

## GRAND SERIAL STORY.

## JUDGMENT.

The Most Amazing Story Ever Penned.

FOR NEW READERS.

SIR JOHN MILLBANK, a successful, but stern judge, quarrels with his only son,

JACK, who leaves his father's house to fight his own way in the world; and whilst serving with the Australian contingent, under the name of Dick Foster, he meets, and falls in love with

KITTY, the adopted daughter of Sir John. However, Sir John has arranged for her marriage with

LORD HAVERHAM. In a moment of despair, Kitty writes to Dick, asking him to meet her in the Blue Room at Rivercourt Mansions. At the appointed hour, Lord Haverham goes to the Blue Room to write some letters, and, unbeknown to the guests, Sir John meets him there. An altercation arises between the two men, resulting in the accidental death of Lord Haverham. Later, Dick arrives in the Blue Room, is caught and accused of murder, and found guilty. Whilst passing the sentence of death, Sir John recognises the prisoner as his own son Jack! A few days later, Sir John interviews the prisoner at his private residence under escort of the warders, and tells him he will have to serve at least three years' imprisonment. Just as they are leaving, Dick with the assistance of Kitty makes his escape, and that night they decide to drive into Winnerleigh; but the car breaks down, and they are forced to accept the hospitality of

BEAUMONT CHASE, a millionaire. The following morning, Dick's host informs him that Sir John had called during the night and taken his daughter away. Dick, believing this story, leaves that morning for Winnerleigh. Kitty goes down to breakfast, and is cross-examined by Mr Chase, but on his promise of assistance tells him the whole story. At a fabulous price Mr Chase engages the services of

MR. PELHAM WEBB, a clever but unscrupulous detective, to find Dick Foster, and extracts a promise from Kitty not to attempt to see or write to her lover until a year has elapsed. Pelham Webb discovers Dick, and unbeknown to Beaumont Chase, takes him to the latter's residence where he is installed as gardener. Sir John and Kitty arrive at Beaumont Hall, and Beaumont Chase loses no time in asking Sir John for the hand of his daughter. Sir John consents. That afternoon Kitty receives news that the gardener is seriously injured.

The concluding paragraphs of last week's instalment, reprinted to refresh reader's memories.

The night was very hot and still, with not a breath of air stirring, and the sound fell upon her ears with startling distinctness.

It was the noise of rustling in the bushes.

Swiftly she turned and slipped down to the ground.

At the same instant the figure of a man leaped at her through the darkness, and flung his arms about her, holding her fast.

"Who are you, young woman?" said a harsh voice in her ear. "And what are you doing sneaking about my garden at this time of the night?"

Desperately Kitty struggled to release herself.

"Let me go!" she panted. "No fear!" came the grim reply. "Not till I have a look at you. Keep still till I get a light."

"I HAVE KEPT MY PART OF THE BARGAIN, YOU MUST KEEP YOURS."

Kitty ceased to struggle.

In the first shock of surprise she had lost her presence of mind, but she was quick to recover it.

She realised that escape was impossible, and that she must now rely on her woman's wit.

She even contrived to laugh.

"Is it you, Mr Chase?" she exclaimed. "How you startled me! I thought it was one of the grooms. What do you mean by spoiling my little adventure like this, you inconsiderate person?"

"Good lord, it's Kitty!" ejaculated the man in astonishment.

At the same time he released his hold upon her, although he did not let her go.

"That's who it is—and where did you spring from, pray?" she answered with astonishing coolness. "And what are you doing, prowling about the grounds when daddy and I have been waiting so patiently for you all the evening?"

"I took a short cut from the road, and as I was passing along here I heard a rustle, and then I caught a glint of your dress. I thought it was one of the maids," explained the man.

"Do you always treat your maids so roughly, Mr Chase?" inquired Kitty primly.

"Of course I don't mean that, and I am sorry I was rough."

Kitty was pleased to detect a note of vexation in the voice which came to her out of the darkness.

"I thought there was some mischief afoot, and I was determined to find out what it was," added the man.

"I think you were unnecessarily violent. You have bruised my arm, I am sure. Shall we now go back to the house?"

Kitty hoped that by adopting an injured air she might deter him from asking inconvenient questions.

In this case she was temporarily successful. Beaumont Chase quite forgot for the moment to inquire what she was doing in the neighbourhood of the pavilion at such an hour of the night.

He did not adopt her proposal to return to the house, however.

"No," he said, "we won't go in just yet. I am glad to meet you alone, Kitty, and I have a chat with you before we see your father again."

His arm still encircled her, and he bent his face nearer to hers.

The girl suddenly experienced a dreadful nervousness. She wanted to get back to the house, to the light. "I think we will go in," she said desperately.

"No," he answered gently, but very firmly. "I have something to tell you, and I want you all alone. Nothing could be better than this. It has happened just right. I wondered how I should tell you, and I was a little afraid. Just like a bashful boy, you know, Kitty my darling. But now, in the dark, when I cannot even see your face, I feel brave. You remember your promise, Kit?"

Kitty, who remembered scarcely anything except that on the other side of the window against which they were staying an old man was lying who could give her news of Dick, answered confusedly:

"What promise? I don't know. Please let us go in."

"You promised to marry me."

"Oh, yes," replied the girl, with an involuntary sigh.

She had promised of course, Dick was lost to her for ever. Some time in the future she would have to marry someone she supposed. It might as well be this man as any other. Yes, she had promised.

The man spoke again, his voice very low and earnest.

"You promised to marry me whenever I choose to fix the day and the hour."

Yes, she had promised that. She remembered now. But why would he bother her with it just at this time? Why would he not leave her alone just for to-night? She only wanted to get Dick's last message. To learn that he was safe and happy; to interview that old man who had last spoken with her boy-lover whom she would see no more.

She felt Mr Chase was unreasonable, and if he did not leave her alone just for to-night she would begin to hate him.

"Yes, I think I did say that," she said petulantly. "But I don't want to talk about it now. I am tired. Please do not worry me to-night."

The man laughed softly, and drew her closer to him.

"You tantalising little witch," he murmured. "I believe I love you all the more when you treat me badly. But you have got to listen to me now, you have got to hear my great news. Why do you think I went to London?"

"Business, I suppose."

"Yes, business, very important business. Didn't your father give you a hint? He knew all about it. Kitty, I have fixed everything. The licence, you know. It was no end of a bother, but it is all arranged now, my dear, delicious little wife."

"What—what do you mean?" exclaimed the girl, alarmed even more by his manner than by his words.

Desperately the girl threw back her head and tried to release herself.

"Don't! Please don't. Let me go. And—and tell me what you mean? I want to know what you have done? What arrangements you have made? I don't think I want to be married soon. There is plenty of time. I—"

"Enough, child listen to me," interrupted the man, not impatiently, but with a certain quiet emphasis in his voice.

"You and I have made a bargain. I promised to do something for you, and you made certain promises in return. Is that true?"

"Yes," murmured Kitty, in a low, distressed voice.

"I promised that I would save Dick Foster, and get him safely out of the country, and give him a good fresh start in a new land. I have done that. I have kept my word. Foster is now in South America with plenty of money, and he will make good. I have kept my part of the bargain, are you going to decline now to keep yours?"

"No," faltered Kitty. "I—I will keep my word. If you really want me, I will marry you—some day."

"Ah, but you promised more than that! You promised to marry me not some day, but any day—any day I chose."

There was a moment's silence between them, and then Kitty answered in a low but steady voice.

"Very well," she said, "let it be as you wish. I will keep my word. When do you want me to marry you, Mr Chase?"

"It is all fixed," answered the man quietly. "That is what I went to London about. I have secured a special licence, and the ceremony takes place to-morrow!"

With a startled cry the girl broke from his encircling arm, and, staggering back, leaned trembling against the wall of the pavilion.

"To-morrow! You—you cannot mean it! You are mad! It is impossible! I will not!" she panted.

Beaumont Chase paused before replying and he did not follow her when she shrank from him.

Then he spoke, and his voice was harsh. "You will marry me to-morrow, or you will break your word, and, if you break your word, I shall break mine. By Heaven I mean it! If you fool me now, I will drag Foster back to England to face the penalty of his crime, even though it cost me half my fortune. Ah, child," he added, with a quick change of tone, "I am a brute and a fool to threaten you when I only want to make you happy. Be patient with me, dear, and be kind. There is no sense in delay. I have kept my part of the bargain—now, be a sport, and keep yours."

(Continued on Page 6).

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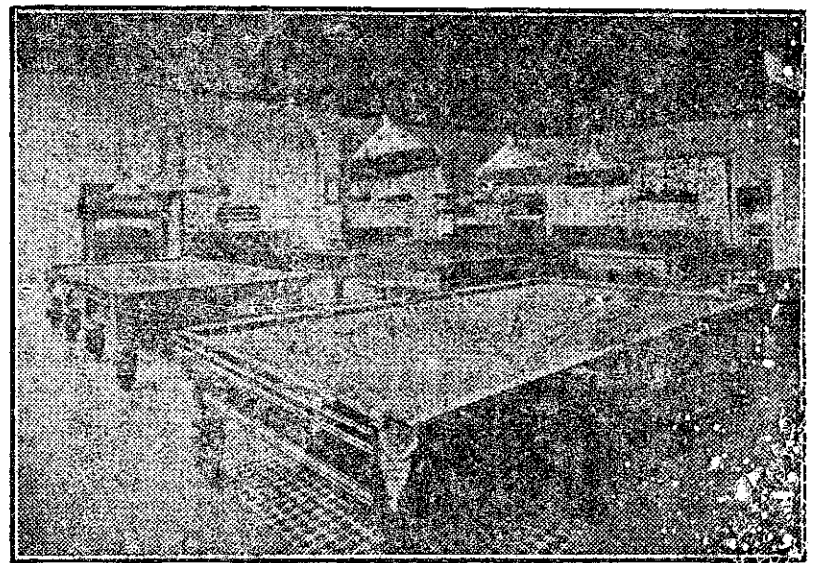
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(Above "The Digger.")

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## BILLIARD NOTES.

## AN IN-OFF PLAYED WITH RUNNING SIDE.

A position from which the in-off should be played, by striking the cue-ball with plenty of left-hand side. In the first place, owing to the object-ball being so near the pocket, the top angle will not be touched by the cue-ball after contact with the object-ball, therefore, right-hand side would be of no assistance in taking it into the pocket.

And, secondly—and this is the chief point—owing to the comparatively large angle at which the cue-ball strikes, the cushion, side very considerably alters the angle of reflection. In this position, by the use of plenty of left-hand side (running side off the cushion) the cue-ball is thrown off the cushion at such an angle as allows it to get sufficiently behind the object-ball to enable the in-off being made. Were the stroke played with right-hand side (check side off the cushion) the cue-ball would come off the cushion so full on to the object-ball that the stroke would fail.

## A DIFFICULT CUSHION IN-OFF.

An extreme kind of cushion in-off. In positions like this the in-off can only be made by the use of plenty of side. This very pretty stroke is a difficult one, for not only must the cue-ball be hit with as much side as possible, but the aim must be judged with the utmost nicety, as, though, of course, the cue-ball must not hit the object-ball until it rebounds from the cushion, it must almost graze it as it passes it, otherwise it will strike the cushion just a little too low down to enable it on its rebound, even helped as it is by the side that it carries, to get sufficiently behind the object-ball to ensure the in-off being made. The missing of the object-ball by so little when first passing it is what makes the stroke so difficult, as in attempting this the object-ball will often

be thinly struck, and when this happens the shot fails. Also, unless plenty of side be imparted to the cue-ball it will come off the cushion too full on to the object-ball to allow of the in-off being made. The nearer the two balls are to each other (the angle being the same) the less difficult does the stroke become, simply because it is easier to play what is really a fine shot when near the object-ball than when at a distance from it. Also, the farther down the table the cue-ball is, the easier the stroke becomes, and the higher up the table the more difficult, until a point is reached when the in-off is no longer possible by this kind of stroke. In playing this shot, I have stated that if the cue-ball touched the object-ball before hitting the cushion the stroke fails, and this is so in the generality of cases.

It will sometimes happen, however, that the object-ball is touched so very finely indeed that the cue-ball is not appreciably deflected thereby, and when such is the case the stroke may still be got. It is needless, however, to remark that the stroke is not to be played in this way. When the same shot is played into a baulk pocket a stroke ball out of baulk, especially if the cushions be fast.

In another case the in-off is made by striking the top cushion instead of the side-cushion, but otherwise the manner of playing each stroke is identical. Nevertheless, these strokes off the top cushion are generally more difficult to get, because the use of the rest or the long rest may be required; and even when it is possible to play without the use of the rest, the cue-ball often cannot be got at so comfortably as when playing across the table. Of course, when a cue-ball is well down the table it may be a good position for easy striking, but then it would be so far away from the object-ball that the exactness of aim required would make the shot a peculiarly difficult one.

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