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A MARRIAGE BY CAPTURE.

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Author of "The Shadow of the Sword," "God and the Man," Etc.

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CHAPTER IV.

Young Patrick Blake, known to his intimate acquaintances as "the squireen," had neither house nor lands, though he belonged by right of birth to an old county family. In spite of his poverty he had great expectations, for his uncle, Sir William Craig of Craig castle, had no issue, and young Patrick was the next of kin. The property, however, was not entailed, and it was entirely in Sir William's discretion how it should be disposed of.

During his uncle's lifetime Patrick paid assiduous court to the old man and received in return a modest allowance, which he dissipated freely among his companions. From childhood upward he had been a black sheep, caring little for decent society and spending his time in the company of his inferiors, but he was a daring rider, a good shot, and he could tie a fly or play a salmon with any man in Mayo. His escapades, which would have shocked most people, only amused Sir William.

"Pat is a wild young devil," he would say to his wife, "but so was I myself at his age. Some day he'll marry and sober down."

Before the young man could do either the old gentleman died, leaving everything he possessed to his wife except a miserable £100 a year, which was assigned to his "beloved nephew," Patrick Blake.

Young Patrick cursed and raged for a time, but he had sense enough left to transfer his court to the widow, whom he invariably described as "the old woman." He went with her to church (she was a Protestant), carried her prayer book and posed as a young saint, only escaping from time to time to more congenial society, in which he could drink and swear comfortably and curse his bad luck.

Things were going on very well from his point of view—that is, the old lady was in very delicate health and likely to follow her lord and master, after having made a will in her nephew's favor—when a serious scandal, in which a young peasant girl was concerned, opened Lady Craig's eyes to the true character of her scapegrace nephew.

She held her tongue, altered her will and died peacefully, leaving the castle and the estates to a niece of her own, Miss Catherine Power.

When the will was read, young Patrick used language which is not generally popular in polite circles, cursed "the old woman," and expressed a hope that she was enjoying a warmer climate, and, riding off to John Craig's inn, remained for a whole fortnight there in a state of savage drunkenness.

In the meantime Miss Power arrived and took up her residence at the castle, and she had hardly been 24 hours there when the story of the dissipated heir was related to her. It aroused all her womanly pity, and her immediate thought was, "How can I make amends?"

She waited for a little time, thinking that her cousin might call. He made no sign.

She ordered her horse and rode over to the inn where he had taken up his quarters, thinking perhaps to get a glimpse of him. He heard of her coming and kept out of the way.

Then she sent him this "petit mot," which was carried by her groom:

MY DEAR COUSIN—I should very much like to shake hands with you if you have no objection. Will you come and take lunch with me some day soon? Yours very truly,
CATHERINE POWER.

The young man tore up the letter. The next day he was in Castlebar, where he had a long talk with Peter Linnie. That worthy gave him very sensible advice, pointing out to him that in all possibility he was missing a great chance. Why shouldn't he capture the heiress and her money by honorable marriage and so make odd things even?

"She's a handsome woman," said the lawyer, "and all the men are after her. Spake up to her like a gentleman and I'll lay odds on she'll have you."

The result of this advice was that Blake dressed himself in his best, struck a flower in his coat, mounted his horse, and rode off to Castle Craig. Thus smartened up, he was a strapping young fellow, handsome enough to catch any woman's eye.

He was shown up into the drawing room, where he waited scowling and trembling, for he was not much used to fine society. A few minutes later a beautiful young woman, with a smile like a May morning, entered and made him welcome, greeting him like an old friend. Being in her heart very sorry for him, she was full of sympathy and effusion, and he went away strongly convinced that she would be an easy conquest.

For a little time after that Blake was a constant visitor to the castle, and being of good family he had no difficulty in getting invitations to other county houses where Catherine was a frequent guest. He neglected his wild companions, paid strict attention to his wardrobe, and altogether seemed a reformed character. His cousin gave him every encouragement. He rode with her, danced with her and was constantly near her.

"She's yours for the asking," said Peter Linnie, when the squireen reported progress.

Blake himself was not so sure. He had many rivals, some young like himself, others of maturer age and ampler fortune, and Catherine was civil to them all. The man he thought most dangerous was Philip Langford, who was certainly a great favorite with his cousin.

He had almost forgotten the money prize in the personal fascination of the heiress. Her bold, frank manners, just touched with feminine tenderness, made havoc with his impetuous heart. He was tormented with jealousy whenever another man approached her, and Catherine, being a very woman, loved to fan the flame.

At last one day when they were riding side by side through the woods he spoke out.

"I've been thinking, Kate," he began.

"Indeed, cousin?" said Catherine, smiling. "Isn't that something unusual?"

"I've been thinking that this sort of nonsense can't go on forever. You waltzed with that fellow Langford five times last night and only gave me two square dances."

"Mr. Langford waltzes beautifully," exclaimed Catherine.

"D—n him!" muttered Blake, flushing crimson and scowling.

"If you use language like that, I shall gallop off and leave you," said the lady, urging her horse to a trot; but her companion, reaching out his hand,



A beautiful young woman entered, seized her bride and brought her horse to a dead halt.

"Stop, I must speak to you," he cried. "It's been on my mind for a long time to tell you how much I love you. I do—you must have seen it. Now, I'm your cousin, and all this place should have been mine, but that's all over now, Kate, and you're welcome to it all. It's you I want and not the money, and if you'll have me, Kate?"

"So this is a proposal?" cried Catherine. "You mean, I suppose, that you want me to marry you?"

Blake replied by leaning from his saddle and trying to take her in his arms, but she drew herself up and waved him back.

"Cousin," she said, "I want you to do me a great favor."

"Well?"

"Never speak of this again. If you do, we shall cease to be friends."

"You don't mean that?" he cried angrily.

"I do mean it. There are two reasons, either of which should be sufficient. First reason, we are cousins, and I don't believe in the marriage of near relations; second reason, I like you very well as a relation, but should find you intolerable as a husband. I hope I'm not hurting your feelings, but in a case like this it's better to be quite frank."

He released his hold on her bride, and she trotted on, leaving him transfixed. When she had gone about 100 yards, she paused and beckoned. He remained stationary. She trotted back to him.

"Come, cousin," she said brightly, "let's shake hands and end the matter forever. Surely we can still be friends?"

He waved her hand aside and glared at her with bloodshot eyes. His face was livid and his mouth worked convulsively.

"If I don't have you, no other man shall," he said.

"What nonsense!"

"It isn't nonsense. I mean what I say."

"Then you are very impertinent," returned the beauty, with a toss of the head, "and you had better go back to Mary Carey."

in the same manner, and the breach seemed entirely healed.

A few days later, as they stood together one morning in front of the castle, Blake said quietly:

"You said something to me 't'other day about Mary Carey. I hope you don't believe that scandal?"

She looked him quietly in the face, but made no reply.

"Because," he continued, "because if you do believe it"—

"Hush, there is Mr. Langford!" she exclaimed, interrupting him as Langford came strolling across the lawn.

The two men lunched with her that day, and we fear she played one off against the other.

They were a curious contrast—Blake, handsome, sullen and savage, like a good looking cub only half tamed to good behavior; Langford, with his calm, clear cut face, his courteous smile and his dark, passionate eyes. When Catherine looked at the former, her expression was merry, kind and almost maternal. When she turned her eyes on Langford, the expression grew grave and dreary.

Langford was the first to leave. When he had gone, Blake, who had taken rather too much wine, snarled savagely:

"I hate that fellow. He's as sly as a fox and as cold blooded as a stoat."

"He is my very good friend," said Catherine, "and I must ask you not to abuse him."

"You mean your sweetheart," cried Blake, forgetting himself in his fury of jealousy.

"I mean nothing of the kind, but even if it were so it would be no concern of yours."

"Wouldn't it, by —!" exclaimed the young man, utterly losing his self control. "Remember what I told you."

Pale with indignation, Catherine prepared to leave the room, but before she could do so Blake sprang up and closed the door.

"Once more I ask you, will you marry me?" he cried, facing her.

She looked him from head to foot with a gaze so cool, so contemptuous, that the hot blood mounted to his face. Then, without replying, she quietly knelt the bell.

He came close to her and seized her two hands in his.

"Kate!"

She tried to release herself, but he held her firmly, looking into her face.

"Don't wake up the devil in me. Don't make me do what I might be sorry for. You've robbed me of my birthright—don't go further and make me mad. As sure as you stand there I mean to have you, and if I can't win you by fair means I'll try foul."

"You are not sober," she replied haughtily, "and you talk to me as if I were the girl of some low inn."

Then releasing herself as the servant entered the room she said quietly:

"Tell the groom to bring round Mr. Blake's horse at once."

The servant disappeared, while Blake stood like a man dazed, as indeed he was. Without looking toward him Catherine sat down at the piano and began to play—lightly, carelessly, letting her fingers wander idly across the keys.

When she looked around, Blake had disappeared.

A week passed, and there was no sign of him; a second week, and still no sign. She began to feel sorry, for though her heart was quite untouched she couldn't help admitting to herself that she was partly to blame.

Then came the mysterious assault in the woods, which we have already described, and Catherine's visit to Cladich castle under escort of the police.

The moment she looked at her cousin Catherine had no doubt whatever that she had discovered her assailant. Up to that moment she had scarcely thought it possible that even Patrick Blake should have been guilty of such a "detisee."

Recovering herself in a moment and forcing a smile, she said:

"Why haven't you been to see me? I have been expecting you every day."

The young man's face was a study. Shame, confusion and reckless audacity were all mingled there. He saw in a moment that his secret was discovered, but he did not seem to care. Answering the smile with one of ugly significance and glancing at Langford, he replied:

"I thought maybe you might have pleasant company." And then with a forced laugh and a shrug of the shoulders he strolled away into the ballroom.

"What a dreadful thing it is to be a woman, especially in Ireland, where men are only half civilized! Pray, take me back to the ballroom."

For several hours after she had gone to bed that night Catherine lay awake thinking of Patrick Blake. When at length she fell asleep, she dreamed of him, and in the morning when she awoke her brain was ringing with the echo of his threat, "If you won't have me, you shall never have any other man."

The singularity of his manner puzzled her, so did the strange coincidence of the mark upon his cheek. That she herself had been the means of placing it there she did not for a moment doubt, and yet it certainly seemed very strange.

"After all," she said to herself, "I am glad I have made no one but Captain Kennedy acquainted with the fact of my having struck the man. That part of the story I will continue to keep to myself."

She walked over to the window and looked out. The country for miles around lay buried deep in snowdrift. The little hamlets, with closed doors and windows and snow laden roofs, lay like black spots on the vast waste of white.

Scarcely a soul was to be seen abroad, for already walking was dangerous, and still the snow was falling fast.

"I shall not be able to leave the house today," said Catherine to herself, and at the thought she did not feel altogether sorry. The idea of walking abroad in daylight, escorted by armed police, was by no means pleasant to her.

For a whole week, therefore, she remained a prisoner. At the end of that time a rapid thaw set in. The snow dissolved and disappeared, leaving to the view a stretch of black bog land, dotted with dripping thatched cabins and cozy with the recent fall rain.

Panting, after her long confinement, for a breath of fresh air, Catherine put on her hat and cloak one evening and walked in the shrubberies surrounding the castle. The boughs of the trees were dripping, and the ground was spongy, but the air revived her and strengthened the courage which a week of quietness had brought. It made her form a resolution to walk daily in the grounds until such time as she could shake off the shackles of the police and drive abroad alone.

One evening about a fortnight from the time when this resolution was formed she left the house to take her customary walk in the grounds. It was not late, but the days were short, and as she left the house she saw that a star was already glimmering beyond the peak of a distant hill and that night was beginning to fall. The sky was of a bluish gray, flecked here and there with floating mist, which settled in little clouds upon the hilltops, and the wind which touched her cheek was like an icy hand.

The police, patrolling before the house, saluted as she passed by and watched her disappear among the trees of the park.

She had walked for about ten minutes, choosing a narrow pathway, and was about to turn into an avenue of beech trees when there was a rustling and scuffling among the boughs. She started. A man whose face was averted from her was emerging from the dense brushwood through which she had first passed.

"Why, he has no right to be here," thought Catherine. Then she asked: "What are you doing here? This part of the park is quite private. If you want the house, it lies in that direction, and that is the pathway to the road."

Thus addressed, the man half turned toward her, touched his hat and moved on in the direction of the castle.

Catherine moved on, too, pacing the long beech avenue with erect head and

springing step. About a quarter of an hour later, however, she was again startled, again the trees rustled, and suddenly she saw a man, wearing a crape mask, cautiously creep from the coppice.

This time, before she could speak, he leaped into the avenue and seized her round the waist.

So petrified was she by this sudden attack that for a moment she could neither move nor cry, but when she felt herself being lifted from the ground and carried toward the woods her power returned. She uttered a piercing shriek and by a mighty effort tore herself from the assailant's grasp and ran toward the castle.

Immediately rattles were sprung, voices shouted, whistles shrieked, and lights flickered in the distance. But the alarm, great as it was, seemed to have no effect upon the ruffian. He raised his shrieking victim from the ground, put his hand over her mouth and dragged

her away. With tigerlike force she tore the hand away and shrieked.

"Help, help! Will no one come?"

She tore, fought, struggled and screamed until all her strength seemed ebbing from her. Presently the low murmur of voices reached her ear. She uttered a wild, wailing sob and swooned away.

"Musha, deal gently with her. See, thanks be to God, she's comin' round. A little more water, Pat Monnaghan. Och, my curse and the curse of all good men on the villain that's doin' this!"

It was Catherine's favorite old groom who spoke as he leaned tremblingly over the form of his mistress, who lay, half swooning, her head resting on the heart of a man. The old man held a lantern, the light of which was shed upon Catherine's face.

For some time that face had been white and cold, but now the blue lips had turned to a delicate pink, and the eyelids quivered, then unclosed.

"Stand back," said a voice she knew. "She's all right now."

She looked up and met the tender eyes of Mr. Langford.

"What has happened?" she asked, trembling.

"I was coming along the avenue when I heard a call for help. I ran forward and saw you struggling with a masked man. The moment I appeared the ruffian vanished. He was not alone. There were others with him, I'm sure."

"My men are searching the place," said the sergeant of police. "If the rascals are in the woods, we'll catch them."

All Catherine's courage seemed to have failed her. She dropped her head, tears blinded her eyes, and putting her hand on Langford's arm she said faintly: "Take me home."

Gently and tenderly he led her back to the castle. Meantime the police searched far and wide, but found no trace whatever of her assailants.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Miscellaneous Reading.

BLANCO KEEPS ORDER.

Riotous Disturbances in the Capital of Cuba Have Ceased.

Special to The Globe-Democrat.

WASHINGTON, August 28.—News has reached Washington from an attaché of the Cuban government who has been constantly in the city of Havana since the beginning of hostilities between the Cubans and the Spaniards, which discloses an interesting condition of affairs in the Cuban capital.

He says that the all-absorbing topic among the inhabitants is the prospective visit of the United States commission charged with supervision of the military evacuation of the island, and with the exception of excited conversations upon the streets and in the cafes regarding the outcome of this visit, the city is in an enjoyable state of tranquility, and has resumed its activity in a commercial way, the wharves and docks taking on the appearance they wore before the blockade by the American fleet played such havoc with the shipping. The cultivated zones about the city, established by General Blanco for the production of sufficient fresh food to enable the city to withstand a long siege, are still being worked for the benefit of the soldiers and the starving poor, but the richer inhabitants have ceased their calls upon the government for food, and the milk men, hucksters and peddlers of the surrounding country have again established their routes and living is almost as easy and cheap as before the blockade.

All places of amusement and cafes closed during the blockade have been reopened and enjoy a large patronage. The bands play in the plazas each evening and promenaders through the walks. A bull fight was scheduled for yesterday, and the interest centering about the prospective fight drew attention for the time away from the United States and the result of war.

The correspondent states that the credit for this condition of affairs is largely due to Captain General Ramon Blanco, who since the signing of the protocol and the refusal of the government to accept his resignation, has done all in his power to restore the tranquillity of the people and blot out any feeling of hostility toward the American commission upon its visit to the city. Nevertheless, he has charged the police with the suppression of any gatherings that might promote disorder, and will closely guard the Americans from any possible attack or insult.

In proof of his activity, through Police Inspector Senor Perera, he has had arrested and incarcerated during the last week a group of prominent Spaniards, whom he believed were forming a conspiracy to promote riots and disorder during the visit of the American commission, and his harsh activity in this case is likely to prevent others from attempting the same.

The Spanish volunteers realize that their power is fast disappearing, and have ceased their acts of barbarity toward the peaceful inhabitants. They have been informed that they will not be removed from the island, but stripped of their arms and mustered out of service, and will have to answer to the civil authorities, under the supervision of Americans, for all their acts during the truce.

Sickness and suffering are prevalent in Havana, and many deaths result daily from the yellow fever. The public kitchens are still running, and the poor throng before these places each day to receive a small allowance of food.

General Blanco has declared to several of the most prominent citizens of Havana that it is his intention to deliver the city in good order to the Americans, and put the reins of government in their hands in such a manner that they will be able to enter immediately upon their duties and take up the work at the exact point where he leaves off. The newspapers have ceased their attacks against the Americans, and most of the Spanish residents of the city fondly hope that annexation will be their fate, instead of an independent government dominated by the Cubans. General Blanco, however, is working to the end that both the Spanish and Cuban factions may be united in an amicable way.

General Castillo expressed the opinion that the disbandment of the Cubans could be effected without trouble, but nothing definite was decided upon. He said that the hostility of the Cubans growing out of the refusal of the Americans to permit joint military occupation of the conquered territory, with the Cuban flag floating over the palace beside the stars and stripes, was disappearing, and under advice of cool heads their scheme of making an armed demand for their alleged rights had been abandoned.

The Cuban forces at Cobre, Boniato, Gibara and other places in the mountains are subsisting on the country, and have made no applications to General Lawton for rations. Complaints from the railroad companies and plantation owners of depredations are received occasionally, but as a general thing good order prevails in the province.

General Lawton today instructed General Wood to formulate a plan of civil government based on the old regime, with modifications. He thinks it advisable that the number of officers necessary to the government of the city should be fixed immediately. General Wood will fix the salaries and make the nominations, which will be submitted to General Lawton for his approval.

Native officers will be appointed as far as possible, as they understand the language and temper of the people better than the Americans do. The police force is to be organized. The force will be increased, and the sentinels, whose presence in the city arouses discontent, will be withdrawn and called into service only on special request to guard life and property.

The Fifth infantry has garrisoned all of the central places. Each garrison is under command of two or more officers, and is in readiness for any emergency that may arise.

The orders prohibiting or limiting the sale of commodities by licensed vendors have all been rescinded.

General Shafter's regulation requiring vessels to remain unloaded in the harbor until all of the duties upon their cargoes have been paid has been abolished, and the public warehouses and wharves have been thrown open to commerce. One of the wharves has been reserved for public use.

Gen. Lawton has ordered that the stars and stripes be displayed upon public buildings from sunrise to sunset. Carrying arms by troops, except when on duty, is prohibited, and sentries will not be allowed to load their guns except upon the order of an officer.

Four earthquake shocks were felt here between 11.10 and 11.15 o'clock this morning. They were felt most along the water front, where the buildings were swayed, glassware was shaken and broken, and floors were cracked.

VESUVIUS KILLED 100.—The unique dynamite cruiser Vesuvius has joined Admiral Sampson's squadron in New York bay. The Spaniards called her "The hurler of earthquakes." Commander John E. Pillsbury talked interestingly of his vessel.

"Her guns," said he, "were very effective in their work. The Vesuvius is a great success."

The dynamite cruiser only fired 26 shots at the batteries defending the entrance to Santiago harbor. The charges of gun cotton varied from 100 to 200 pounds, the aggregate of the explosive hurled at Santiago's defenses being estimated at 4,000 pounds, or as one of the officers put it, "Ten times as much as would be necessary to blow up every ship now in New York bay, including the squadron over there, and the countless other boats."

Captain Canals, of the Spanish flagship Maria Teresa, told Captain Pillsbury that one of the Vesuvius' shells struck the barracks between the lighthouse and Morro Castle and killed over 100 soldiers.

Being unarmed, the Vesuvius did all her work at night. The Spaniards could have knocked her to pieces in daylight.

Woman tempted man to eat; but he took to drinking whiskey himself.