

Monday

The wide river blazed with sunset light; the air was full of the scent of magnolias. There was no sight that was not beautiful, no sound that was not sweet, at Vue d'Liere.

A pink glow fell over Emma Haughton's figure as she stood on the wide lawn among the cape myrtle, all in pink flower, the hem of her white dress sweeping the sward.

Nothing could have been more exquisite than the pure curves of her face, nothing more perfect than the infantile gold of her clustering hair. And her beauty suited the delicacy and sweetness of her spirit.

She was waiting for her husband. You would not have thought that she had a husband, she was so very young, so girlish, so flower-like. But she had been Guy Haughton's wife for six months, and he was young and handsome and happy as she. But she had always lived in seclusion at Vue d'Liere. It had been her patrimony.

Guy Haughton, who had moved in the great world for five and twenty years, knew more of its evil than she had ever dreamed.

As she stood there under the rosy branches of the cape myrtles, a great dog, with a curly chestnut coat, suddenly bounded out of the shrubbery. He paused at the sight of her, posed with one foot uplifted, eying her wistfully.

Then a young man, in his shirt-sleeves, came out of the shadows of the trees.

"Lon," said Mrs. Haughton, "whose dog is this?"

"Mine," replied Lon Mackenzie, advancing.

"He is very handsome. I did not know you had a dog, Lon."

The gardener—a dark, wiry, handsome fellow—smiled.

"I went in town yesterday with Mr. Haughton, to get an order for some young trees. Gentleman going away on the Liverpool steamer offered him to Mr. Haughton—*he* gave him to me. I call him Monday, for the day I got him, you see."

"I'm very glad you have him, Lon. It's lonely sometimes on the sands, isn't it?"

Lon crushed his straw hat uneasily.

"Yes," he answered.

"How are your father and mother?"

“About the same.”

“They are very old and infirm. You are a good son, Lon”

Lon smiled his dark, brilliant smile. The dog fawned on him, standing half way to his shoulder.

“Down, Monday!”

“His coat is fine and chestnut colored, like the hair of a lady,” said Mrs. Haughton.

A buggy whirled up the drive. Guy Haughton had arrived.

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That night, his young wife dreaming innocent dreams, Guy Haughton was arrested for forgery. The stern arm of the law drew him from the delights of his home to the cell of a prison.

It was a direful day. No light could be seen to lift the pall of darkness.

A check had been presented at one of the principal banks of the city, signed by a name which proved to be falsely rendered. It had been received from Mr. Haughton’s gardener, Lon Mackenzie, and Lon, on being searched for, was discovered missing.

In the night, but a few hours previous to the arrest of Mr. Haughton, he had left his home, a cottage on the sandy banks of the river.

But no one believed that the young gardener was guilty. The trick was too bold, of too great magnitude for the work of an uneducated man. He had been a tool of others—of that sharp, brilliant master of his, they said. And with part of the notes found in Mr. Haughton’s office desk, who could doubt it?

Only, Lon had *discovered* his danger, and ran away.

So the community said. Flint, the detective, knew better. He came and stationed himself on the outskirts of the city, and did a little trading between the freedmen who had “truck patches” and the shippers of Southern fruits to the Northern markets.

By-and-by he found a beautiful quadroon girl cultivating strawberries. She spoke sweetly—she could read and write.

Flint managed to see her every day for three weeks.

She had told him that her name was Rosy. She and her mother owned the cabin and the strawberry-patch. She was industrious, modest, respected, yet she looked sadder than most of her class.

Professionally, she was an object of great interest to Detective Flint. He watched her face, he listened to the tones of her voice, to her very breathing, when he questioned her.

She talked with him in a simple, modest fashion. She showed little interest in the trouble at Vue d’Liere, even though she had occasionally sold strawberries to Mrs. Haughton. She had seen the missing gardener, Lon Mackenzie, once or twice, she said.

She always went on with her work steadily during these conversations.

Flint knew that a Southern girl, either black or white, seldom does that—seldom or never chats and labors.

His watch of Rosy grew more vigilant.

He went to the cabin one day, making an excuse of wanting some washing done by Rosy’s mother.

Rosy came to the door. She wore a white blouse, a red ribbon at the throat, and a skirt of a dark worsted stuff.

As she stood in the doorway, shading her black-lashed eyes with her slim hand, the sun fell full upon her dress.

“I suppose you have to keep a dog to prevent the niggers from stealing your strawberries?” said Flint.

“No,” she answered, quietly, “we keep no dog.”

“Don’t like them, perhaps?”

“*Some* dogs,” replied Rosy, looking sadder than before.

“What colored dogs, now?” persisted Flint, in a careless manner, as he lit his pipe.

A faint crimson stained her creamy cheek.

“I think brown dogs are the prettiest,” she said, thoughtfully—“brown and curly.”

At midnight all was still about the humble cabin.

The salt tide swelled up the river. The white sailed boats flitted noiselessly down.

The trumpet vine stirred in the breeze on the old sea-wall. The bushes stood in dark clumps on the dusky banks.

Under these bushes a man lay smoking.

At a slight sound he turned the fire from his pipe down among the dewy grasses.

A dog came running down the shore. He leaped up the bank, sprang past him, and scratched at Rosy's cabin door.

He was instantly admitted.

Half an hour and he was noiselessly let out. A small basket was hung about his neck. He trotted down the shore.

Flint crawled out from under the bushes and followed the dog.

It was Monday!

Faithful, sagacious Monday!—he was licking the hand of his master, hidden in a deserted fig-thicket, when they came upon him—strong officers of the law against whom resistance is useless.

Detective Flint had been joined by two other men.

Lon Mackenzie was drawn from his retreat, and conducted to prison.

There he confessed to the forgery. He was singularly gifted in the power of imitating penmanship. He had implicated Mr. Haughton by placing the bills in his desk.

He had coveted the money to enable him to marry Rosy, he said.

Rosy and Monday had fed him for nearly a month.

He had made his confession, clearing Guy Haughton, and then—liberty is sweet! Love laughs at prison bars—Monday came into the prison with a tiny file hidden in his brown, curly coat.

The prisoner was missing next morning, and Rosy and Monday were missing, too.

And this time Detective Flint was balked.

“How did you find the clue before?” he was asked.

“I saw the dog's hair on the girl's dress. A peculiar color. I knew he had been fawning on her. But the fellow is off his time for good and all. Gone over the water.”

So spake Detective Flint, out of his knowledge of the guild.

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