

The Real Man

By FRANCIS LYNDE

Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS

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CHAPTER XII—Continued.

Smith, especially in this later incarnation which had so radically changed him, believed as little in the psychic as any hardheaded young business iconoclast of an agnostic century could. But on this particular evening when he was smoking his after-dinner pipe on the flagstoned porch with Corona for his companion, there were phenomena apparently unexplainable on any purely material hypothesis.

"I am sure I have much less than half of the curiosity that women are said to have, but, really, I do want to know what dreadful thing has happened to you since we met you in the High Line offices this morning—mamma and I," was the way in which one of the phenomena was made to occur; and Smith started so nervously that he dropped his pipe.

"You can be the most unexpected person, when you try," he laughed, but the laugh scarcely rang true. "What makes you think that anything has happened?"

"I don't think—I know," the small seeress went on with calm assurance. "You've been telling us in all sorts of dumb ways that you've had an upsetting shock of some kind; and I don't believe it's another lawsuit. Am I right, so far?"

"I believe you are a witch, and it's a mighty good thing you didn't live in the Salem period," he rejoined. "They would have hanged you to a dead moral certainty."

"Then there was something?" she queried; adding, jubilantly: "I knew it!"

"Go on," said the one to whom it had happened; "go on and tell me the rest of it."

"Oh, that isn't fair; even a professional clairvoyant has to be told the color of her eyes and hair."

"What's that?" the ejaculation was fairly jarred out of him and for the moment he fancied he could feel a cool breeze blowing up the back of his neck.

The clairvoyant who did not claim to be a professional was laughing softly. "You told me once that a woman was adorable in the exact degree in which she could afford to be visibly transparent; yes, you said 'afford,' and I've been holding it against you. Now I'm going to pay you back. You are the transparent one, this time. You have as good as admitted that the 'happening' thing isn't a man; 'what-what' always means that, you know; so it must be a woman. Is it the Miss Richlander you were telling me about not long ago?"

There are times when any mere man may be shocked into telling the truth, and Smith had come face to face with one of them. "It is," he said.

"She is in Brewster?"

"Yes. She came this evening."

"And you ran away? That was horribly unkind, don't you think—after she had come so far?"

"Hold on," he broke in. "Don't let's go so fast. I didn't ask her to come. And, besides, she didn't come to see me."

"Did she tell you that?"

"I have taken precious good care that she shouldn't have the chance. I saw her name—and her father's—on the hotel register; and just about that time I remembered that I could probably get a bite to eat out here."

"You are queer! All men are a little queer, I think—always excepting colonel-daddy. Don't you want to see her?"

"Indeed, I don't!"

"Not even for old times' sake?"

"No; not even for old times' sake. I've given you the wrong impression completely, if you think there is any obligation on my part. It might have drifted on to the other things in the course of time, simply because neither of us might have known any better than to let it drift. But that's all a back number, now."

"Just the same, her coming shocked you."

"It certainly did," he confessed soberly; and then: "Have you forgotten what I told you about the circumstances under which I left home?"

"Oh!" she murmured, and as once before there was a little gasp to go with the word. Then: "She wouldn't—she wouldn't—"

"No," he answered; "she wouldn't; but her father would."

"So her father wanted her to marry the other man, did he?"

Smith's laugh was an easing of strains. "You've pumped me dry," he returned, the sardonic humor reasserting itself.

A motorcar was coming up the driveway. It was high time that an interruption of some sort was breaking in, and when the colonel appeared and brought Stillings with him to the lounge end of the porch, a business conference began which gave Miss Corona an excuse to disappear, and which accomplished easily for the remainder of the evening.

Smith returned to Brewster the next morning by way of the dam, making the long detour count for as much as possible in the matter of sheer time-killing. It was a little before noon when he reached town by the round-about route, and went to the hotel to reconnoiter. The room clerk who gave him his key gave him also the information he craved.

"Mr. Richlander? Oh, yes; he left early this morning by the stage. He is interested in some gold properties up in the range beyond Topaz. Fine old gentleman. Do you know him, Mr. Smith?"

"The name seemed familiar when I saw it on the register last evening," was Smith's evasion; "but it is not such a very uncommon name. He didn't say when he was coming back?"

"No."

Smith took a fresh hold upon life and liberty. While the world is perilously narrow in some respects, it is comfortably broad in others, and a danger once safely averted is a danger lessened. Snatching a hasty luncheon in the grillroom, the fighting manager of Timanyoni High Line hurried across to the private suite in the Kinzie building offices into which he had lately moved and once more plunged into the business battle.

Notwithstanding a new trouble which Stillings had wished to talk over with his president and the financial manager the night before—the claim set up by the dead-and-gone railroad to a right of way across the Timanyoni at the dam—the battle was progressing favorably. Williams was accomplishing the incredible in the matter of speed, and the dam was now nearly ready to withstand the high-water stresses when they should come. The powerhouse was rising rapidly, and the machinery was on the way from the East. Altogether things were looking more hopeful than they had at any period since the hasty reorganization. Smith attacked the multifarious details of his many-sided job with returning energy. If he could make shift to hold on for a few days or weeks longer. . . .

While Smith was dictating the final batch of letters to the second stenographer a young man with sleepy eyes and yellow creosote stains on his fingers came in to ask for a job. Smith put him off until the correspondence was finished and then gave him a hearing.

"What kind of work are you looking for?" was the brisk query.

"Shorthand work, if I can get it," said the man out of a job.

Smith was needing another stenographer and he looked the applicant over appraisingly. The appraisal was not entirely satisfactory. There was a certain shifty furtiveness in the half-opened eyes, and the rather weak chin hinted at a possible lack of the discreetness which is the prime requisite in a confidential clerk.

"Any business experience?"

"Yes; I've done some railroad work."

"Here in Brewster?"

Shaw lied smoothly. "No; in Omaha."

"Any recommendations?"

The young man produced a handful of "To Whom It May Concern" letters. They were all on business letterheads, and were apparently genuine, though none of them were local. Smith ran them over hastily and he had no means of knowing that they had been carefully prepared by Crawford Stanton at no little cost in ingenuity and painstaking. How careful the preparation had been was revealed in the applicant's ready suggestion.

"You can write or wire to any of these gentlemen," he said; "only, if there is a job open, I'd be glad to go to work on trial."

The business training of the present makes for quick decisions. Smith

snapped a rubber band around the letters and shot them into a pigeonhole of his desk.

"We'll give you a chance to show what you can do," he told the man out of a job. "If you measure up to the requirements, the job will be permanent. You may come in tomorrow morning and report to Mr. Miller, the chief clerk."

Having other things to think of, Smith forgot the sleepy-eyed young fellow instantly. But it is safe to assume that he would not have dismissed the incident so readily if he had known that Shaw had been waiting in the anteroom during the better part of the dictating interval, and that on the departing applicant's cuffs were microscopic notes of a number of the more important letters.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Sweet Fortune's Minion."

It was late dinner-time when Smith closed the big roll-top desk in the new

private suite in the Kinzie building offices and went across the street to the hotel. The great dining room of the Hophra House was on the ground floor. The room was well filled, but the head waiter found Smith a small table in the shelter of one of the pillars and brought him an evening paper.

Smith gave his dinner order and began to glance through the paper. The subdued chatter and clamor of the big room dimmed pleasantly in his ears. Half absently he realized that the head waiter was seating someone at the place opposite his own; then the faint odor of violets, instantly reminiscent, came to his nostrils. He knew instinctively, and before he could put the newspaper aside, what had happened. Hence the shock, when he found himself face to face with Verda Richlander, was not so completely paralyzing as it might have been. She was looking across at him with a lazy smile in the glorious brown eyes, and the surprise was quite evidently no surprise for her.

"I told the waiter to bring me over here," she explained; and then, quite

pleasantly: "It is an exceedingly little world, isn't it, Montague?"

He nodded gloomily.

"Much too little for a man to hide in," he agreed; adding: "But I think I have known that, all along; known at least, that it would be only a question of time."

After the waiter had taken Miss Richlander's order she began again.

"Why did you run away?" she asked. "Smith shrugged his shoulders helplessly."

"What else was there for me to do? Besides, I believed, at the time, that I had killed Dunham. I could have sworn he was dead when I left him."

She was toying idly with the salad fork. "Sometimes I am almost sorry that he wasn't," she offered.

"Which is merely another way of saying that you were unforfeiting enough to wish to see me hanged?" he suggested, with a sour smile.

"It wasn't altogether that; no. There was a pause and then she went on: "I suppose you know what has been happening since you ran away—what has been done in Lawrenceville, I mean?"

"I know that I have been indicted by the grand jury and that there is a reward out for me. It's two thousand dollars, isn't it?"

She let the exact figure of the reward go unconfirmed.

"And still you are going about in public as if all the hue and cry means nothing to you? The beard is an improvement—it makes you look older and more determined—but it doesn't disguise you. I should have known you anywhere, and other people will."

Again his shoulders went up.

"What's the use?" he said. "I couldn't dig deep enough nor fly high enough to dodge everybody. You have found me, and if you hadn't, somebody else would have. It would have been the same any time and anywhere."

"I was intending to go on up to the mines with father," she said evenly. "But last evening, while I was waiting for him to finish his talk with some mining men, I was standing in the mezzanine, looking down into the lobby. I saw you go to the desk and leave your key; I was sure I couldn't be mistaken; so I told father that I had changed my mind about going out to the mines and he seemed greatly relieved. He had been trying to persuade me that it would be much more comfortable if I should wait for him here."

It was no stirring of belated sentiment that made Smith say: "You— you cared enough to wish to see me?"

"Naturally," she replied. "Some people forget easily; others don't. I suppose I am one of the others."

Smith remembered the proverb about a woman scorned and saw a menace more to be feared than all the terror of the law lurking in the even-toned rejoinder. It was with some foolish idea of thrusting the menace aside at any cost that he said: "You have only to send a ten-word telegram to Sheriff Macaulay, you know. I'm not sure that it isn't your duty to do so."

"Why should you telegraph Barton Macaulay?" she asked placidly. "I'm not one of his deputies."

"But you believe me guilty, don't you?"

The handsome shoulders twitched in the barest hint of indifference. "As I have said, I am not in Bart Macaulay's employ—nor in Mr. Watrous Dunham's. Neither am I the judge and jury to put you in the prisoner's box and try you. I suppose you knew what you were doing, and why you did it. But I do think you might have written me a line, Montague. That would have been the least you could have done."

For some time afterward the

was not resumed. Mrs. Richlander was apparently enjoying her dinner. Smith was not enjoying his, but he ate as a troubled man often will; mechanically and as a matter of routine. It was not until the dessert had been served that the young woman took up the thread of the conversation precisely as if it had never been dropped.

"I think you know that you have no reason to be afraid of me, Montague; but I can't say as much for father. He will be back in a few days, and when he comes it will be prudent for you to vanish. That is a future, however."

Smith's laugh was brittle.

"We'll leave it a future, if you like. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

"Oh; so you class me as an evil, do you?"

"No; you know I didn't mean that; I merely mean that it's no use crossing the bridges before we come to them. I've been living from day to day so long now, that I am becoming hardened to it."

Again there was a pause, and again it was Miss Richlander who broke it. The slow smile was dimpling again at the corners of the perfect mouth.

"You are going to need a little help, Montague—my help—aren't you? It occurs to me that you can well afford to show me some little friendly attention while I am Robinson-Crusoe here waiting for father to come back."

"Let me understand," he broke in, frowning across the table at her. "You are willing to ignore what has happened—to that extent? You are not forgetting that in the eyes of the law I am a criminal?"

She made a faint little gesture of impatience.

"Why do you persist in dragging that in? I am not supposed to know anything about your business affairs, with Watrous Dunham or anybody else. Besides, no one knows me here, and no one cares. Besides, again, I am a stranger in a strange city and we are—or we used to be—old friends."

Her half-cynical tone made him frown again, thoughtfully, this time.

"Women are curious creatures," he commented. "I used to think I knew a little something about them, but I guess it was a mistake. What do you want me to do?"

"Oh, anything you like; anything that will keep me from being bored to death."

Smith laid his napkin aside and glanced at his watch.

"There is a play of some kind on at the opera house, I believe," he said, rising and going around to draw her chair aside. "If you'd care to go, I'll see if I can hold somebody up for a couple of seats."

"That is more like it. I used to be afraid that you hadn't a drop of sporting blood in you, Montague, and I am glad to learn, even at this late date, that I was mistaken. Take me upstairs, and we'll go to the play."

They left the dining room together, and there was more than one pair of eyes to follow them in frank admiration.

"What a strikingly handsome couple," said a bejeweled lady who sat at the table nearest the door; and her companion, a gentleman with restless eyes and thin lips and a rather wicked jaw, said: "Yes; I don't know the woman, but the man is Colonel Baldwin's new financier; the fellow who calls himself 'John Smith.'"

The bediamonded lady smiled dryly. "You say that as if you had a mortal quarrel with his name, Crawford. If I were the girl, I shouldn't find fault with the name. You say you don't know her?"

Stanton had pushed his chair back and was rising. "Take your time with the ice cream, and I'll join you later upstairs. I'm going to find out who the girl is, since you want to know."

CHAPTER XIV.

Broken Threads.

Mr. Crawford Stanton a little later went upstairs to rejoin the resplendent lady, who was taking her after-dinner ease in the most comfortable lounging-chair the mezzanine parlor afforded.

"No good," he reported. "The girl's name is Richlander, and she—her father—comes from one of half a dozen 'Lawrencevilles'—you can take your choice among 'em."

"Money?" queried the comfortable one.

"Buying mines in the Topaz," said the husband mechanically. He was not thinking specially of Mr. Josiah Richlander's possible or probable rating with the commercial agencies; he was wondering how well Miss Richlander knew John Smith, and in what manner she could be persuaded to tell what she might know. While he was turning it over in his mind the two in question, Smith and the young woman, passed through the lobby on their way to the theater. Stanton, watching them narrowly from the vantage-point afforded by the galleried mezzanine, drew his own conclusions. By all the little signs they were not merely chance acquaintances or even casual friends. Their relations were close—and of longer standing.

Stanton puzzled over his problem a long time, long after Mrs. Stanton had forsaken the easy chair and had disappeared from the scene. His Eastern employers were growing irascibly impatient. Who was this fellow Smith, and what was his backing? they were beginning to ask; and with the asking there were intimations that if Mr. Crawford Stanton were finding his task too difficult, there was always an alternative.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Curse of Modern Life.

To eat what you like, and all you like, may be a merry life, but it will be a short one. The curse of modern life is overfeeding.—Dr. Frank Crane

A Medicine for Women

For Forty Years Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has Relieved the Sufferings of Women.

It hardly seems possible that there is a woman in this country who continues to suffer without giving Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound a trial after all the evidence that is continually being published, proving beyond contradiction that this grand old medicine has relieved more suffering among women than any other medicine in the world.

Mrs. Kieso Cured After Seven Month's Illness.
Aurora, Ill.—"For seven long months I suffered from a female trouble, with severe pains in my back and sides until I became so weak I could hardly walk from chair to chair, and got so nervous I would jump at the slightest noise. I was entirely unfit to do my house work, I was giving up hope of ever being well, when my sister asked me to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I took six bottles and today I am a healthy woman able to do my own housework. I wish every suffering woman would try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and find out for herself how good it is."—MRS. KARL A. KIESO, 596 North Ave., Aurora, Ill.

Could Hardly Get Off Her Bed.
Cincinnati, Ohio.—"I want you to know the good Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done for me. I was in such bad health from female troubles that I could hardly get off my bed. I had been doctoring for a long time and my mother said, 'I want you to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.' So I did, and it has certainly made me a well woman. I am able to do my house work and am so happy as I never expected to go around the way I do again, and I want others to know what Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done for me."—MRS. JOSE COOPER, 1668 Harrison Ave., Fairmount, Cincinnati, Ohio.

If you want special advice write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential) Lynn, Mass. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman and held in strict confidence.

The "Cat Squadron."
Great Britain was the first naval power to build the battle cruiser. Close on her heels came Germany, Russia and Japan; but all others, including the United States, have no battle-cruisers in their line of battle. It was in 1907 when the Indomitable, the first one, was begun. One year later she crossed the Atlantic at a speed of a little more than 25 miles an hour. The inflexible and invincible followed, and when the European war came, Great Britain had a squadron that proved of immense worth to her. In the Jutland battle, however, three of the British battle cruisers were sunk, shells penetrating their armor and exploding their magazines or boilers. The armor of a superdreadnaught would most probably have proved too strong for the shells that destroyed these battle cruisers. The famous "Cat Squadron," so called because it included the Lion and Tiger, is today the last word in the battle cruiser; but in a few years the American battle cruisers that are now being built will far outstrip the "cats" in every feature.—FRANK E. EVANS, in St. Nicholas Magazine.

Don't Neglect Kidneys
Swamp Root, Dr. Kilmer's Prescription, Overcomes Kidney Trouble
It is now conceded by physicians that the kidneys should have more attention as they control the other organs to a remarkable degree and do a tremendous amount of work in removing the poisons and waste matter from the system by filtering the blood. The kidneys should receive some assistance when needed. We take less exercise, drink less water and often eat more rich, heavy food, thereby forcing the kidneys to do more work than nature intended. Evidence of kidney trouble, such as lame back, annoying bladder troubles, smarting or burning, brick-dust or sediment, sallow complexion, rheumatism, maybe weak or irregular heart action, warns you that your kidneys require help immediately to avoid more serious trouble. An ideal herbal compound that has had most remarkable success as a kidney and bladder remedy is Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root. There is nothing else like it. It is Dr. Kilmer's prescription used in private practice and it is sure to benefit you. Get a bottle from your druggist. However, if you wish first to test this great preparation send ten cents to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., for a sample bottle. When writing be sure and mention this paper. Adv.

Why Look?
Mrs. Jenkins, a regular visitor in the doctor's consulting room, started on the long story of her troubles. The doctor endured it patiently and gave her another bottle. At last she started out, and the doctor was congratulating himself, when she stopped and exclaimed: "Why, doctor, you didn't look to see if my tongue was coated?" "I know it isn't," wearily replied the medical man. "You don't find grass on a race track."

To Extend Railway.
Oshkosh, Wis., street railway system is to be extended and improved in equipment.
Gen. B. H. Young has been a Sunday school superintendent 50 years in Louisville, Ky.

The Description.
"I'm sure you will like him. He has a pleasant personality, an easy flow of conversation and a wonderful fund of information."
"What is he?" inquired Miss Alma Cayenne, suspiciously, "a book agent?"

MOTHER!
Have you ever used MOTHER'S JOY, SALVE for Colds, Coughs, Croup and Pneumonia, Asthma, and Head Catches? If you haven't get it at once. It will cure you.—Adv.

Not a Bit of Use.
There was some speculation as to whether the instrument would benefit the old gentleman or not. One was holding the ear trumpet, while another was explaining its use and showing old Mr. Shortcass how to hold it to his ear.
"Say something to him through it, Binks," said one to the other.
Now Binks had long waited for an opportunity to reach Mr. Shortcass's ear, so, speaking very distinctly into the trumpet he said:
"You've not paid me that five dollars you owe me yet, Mr. Shortcass."
But the old gentleman put the instrument down with disappointment on his face, and they could see it was a failure even before he had time to say:
"That thing's not a bit of use to me."
And he sighed, but his sigh was not so deep as that which came from Binks.

Sure Enough.
The ball had gone over the fence, as balls will in suburban gardens, and a small but unabashed batsman appeared at the front door to ask for it.
Then appeared an irate father.
"How dare you show yourself at my house? How dare you ask for your ball? Do you know you nearly killed one of my children with it?"
"But you've got ten children," said the logical lad, "and I've only got one baseball."

Where the Gender Comes In.
Teacher—Willie, how many seconds in a minute?
Willie—Masculine or feminine?
Teacher—Masculine or feminine!
What do you mean?
Willie—There's a big difference. When pop says he'll be down in a minute it's sixty seconds, but when sister Susie says she'll be down in a minute it's 600 seconds.

A good-looking woman ought to make a successful detective.
Better a cheerful nature than a morbid success.

YOU BET I'M HELPING SAVE THE WHEAT says Bobby
POST TOASTIES
For me 3 times a day



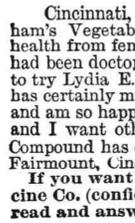
"And You Ran Away?"



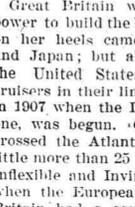
"But You Believe Me Guilty, Don't You?"



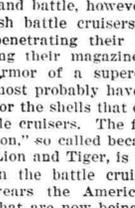
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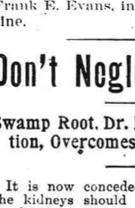
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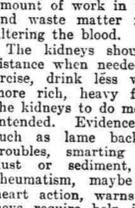
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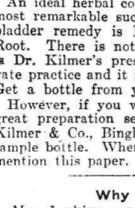
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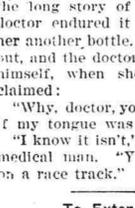
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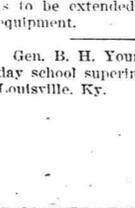
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Mrs. Kieso