you explained that to him?"

"I was careful to do so, madame," the lawyer answered, "but I regret to say that he absolutely refused to entertain your generous proposition."

"He refuses to accept the money for Sophy?" she exclaimed.

"Absolutely," Mr. Welgrove replied.

"Tell me exactly what he said," she insisted.

"He said that you had taken your risk in sending the child to him, and you must stand by it. He should keep her now and she must live in the way he was able to afford."

The woman frowned, but in spite of herself her face softened. "Poor Valentin," she murmured, "he was always proud. Yet for Sophy's sake I thought that he would have taken the money. You have no idea, I suppose, Mr. Welgrove, as to what his means really are?"

"I have no idea," the lawyer admitted. "Your husband showed no disposition whatever to take me into his confidence. I see no harm in telling you, however, that it is within the knowledge of my firm that some eight or nine years ago, about the time, indeed, of the regrettable difference between you, the Vicomte realized all his available property. What has become of it I do not know."

"One can guess," she answered softly. "Valentin was always at heart a gambler."

"I think it my duty to tell you," the lawyer continued, "that, apart from your husband's financial position, my visit certainly gave me cause for grave uneasiness."

"What do you mean?"

"I am not sure," he said, "that it is poverty only which one has to fear. I am afraid that your husband's manner of life is by no means what it should be."

Sophy was frightened. She leaned a little forward in her chair. "Mr. Welgrove," she begged, "you must please be explicit."

"I have heard rumors," the lawyer went on, "that your husband has been associated more or less directly with a very undesirable class of people. This morning he gave me absolute proof of it."

"Yes, yes! Go on."

"He entrusted to me to return to their proper owner some wonderful jewels, which I regret to say were stolen only last night."

"How do you know that they were stolen?" she demanded.

"Vicomtesse," he said, "I consider it best to tell you the truth, but I beg that you will try to receive it calmly. It is not two hours since your husband placed in my hands the jewels which were stolen from Lady Transome's maid last night, in connection with which the unfortunate young woman was found murdered."

The Vicomtesse was suddenly white to the lips. She swayed in her seat. The lawyer moved toward the bell, but she stopped him.

"I shall be all right in a moment," she declared. "Mr. Welgrove, this is terrible! I can't believe that Valentin has sunk so low as that. I must have Sophy back at once—today."

"It would be most desirable," the lawyer admitted frankly, "but I warn you, Vicomtesse, that it may not be easy. Her husband is a peculiar man. If he really wants money, now is his time to demand it from you. He has a right to keep the child; he may ask from you a very large ransom."

She rose to her feet. "Whatever it is, I shall pay it!" she exclaimed. "I will go there at once, I will fetch my child away. This is too horrible!"

"The object of my object is to advise you to do so," the lawyer said. "You know my respect for your husband's family—the affectionate regard, indeed, in which I hold every member of it. I would do anything I could, but I am afraid—somehow or other, I am afraid that Monsieur le Vicomte has sunk beneath the reach of our help. He had—forgive my saying so—the look of a dying man this morning, the look of a man who is terrified, whom fear has mastered."

To be Continued Tomorrow.

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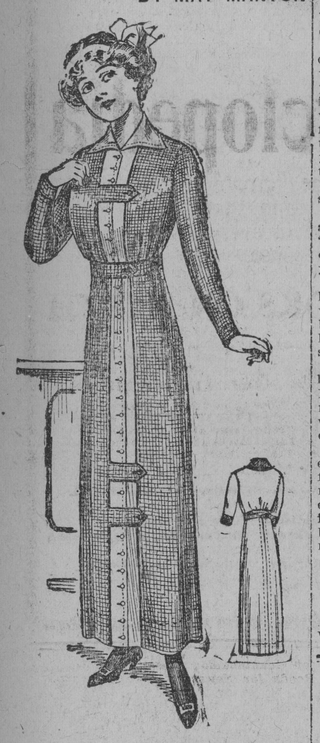

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Dr. Nydegger Urges Importance on U. of M. Nurses.

At the annual meeting yesterday of the University of Maryland Alumni Association of Graduate Nurses, Dr. J. A. Nydegger, of the United States Public Health Service, made an address on The Importance of Tropical Medicine Both to the Medical and Nursing Professions. In part Dr. Nydegger said:

"Owing to the extension of the commercial relations between the United Sattes and countries in which tropical diseases thrive and also the growing increase of travel of people from tropical countries to the United States, there has been brought about a special line of thought and investigation by the medical profession, which is of great value to the nurses, as well as physicians.

"Knowledge of tropical diseases made possible the successful completion of one of the greatest engineering feats in the history of the world—the building of the Panama Canal. The building of the canal was only made possible by the use of the knowledge concerning tropical diseases, in making the canal a healthful place for the workmen to live and carry on the work to a successful completion. It was on this very point that the French government, which first attempted to construct the canal, had to abandon the enterprise. Every professional nurse who expects to accomplish something most necessarily have a knowledge of how tropical diseases should be nursed, if they want to follow nursing successfully."

In his address Dr. Nydegger referred to conditions in Hawaiian Islands, Philippine Islands, Guam, Porto Rico, Panama Canal Zone and the close relationship with seaport cities of Cuba and Central American states. He also discussed the possibility of the fevers invading Mexico.

LAW UNFAIR TO HUSBANDS

Capt. Cole Thinks Female Deserters Should Be Punished.

Quoting the Scriptures and decrying the fact that the law provides no punishment for the woman that deserts her husband while at the same time holding down a man with iron-bound rules, Capt. Charles M. Cole, of the Southern district, delivered a severe arraignment against a woman who had appeared at the Southern Police Station yesterday following the arrest of her husband on a charge of disturbing the peace.

While Captain Cole, Justice Levinson and Lieutenant League made heroic efforts to reconcile the couple, a baby in the arms of the mother made repeated efforts to reach the father, who was standing by, and as the magistrate listened to the evidence, the infant succeeded in getting its arms about his neck.

For two hours on Sunday Captain Cole had had the couple in his room trying to effect a reconciliation and again yesterday the man and his wife conversed for an hour, but the woman would not accept the husband's offers to patch up the differences. Captain Cole characterized the woman as the most stubborn he had ever met in his two years as captain of the Southern district.

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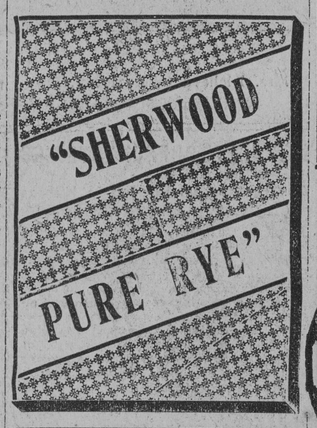

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