

HOW SHE WON OUT.

Matt Sloan was a self-made man—very well made in his own estimation in the estimation of the world, too.

He had been newsboy, bootblack, barman, publican contractor, speculator and parolent politician always a politician, and had succeeded in everything.

He had ideas, too, of a rough sort. For instance, he had dropped the public house business at a considerable personal loss before he married.

"I ain't goin' to keep Mary on my feet by makin' other men drink," he announced.

Matt Sloan was thinking of all these things as he sat in his den in the handsome new home he had fitted up the year before when Mary had left school and come home—Mary the 'doldzed daughter, who so strongly resembled his dead wife.

He had loved his wife with all the strength of his nature, and had resolved that little Mary should have every advantage that his wife and he had missed, and that all good things of the world should be hers.

He was thinking over all these things and feeling greatly at peace with himself and the world—except for a secret confided to him recently by the girl that she had given her heart to young Arthur Vincent and that presently the lover would call on him and ask for her hand.

He did not dislike young Vincent. He was a mainly young fellow and well conducted. His father, Malcolm Vincent, was a power in the financial world, and the head of one of the biggest firms in the city.

While engaged in these reflections the door opened and Mary entered. She fell upon her knees and buried her face in her father's knees, the tears gushing from her eyes.

Sloan's heart stopped beating and that terror possessed him which all strong men feel at a woman's tears.

"What's the matter?" he gasped. "Oh, father, father!" moaned the girl. "It ain't true, is it?"

"What?" replied Sloan, wishing wildly for something to do to help the girl.

"Mr. Vincent, Arthur's father came here to see me," the girl went on, weeping and fro in her distress.

"He asked me to give up Arthur. He said we were not a fit family for a gentleman to marry into. He said that our money came from public houses; that we were low born; that mamma was a woman of doubtful origin and character."

"Stop!" cried Sloan, hoarsely leaping to his feet and nearly throwing the girl to the floor. His face was purple and the veins stood out in his neck like whipcords. "Did he say that?"

"Those were the very words," sobbed the girl, clinging to the arm of the chair. "They are burning in my memory!"

His face assumed a livid white. His great, square jaw was set like a vice, while his eyes blazed in a manner she had never seen before.

"Father, dear," she said, rising and going to him, "you must do nothing rash—nothing to indicate we are low born."

"You are right child," the man replied, slowly. "We must do nothing to hurt ourselves only him. What else did he say?" He sat down heavily.

"He said that Arthur had told him about our engagement, and when he forbade it, and threatened to disinherit him. Arthur told his father that he would marry me if I would have him, she answered. "He said he had come to me to save Arthur from an alliance which would not only ruin his prospects and life, but could not fail to result in misery all around. That such a marriage would break his mother's heart, and disgrace the family name. He appealed to me to save the boy from his own folly, and refuse him, and so prevent all this wretchedness—and oh? father, I love him, I love him!"

"Poor, motherless girl!" he muttered. "Nobody to help you but an ignorant, coarse-grained old ruffian!" Then bitterness filled his cup to the brim as she sobbed in his arms, and he reflected that all his success, all his power could not save from unhappiness the one object he loved. All his life had been a mistake, and his money could not buy the one thing he wanted.

"What did you say to Vincent?" he asked. "I declined to discuss the matter," she replied. "I was so upset I did not know what to do."

AMUSING BROWN BEAR.

A Good Natured Coward That Will Fight Ferociously When Cornered.

The brown or black bear of California is the most cowardly animal that roams the hills. He is a worse thief than the northern wolverine, and at the same time better natured than half the farm dogs the hunter chances upon.

Strange, strange," he muttered to himself. "I cannot understand it. With no normal condition to send G. P. and T. up, and our house selling for a week, it has advanced steadily. I can see no indication of any defensive movement, but every offer of the stock is snapped up and a higher price quoted every day.

Good natured as is either of these smaller bears which weigh from 400 to 500 pounds apiece, it is best to know how to hunt them before attempting it. As with most big game the best way to hunt them for sport is alone, armed with a reliable rifle and a good knife.

As has been said, a black or brown bear seldom keeps one address long, but nearly most of them just now are down among the rocks where the fallen acorns afford them an easy living.

Well," remarked Sloan, "where is the stock?" "Mr. Sloan," said he, "I am unable to deliver you the stock today, but the truth is in an effort to break a price for certain reorganization purposes, I was caught short and I save myself and the Universal Investment Company I used the stock yesterday in settlement. I supposed that it would be held for months and that I could have gone ahead. It will be but a few days before I can buy it back at a price that will not cripple me."

"You mean that you are a thief and an embezzler?" remarked Matt Sloan bluntly, lighting a big black cigar. Vincent sprang to his feet, his face flushed. "Sir," he said.

"I mean that I propose to put you behind the prison bars," replied Sloan. "It is a solemn duty I owe to society. The banker groaned in despair. In Heaven's name, man, have you no mercy?" he said. "Everybody says you are a big hearted fellow. It is only for a few days."

"I reckon I am as big hearted as a thin tipped old thief who makes it his business to break a girl's heart then mud at her father and be about her dead mother. And Sloan brought his heavy fist down on the desk with a bang.

"Now, if that affair had gone on of course I would have felt a bit chary about prosecuting my girl's father in law; but it's a good thing it was stopped. We never had any gaolbirds in our family. It'd been an awful disgrace!"

"The banker, red with humiliation, saw a ray of hope. He grasped it. "Couldn't the affair between the young folks go on?" he asked timidly. "It might," replied Sloan, coolly. "If the girl wants your son, she can have him for all I care, but I tell you, she is very proud. After what has happened she wouldn't go into any family that didn't want her."

"I will see her myself," ventured Vincent. "Yes, and maybe your wife has better go round and assure my girl that the marriage won't break your heart," replied Sloan. "I'll give the stock to her for a wedding present."

There was no prosecution of Vincent, and there was a beautiful wedding some weeks later, at which Matt Sloan cut a most noticeable figure in a new dress suit which he wore but indifferently well, and a gorgeous array of diamonds, which he wore as to the manner born.

Among the wedding presents was the certificate for 2,000 shares of G. P. and T. stock. "If it would sell for what it cost me it would be a pretty penny," Matt Sloan remarked.

THE LEVERIDGES.

Three of a kind," said Mona Leveridge, gazing after her husband as he drove away from the doorway on his way to the station, to fetch Alina Register, her dearest friend, whom she had invited on a visit with a purpose.

She would have preferred her husband driving something quieter than those fiery chestnuts but they were three of a kind, and perhaps the brutes understood their fiery master as well as he understood them.

For her own sake, as well as Alina's, she wanted to patch up that old affair. With Rafe Stillman at the other end of the globe it had mattered little. But with Rafe back home, her next door neighbor.

She had not married the last of the Leveridges unwarned. Prosperity had held up its glisty finger, she would regret it. The Leveridges were not across the bar sloping approach to his own door gate, adown the dusty gray bushes into the twilight gloom of the forest growth that marked the boundary line between the Leveridge and the Stillman places.

Suddenly with sports of terror she averted her eyes from the vehicle set out of the road. They had taken fright at the thoroughly common place object, an old man standing on the roadside innocently engaged in winding bits of twine about the saddle girth that had treacherously broken on leaving him dismounted from the horse that improved his opportunities by grazing. It was his own stableman.

"You infernal old idiot, why are you not at work?" The old man doffed his ragged hat deferentially. "I told missus I didn't think I had time to go, but she said I must. Leveridge leaned toward the old man with darkening eyes. "Go where?"

"Over to Mrs. Stillman's." "For what?" "To carry a letter." "To Mrs. Stillman?" "I don't know sir, missus jus give me this an she say I won't wait for no answer."

With confiding frankness the old man extracted a note from the crown of his business hat and put it into the hand eagerly stretched out for it. It was addressed to Mr. Rafe Stillman. Leveridge turned it over with unsteady fingers. It was sealed with a looseness that invited treachery.

I used to be accounted a gentleman, he snarled in an undertone, altered a second and in another tone was in full possession of the contents of the hastily sealed envelope. "Mr. Leveridge goes out this morning. You had better come over early if you want a good day with the snipe."

The address and the signature were brief to curtness. Mr. Stillman and Al. L. Leveridge. Horace replied the intercepted note in its envelope and sat staring at it so long that his wife's messenger came to him. "Is you going to deliver it to Mr. Horace?"

No, the man in the rag handed back the note. You are to deliver according to your address, and as And Munson his name was on it in its enclosed compartments, you will go as fast as if the devil was putting your heat. Deliver that note and come back here to me. I'll have a note for you to deliver. It's only a mile by the Express Walk Five shillings if you are back here in half an hour, dismissal from the place if you are not."

"I'll be here, sir." Leveridge straightened himself in the drag as the old man cantered out of sight. He had some few preparations to make. Of course, he should have to kill Stillman. As well then and there as at any other time. He laughed unpleasantly. It was odd he should have his gun under the seat of the drag. He had meant to leave it with the smith in town to be cleaned.

He tore a page from his pocket diary and wrote his courteous regrets that circumstances rendered it inconvenient for him to fetch Miss Register from the station. "I have a little matter to settle with Mr. Stillman," he wrote, "that may interfere with his snipe shooting. Sorry to have spoiled your little plan for a pleasant day. Your pardon for a rather free interpretation of marital rights."

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