"She Is Gone, Then!" Gasped the Boy.

The RING and the MAN

WITH SOME INCIDENTAL RELATION TO THE WOMAN

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SYNOPSIS.

A foolish young tenderfoot becomes fascinated with the bold, artful wife of a cowboying proprietor in a western mining camp. They prepare to elope in a stolen buggy but are overtaken by the husband on horseback. He is shot by his wife but the chivalrous boy puts a note in the body taking the crime upon himself.

PROLOGUE—Continued.

The Storm Without.

The woman's first thought when she stepped outside the door was that all all hazards they must go back. The wind almost swept her away; only the steadying grasp of the boy, better prepared than she for the attack of the storm, enabled her to keep her feet. Yet the presence of that ghastly thing on the floor which was affecting even her iron nerve, prevented their return. Whatever happened they must go on! The door of that shelter was closed to them forever by the dead or dying tenant. She realized however, that via chances of escaping freezing to death in the open were as one to a small as to be practically non-existent. Well, fate had forced her into this position, and she would follow the path she had chosen, whatever might be at the end of the way.

Speech was well nigh impossible. The boy had lingered on past the wife's door, and she followed until the lee of the house was reached. Leaning a great drift and the wall, in a little more open the horses were tied.

The boy was a natural horseman. He had picked out the best two from the corn in the camp. If any animals could take them to safety, these could. Not yet chilled by the fierce cold, they showed the alarming, reluctant, terrified horses from the wooden pins driven into the chinks between the log walls of the house to which they had been hitched. Mounted them, and threading their way round the end, started southward on their awful ride. They left death behind them—and life—in death loomed before and on either hand.

Hanged where the storm was broken by houses, cattle had not yet formed. The wind was too terrific; it swept the level prairie clean. Not away from the shelter of the house they got the full force of it. Although they were thickly clad in wool and fur, the pressure of the stong drove their garments against their bodies and soon filled them with icy cold. There was no help for it; no relief from it. They had to bear it. They could only bend their backs to it and keep on, trusting to the endurance of their horses.

The woman judged that it had been about one in the morning when they had started. The Overland Limited had run through the station at three. No doubt it was forced upon him. And perhaps after all it was just as well to get rid of them both and have done with it. If she reached over, and before the boy realized what was happening she caught his hand, tore his fingers from the saddle strap, and thrust him violently backward. He, unprepared, unsuspecting, half-dazed, he could offer no adequate resistance. He reeled and fell sojtly in a deep and overwhelming drift. She struck the horse heavily with the whip that hung from the saddle bow, and the animal plunged forward wildly. She knew that she was safe unless he should try to shoot her, for he was too weak and too exhausted to catch her.

The boy's senses were quickened to instant action by her conduct. At the first moment of surprise, he knew at once that she was deliberately abandoning him to die in the snow. A hot rush of blood, in spite of the cold, swept over him. He thrust his hand within his coat and dragged out a weapon. He raised it and trained it on the woman's back, and for the moment his hand did not tremble. Then there rose before him that other gory figure. Though he had lived some months on the wild frontier and had seen more than one man killed there, he had never been connected with the murder before, even as an accessory after the fact, and the sight of it was still upon him. He lowered the pistol, though he could easily have shot her dead.

Such treachery on the part of a woman would have killed some men not so this boy. In that moment he became a man. He saw himself as God; he determined that he would not also see himself a coward. Clenching his fists and summoning his strength, he followed southward afoot in the woman's wake.

He walked—if that be the word for his progress—with his head down, his body bent lower and lower. He took long rests between the steps. He and by he fell forward on his face. The sensation of delicious sleep and drowsiness that swept over him wooed him to lie still and rest. But the boy still sparks and remnants of manhood and courage in him. He shook off the desire to sleep at last and strove free. Finally to rise. Finding that he could not be craved forward on his hands and knees slowly working himself forward, he made his way around, through the drifts like a great animal.

There was no use—he thought could not stand for strain any longer. One more non-creeping made, and then he was about to sink down forever he heard a loud deep bellow. Instinct sound. He stopped interested, dimly wondering what it meant.

Whatever it was, it meant life of some kind. It came from directly in front of him. It nerved him to further effort. Husbanding the last vestige of his strength, he advanced a little farther.

He knew what it was now. It was a locomotive.

He lifted his head and saw lights faintly. He dimmed that it was the station, the train, the warmth and the food. She would get on it and go away! What mattered?

And what of himself? There was no help there was no food. He could turn to his feet and wavered on. By the sheer force of his will he conquer the ground and caused the engine to stop. He saw and the lights to be swept compartments. He knew that he had a difficult walking, yet he staggered like a drunken man.

Ah! the lights were moving before his eyes, they danced and disappeared. The train was going! He broke into a reeling run, however staggering as the frozen lips. Too late!

He stumbled and fell across the platform, the caboose of the last car of the departing train. He had just sense enough to realize that he could not try out as he did so. Some one on the station platform might see him. A Mexican coward him; he was little accustomed to violence. Something burning yet deliciously revolting was poured down his throat. The "woman" he gagged out, took the cup in the darkness from the station agent and his helper heading over him.

"She took the limited not five minutes ago," said the man staring at him curiously. The train was two hours and a half late or she'd never have got her."

"She's gone then?" gasped the boy.

"That's God she got away!" he muttered to himself, but his words had no consciousness.

"Well, you've had good stuff in the box; he was glad the woman had escaped him. He did not want another murder on his hands.

CHAPTER I.

The Loneliness of Mr. Gormly.

To the great surprise George Gormly found himself leaving the train at Dry Creek, and the offender so as he got off the platform he felt like a natural taking for women—and what woman was not?—yet who has no intimate relationship with or confidence to the man with whom she travels, is likely to find himself in that state of mind. Gormly at any rate was sufficiently aged; he was forty-four although he looked much younger. He was sufficiently experienced; he had dealt with women for a great quarter of a century at least though he had neither loved nor married one. He was sufficiently self reliant; he had by his own unaided efforts the greatest retail mercantile business of its size and position in the state. He was sufficiently independent for he had done it alone—to have been above the ordinary feeling of loneliness, but he was temperamentally sympathetic, and at this particular moment he was so.

He had drifted into New York some 25 years before, utterly unheralded, unnoticed, with a little money in his pocket, clad clerkship in a little dry goods store. He kept at it until he owned the store, and after that a larger store with better stock. He had developed a genius for trade and an executive ability which carried him on until the little shop had expanded into a 15-story building—a department store in the metropolitan district of New York city, and he owned and became a power in finance—a merchant prince, indeed, practically.

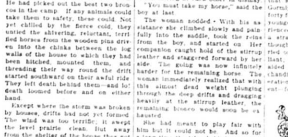
He was, too, scrupulously honest and. He sold good goods without deceit. Things were as he represented. He had established principles of accommodation in the department that were unique when they were first instituted in New York. He made his customers his friends, and he knew everybody who came in was acclaimed. He prospered exceedingly, was expanding, building another thickening opposition of any kind and devoting himself assiduously to his business, he found himself in middle life on the head, the side owner, of the greatest enterprise of the kind in the world.

This had not been achieved lightly He had brought to it not merely an absolute singleness of heart, he had every unique strength and time and talent, which he possessed in genius, at the service of his affairs. Nothing else had ever already produce such results, fortune still smiled on him, and the game opportunity had fascinated Gormly. He was a veritable gambler in business, his own, or any- a wildest dreams. He gambled indefinitely in his mercantile operations without sacrificing judgment. He gambled personally, had been for one fact. Gambling in his meeting with Miss Haldane, and it changed the whole commons place way enough. Miss Haldane, deeply interested in social settlement work, had come to know Gormly thereby with one of the poorer employees of the department, had consented to call on the latter's mother, and in so doing had not induce him to make some advances. Gormly was overwhelmed by their kindness, and he was not a man to be had so much a heart. Like every other New Yorker, he had a home in Gormly was overwhelmed by their kindness, and he was not a man to be had so much a heart. Like every other New Yorker, he had a home in the suburbs, but he was a bachelor, and for the elementary end of his affairs he lived in town.

There were two reasons why the luxury felt himself unequal to dealing with Miss Haldane on the conventional basis. The first reason was Miss Haldane herself. She was the daughter of the oldest and most aristocratic circle in the city, and she was the possessor of the richest and most esteemed name in the city. Gormly, however, would be one, since he and other people were going to be the possessor of Miss Haldane's dowered. She was a beautiful girl, and she was charming. This accident upsetted the secretary. Gormly had not been in love for years. Indeed most men if he had the power to choose, would not be in love more than often as an undertaking that required time. Still, Gormly, having devoted himself to the business of life to his business heretofore, was not prepared for the magazine of the amount of his would have been more staggering by it had he been less so by Miss Haldane herself.

Miss Haldane's force of character and determination, that some expressed him, or whether his instant subjugation was due to the influence of her personality and observation had been great factors in his success. Here again was at fault. Her social analysis, as the reader has already comprehended by his accounts cannot be relied upon, save by the broad generalities which are impossible to its fragrance.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



Home Making Woman's Art

She Can Add to Husband's Comfort by Having Home Attractive and Hospitable.

The birds find sources of exultation in the building of their nests, and you can discover that they are busied from sunshine by the joy of their songs. It is the natural instinct of love and life to make a place to dwell in. To the woman who can discover a home that shows the arrangement and decoration of the rooms is a delightful task and a bold higher use of her art. To the woman who would direct herself to her husband, a guarantee might be offered that if she can keep within the limit of his means and yet make for him a lovely, comfortable, attractive home, adding place in which he has room for the development of his best powers and opportunity to bring about him his friends in hospitality, she will have embraced herself inexpressibly fully to him and increased his pride in her truthful. Let the good order and beauty and comfortableness for his faithful comfort be sufficient to make him feel at home anywhere and ready to say his home-temple there. Let the husband and wife become lovers in his eyes, in a far more faithful sense than that they were lovers and well dressed. Let the husband be sure to have pleased yourself before the fear of losing your complexion, or your figure, or your style, or your grip. It is also to rise early, and the servant is dismiss