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NO. 1.

LOLA CRAWSHAY

BY AN MARCHMONT, BA.
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PROLOGUE I. ON THE DEVIL'S ROCK.

"So you're in earnest, are you, and really mean it this time?"

"Every syllable of every word."

The reply was uttered with the crisp, clear ring of determination, and Lola Turrian as she spoke looked her husband in the face with set decision in every line of her young, beautiful face.

The husband, a slim, fair, good-looking man, sneered provokingly as he returned her gaze. He shrugged his shoulders as he answered readily and rapidly, though with a slight foreign accent:

"Upon my word, you really are very beautiful, Lola. I'm not a bit surprised that other men fall in love with you. On my soul, I should—if you weren't my wife already, of course." He ended with a laugh that might have marked any phase of feeling, but there was a threat veiled in the light tone of the question which followed, "And what then?"

"I care not what then," was the answer, spoken with angry emphasis. "I know what you mean, and I care nothing. You mean that you will add informer to your other characters and try to send my father to the galleys. The same chivalry which let you live on me urges you to whip me with a fear on my father's safety. Would to heaven I had dared you at the first and never put this cursed fetter on my life." She was playing nervously with her wedding ring as she spoke.

Her husband eyed her curiously without letting any sign of annoyance at her words appear and replied with the air of one who is merely balancing the pros and cons of a given course:

"I wonder if I did make a mistake with you when I stopped you going on the boards. A speech like that to the gods ought to draw many pounds a week to any house. You want a trifle more gesture. If you're going to say it again, either hold up the fetter and flaunt it in my face or dash it on the ground. The gallery likes gesture. Don't forget. But you'd better not rehearse here because the rock is not very wide, and if you chuck much of your jewelry about some of it's pretty sure to roll down into the gorge, and what goes over there won't come up again. But here! What's the need for me to doubt your powers of acting? Haven't I seen you lead a dozen men—aye, and to the very verge—only for us to use 'em up in the end? You're a born actress, Lola, with limitations and in a certain line."

"I'll act no longer, then," returned the girl, for she was little more. "You go your way. I'll go mine."

"And your father can go his, eh? Poor old chap. You're very hard on him, Lola, very hard indeed. To send him to the galleys in that way, and at his age too."

His cold, sneering indifference goaded her almost beyond the point of endurance, but she fought down her rage.

"I have come out here to tell you that this kind of life must end. I—"

"And a devilish uncomfortable place you've chosen," he said, interrupting her and laughing. "Here we are on a lonely crag, with these villainous fir trees on one side and a sheer dip right down to the bottom of the ravine on the other and a sky that looks as though nothing short of a miracle could stop it sending down buckets of rain inside five minutes. I wish you'd be a bit thoughtful. If you want to do an uncomfortable thing, you might at least choose a comfortable place to do it in. Look here! Let us go to some hotel and have it all out there quietly over a bottle of wine."

"I know what you mean by all this. You think to snare me out of my present mood. I mean to speak here and now. I came here on purpose."

"What! Here up on this infernally bleak Devil's rock, stuck right in the middle of the Schwarzwald? What rubbish, Lola! Do be consistent. Why, when the train started this morning we had not an inkling that we should be brought to a standstill at this roadside station, with three hours to wait for the next train, so you couldn't have come on purpose, as any fool can see."

"When I knew we had to stop so long, I resolved to bring you here to say what I had to say."

"All right," was the answer, and the husband glanced round as if resigning himself to an uncomfortable experience. "Devilish dramatic surroundings and devilish dangerous, too," he muttered, glancing over the side of the rock into the abyss that yawned below, some 200 or 300 feet down. "Might be devilish convenient, too, if you wanted to get rid of an uncomfortable friend. Well, wife, go on," he said, sitting down on a point of the rock and looking round to shrug his shoulders again and smile. "You've brought me to the dismal death of a Swiss wood in order to thrill me with a terrible tale of defiance. Very well; thrill away."

He seemed determined to make light of the interview and to mock his companion's indignation and emotion. But he watched her all the time, despite his assumed indifference, with lynx-eyed vigilance.

"I repeat, this life shall end," she cried, after a moment's pause, bursting into quick, vehement, emotional utterance. "Shall end, do you hear? I will be your decoy no longer—your slave—your tool. I will no more lure men into the meshes of the net you cruel hands spread for their ruin. You and I shall part. Do you hear, part, now and

PROLOGUE II. FREE AT LAST.

A fortnight after the incident on the Devil's rock Lola Turrian and her father sat in close consultation in the old man's bedroom in a hotel in Neufchatel.

The old man was sitting up on his bed, propped by pillows, and his wrinkled, parchment-colored skin looked yellow and dingy against the snow white bedclothes. His voice was quavering and thin, but his black, beady eyes shone with a light that seemed all the stronger and stranger by contrast with the weakness of his withered body.

"It's good news, Lola—real good news. I hope the brute is really dead!" The hate with which he spoke of the dead man lent uncounted energy to his voice, while his lean, crooked fingers gripped the bedclothes with a gesture suggestive of his feeling.

"I wish I'd been with you, girl, to have made sure. Imps like those can tumble over cliffs, and yet the devil finds a soft place somewhere for them to fall. If I'd been there," he added grimly, "I'd have had him found by those who'd have made sure he was dead."

"He is dead, father, never fear. I tell you I went back and staid at the hotel close to the place for ten days, making cautious inquiries everywhere. If he had escaped, I must have heard of it." The old man was silent a moment, muttering and mumbling and shaking his head.

"But you don't know it, Lola. You haven't found his carcass." "Well, he is dead to me at any rate. Our paths shall never lie side by side again. He never held me at all, as you know, save for my fear for you. I am not afraid of such a thing as that."

"She tossed her head with a gesture of contempt."

"Mark my words, we shall never hear of him again," she added.

"I shall not, child," said the old man. "That's why I sent for you." The girl rose impulsively at this, and taking her father's hand kissed it, and then kissed his face and smoothed some of the white locks which had strayed down from under his skullcap over his forehead.

He suffered rather than enjoyed the caress and shook his head with a half-petulant movement of impatience.

"You ought to be glad I'm going to die at last, Lola," he continued. "I've been an unconscionable time over it, but that fool of a Dr. Lubin says I can't last now more than a week or a fortnight more, and if I do I can't get out of bed. What the deuce is the good of living, I should like to know, caged up in a hole like this, and in bed, and not able to have a scrap of decent food or a drop of wine, nothing but a cup of nasty stuff that might be pig swill for all I know? If that's the case, the sooner I go after Pierre the better. I only wish I could let you know that he's there safe bound. We shan't be far apart over there, I expect," he added, with a smile that made his wrinkled features inexpressibly ugly.

Lola said nothing.

"I hope you don't think I'm going to make a fool of myself about dying," he said querulously, noticing her manner.

"You wouldn't have me turn white-livered and send for a pack of priests and pretend to wipe out all the record of a full life lived and well enjoyed with the cant of half an hour! Pah! But here! That'll do about myself. I'm thinking more about you. What will you do?"

"I have made no plans yet, father. I have only thought so far that you and I would be much happier together now."

"Then it's time you did think, that's all. Your face and form are good enough to win you half a kingdom if you only use them properly, and your pluck—well, it's as staunch as mine. You'll go far if you choose. Only mind don't try to go too fast."

"I don't want to talk of myself." "I don't care what you want," was the testy reply. "I do, and I mean to. Listen. Drop the name of that infernal scoundrel and act as though that part of your life had never been lived. Play the beautiful ingénue. Be my daughter, Lola Crawshaw, once more, and as soon as I'm dead do what those cursed records of mine would never let me do—go back to England. They'd have stopped my allowance if I'd gone back, but when they see you in the garb of the mourning orphan—probably dressed for the part, mind—they'll take you in as surely as you will them. I've written a letter for you to the only one among 'em who ever showed she had a heart, old Mrs. Villyers, and if you play your cards as my child ought to you'll make her home yours and her introductions be the means of starting your campaign. She's so deadly dull and religious that the world will cash her introductions at sight to any amount just as banks will Rothschild's checks. I've thought all this out, expecting that you'd probably run away from that brute as soon as I was in my coffin, and I've written down here a list of all your eligible relatives, with such hints as occurred to me of the best means of get-

ting round them you're not my child."

"I'd rather you'd not speak," began Lola, when the old man cut her short:

"Do hear me to the end, girl. I've all but done, and you know how it tires me to talk. You'll find everything in that black box addressed to you to save trouble. Don't waste your little money on any funeral fallals for me. I should not do it on you, and I don't want 'em. Get away as quickly as you can, but post the letter two days before you start, only two days, so as not to give any one a chance of replying. It's just as you've told you to go straight to our people in England, and as they don't love me overmuch they may want to put off my child. Don't give 'em the chance, but you go, and when you're there I'll trust you to do the rest. That's the best I can do for you, Lola. You've had a rough time between an old scapegrace like me and a young villain like Pierre, and you've been a stanch, brave girl. Now let me lie down to sleep."

Lola kissed him again, and this time, softened by his own words, he kissed her hand in return.

"You're a good girl when you like, Lola," he said. "I believe you'd do anything on earth for the man you loved—and anything to the man you didn't," he added dryly.

The girl watched him till he dropped asleep, and then she sat thinking over all he had said. She was really sad at the thought of his death, for he was the only thing she had ever loved in her life.

But he was right when he said he was dying. In less than a fortnight he was in his grave, and she had started for the new life in England, and despite her regret for the old man's death she was filled with an intense gladness that the old disgraceful thraldom was over, as well as with eager anticipations of what the future held for her.

CHAPTER I. MAD FOR THE LOVE OF HER.

"It's no use. I've come back, you see. I guessed you'd be alone now." And Sir Jaffray Walcote laughed as he passed out through the window of the hotel on to the veranda and sat down on a low basket chair, which creaked under the weight of his tall, powerful frame.

Lola Crawshaw, who was sitting alone at the end of the veranda, looked up from her book and first greeted him with a glance and a smile, which made his pulses beat faster, and then changed and said in a tone which implied rebuke:

"You said you would go with the others."

"I know, and I meant it right enough. I always do when—when you pack me off. I got nearly as far as the town, and upon my word I meant to go right on and find the little woman and my cousin and stop with them, just as I said, but—well, I thought of this cozy veranda, and that—that you"—he glanced at her, checked himself and changed the finish of the sentence, adding—"that on such an evening one gets such fine views of the scenery, you know, and all that, and so here I am. That's all." And he turned his smiling, handsome face to her.

"You had no right to come back," said Lola coldly and almost coldly, and she closed her book and gathered up the fancy work which she had been doing. Then she rose from her chair and stood just where the sun shone upon her, bathing her in golden light and making her magnificent beauty seem almost supernatural in its dazzling radiance.

Her companion gazed almost like one bewitched by the glorious picture she made.

"Will you let me pass, Sir Jaffray?" she asked, purposely avoiding his eyes.

He jumped to his feet and reddened. "Do you mean you are going in? Have I offended you? Don't go."

The last was a whispered appeal, and he looked down at her and seemed to search for her eyes with his. After a long pause she lifted her face and turned upon him a gaze which thrilled him till he almost trembled with the passion which raged in him.

Then she made as if to speak, but said nothing, and her eyes fell again, as though beaten down by the ardent look he bent on her, and instead of speaking she sighed deeply and tremulously.

She moved on as if to pass him without speaking, but he barred her path, and as though unwittingly she brushed against him, then stopped, drew back and started and sank down again into her chair, leaning her arm on the veranda and her face on her hand and sitting quite still, like the statue of embarrassed and emotional loveliness.

Sir Jaffray leaned against the rail of the veranda and made no effort to speak for awhile, content to feast his eyes upon her lustrous beauty and to yield himself up to the full enjoyment of the emotions she had roused.

He was mad for the love of her, and she knew it well enough and meant to be his wife.

But she knew also that there were difficulties to be surmounted first and that she must act warily and cautiously if she was to succeed.

It was more than 18 months since that scene on the Devil's rock, and she had already made excellent use of her time in England. She had found Mrs. Villyers, the widow to whom her father had sent her, ready at first to give her only a very cold and formal welcome, willing to do for a relative what the demands of duty, sympathetically interpreted, might require, but unwilling, on account of the ill odor of Lola's father with his family, to take her into the house on the footing of an intimate and loving friend.

But Lola had amply justified her shrewd old father's judgment, and the winning tact, the clever usefulness, the supple adaptability and the patient temper which the girl never failed to show won the old lady's heart, until she was almost loath to let her out of her sight.

As the old man had predicted, moreover, Mrs. Villyers' introduction opened the doors of every desirable house in

the county, and Lola's beauty and shrewdness did the rest. She was the beautiful Miss Crawshaw, and nobody ever tried to remember that her father had enjoyed and deserved a reputation for such ill conduct as had made his friends pension him off on condition that he never set foot in his native country.

Lola was not long idle, moreover, in making her plans. She meant to marry. She had heard nothing of the man who had forced her to marry him, and she believed him dead. If he was still living, it was almost impossible for him to find her, she thought. Anyway she would take the risk.

The homage which the men all round the neighborhood were eager to pay her wherever she went soon convinced her that she could marry almost whom she pleased, and, as she had long convinced herself that she had no love to give and no reason to fear any yielding to a weakness of the kind, she carried a very cool head indeed behind her very glowing and fire-raising beauty.

Her final decision as to the man she would marry came as much by accident as design on her part.

Among her distant connections was a bright, shrewd, gossiping little woman, Mrs. De Witt, whose married life was in Lola's views a curiosity. The husband and wife had no tastes in common, except that they were both intensely fond of the comforts which money can give. They went nowhere together. If they met in public, it was generally accidental, and if they staid at the same place it was owing to quite independent causes. Each had a separate circle of friends, male and female, for unconventional purposes, though both moved in the same social set for conventional purposes.

The "little woman," as most of her friends called her, heard of Lola's beauty and went down to Moscombe, the village near Walcote where Mrs. Villyers lived, to see for herself what the girl was like and to judge whether she could do herself any credit and serve her own purpose by taking her up and bringing her out in London. She was more than satisfied by her scrutiny, and as Lola was careful to show a somewhat different side of her character to her from that known to Mrs. Villyers—though not at all more natural—Mrs. De Witt carried her off there and then to London, protesting that such a girl must not be shut up in a country box, but must seek her fortune and her husband in London.

At that juncture, however, Lola proved her clever shrewdness. After staying with Mrs. De Witt for a few days she relinquished what was in fact inexpressibly delightful to her the pleasures of the London season, in order to return to Moscombe and Mrs. Villyers. By that one act she secured forever the affections of the widow, who would after that go anywhere to please her, while she did not leave London until Mrs. De Witt had seen how much use the girl could be in making the house attractive to men.

She paid several visits to the lively little woman's house, and it was in one of these that she met Sir Jaffray Walcote for the first time. He had been abroad on a tour half round the world hunting and shooting at the time of Lola's arrival in England, and she had thus only heard of him by repute. She knew, moreover, that he was to marry his cousin, a distant relation of her own, Beryl Lylester, whose people lived near Walcote.

Mrs. De Witt had spoken much about him, describing him always as one of her chief intimates and suggesting more in her manner than in her words that there was an understanding between them of the closest and most confidential kind.

The moment that the baronet's eyes fell on Lola, however, he seemed to yield to the influence which she exercised over men, and he never had either strength or inclination to attempt to resist it.

Perceiving this and knowing intuitively that any encouragement on her part would tend to estrange Mrs. De Witt from her and bring quite unwillingly to have so agreeable a house closed against her, Lola held herself in the strongest reserve against him and when other things failed made an excuse and returned to Moscombe.

The baronet soon followed her, however, and going to Walcote manor, much to the delight of his mother, who quite misunderstood the reason of his return, began to stalk Lola with as much persevering patience as he had been wont to show with some rare game.

At that time she was on very friendly terms with Beryl Lylester, and her quick woman's wit had shown her how strongly Beryl, who hid her feelings behind a mask of reserve, loved the man whom, by the common desire of both their families, she was to marry. Nor at the time had Lola the least intention or desire to come between them.

How that design was first formed she never quite clearly knew. The baronet's persistency was one great cause, while her determination had been greatly helped by an incident in which his mother, who had never liked her, had slighted her and stirred the fires of that temper which she knew so well how to control. But when once the purpose was formed nothing could stay it, and she set herself to weave such a web of wretchedery over the man as he could not hope to break.

She knew that the climax was fast approaching, when, hearing that Mrs. De Witt and Beryl Lylester were going to stay at Torquay and that Sir Jaffray was to be there at the same time, she persuaded Mrs. Villyers to go there before them and thus made it appear that the baronet had followed her.

When he found Lola was staying in the place, he did not attempt to conceal his pleasure, and he would have been with her from morning till night if she would have allowed it; but, knowing the strength of her hold over him, she sent him away continually to be with the others, while she herself would avoid him ostentatiously.

This treatment only fed the fever of his passion, however, and, absorbed in his love for her and desire to have her for his wife, he was perplexed by the thousand lover's fears and uncertainties which the coquetry of her manner toward him created.

A hundred times in the first few days of this visit he had resolved to ask her to marry him, and he sought to make an occasion, but always they seemed to be interrupted just when he had begun to frame the question, and his wife was too dazzled by his love to see that Lola herself contrived many of the interruptions.

But on the day when he found her alone on the veranda he had returned determined that he would wait no longer. He was hungering for the knowledge that she loved him. When she was near, he could think of nothing else. His mother's objection to the marriage, his more than half engagement to marry Beryl—every hindrance and caution was burned like dead grass in the fierce, hot flame of his passion.

Thus he looked at her with the hot eyes of desperate longing as she sat with her face resting against her hand and her eyes bent down, and it was like a sweet delirium to believe, as he did, that the emotion which had brought the blood to her cheeks and made her bosom rise and fall in loveliest confusion was due to the feelings which he had roused in her.

After a long pause he moved slowly nearer to her and nerved himself to speak.

As he sat down close to her she turned her head and flashed a rapid glance right into his eyes and then as quickly turned away, the hot blood surging over her face in a deep blush.

"I want to end this suspense," he said in a tone little louder than a whisper. "I can't bear it any longer. It's not fair to either of us. I came back on purpose." There was a pause of embarrassment between each sentence.

Lola made no reply, but she was thinking fast what was the best course for her to take.

Sir Jaffray gathered himself for an effort and a resolute look came into his face, knitting his brows and setting his lips for a moment before he spoke again. Then, forcing himself to be calm, he went right to the point.

"I love you, Lola, and I want you for my wife."

There was no mistaking the ring of intense sincerity or of concentrated feeling in the calm, strong tone, and the girl felt a flush of triumph as she recognized it. "It promised her a certain victory. But she knew that it was not to be won yet, and she played her part with consummate skill.

At first she turned toward him with a look of infinite sweetness on her face and with the light of love beaming in her eyes, but she checked herself as suddenly, drew back and then rose.

"That is an insult, Sir Jaffray, and a wrong which you at least might have spared me," she cried.

The words struck him like a slap in the face.

"An insult? A wrong? To ask you to be my wife? His tone was still calm enough, but it rang with the note of angered pride.

Twice she turned to him impetuously, as if to speak, looking her fingers tightly together as if fighting with her feelings and unable to utter the words which rose to her lips. Then she clutched the rail of the veranda tightly with both hands, and, leaning back, as though at bay, she appeared to compel herself to speak the silence, which once broken was followed by a flood of words poured out with rapid, vehement rushes. She was like one wrung by the deepest passion.

"Why do you say this to me? Why do you torment me? Why tempt me in this cruel, heartless way? Yes, heartless. You know this thing can never be. You know—who better?—that between us stands the bar of your unfiled promise to your cousin, Beryl Lylester. You know that all the world looks on that as settled. You have known this all through. You must have known, and yet you come to me and press me to be your wife. You, half pledged to another woman, can ask me to help you break that pledge by winning from me another, because you think you can do with me as you will."

"You hold me for a child, a toy, a plaything, to be used for a season and tossed aside. You know your strength with me. You think because you have made me love you—what do I say? Made me hate you, maybe, for heaven help me, I know not what I think or feel, say or do, where you are. But this I will not do—I will not help you to play that girl false. Go to her. She will make you happier than I ever can. It is not love that makes happiness. That comes far more readily from the easy content of even flowing, placid

which you have kindled and to know that I can never—wait! I am mad. Oh, why, why did I ever see you?" She stopped suddenly and stood pressing her hands to her face.

Sir Jaffray stood by her, immovable, but infinitely moved, conscious of nothing save the wild thumping of his heart against his ribs and of the mad, bewildering thought that she loved him.

"Let me go in, Sir Jaffray, please," said Lola, her whole manner changed, save for the light in her eyes.

As she passed she touched him again, and he drew back as if afraid of losing all self control.

"One moment," he said, keeping his voice as steady as he could. "I understand now. You are right. I will do what you wish, and till then I will not say a word more."

He stood back and let her pass without another word, watching her with burning eyes till the last hem of her dress disappeared and the soft froon of the silk was lost in the room.

Then he turned his face to the light, and a smile of proud triumph lighted it as he stood and gazed at the sea, and the woods, and the landscape, though seeing nothing, lost in the thought that he had won her, a queen among women.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEDNESDAY.

Miscellaneous Reading.

THE YORKVILLE GRADED SCHOOL.

A Surprised Patron Is Delighted With the Efficiency of the Institute.

Editor of the Enquirer.
One day last week, I received a neatly written invitation to be present at an entertainment to be given by the pupils of the graded school on Tuesday morning, December 21, beginning at 10.15 o'clock.

Now, I will say in the outset, that I have always been a friend of the school, having worked for it in every legitimate way before it was established, and have always stood by it since, when any voting was to be done or taxes paid; but had never been in the school building when the school was in session, or when the teachers and pupils were there, and have only been there barely once at any other time, and that was when I was invited by several friends to go round with them on a tour of inspection.

After receiving the invitation above referred to, and thinking the matter over, I decided to be on hand on Tuesday. I went and am glad I did, and every other citizen in the town who will do likewise, will be pleased with what he sees and hears if he will go to the school when the teachers and pupils are at work whether or not he has a son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter, nephew or niece, or other relatives receiving its benefits, provided, of course, he has a heart that goes out to his fellows and does not measure everything by dollars and cents, and realize that there is a future ahead of us as well as a past behind us.

I shall not attempt to make an elaborate and minute report of everything that was said and done. Suffice it to say that the entertainment consisted of songs, recitations and dialogues appropriate to the Christmas season, by the pupils in the grades presided over by Misses Florrie Allison, Maggie Gist and Jennie Hart. The manner in which each pupil carried out its part, was conclusive evidence that the teachers are competent, faithful and efficient, and are doing a work that will be felt in this community long after the friends and enemies (?) of the school who took sides for and against it at the time of its establishment, have joined the silent majority.

There is no doubt of the fact that this is an age of improvement, and it is equally true that as much, or more, progress has been made in the school books and methods of teaching during the past twenty years, than in any other. I heard and saw things on Tuesday that would have been considered marvelous less than twenty years ago. Boys and girls, less than eight years old, recited pieces and engaged in dialogues with a calmness and composure that would have marked them as precocious in the days when Webster's blue back spelling book, Pike's arithmetic and Smith's grammar were the favorite text books for all pupils from 6 to 16.

The teachers stated that in preparing for the entertainment, not one minute had been lost from the regular work of the school, and that all preparations had been made during the past two weeks, during the recess hour, and after school had closed in the afternoon.

In conclusion, I desire to return thanks, for the entertainment, to the teachers and pupils, and to say to the former, that while the outside world does not fully realize or appreciate the importance of the work, still they have a great responsibility on them, and the Yorkville of the future will, in a large measure, be what they make it.

I must say something about the discipline of the school as it impressed me. It seems to be perfect. "The worst boys in town" are, of course, pupils in the school; but I defy a stranger to pick them out while in school. If the parents of the town could see their boys and girls as these teachers do, and control them as they do, they would grow to be better men and women than the signs indicate at present from their neighbor's standpoint. The whole trouble, however, is due to the fact that we can see the faults in other people's children but not in our own. The teachers in the graded school see them all as they are, and govern themselves accordingly.

X. X. X.

Two PHASES.—"What're you doing now, Billy?"

"I'm selling baking powder to get a bicycle."

"That's queer. I had to sell my bicycle to get baking powder."



"I love you, Lola, and I want you for my wife."



The girl watched him till he dropped asleep.