

Red Gables

The Black Shame



By the
Captain's Friend

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"THE CAUSE."

THE VAMPIRE.

A fool there was and he made his prayer
(Even as you and I!)
To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair
(We called her the woman who did not care),
But the fool he called her his lady fair
(Even as you and I!)

*Oh the years we waste and the tears we waste
And the work of our head and hand,
Belong to the woman who did not know
(And now we know that she never could know)
And did not understand.*

A fool there was and his goods he spent
(Even as you and I!)
Honor and faith and a sure intent
(And it wasn't the least what the lady meant),
But a fool must follow his natural bent
(Even as you and I!)

*Oh the toil we lost and the spoil we lost
And the excellent things we planned,
Belong to the woman who didn't know why
(And now we know she never knew why)
And did not understand.*

The fool was stripped to his foolish hide
(Even as you and I!)
Which she might have seen when she threw him aside—
(But it isn't on record the lady tried)
So some of him lived and the most of him died—
(Even as you and I!)

*And it isn't the shame and it isn't the blame
That stings like a white-hot brand.
It's coming to know that she never knew why
(Seeing at last she could never know why)
And never could understand.*

A Page of Delaware County History

On the night of October 6, 1908, in his home known as Red Gables, at Village Green, Delaware county, Pa., Captain J. Clayton Erb was brutally murdered. His wife, Mrs. M. Florence Erb, alias "Margaret F. Rothermel," alias "Bridget Conway," was arrested for the murder. Her sister, Mrs. Henry C. Beisel, formerly Kate Conway, was also arrested for the murder.

Both women confessed that they had been present at the murder, but that Mrs. Beisel alone had committed the murder in defending her sister. Both were arrested and taken to Media jail charged with the crime.

The two accused employed in their defense, W. Roger Fronefield, B. Frank Roades, and W. Cloud Alexander.

Later habeas corpus proceedings were brought in the Delaware court in an attempt to free Mrs. Erb, who was charged with being accessory to a murder. The presiding judge was Willaim B. Broomall, who, after a hearing, released Mrs. Erb on \$500 bail.

Later on the Grand Jury indicted both women for murder, holding them equally guilty as principals.

After a trial in the Delaware county court, in which one of the women confessed the murder, at which Judge Isaac B. Johnson presided, and Attorney M'Dade represented the people, the women were acquitted by the following jury:

Charles W. Dickinson, mechanic, Marple township, foreman.
Benjamin F. Riley, hardware, Chester.
V. S. Litzenburg, salesman, Middletown.
John Edwards, stonemason, Haverford.
John McCabe, shoe store, Chester.
Reece T. Levis, retired farmer, Media.
John Connor, artist, Radnor.
Edward Connor, gardner for the P. R. R., Colcroft.
Thomas Sweeney, coremaker, Chester.
John F. Kerrigan, plumber, Radnor.
John McDonald, grave-digger, Upper Darby.
B. E. Moore, iceman, Darby borough.



"THE EFFECT."

THE HYMN OF DELAWARE COUNTY

An Echo from an old Legend



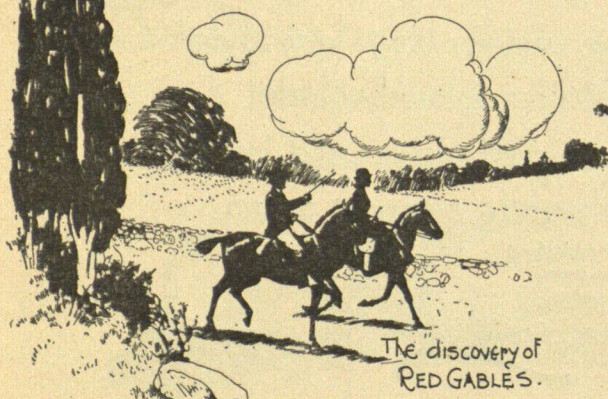
Baiting the trap
as the plot begins



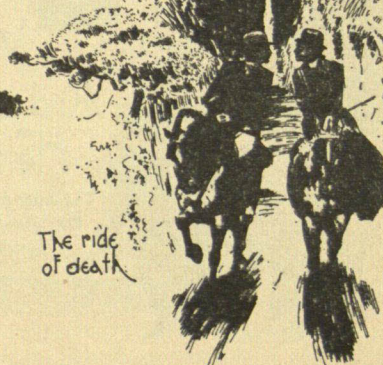
I'll tell the story, kissing
This white hand for my pains:
No sweeter heart, nor falser
Er filled such fine, blue veins.



I'll sing a song of true love, Song of the Vampire..
My sweetheart dear! to you;
Contraria contrariis—
The rule is old and true.



The discovery of
RED GABLES.



The ride
of death

The happiest of all lovers
Was Ernst of Edelsheim;
And why he was the happiest,
I'll tell you in my rhyme.



Lonely nights at Red Gables



The happy return of the DUPE

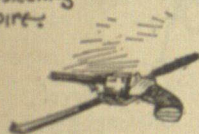


"I could always hit the Captain's bald spot."



One summer day he wandered
Within a lonely glade,
And couched in moss and sunlight,
He found a sleeping maid.

The Viper protecting the Vampire

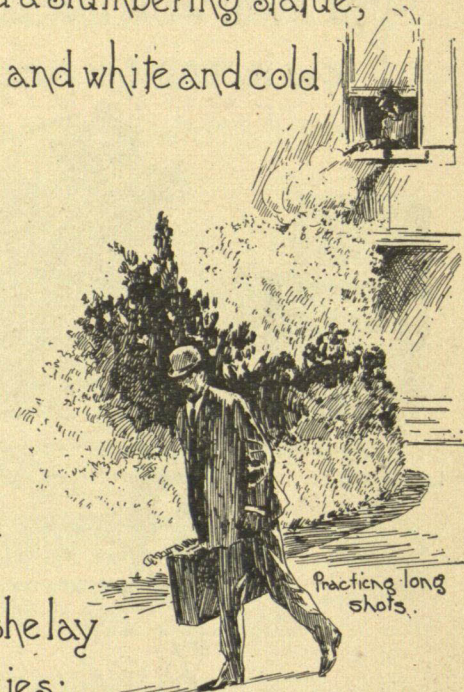


Preparing for the ghastly climax of Gore

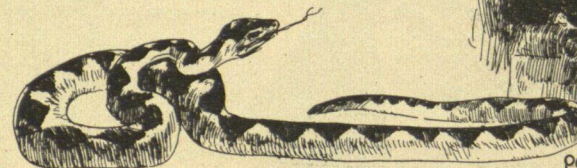


Daily practice for the MURDER

Fair and white and cold she lay
Beneath the purple skies;
Rosy was her waking
Beneath the soldier's eyes.



Practicing long shots.



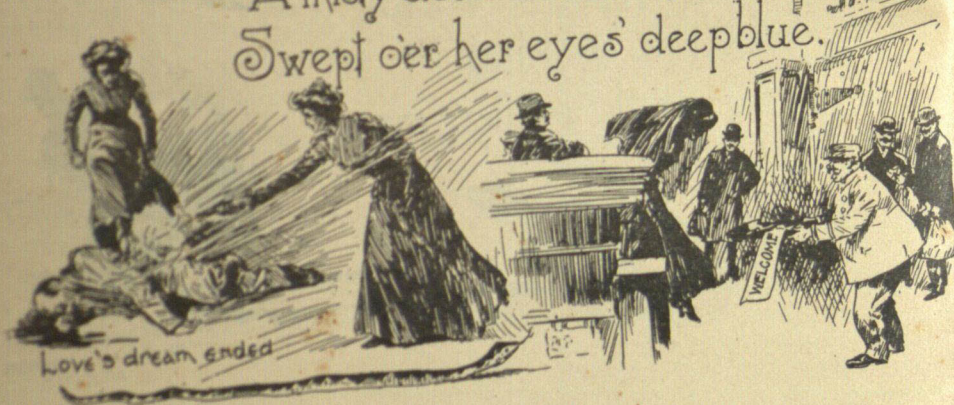
A love potion of POISON A LA NURSE ATKYNS



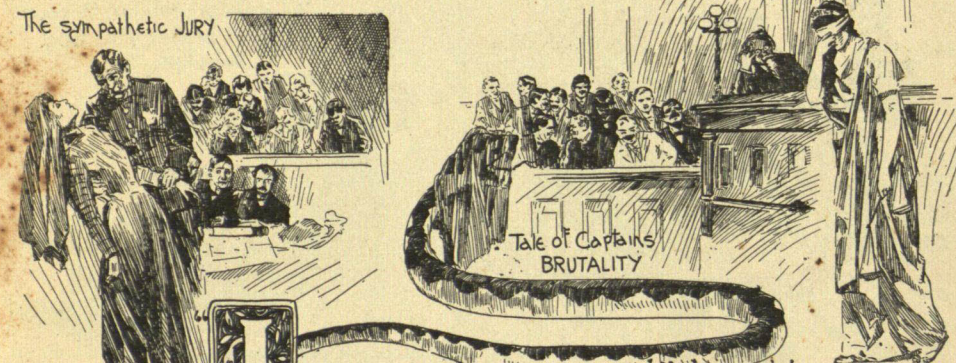
She won his drowsy fancy
 He bore her to his towers,
 And swift with love and laughter
 Flew morning's purple hours.



But when the thickening sunbeams
 Had drunk the gleaming dew,
 A misty cloud of lust and sin
 Swept o'er her eyes' deep blue.

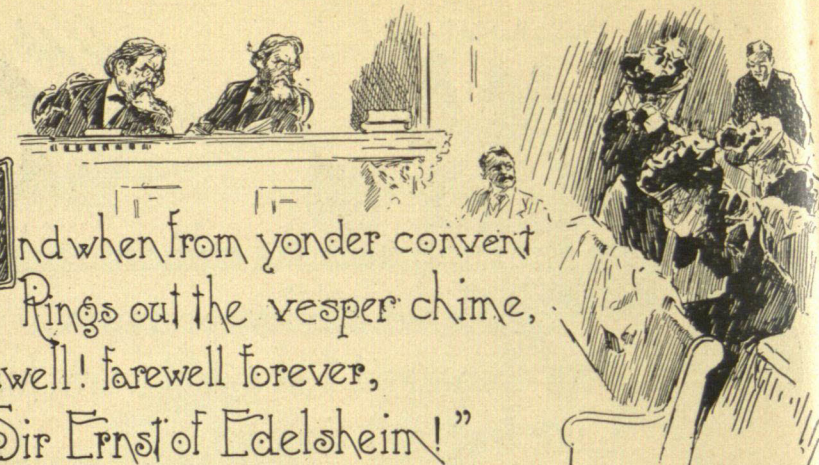


She hung upon the soldiers neck,
 She lured with love and pain,
 She showered her sweet, warm kisses
 Like fragrant summer rain.



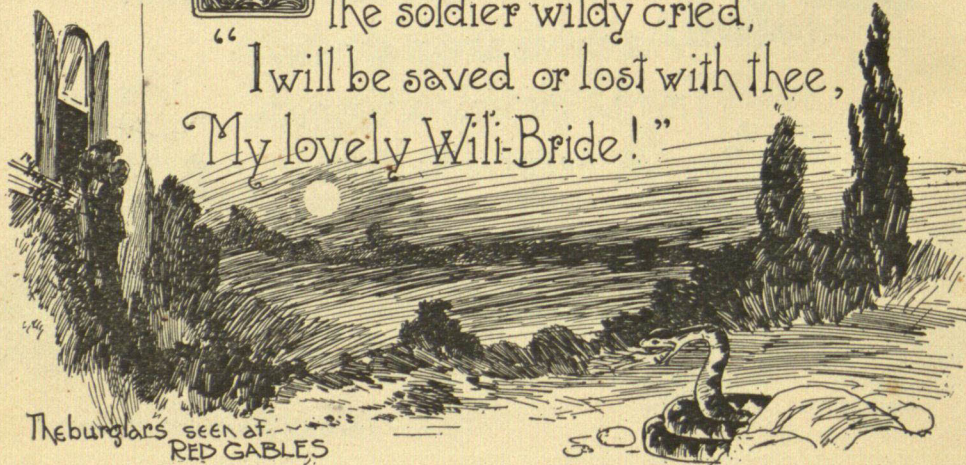
I am no Christian soul, she sobbed,
 As in his arms she lay;
 "I'm half the day a woman,
 A serpent half the day."

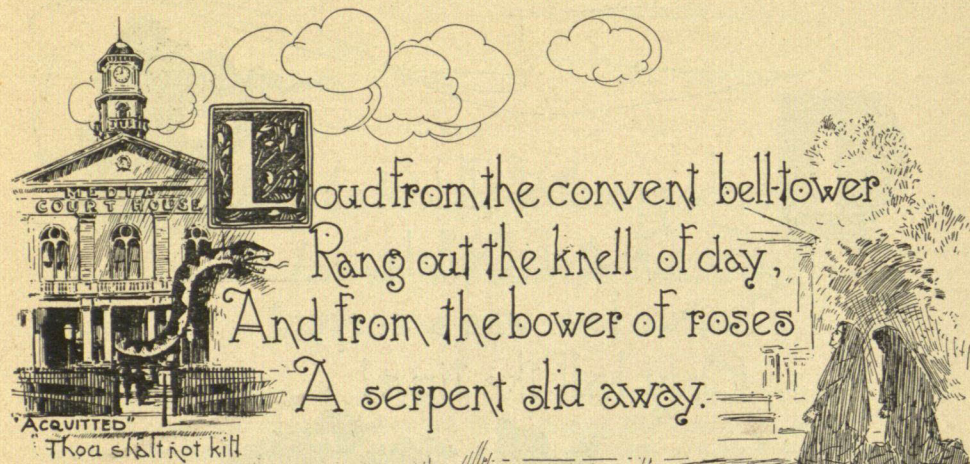



And when from yonder convent
 Rings out the vesper chime,
 Farewell! farewell forever,
 Sir Ernst of Edelsheim!


 Perjury CLASS
 IN MEDIA JAIL
 "Oh! its false! its false! My poor
 dear, dead brother, May God
 save him."

Ak! not farewell forever!"
 The soldier wildy cried,
 "I will be saved or lost with thee,
 My lovely Wili-Bride!"

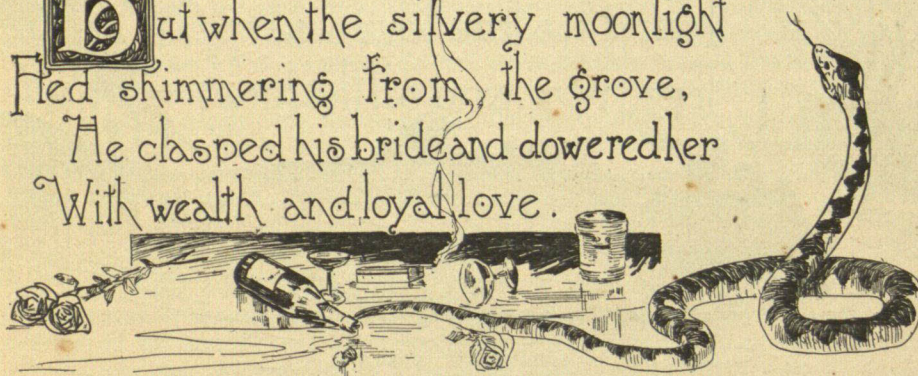

 The burglars SEEN AT
 RED GABLES


Loud from the convent bell-tower
 Rang out the knell of day,
 And from the bower of roses
 A serpent slid away.

"ACQUITTED"
 "Thou shalt not kill"


 Stiffening the
 VIPERS SPINE

But when the silvery moonlight
 Flew shimmering from the grove,
 He clasped his bride and dowered her
 With wealth and loyal love.



The happiest of all lovers
Was Ernst of Edelsheim—
Mistrue love was a serpent
Only half the time!



Red Gable's luckless lover,
Base-butchered in his prime,
Found his true love a serpent
Then, now and all the time!



GOOD BYE, MY SWEET HEART, GOOD BYE.

"A Friend in Need Is a Friend Indeed"

This effort is in no sense intended as a romance. There is not a clean spot nor decent sentiment in it, except the character and life of the luckless dupe. It is a sordid tale with a brutal, low, beastly motive, based on mean, cheap, disgusting filth, degeneracy, and moral nastiness.

The marplots who made it possible, especially the judicial contingent, are nothing more than a bunch of chuckled-headed, be-whiskered, frowsy yokels, without legal knowledge enough to convict a nigger caught in the act of stealing chickens, but with morals of yeggmen and manners of swine, who use the bludgeon instead of the law.

Were it not for the immutable law of decency that governs civilized communities, that requires, in the interests of public welfare, the eradication of noisome cesspools, it would be undignified to pay any more attention to the pitiable collection that freed the two bloody murderers and low bred sluts, than the attention the farmer pays to the decayed rat he flings from the back door of the barn on the manure heap.

The motive of this modest volume is in no manner based on vindictiveness, or a desire to persecute anybody. It is simply a tribute from a living friend to a dead friend, and is prompted solely by a sense of duty to right a terrible wrong and to clear the fair fame of a loyal, generous friend, an honorable man, a brave soldier, a trusting husband, a loving son, an affectionate brother, and decent citizen—the unsuspecting, helpless victim of a sordid plot, who was foully butchered at his own bedside by two lewd wantons, and sent before his Maker without a moment's warning.

Before his body was cold in death's embrace, the two inhuman, fiendish, self-confessed assassins, were permitted under the cloak of law, in the face of an outraged justice, to besmear his defenceless grave with vile, perjured, false calumny, and bring the fair fame of his family and kin into public disrepute.

In this they were aided by a band of dastardly, perjured con-

spirators, who have shamelessly boasted of their low cunning, and who have apparently no fear of God's future retribution in their craven hearts, and who are now prowling like human ghouls around his wrecked and desolate home looking for loot.

Aside from the fact that these developments, every one of them true, will clear the honored name of the luckless victim, it may also serve to right another damnable wrong that was unknowingly thrust by public opinion on the orphaned sisters of the bloody "Vampire's" victim, who were left alone in the world, because the sole remaining male protector of the honor of the family was lying in an untimely grave, with death-sealed lips, helpless to defend them.

After many hopeless days in an unfriendly, impotent court, seeking only justice, striving with all the devotion of sister-love to protect their murdered brother's honored name from the vile stream of perjured calumny; encountering sinister, threatening looks from the assassins and their lawyers; heartless jokes from certain members of the press at the expense of their dead brother; stern looks from high court officials at any natural burst of indignation; sneering smiles from certain members of the jury; and lastly, the awful miscarriage of law, compelled these Christian, God-fearing women to flee society, and seclude themselves in their stricken home, to hide the unjust shame of it all.

It was a natural result. The opinion of the public was formed by reading the perjured tale in the shadow of weeping justice, from the venom-dripping lips of the assassin, gleefully printed as truth in the politically-hostile, vindictive Philadelphia papers, many of which have long since abandoned the pen of journalistic dignity, truth and enlightenment for the muck-rake, the sandbag and the dirty dollar. In fact at the Erb trial it seemed the reporters present were able to smell perjured scandal against Captain Erb wirelessly.

It may also point a bloody lesson to future generations, by demonstrating that if civilized government is to exist, and the sacred law of God and man be maintained, and kept undefiled, the only way is to fearlessly hold up to public scorn those who wilfully violate it, and drive them from the haunts of God-fearing men and women by burning truth.

Therefore it will not be out of place to dedicate this sordid tale to any band of guilty, perjured plotters, whether they be judges, jurymen, lawyers, false friends, crooked officials or anybody else who had a hand in the delectable, putrid mess, that resulted in the brutal slaughter of an honorable man, and bringing about a travesty of law that has made the name of Pennsylvania justice a stench in the nostrils of the civilized world.

It will also serve to call the attention of the vile marplots to the inexorable truth, declared by God in the Holy Book, that He will surely deal out stern justice in the great hereafter to those who have wilfully violated His Holy command which is:

"Whoso killeth any person shall be slain at the mouth of witnesses. Moreover ye shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer that is guilty of death; but he shall surely be put to death. So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are, for blood polluteth the land, and no expiation can be made for the land for the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it."

CHAPTER I.

MEMOIRS OF A MURDERESS FOUND IN A HOLLOW OAK TREE
AT RED GABLES, WRAPPED IN A PAIR OF BLOODY PAJAMAS.

I wish to state in starting these memoirs that my reason for writing them arises from the fact that before the Captain was murdered I had made arrangements to marry a person who is now in Paris awaiting me, and as soon as I can dispose of my late husband's estate, which my lawyers assure me they will get for me, I shall leave the country for a long wedding tour, and I do not care to have any unpleasant developments arise that might jar the happiness of my honeymoon.

I have no idea these memoirs will ever be discovered, but if they are they will serve to help my case, I hope, in the final settlement in the court above. I got that idea from a holy man of God when I was very young. He told me that I should always be able to present a defense that would be sufficient in the eyes of the Lord when I arrived before the bar of justice on the last great day.

I think the fact that I have told the truth in these memoirs will help a little, at least, in my defense when the final jury is faced.

There is still another reason. I know and so do my lawyers and friends that since the trial the career of myself and sister has been followed unerringly from the cradle to the bloody shambles at Red Gables, and not one link in the plot to murder the Captain has been lost. However, we are legally innocent, and that is all that is necessary at present.

Ever since a famous trial in Media I have known that it would not be possible for me to conceal my career and the mystery behind the murder of the Captain. I found this out in several ways.

However the first evidence I got was given me in very weird and gruesome manner, and it is constantly running through my mind. It was a bit of verse sent me anonymously, and written in human blood with huge blood spots all over the paper. It was attached to the Captain's bloody pajamas, which my lawyers assured me had been burned.

The verse was illustrated, and when I saw the pictures I knew then that the true story was known and that I had no chance to escape the wrath that was sure to follow, therefore I determined

to make whatever reparation I could to place my sister right before the people.

The document was signed "Nemesis" and had a quotation from Scriptures, "Thou shalt not kill. Vengeance is Mine saith the Lord."

I also have another reason. I am also absolutely certain that sooner or later my sister will tell the entire truth, for I have information from those who are in close touch with her at present, that she is unable to sleep at night, and that she is afraid that I will continue my career of crime, and sooner or later, the strong hand of the law will get me sure, and force the truth from me.

I will state that the principal characters in these memoirs are known confidentially as the "Vampire," which is myself; the "Viper," which is my sister; the "Captain," who is the victim, and the "Captain's Friend." The reason for the names given these characters will develop later.

There are several other characters that have active parts in this sordid drama, which will develop as the play proceeds.

CHAPTER II.

THE EARLY HISTORY AND THE BEGINNING OF THE CRIMINAL CAREER OF THE VAMPIRE AND THE VIPER.

In giving a brief history of my life I will state I was born on March, 1875, in the rear of 1214 South Seventh Street, in an alley known at that time as "Ramcat Gut." My parents and two sisters, came from Scotland in 1874 to Philadelphia. My father and the family moved to New Castle, Delaware, in 1877, where he was killed in an explosion and was buried in Philadelphia in the New Cathedral Cemetery.

Four months later my mother married. We then moved back to Philadelphia in 1889, and lived at 2052 Fernon Street, where my criminal career really began at the age of fourteen.

At my birth I was called by my parents "Bridget" Conway, but at the christening it was changed to Margaret Conway.

The Viper was born in Scotland, and came to this country in 1874, where she also lived in "Ramcat Gut." She also went to New Castle and afterwards lived at 2052 Fernon Street, until she married, and is now living with her husband at 1629 South Fifteenth Street.

Both the Viper and myself came into prominence in sporting circles at the beginning of the bicycle craze. We wore bloomers and rode a tandem wheel astride.

We were known as the "Straddle Sisters." This, of course, caused the comment we desired, and among a certain class we were great favorites. We used to take century runs with the Time Wheelmen Club, and made a good deal of money from our connection with the sporting members of the club. But the members of the club were not the only ones we got money from while bicycling.

I recall one night when we rode together out to Riverside Mansion we met there an old fellow who was a stock dealer from Kansas. His name was George Benson, and he lived in Topeka as the police records afterwards showed. He treated us liberally, and we had a nice visit together in one of the private rooms. Then he proposed that we meet him next day and he would give us a fine present. While we were busily arranging the details for the meeting, the Viper was hugging and kissing him and I was sitting on his lap. Somehow or other I got a roll of money

out of his pocket, and he never noticed it at that time. He had been drinking heavily, and I guess that was the reason. At any rate we kissed him good-bye and that was the last we ever saw of him.

He made a complaint to the police, but as the folks said we had never been away from home that night nothing further was done. There was one hundred dollars in the roll, and part of that gave me a start.

I will say now that my mother did everything that a woman could to keep us straight. She followed the Viper and I to a bed house where we met two wheelmen, and as the proprietor swore we were not there, mother sent a priest to the place to get us, but I tricked him, and we made our escape by the back gate.

The roll I got from the old cattleman showed how easy it was to get along without work, and from that time to the murder of the Captain, I have lived a life of comparative luxury on the money I got from scores of victims by blackmail, stealing, badger work and fake trolley accidents.

I left home finally in 1892, and went to live with a badger thief named "Big May," who had "privileged" rooms at the corner of Eighth and Pine Streets. I had heard of the woman, and she had also heard of me. She took kindly to me, and I soon learned to make money fast.

In order to keep up the appearance of respectability I secured a position in a fur store on Arch Street, between Eighth and Ninth. The firm has now gone out of business. While there I stole several hundred dollars' worth of furs, and the Viper, who was in touch with me all this time, and also had a job, pawned most of them in different parts of the city. They never could fix the thefts on me, although I was sweated by the special officers of the Sixth District, when I was suspicioned. I was always lucky in my dealing with the police in those days.

One time, however, I came nearly getting caught while living with "Big May."

One night on the street I met an old fellow whom I recognized as a Chestnut Street business man of prominence. He was very drunk and I had no trouble in steering him to Eighth and Pine. I was going to have "May" help me trim him, but as soon as he got in my room he went to sleep. I trimmed him for two hundred dollars and a diamond pin. I knew there would be a fuss about that.

I wrote a note to "Big May" and went secretly to a house at 1926 Tasker Street and laid low. As I supposed a terrible kick was made but the police could not find out anything about it from "May" or the old fellow who was drunk at the time, and

nothing was done. About three years after, however, when "May" and I had a falling out, she told the whole story to Lieutenant Mitchell.

Just before that robbery, in order to keep up appearances, I had engaged as private secretary to a lawyer by the name of John Berkeley, with offices in the Drexel Building. I really do feel a tinge of regret in telling of the ruin of this man.

He was extremely kind and good to me, and got me out of a serious fix one time when I blackmailed a prominent bucket-shop man named Turner, who was connected with the Haight & Freese concern, broke up long after by the police. Turner was easy, and I touched him for a thousand. He made a kick to the police and my employer, who assured him that he had been skinning suckers himself all his life and perhaps he had not better do any more squealing at this time. I soon had Berkely in my clutches. I wore at his expense diamonds, furs and other finery, and finally for certain physical reasons his health gave way, and he was ruined financially and professionally, and his friends sent him to the West where he died on the way, of paresis.

In making an examination of his effects he left a statement telling the cause of his ruin, and a copy of it was sent to me anonymously, during my trial, and also to another source where I hear it has been preserved.

CHAPTER III.

ROTHERMEL, THE SECOND BLOOD VICTIM OF THE VAMPIRE, IS LURED TO HIS DEATH AND RUIN.

It was just about this time that I first met a man named William H. Rothermel. I regret the necessity of telling this part of my life, but as the details are known to at least one person I know of, and who is a deadly enemy of mine, it will probably come out some day. Therefore I may as well give it in full.

It was shortly after the downfall of Berkely I met "Billy" Rothermel. I was short of funds at the time, and was casting about for another victim. I had not succeeded, and I then went to live in the house kept by Mary Walker, alias "Mag Anderson," at 1518 Brown Street. There were several "inmates" there, and while there I met a wine agent, who I will call "Swarts," who taught me to play poker with marked cards. This accomplishment stood me in good stead many times later when I gave parties in my own home.

I also taught the Viper the art of card cheating, and we derived much benefit and profit from it during our social career. By the way, while it might be considered a little digression, "Swarts" was the mysterious person I visited in Pittsburg and stayed with two days at the Duquesne Hotel, and when I told Rothermel of it that was one of the causes of him leaving me for a time. That visit to Pittsburg was made in September, 1901.

It was in the house of "Mag" Anderson I met Rothermel in the winter of 1898. I shall never forget it. He came in one night with a number of friends. He was a tall handsome fellow, dressed in the height of fashion, and spent his money like water. He was a prince, and I at once made up my mind to catch him at any price.

That night I wept and sobbed in his arms and tearfully told him the story of my life, as I only could picture it. It was all about an unkind mother, a brutal father, poverty and so on,—the usual "spiel" used on occasions of that kind—and I landed him. His sympathies were aroused, and the next day he sent for me and the tragedy of his life was on.

I did not care then to continue living at "Mag" Anderson's, and I took rooms at the bed house kept by Elizabeth "Gray-slut," who

was one of my chief witnesses at my murder trial. This house was at 1418 Mount Vernon Street. She also had a summer house of ill-fame at Atlantic City. We then left Mrs. Gray-slut and went to live at 3218 Summer Street, where Rothermel fitted a house and rented it for me.

The last place we lived together was at 529 North Eighteenth Street, where we had a quarrel and he left me. The occasion for the row was his coming home one night when I thought he was out of town, and found a full-fledged wine party in progress. The wine had been furnished by my friend, Swarts, and we were entertaining a number of ladies and gentlemen. "Billy" got in a rage, and flew at me. The Viper, who was there, and who was disrobed like the rest of us, grabbed a wine bottle and was about to smash him, when one of the members of the party grabbed her. I cut "Billy" on the head, however, while he was being held, and he at once left the house and never returned. He swore a warrant out for me before Magistrate South, but it was never served. However, I got even with him.

As it has always been a rule of my life to never let up on anyone whom I turn against me, I started in writing anonymous letters to his business friends and his relatives. I had a good friend in the wine agent, who was at the party that night and who was also angry. He kept me posted and slowly I learned that "Billy's" business was dwindling. He got married, and I started the story that he was a bigamist. I was using his name at that time, and defied him to prevent me from doing so.

I made the life of himself and relatives, particularly his wife, a hell on earth. He told several of his friends that he had received poisoned candy, and that he thought it was that damned Vampire who sent it. He placed the matter in the hands of the police, but withdrew it later as he was afraid of a scandal that would kill his mother and ruin his wife's social standing. I knew this, and on several occasions used to visit his office with the Viper and taunt him.

Finally my friends got together and started a crusade against "brokers" of his class and he was finally ruined after being threatened by the authorities.

I am not going to tell the details of my last visit to his office, but I don't see why the Captain's Friend and the police declare I was the last one seen coming from his office the day he was found dead in his chair, with a glass of water containing cyanide of potassium. Why I never knew there was such a deadly poison at that time.

The real start of my trouble with Rothermel began at Atlantic City in 1901. We were stopping at the Normandie Hotel, and

I was posing as his wife. At that time District Attorney Rothermel was a very prominent figure in politics and I took pains to spread the lie that he was a relative of mine. A great many of "Billy's" friends used to guy him about it, and he protested to me. Then I got mad and started in to do all sorts of things to humiliate him. I flirted with everybody I could and took pains to let him know by anonymous letters that I had been intimate with.

About this time I met a man who has since that time cut a very prominent figure in my career, and has been a great help to me in Delaware county in my efforts to get my own from the Captain. I will call him "Riznercur," a shoe merchant, not far from Thirteenth and Market Streets, Philadelphia. Our pet name for him was "Frankie." My first meeting with him was at the German American ball, where he was introduced to me and the Viper by one of the Captain's false friends, who I will call "Charles Kooper," and after the ball the four of us registered at a well-known sporting hotel, on Filbert Street opposite the Broad Street Station.

The next day the Viper and I visited "Frankie's" shoe store, and in a private apartment over his store he gave us each two pairs of fine kid shoes. We were fitted by a clerk, who insulted me when he was fitting the shoes, and I complained the next day, and "Frankie" discharged him. The clerk is now working in a department store on Market Street, and as "Frankie" had told him all about the good time we had at the Filbert Street hotel, and how he met us, I am satisfied he has been talking to somebody about it. I met "Frankie" many times after that at Atlantic City, and in other places, after I had been married to the Captain.

One day in August after my marriage, I was riding with "Frankie" in a rolling chair on the Boardwalk at Atlantic City, when we came face to face with Louis Pyle, a horseman who is now employed by a prominent man at Bryn Mawr, and "Frankie" gave him ten dollars to say nothing about it. However somebody followed us to the Chelsea Hotel, and the register showed that we were guests as man and wife that night.

In all my dealings in a crisis the Viper was always by my side. Of course she bluffed as a working girl, but I never knew a man that ever liked her, and Rothermel had a particularly bitter hatred for her. He used to dream of her at night. One night I remember, he jumped from bed out of a sound sleep and ran shrieking to the corner of the room yelling, "Don't stab me." He told me that he had had a dream, and imagined the Viper was standing over him and her one eye was a ball of fire, and

she had a knife raised and was about to stab him. From that time on he would always get up and leave the room when she entered. When I found this out, I used to take particular delight in having her about whenever I could.

It was about the time I saw that Rothermel was slipping from my grasp, that I then determined to look for another victim. The Viper had been on the lookout also, but her hideous face with the dead eye was a handicap, and she could make no progress. Finally my usual good luck came to my aid, and I located the Captain, the real victim, by a lucky chance.

It was in the summer of 1901, when I was stopping at the Normandie Hotel with Rothermel in Atlantic City. One of the guests of the hotel, who I had been using to make Rothermel jealous, and who had been one of the easiest marks I had encountered that summer, was a warm friend of the Captain, and I understand he has been meddling lately with my private affairs. One night we were making a social call together to the "hospitable" home of "Elizabeth Grayslut" on Arctic Avenue, where the wine was flowing freely and the piano was sending forth all the sweet strains of rag-time music, when I asked the Captain's Friend if he would accompany me on a horseback ride the next day. He told me he had never ridden a horse and it was his own fault, too, for he had a friend in Philadelphia, Captain J. Clayton Erb, who was very fond of the sport, and had a couple of horses in a riding academy, one of which he used very frequently, and that he was one of the best fellows in the world, and had often offered to loan him one of the horses to learn to ride.

That at once gave me the idea of getting acquainted with the Captain and getting the privilege of using one of the horses.

That innocent remark of the Captain's Friend was absolutely the beginning of the plot that ended in the murder at Red Gables seven years later, as I shall show in these memoirs.

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH THE CAPTAIN TELLS THE GHASTLY STORY OF HIS INNOCENT ENTANGLEMENT IN THE FIENDISH PLOT, AND THE INHUMAN BRUTALITY OF THE VAMPIRE AND THE VIPER.

I did not disclose my intentions to anyone but the Viper until I had left Atlantic City, and returned to my house at 527 North Eighteenth Street. Then I made every effort I knew to get the Captain's Friend, who had a room in my house for a short time, to bring him to the house so I could meet him. He refused, telling me that he had found out I was a dangerous woman, and declared he was going to leave my house, which he did without delay.

But I succeeded, in spite of this and all obstacles, and the way it was done can be best told in the Captain's own words, which he had prepared in a statement just before we killed him, and was to be used in divorce proceedings. The contents of it were known to my counsel after we had begun preparations for the trial that came later, and was a great help in the successful attempt we made to prevent any evidence against our character, honor or past career being produced at the trial.

This is the Captain's statement, and one of my attorneys when he heard of it said if it was permitted in evidence, it would be like a voice from the grave and would surely convict.

"One evening several years ago, there was a social gathering at my house on South Thirteenth Street of a number of my friends whom I had invited. A woman calling herself Mrs. M. Florence Rothermel, appeared among the number, although she was a perfect stranger to me and had not been invited by me. She explained her presence by saying that she had accidentally met the people while they were on their way to my home, and one of them invited her, and knowing that I was an ardent lover of horses, had claimed a fellow-feeling and was sure that I would give her a welcome. Of course I could not violate the rules of hospitality and she remained the entire evening, one of the popular members of the gathering.

"Several days later I received a note at my office in the Betz Building requesting a private interview in which she

stated that she had been impressed with me as a kind-hearted person in whom she could repose confidence. It was signed 'F. R.' I paid no attention to the note until the next day, when she called me on the telephone and in pleading tone asked me if I would not grant her a moment's interview.

"I immediately pleaded business and ignored this also, and the next day she came to the office, in the Betz Building, and called me into the hall. And then with tears in her eyes she begged the privilege of a personal interview at my home. As she appeared to be in deep distress, and as I wished to avoid a scene, I reluctantly granted her request.

"At that interview she also appeared to be in trouble and distress. She wept and sobbed, and told me that her husband, Rothermel, had basely abused her, mistreated her and had abandoned her without a penny. She stated that she was forced to earn her living by painting, and that she had painted a very beautiful and costly jardiniere which had been ordered by the Caldwells for the Christmas trade, but it was too long to wait, and if I would only advance her enough money to pay the rent she would pray for me night and day and would never forget me. I advanced her \$30 and, paying slight attention to the incident, dismissed it from my mind.

"A week later she called again at my home on Thirteenth Street one evening and tendered me the return of the money for the jardiniere, which she said was really worth ten times that sum. She said she was making a sacrifice to return the money. I assured her that the money was a trifling consideration and she insisted on my keeping the jardiniere as an ornament in my house until it went to Caldwell's.

"Later on she insisted on making me a present of it and refused to let me send it to her. During all these visits, against my protests, she continually insisted on me visiting her home, which I refused to do. Later on she brought me a plaque she had painted, and then one evening she came and brought up the subject of horseback riding. She said her mount that day was an 'old skate' and she was just dying for an opportunity to ride one of my horses. I was reluctant, but she pleaded so hard for 'just one ride' that I finally gave her the permission. My horses were being kept at a riding academy.

"At that time I was attending the riding academy and she made it a point apparently, to be there during the hours I was exercising my horses.

"From this time on she met me frequently and she rode my horses several times without my consent. She often visited my house, despite my protests that it was not the proper thing for a married woman to do. Then, one day, she assured me that over a year before she had applied for a divorce from Rothermel in a Western state. She borrowed \$300 from me for legal expenses.

"Her visits to my house caused comment in the neighborhood, and in order to avoid them, I finally visited her at her house, at 1625 Summer Street. About this time, in the most mysterious manner, rumors began to be circulated that "Mrs. Rothermel" and myself were engaged. I had never thought of proposing to the woman, and when I asked her who was circulating the rumors she replied that it was friends of Rothermel who were trying to ruin her.

"Then she began (as I now can see), in underhand ways to make me formally propose to her. Other stories were circulated and anonymous letters sent to newspapers and friends, and she cried and wept in her interviews with me, saying that her connection with me was ruining her reputation and life.

"I was firmly averse to any idea of matrimony with her, but one day a notice appeared in one of the evening papers to the effect that I had been married to her and she came to me, apparently in a desperate frame of mind, and tried to convince me that I had been the cause of all her trouble and declared she would kill herself.

"I did not learn anything further along this line until I secured the lease of Red Gables. I tried then to keep her away from there because I did not think it right to have an unmarried woman living there with me. I offered to pay her expenses and let her live in ease wherever she cared.

"But this suggestion failed also. One day when I came home I found she had moved her things to Red Gables and declared she would stay at all hazards to protect her reputation as my housekeeper. Her sister was there too. Then I began to realize that I was against a terribly dangerous proposition.

"My mother was very ill and on her death-bed, and I feared that any scandal would kill her. One day a ser-

vant found a box of engraved wedding invitations hidden in her room, announcing our approaching wedding. I destroyed them and later on an announcement appeared in the newspapers.

"At this time there was a great amount of political notoriety in the daily papers concerning myself and my friends and I was afraid that something might develop from this affair if it became public that would make fresh scandal for the newspapers. One day she told me that a reporter had been to see her and asked her if it was true that she was my common-law wife or were we really married. And she said the reporter appeared to know so much of our relations, 'I told him we were really married in order to save you.'

"It was about this time a marriage notice was printed in an afternoon paper, and in sheer desperation in my efforts to save a public scandal I consented to marry the woman, after she had apparently had a fit of hysterics and a fainting spell, which I found out afterwards she could fake in a manner that would deceive anybody, even an expert.

"Frequently she and her sister assaulted me, hurling plates and table ware at me at all times, and often throwing coffee in my face. They never attacked me alone. I really had no chance to defend myself. If I made an attempt, one of them would always be behind me, and would crash something over my skull, and knock me down or stun me. I recall one incident that the servants witnessed.

"It was on October 19, on a Sunday at dinner. No word was spoken, when her sister arose with a glass pitcher in her hand, and passed behind me. I thought she was going to the kitchen for something, and as she got behind me she struck me on the head, and it cut a deep gash in my head and the blood spurted. Then both of them began throwing dishes and everything in reach, and the blood blinded me.

"I could not see, and if it had not been for Eugene Poulson dragging me away I would surely have been killed that day. Both of them ran upstairs laughing, and I had a constable called, and her sister got frightened and ran down the road and disappeared. Then my wife told the constable that I had assaulted her sister who was protecting her from me, and that the servants were all lying as I had bribed them.

"There were frequent episodes in which they threatened and made attempts upon my life, and I was always in mor-

tal fear. The stories my wife continually told of my brutal treatment were absolutely untrue and without foundation, in fact, because she was aware that her conduct was creating talk among the servants. Her arrest of Poulson, the coachman, was part of a scheme to attempt to convince the neighbors that I was mistreating her, and to expose me to public scandal.

"On numerous occasions both of them threatened to burn Red Gables and the stables. This was one reason I did not leave the place as I was afraid to stay away from there at night.

"An attempt was made one night to either murder me or burn the house. It was frustrated by the watchfulness of myself and servant.

"It was my plan every night before retiring to inspect all windows and doors in the house. After this had been done one night, I heard a noise in the back of the house and quietly calling one of the servants, made an inspection. I found that one of the back windows had been unlocked since my visit, and entirely opened. The curtain was down from the inside. We waited silently and suddenly heard a voice from the upper windows say, 'run for your lives.' There was a sound of footsteps running, and I and the servant saw two men disappearing in the darkness.

"Directly after this episode Mrs. Erb claimed to have nervous prostration and employed the services of a trained nurse.

"Acting under the advice of my counsel, I refused to hold any communication with her sister, whom I had frequently warned off the place. On frequent occasions the nurse came to me and asked me if I would not speak a word to my wife, as that would make her feel better. I refused to do so, as I was then afraid of some plot.

"But before this got so bad I tried to win her by kindness. From the start I did that.

"I bought her a stable of fine saddle horses and surrounded her with every comfort and luxury I could think of. I had a staff of fifteen servants, and through friends of mine had her placed in the best society I could. I lavished money on her, and hoped and longed she would appreciate it and not dishonor and disgrace me. I treated her with all the affection that a man could bestow. I tried to pay no attention whatever to the rumors that were constantly coming to my ears about the false friends who were wrecking my home.

"But with all that she would not cease her brutality or act in a gentle or wifely manner. She knew that I did not care for her sister and she constantly brought her to the place, and at every opportunity insulted me and assaulted me before my friends and the servants. She constantly made unreasonable demands on me for money, and when I had almost reached the limit of my resources for ready cash, she began with her sister a brutal system of persecution and an attempt to fleece me.

"Both of them tried every way in their power to make me unhappy, and abuse me, kill me and drive me away from my home. It was a fearful ordeal, and finally, as a last resort, in fear of my life, I determined on the advice of my friends, to seek a divorce.

"When she and her sister found this out they visited all the big stores at once where I had credit, and ordered hundreds of dollars' worth of merchandise for herself, family and friends. She even bought working material and tools for her brother, who is a plumber. It threatened to ruin me, and I had to close all my credit accounts. Then the real brutality of the two appeared, for both were desperate, as I had found out her sister was under indictment for theft.

"She stole all silverware from the place and told friends of mine it belonged to her and she had to pawn it to get something to eat as I was depriving her of all her allowance. On several occasions she tried to take away loads of furniture, and I had great trouble in stopping her. As it was she did get away with many hundred dollars' worth of my possessions, claiming that they belonged to her.

"She did not own a dollar's worth, as she had nothing when I met her, but I let her have whatever she claimed in order to pacify her. What she, her sister, her brother, and her brother-in-law did not take away she induced children to visit the place and destroy. I tried every way possible to pacify her and her sister.

"At her request I got her sister's husband a position as brakeman on the Reading Railroad when scores of men were being laid off every day.

"She brought her brother to the place and I hired him to do the plumbing work, and he insisted on eating with us in the dining room with his overalls on and in his shirt sleeves. When I objected they all three threatened and assaulted me. It was useless for me to try to get justice in that county. It seemed that nearly all the constables,

officials and justices were against me. They were always with her and sympathized and aided her in her attempts to drive me away from the place. It was needless for me to attempt to check her that way. I found most of the hotel people and the road house people and many of the so-called society men were aiding her every way in her schemes.

"And now I wish to say in connection with this statement which is to be sworn to, that never in my life did I strike, beat, assault either her or her sister, or do anything that I would not have been willing to do to my own sainted mother, who is now in her grave, and who confided to a friend, before her death, that Clayt's wife reminded her of a human snake and some day would sting him to death."

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH THE VAMPIRE FORGES THE CAPTAIN'S FATAL
CHAIN OF BLOOD AND DEATH.

I wish to state that every word the Captain tells in that statement was true as far as he knew, but he did not know, of course, how the plan was worked by me as he had no suspicion until near the end that he was being made the victim of a plot.

After I had got a slight foothold in the house at South Thirteenth Street I found I had to have some method of making an excuse for coming there as often as possible.

I found that he had a lodger in his house, a widow named Kate Johnson, who had a shady police record, but of which he was ignorant. She had a nephew named George L. Johnson, working in Strawbridge's and I made it a point to make his acquaintance and tie him to my string. Through him I met his aunt, and soon had a strong confederate in the Captain's home.

She was very fond of whiskey and I took pains to keep her well supplied. She gave me all the aid she could. This gave me an opportunity to keep in close touch with the Captain, as she spied on him continually.

I had a hard time to make him come around and even tolerate me. He tried to get rid of me time after time, but I still kept on, and slowly I was drawing the coils about him, and he never suspected.

Mrs. Johnson kept a close watch on the Captain and everything that went on in the house. She carefully watched for any signs of suspicion, and often told me of plans the Captain was making to keep me away from the house and of his talks with his sister. She told me the Captain did not like me to come around there as I was a married woman and it might make trouble, and he did not believe in having anything to do with another man's wife, and was afraid of newspaper scandal. I had that to contend with until I convinced him that I had applied for a divorce in a Western state, and that it had been granted, and that I had to have \$300 to pay the expenses before I could get the papers. He did not want to let me have the money, and tried to dodge and keep away from me, but I would not let him.

I have heard it was said that it was a pity that the Captain did not have a stronger moral courage to resist me, but of course that

is explained now when it is known that no matter what he did, I was always ready to checkmate him, and of course he was not aware of my motive and slowly I was closing the coils about him and he had no chance to escape.

As I am still desirous of having these memoirs as clear as possible, I will now mention that I had aid from many of the county officials and justices in my efforts to drive the Captain from Red Gables. Besides these there were many others high in society who were posing as friends of the Captain, and who were really aiding me in wrecking his home. Among these latter I will mention a few at this point. Of course I would not be so mean as to give anything like their real names, so people would know them, but as they all figure largely in these memoirs, and I am telling the entire truth, I will mention them as characters. There was one, who was the very worst one in the bunch. I will call him "Lewd Stacklouse," a rotten-principalled wrecker of homes and despoiler of woman-virtue.

There was another, a prominent physician living in West Philadelphia near Forty-seventh Street, who I will call "A. Weasel Hammershame." Another physician, who lives in Media, I shall refer to simply as "Doc. Dickerdung." Another who deserves very high mention, is a shyster Delaware county lawyer, who I will refer to as "Cloudy Alexadder." However, "Cloudy" has only a little on two other lawyers, also of Delaware county, who I will refer to as "Frowsy Rhouges," and "Robber Fraudfield." And then the real all-wool-yard-wide fraud, an old senile person, high in judicial circles, I will name "Bill Broomstink."

Another one, a dull-witted, pitiable, old judicial ass. I will call "Ike Jokeson," who never was admitted to the bar.

And now that these have been mentioned, I must not forget the one who really saved the lives of myself and the Viper, by a verdict of acquittal in the trial. This one I shall call "Vile Litzenbug," a former jurymen, who has been driven out of business in Delaware county by public sentiment.

There is a long list of others who I shall mention generally in these memoirs, and who I still have on my list in case of emergencies.

Really it was an easy problem to solve. How the Viper and I used to laugh at the Captain's efforts to escape. I used to show his letters to his false friends, and we had many a good laugh at them. After I had shown them the "Dear Peggy, come home, and be good," letters, they used to kid me by calling me "Peggy, the Vampire," and laugh at the Captain's silly little term of endearment he had invented to show that he was in a forgiving mood and was trying to win my love.

"Doc. Hammershame" said humorously one day he had a mind to visit Clayt's lodge in the secret order to which they both belonged, and read the letters and show the brethren there what a "sucker" they had in the order. He said a man who was soft enough to write such letters "was not fit to belong to any organization that had real men in it."

Of course, the reason the Captain gives in his statement is that he was afraid of a scandal that might affect his political friends, but I know another and stronger reason. At that time his mother was on her deathbed. I would never have known this if the Viper had not heard it one day after she had trailed the Captain to his mother's home. When I asked the Captain if it was true that his mother was on her deathbed he broke down and cried and begged me not to let her know of our connections. Then I knew I had him. I told him not to fear, and then went and made a secret visit to his mother. I showed her a little gold band that I still wear and that I stole from Lawyer Berkley years before, and told her it was my engagement ring to "Clayt." I made her promise to keep the secret as the Captain didn't want it known yet.

However, I found out the Captain's mother had not been favorably impressed with my appearance, and she worried over it, and told one of her daughters that she feared her boy had made a grave mistake in his choice of a wife. However, she did not tell the Captain of my visit, and one day after we were married I made another visit. It is this visit that makes me furious when I think of it.

I learned after that visit that Clayt's mother had reluctantly made up her mind to accept me on Clayt's account, and that she had prepared a check for five thousand dollars and intended to give it to me on that visit. It was under her pillow. That day I had used extraordinarily large quantities of paint on my face, and carmine on my lips, and a quantity of musk, and as I had been drinking with "Riznercur," the combination was too much for the sick woman, and she turned her head to the wall and refused to talk any more.

I never got the check, and when I learned it after her death, I was furious. That night I took a shy at Clayt's bald spot with a cup, and the Viper hit him with a plate.

CHAPTER VI.

THE VAMPIRE TELLS THE TRUE STORY OF THE PURCHASE OF RED GABLES AND THE FATAL BED.

After I had left Philadelphia for good, I went to Media, and took up at the Idelwild Hotel. The Captain never visited me there but I used to go to the city to see him. My early career with the fox hunting crowd began at that time. I met many men in that set during my sojourn at the Idelwild and afterwards, that were useful to me in the days of my ordeal in court and visited me at Red Gables. Later on I will detail how they were loyal and useful in perverting justice.

My stay at the Idelwild was not prolonged as I was the storm center of a lot of scandal, most of which was true, but some of which was not. One story was about a colored man, who worked about the stables, but they never could prove that was true. However, it served to make my stay there very short. Then I went to the Kolonial and at that famous hostelry I had a wild career, and it was at that point the final plans for completely ensnaring the Captain was formed.

I had made up my mind the Captain must marry me, and also provide for my desire for sport and luxury in the future. Luck seemed to come my way, and has never deserted me since, and I now shall tell how I made good on my determination to indulge in my desire for fox hunting and degenerate practices.

The true story of the purchase of Red Gables by the Captain forms the strangest and weirdest part of this unnatural tale. One day after a trip to New York, where I met my friend, "Koooper," I returned to the Kolonial Hotel in Media, and as my bill was overdue, I went to the office of "Frowsy Rhouges" to borrow the money to fix the matter up. At that interview "Rhouges" told me that his uncle had placed a beautiful farm property located at Village Green, in his hands for sale, and if he could find a purchaser he would give him two thousand dollars as commission. Then "Rhouges" told me that if I could find somebody to purchase it he would divide with me.

Instantly it occurred to me that the Captain had been looking for a country place, and was at that time negotiating for a property on Montgomery Pike. When I told "Rhouges" this he at once grew enthusiastic and declared it was the very thing. He said

the Captain would be easy to work through me, and he would help. He warned me to approach the subject in a very natural manner as the Captain might get suspicious.

I found that the Captain had already paid an option on the Montgomery Pike property, but that he was in doubt as to the title. I at once got in touch with "Frowsy," and he called the Captain up on the 'phone one day and told him he was a lawyer, and that he represented a claimant, for the Montgomery Pike property and if anybody bought the property a law suit would surely follow. It worked to perfection. The Captain immediately notified the owner that the deal was off, and this left the field clear for our plans.

"Rhouges" immediately got busy, and employed a "caretaker," who was to act as "capper," who went to Red Gables. He told the "caretaker" all about the deal and what we had done, and promised him a part of the commission if he would help with the deal. Failure to keep this promise on the part of "Rhouges" was a mistake, for I understand the Captain's Friend got wind of it and started at once on the trail. From this point on the story sounds like the wildest dream of a Sherlock Holmes, but it is absolutely true. Following "Rhouges'" instructions, I began to look for an opportunity to bring the subject to the Captain naturally, and it came to me in the luckiest manner.

The Captain had one hobby, that was the possession of old-fashioned furniture, particularly of the Colonial type. He was continually talking of a rare old bedroom suit that his father had when he was married, and had been given him by his grandmother and had been in the Erb family for ages. At the present time there was only another one like it and it was in the Virginia branch of the family.

The Captain always said he would give anything he had if he could only get possession of it. He finally succeeded. The furniture was massive and extremely rare. The bed was an immense affair of solid mahogany with a headboard several feet high. There was no ordinary house with ceiling high enough to permit of its use.

One day I was looking for a chance in the Captain's home on Thirteenth Street, after he had made the usual protest, when his sister unexpectedly came in. The Captain knew his sister did not like me, and objected to me coming to the house. In order to smooth things over the Captain mentioned to his sister that he had secured the old grandfather bedroom suit he had been longing for, and had stored it upstairs until he could find a country home with ceilings high enough to use it. He invited us up to look at it, and I at once saw my opening.

The Captain said he guessed he would be a long time finding a house with a ceiling high enough to set the immense bed in, and I apparently said in a joke that I knew of a house in the country, and if I would tell him where it was would he consent to go with me and look at it. He smilingly assented, and I saw his sister looking very much displeased, for she always mistrusted me.

I then told him of a beautiful place at Village Green, known as Red Gables, which I heard was for sale at a bargain, and the Captain at once became interested, and told us how his deal with the Montgomery Pike property had fallen through by the kindness of some unknown lawyer who refused to give his name. And now I hate to tell this part of the story, for it is the real tragic part that makes this gruesome tale of blood one that sounds stranger than fiction.

The ancestral bed, the reminder of the ancient fame of his beloved forbears, who made American history, and who were soldiers, statesmen and proud gentlemen, was the one on which he was sleeping peacefully when I lured him to his ghastly, bloody end, and sent him to his Maker without a moment's warning.

One day, in accordance with his promise, I induced the Captain to come to Media and take a horseback ride with me. He consented, and I led the way to the road that I knew would serve my purpose. I made warm love to him all the way, and talked in a romantic strain of our future. When we reached the top of a hill where we could see the towers of Red Gables shining in the sunlight, I then spoke to him of the ideal life we two could live in a retreat like that away from the "world, the flesh and the devil." "Now," said I, "show how much you love me by buying that for our home if we ever intend to get married and live a life of peace and happiness."

He assured me that he would never marry anybody as long as his mother was alive, but that he would consider the idea of securing the place as he always had a desire to become a gentleman farmer.

Then we rode to Red Gables where the "caretaker" had been carefully schooled. He showed the Captain over the beautiful grounds, introduced him to the farmer, and then made a tour of the house.

When we reached the fatal room, which the Captain later selected as his own, the "caretaker," following my instructions, pointed to the great height of the ceilings, and I at once called his attention to the fact that the dear old bed would fit there. Immediately the Captain asked for a measurement. I had previously made one and knew it was all right. I could see that the Captain

was impressed and from that time on there was little trouble in making the deal.

I got my commission and the only mistake "Rhogues" made was in not keeping his word with the "caretaker," who had been told every detail of the scheme to sell the property, and how I had lured the Captain to the place.

CHAPTER VII.

THE VAMPIRE REVELS IN A GRUESOME TALE OF BLOOD,
DEGENERACY, PERJURY, BLACKMAIL, FALSE FRIENDS,
POLLUTED JUSTICE AND POISON.

Now that I have cleared my mind of the plot to get into Red Gables, I will detail the efforts we made to get rid of the Captain so the Viper, myself and friends could enjoy the beautiful place and the Captain's fortune. All these facts are true, and I may as well tell them, as I know the Captain's Friend has found them out and has corroborated them.

I wish to state that the Viper was averse to my plot to kill the Captain outright. She opposed it from the start, despite my positive assurance and her knowledge of my connections with high judicial and legal authorities in Delaware county. She declared that it would be too dangerous, as the Captain was one of the most potent men in the public and political affairs of the State, and that he was entrusted with political confidences of some of the greatest political leaders in the country, and that no jury or court in the land would dare to lend aid to a plan to permit his murderers to escape. But I knew different, as she smilingly acknowledged after our acquittal.

She was in favor of driving him away by a systematic course of brutality. She argued that as the Captain hated her with a deadly hatred, she would continually visit Red Gables and both of us could make his life a perfect hell and he would finally give up. I thought this would take too long and I suggested poisoning him. This the Viper thought would be too dangerous, because I had already been under suspicion for poisoning Rothermel.

Then we decided that we would try the brutality plan first, and if that did not succeed, we would poison him and claim he had committed suicide. Again the Viper told me she would take no part in the shooting.

The Captain has already told how I tricked him into marrying me, therefore I shall take up the story after my arrival at Red Gables as the real wife. We were given a warm welcome on the day of our arrival and the Captain appeared very happy. He, in his false dreams of wedded bliss, told me as he kissed me good-bye the next morning, that we should both forget the past and live

now for the future and try and surround ourselves with a family of little ones to brighten our lives.

He said he would always love me, and would buy me a stable of horses and a pack of hounds, and I could indulge in my love for the chase as much as I chose. He said he only asked one favor in return, that I would not let my sister come to the place and make trouble. These remarks were overheard by the servant who drove the Captain to the station.

The Captain kept his word. He made me a personal allowance of \$200 a month, and directed that all the household bills should be sent direct to him. We had fifteen servants on the place and I was given the privilege of a groom and a maid, for which he paid.

I am not going to attempt to give dates in my story of the life we led at Red Gables after my marriage, but will confine myself to the facts and occurrences, which I am certain are known to the Captain's Friend, who I know has been camping on my trail night and day, and I also know that certain high officials in Delaware county knew some of them before the trial and would not let them be introduced as evidence. Every one of the facts have been corroborated by eye-witnesses and others who were familiar with the events that led up to the killing of the Captain. I will now state that many of the sworn affidavits were read by myself and the Viper and my lawyers in the jail before the trial, and was a great help to us. I do not think it would be right for me to tell how we got them, for people might cast a suspicion on "Bill Broomstink," for in the words of that classic melody, "He certainly was good to me."

I will state now that never in my life have I failed in any plot I have ever laid. I always started it right and attended to the details myself. This I did in the plot to get rid of the Captain. My first effort was to make powerful friends by getting in close touch with the fox hunting crowd, as they represent to my mind all that amounts to anything in Delaware county, and I knew that they had powerful influence. The Captain helped me largely in that move. He spoke to several of his personal friends, among that set, and as a result I was invited to many of the hunts of the Chester Valley Hunt Club. I noticed on several occasions that some of the women folks did not take kindly to me but nearly all the men did and that was all I cared for.

I will here give another evidence of my luck and the statement will also make several other matters clear in these memoirs.

The first woman I met in the fox hunt was a married lady, who I shall call "Mrs. Walkermire," who was one of the principals in the Red Gable plot. She was really of great aid to me,

not only in a social way but was a constant companion of mine in other confidential matters of a strictly "personal" character. However, she showed the white feather, and deserted me just before the murder, and I understand got conscience stricken and told the Captain's Friend a lot of things after he had located her in New York.

I found her the very person I was looking for to put me next to the "easy marks" in the hunting set. I found this out when I learned that she was popular with certain men in the fast set who had a private masculine nickname for her, which I am too much of a lady to repeat.

Mrs. W. was talented. She could sing and dance and play the piano beautifully. She it was who gave us the names we are known by in these memoirs. She wrote a little musical sketch one time, and she called it the "Three Sin Sisters—Vampire, Viper and Vulture," and those names were used by us in private and we had lots of fun with them among our friends.

I learned to repeat Kipling's poem "The Vampire," and at the suggestion of "Cloudy Alexadder," one night during the Captain's absence, he suggested that a certain pose I had assumed would make a good representative of the Vampire, and he arranged with an artist friend of his, who was on a certain jury, to take the picture. "Mrs. Walkermire" was with me when the picture was taken and she got one of them.

In the sketch she wrote was a clever little song satire that made a hit on another occasion.

It was a take-off on my friend "Cloudy Alexadder," "Bill Broomstink," the high judicial friend of mine, and my darling "Lewd Stacklouse." It ran like this:

Under a "Cloud," under a "Cloud,"
Sing in a whisper, not very loud—
The Captain sleeps near, perhaps he might hear
That rat Alexadder sneak up the rope ladder.

We heard a wierd whiz-z-z-z-z-z-z-z-z,
And what do you think?
'Twas wind in the whiskers of "Bill Broomstink,"
Who fled o'er the lawn at first peep of dawn.

Hold your nose, hold your nose,
There's a skunk in the house,
It's that rotten false friend "Lewd Stacklouse,"
Who stole a man's wife, and ruined his life.

It was by the knowledge and aid of Mrs. W. I got such a strong hold on the fox hunting crowd. She was a fine horsewoman,

and rode one of the Captain's horses, and invariably accompanied myself and Litzenbug on the hunts. I was very kind to her. I used the Captain's credit to keep her in good clothes, and costly riding habits, and on many occasions we used to take trips together to different hotels in Atlantic City, New York and Philadelphia, and on these occasions we would occupy expensive apartments for a week at a time and the bills for wine and costly meals were always large, and the Captain would have to pay them, as I used to have the hotels draw on him at sight.

Sometimes we never left the rooms for a week at a time, and I used to tell the hotel folks that I was suffering from nervous prostration and Mrs. W. was my nurse.

In all my efforts at Red Gables to get rid of the Captain, Mrs. W. was a great aid. She got me a lot of outside information that was valuable to the Viper and myself.

The Captain was always suspicious of her, and she knew it, but to convince her this was not the case, I induced the Captain by trickery to loan her husband two hundred dollars, which has never been paid.

While the Viper and myself never told her in so many words about the plot, I am sure she knew all about it, for she lost her nerve and tried to get some one to 'phone the Captain the day before the murder that he would surely be killed if he went to Red Gables that fatal night. The Captain could not be located, and after the parade another attempt was made, and that also failed.

The reason I am certain she had knowledge of all our plans regarding the murder, was of my conversation she overheard in Broad Street Station in the telephone booth, with the Viper. This was on the morning of the day of murder. I thought the door was closed, but it was ajar, and when I finished and turned to go out I saw her slipping away. I at once accused her of eavesdropping, and she got angry and left me without a word, and I have never seen her since.

While on those hunts I met many men and nearly every one of them was intimate with me at Red Gables, and when my trial came it was just as I had planned, they saved the day for us, by money and influence and fear of exposure.

In order to prove this it will be necessary to elucidate another joy invention of mine that was a great aid to me in meeting my lovers at Red Gables at night. I did this by means of a rope ladder, which was found in my bureau after the murder, and was hidden by one of the friendly county officials who came to the place to do all he could to destroy evidence that might be of benefit to the detectives.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN WHICH IS REVEALED THE TRUE AND STARTLING TALE
OF THE VILE PERJURER, WHO LOST HIS SOUL BY POLLUT-
ING JUSTICE AS A MEMBER OF THE JURY.

I think at this point I may as well explain one attachment I found at the fox hunt that will make this clear and prove that I am telling the truth. For instance, take the attachment I formed for "V. V. Litzenbug," number three on the jury. He was one of my first fox-hunting friends and my warmest. He and I had many pleasant, cosy times at Red Gables in the seclusion of my room, by the rope ladder route, and also at Chester and other places.

He was usually my steady escort on the fox chases although he swore differently in court. He became quite well known to the servants of Red Gables, and helped me out many times after the Captain had withdrawn my credit from the big stores.

One instance I wish to state that will show how easy it was for us to escape penalty for murder. It happened in the latter part of last September, just before the murder. One night Litzenbug was seen to go into my room by the rope ladder route by a person named "J. R. C.," and I told him how brutally the Captain had treated me in stopping my credit. He sympathized with me, and directed me to go to Wanamaker's and order a coat and send it to him C. O. D. and he would pay for it. He told me to tell the folks in the store that I was his wife, and he gave me his card to show, and that it would be all right. I went to the store and did as he requested. The coat was sold to me by the head saleslady, and in my interview with her I told her how good my husband, Mr. Litzenbug, was to me, and all about the beautiful home I had called Red Gables, and the horses and dogs and servants, and she seemed to take a deep interest in my story.

This was unwise for me, however, for during the trial, the saleslady who had no suspicion who I was, saw the name and address of Litzenbug as having been drawn on the jury, and also saw my picture as being the principal in the murder trial. She at once recognized the terrible significance of the matter, but as it was the last day of the trial, she was powerless to do anything.

However, I found out from Litzenbug later it was an easy mat-

ter for the Captain's Friend to trace the delivery of the coat and the payment to him, and the receipt of it by me at Red Gables. I am glad the matter was not made known during the trial, as of course, that would have been quite a blow to the Viper and myself, as it was well known that Litzenbug absolutely controlled the jury.

It will also be remembered my friend Litzenbug, when he was qualifying for the jury swore that he had slight acquaintance with me, and had only seen me in a very few times at fox hunts. I think it was real mean for the saleslady to give us away in that manner, but I found out afterward that she was a person of deep Christian principles and convictions and was convinced that it was her duty to help show the public how such a grave travesty of justice was brought about. And to think of it! the Viper wore the coat at the trial.

After I had thoroughly entrenched myself with the male members of the fox hunting crowd, I at once started into either drive the Captain off the place or drive him insane. My first move was to make him have an intense fear of me. I did this in several ways.

On every occasion* when the Viper was in the house we would put up some job on him and assault him and abuse and insult him in any way we could think of. I did everything possible to make his life miserable. I discharged servants, broke furniture, ruined the crops, and in fact did everything devilish that either the Viper or myself could think of. It was one continual wrangle from one day to the other whenever the Captain was home.

I know he was afraid to make any open move as he was deadly in fear of notoriety and besides every Justice of the Peace was my friend, and he did not want his friends to know he was so unfortunate and unhappy. To prove this I will attach the copy of an affidavit, a sworn statement by a servant who was at Red Gables for several months. This affidavit also was known to my counsel, but was not permitted in evidence, and shows how near we came to driving the Captain insane. It is a statement made by Mrs. Louise Voltze, 3224 N. Broad street.

She says:

"I was cook at Red Gables from October, 1907, until February, 1908, and left there because there was so much fussing between the two sisters and the Captain that I couldn't stand it. I was there when the Captain was hit on the head with a pitcher, but did not see it as I was upstairs and the fuss was downstairs. Next day I saw the

Captain in the library and he was crying very hard, and his head had a bloody bandage on it, and the tears were coming down his cheeks, and he seemed dazed in his head and said he did not remember what happened or anything about a fuss. The Captain's wife was a crank and always finding fault."

The Viper and myself had a good laugh over the fact that the Captain said he did not remember any fuss. The reason he didn't was simple. We both knew he was in his room that time and would go downstairs in a few minutes. We waited at the door of my room listening, and when the Captain went down the stairs, the Viper and I run out, to the top stairs, each one with an ice pitcher in hand, and before I could get a chance, the Viper flung it with all her strength and it struck Clayt square on the back of the skull. He was at the bottom. It was meant to kill, but the Captain with a cry of pain and the blood streaming, staggered into the kitchen and then I run downstairs, and started to scream so the servants would think the Captain was beating me. This was one episode where the Viper got in her work before I did.

There were three eye-witnesses to it all.

Really it was a shame to take advantage of the poor Captain the way we did, but it was such sport. He was so unsuspecting.

For months he received anonymous letters from neighbors about me meeting men and he refused to believe them about his "dear little wife."

We used to do the most daring things in bringing our paramours and lovers into the house, by the rope ladder. Many nights when the Captain was asleep in his room, we had men in my room until near morning, and many nights when the captain thought I was in my room, I would go down the ladder and meet somebody and stay out till morning.

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH ONE OF THE FALSE FRIENDS BETRAYED THE
CAPTAIN'S SECRETS TO THE VAMPIRE AND THE VIPER.

Along about this time I began to hear rumors from my friends who were keeping watch for me that the Captain was preparing for a divorce.

In order to prove this I will explain how the Viper and I after we found this out were able to keep constant watch on the movements of the Captain while striving for divorce evidence. It was done through a certain doctor, a dear friend of mine, who like his namesake, the "Brook," babbles unceasingly, and who I will call "Measly Brooklets."

The doctor had a friend, high in the National Guard, who was the superior of the Captain in rank, and also a good friend of his. The Captain confided in him at all times and sought advice in his troubles. He told him what he was doing and how he was going to get a divorce. One day the soldier friend of the Captain and "Measly Brooklets," met at lunch, when the soldier, who was under the impression that the doctor was the Captain's friend and an enemy of mine, told the doctor the whole story, and revealed the plans of the Captain. This proved to be a very potent factor in aiding the Viper and I in our plans, and had a very grave influence in the murder. There was not a move of the Captain the doctor did not let us know. We could see the Captain was puzzled, and suspicioned that certain persons in his employ were giving him the "double cross," but that was not true.

In order to mislead the Captain we had the doctor write an anonymous letter to the Captain and tell him that certain high police officials of the Philadelphia force, who posed as his friends, but were his enemies, were keeping us posted. One day in order to give it that appearance the Viper and I visited the Department of Public Safety, and after a consultation about some trifling matter with one of the officials, we left and my brother who was watching at the corner of Broad and Chestnut, went in a public 'phone booth and called the Captain up at 1106 Betz Building and told him his wife and sister had just left the Department of Public Safety. Then we saw the Captain come out of the Betz Building and go to the City Hall hurriedly. We were then quite

sure that by this ruse the attention of the Captain would not again be turned to the doctor who had proven to be a false friend, and who he had faintly suspected.

Then the Viper and I determined to get to work in earnest, and if we found he had any chance of winning, we would surely do him before he could get us off Red Gables. It was about that time I went to Gimbel's and purchased a revolver each for myself and the Viper. I sent the revolver for the Viper to her husband, as it would not look right for me to send it to a woman, and might cause inquiry.

However she never brought it to Red Gables.

Then I began a systematic practice of shooting at a mark, and of handling the revolver quickly at all distances. I gave it out that I carried it because there were many burglars frequently seen around Red Gables. That story helped me afterwards in a way I had not counted on. I ascertained one day that I had been indiscreet with the rope ladder because the room occupied by the maid, was in position to command a view of every foot of the lawn, and anybody climbing in or out of my window by the rope ladder could be seen by her if she was looking.

After that whenever we let anybody out in the morning, I used to arouse the house by firing out of my window, and claim I had seen burglars. I don't think I fooled the maid, however, for she was as smart as I was, and hated me like poison, and loved the Captain, as did every other servant about the house, except my stool-pigeons.

I took particular pains to keep the Captain aware of the fact that I could handle a gun, by constantly taking snap shots at him. Of course I claimed I was only fooling when he protested, but it gave me the practice I needed in the final tragedy.

The Viper and myself at last begun to understand that the Captain was thoroughly aroused, and was aware of the fact that we were trying to get rid of him. The Viper got frightened and wanted to quit, but I would not let her, as I knew I could do nothing without her when the real ordeal came, as she was as strong and ferocious as a wild hyena when she smelled blood. "Measly Brooklet" told us the Captain was working on our past record, and had discovered many things. We tried to deceive him again, but we saw that he was determined to get rid of myself and the Viper at any cost.

I then took away all the furniture and valuables I could get hold of by stealth and stored them with a lady at Media, who knew nothing of my motives. I received notice from the Captain's lawyers that a settlement must be made and a separation arranged pending a divorce. I knew that the Captain had enough

testimony to get a dozen divorces, if he desired, and in the hands of any court outside of Delaware county I could expect nothing but justice.

Among the things I knew the Captain had found out was that one time I had blackmailed a prominent manufacturer of Philadelphia, who I will call "J. P.," with the aid of a woman named Helen Mason and a lawyer named Ellis, out of one thousand dollars. This was in 1900. We would have gotten five thousand if it had not been for the manufacturer's lawyer, who reluctantly consented to the action seeking to avoid publicity.

Another thing the Captain knew, was that I had victimized the traction company of Philadelphia out of several hundred dollars by fake claims in times past. In these cases I always had friendly lawyers on my staff, and each one would go the limit for me in swearing. I also had a friendly doctor or two. In the first case I had "Dr. Weasel Hammershame," of Philadelphia, and a lawyer named Ellis. That was easy, I got three hundred for settling that fake claim.

The next case I had was "Frowsy Rhogues" and "Dr. Dickerdung." The doctor swore that I had been injured so badly that he had to perform an operation on me, and it cost three hundred dollars for his fee. Therefore, a thousand dollars would be little enough.

However we all came nearly getting into trouble over that fake claim. The doctor wrote the company that I was suffering severely in bed and the claim should be settled at once. He said my usual recreation was horseback riding, and I would never be able again to indulge in it. "Frowsy" also wrote in the same line and so did I. The traction company quietly had me trailed, and the very next day "Lewd Stacklouse" and myself took a long, dashing ride across country, and the day after that the traction company gave "Dr. Dickerdung," "Frowsy Rhoughes" and the Vampire the scare of their lives. I was going to bluff it through, as I needed the money, but the doctor gave me two hundred dollars to drop it.

I also had another lawyer in that case, named "Jokeston," a son of a prominent judge in Delaware county, who was present every day in court during my trial, but under cover.

I didn't care so much about what they found out about the fake trolley hold-ups as I did about other things. For instance, take the episode at a certain riding academy, near Twenty-second and Chestnut Street, Philadelphia. I was ordered away from the place by the proprietor who gave as a reason that I was too friendly with a certain riding master, and after he had made it, I employed a "busy" lawyer, widely known in the criminal and

divorce courts, and he wrote a letter to the proprietor demanding a monetary retraction. That case was dropped like a hot potato when the real story was told. It was never made public, but some one told the Captain's Friend after the trial some lie about a negro hostler in the harness room one night. They did not employ colored help at that place. The hostler told me he was an East Indian.

There was another thing the Captain's Friend found out after the trial that I am glad was not discovered sooner. If it had there might have been a scandal that would have shocked the community far more than the acquittal of the Viper and myself, for it included a number of persons connected with very high social circles. The Captain's Friend would never have found it out if he had not landed Mrs. Walkermire, the "Vulture," in New York, I am sure of that.

But as it was the two women she directed the Captain's Friend to look up did not tell the truth. I had quarreled with both of them and they were taking their spite out on me and the Viper in that way, telling a pack of lies. The facts are simply these: A certain doctor who has an office near Media, who I will call "Dr. Dickerdung," is a specialist in the private ailments of women, and works in conjunction with a "Dr. Hammershame" of Philadelphia, who is also a specialist in the private ailments of women.

The two doctors together, had regular consultation days, and a number of us society ladies, who belong to the "horsey set," used to go there for treatment regularly. These two women told a lie when they said the curtains were always pulled down and the doors locked, and that there were always plenty of cigarettes and cigars and wine, and that we stayed there all night. We never stayed a moment longer than necessary for us to get treated in turn by the doctors. There was only one chair in the operating office, and necessarily that took longer than if there were two.

I brought many new patients for treatment, and just because the two women who made the affidavit declared they had been insulted on their first visit to the private office and left in anger they were real mean to make such affidavits, for they knew that no matter what the real facts, a great many persons who came for treatment, who had high judicial, family and social connections might be injured by such a mean course.

CHAPTER X.

THE VAMPIRE TELLS THE TRUE STORY OF THE POISON,
AND THE BRUTAL, FIENDISH MURDER OF THE CAPTAIN.

There were other things we knew the Captain's Friend was working on in aiding him for a divorce, and it began to look serious. About this time the lawyers of the Captain had begun to get things in shape for a legal movement that would prove effective. Then I determined on an exposure at all hazards. That was the time I had Poulson arrested for threatening to kill me. This of course was absolute perjury. I had my friend, the Justice of the Peace, arrange to have reporters present at the hearing, and of course the Captain had to show his hand then.

After that the battle grew fast and furious.

I then determined to try the poisoning method. I had the samples of poison brought with me from the hospital, and with expert advice at hand, in the person of my trained nurse, I prepared to do the job.

I knew that the Captain, every morning made for himself a highball before he went to breakfast, and two or three during the day. My intention was that when he went to his breakfast that Sunday morning to put the poison in whiskey bottle.

However, the opportunity came sooner than I had expected. The nurse and I were watching through a crack in my door when we heard one of the servants call upstairs and ask the Captain to step down a moment.

Quick as a flash, with noiseless step, I ran in the Captain's room, through the door that was ajar, and poured the poison in his highball, standing on the table that had not been touched. The Captain was returning by this time and he swore in his statement that he just saw the edge of my skirt disappearing into my room, but he had no suspicion that I had done anything, or had been into his room. It did not take the poison long to begin operations, and the only mistake we made was that we did not fix the telephone so that the doctor could not have been called. The doctor was called, and also the Captain's sister was summoned from Philadelphia. The doctor, who was a friend of mine, took his leisure in coming, as I knew he would do, as I, after the summons by the servants, called him up and told him the case was not an urgent one, and to come when convenient.

The doctor had a hard time to save the Captain's life. Finally I thought he might be successful, and I sent a hurry call for Dr. Dickerdunk of Media, I thought if he came it would help my plan some. The doctor when he came at once saw that the Captain was nearing the end, and that the medicine he was taking was doing no good, and he, despite my protest that the Captain had taken hair tonic in mistake, did his best. After a strong effort the Captain rallied, and finally after a fierce struggle, recovered.

While he and his sister were in the room, and the Captain was lying exhausted, I sent the nurse in to see how the Captain was getting along. When the nurse entered the sister protested as did the Captain, and when the nurse asked what was the matter the sister said the Captain had been poisoned.

"Oh, I guess not, was the reply, too many highballs made out of hair tonic."

Then she went out of the room laughing loudly. When she returned and reported the reception she had received, I seized my revolver and rushed into the room, and pointing it at him lying in bed, I said:

"You dirty dog, if you say I poisoned you I'll blow you full of holes."

The Captain did not reply, nor did his sister, and I had a notion at that time to kill them both. This remark about killing both was made as I was passing through the hall to my own room and was heard by a servant.

All the evidence regarding the deadly nature of the poison was brought out at a habeas corpus proceedings by an expert, but "Bill Broomstink" prevented it from being referred to at the trial by arrangement with "Jokeston." This episode, of course, threw off all need of my attempting further to conceal the plot the Viper and I had to get rid of the Captain.

About this time, I found the Captain's friends had discovered that the Viper had been indicted for larceny of a diamond ring, and that proceedings were being taken to have the case tried at once.

I also received notice that an agreement would be demanded from me for a separation pending a divorce. I knew that a divorce was absolutely certain, and then after a consultation with the Viper, we determined to finish the Captain at once and depend on the plans I had already made to escape the consequences.

The opportunity came a little sooner than I had anticipated. The only stumbling block to our plans was the presence of Eugene Poulson, the Captain's loyal servant. We tried hard to get an opportunity, and always found the faithful fellow on guard. Poulson was rarely ever away from the place. The lawyers of

the Captain were busy in the attempt to keep the Viper away from Red Gables, and on the day of the murder legal notice was issued for her. We had heard of it the day before, and determined to kill the Captain without delay, as we knew that if the Viper was kept away I would have no chance to carry out the plan alone, as I needed her assistance.

The night before the murder, we went to Philadelphia and perfected our plans. We slept together in the house at No. 1629 South Fifteenth Street, and completed the details and they worked perfectly. The next morning I went to the Broad Street Station with Mrs. Walkermire, and hid in a doorway and waited for the Captain to arrive. While there I 'phoned to the Viper, giving her further directions of the plan. The Captain and Eugene Poulson came together, Eugene was carrying a dress-suit case containing the Captain's uniform to be worn in the military parade.

When the Viper hurriedly came we both went to Red Gables, while an officer who had the legal notice to serve on the Viper was searching for her in Philadelphia. Mrs. Walkermire had, the day before, helped us burn a lot of incriminating letters and papers that we had found in the Captain's closet.

Shortly after our arrival a telephone message was received, stating that a legal notice had been issued warning the Viper off the place, and to notify her if she was there. We had our dinner in my room, and then thought the best plan would be for the Viper to arrange for a room at the hotel in case the Captain returned, which we hardly expected. A 'phone message was received from the Captain later stating that he would be home and requesting that a team meet him at the station. Of course we expected that Poulson would come with him, but when the Captain arrived he told the servants that Poulson had missed the last train.

That little act of Poulson's was fatal to the Captain, as we knew the coast would then be clear for the job in hand. The Viper went to the Village Green Hotel, and arranged for a room for the night. I planned the thing carefully. After I knew the Captain had gone to bed, I determined to do the job promptly and have the servants where they could not interfere. Then I left for the Village Green Hotel about 9 o'clock and asked the two maids to come later to the Village Green after me, that was because I could make certain statements in their presence, and have the coast clear, and it would be of benefit to me if there was serious trouble.

The plan worked perfectly.

On the way back to Red Gables, carrying a search light, I made a remark that I needed money and was afraid to ask the Captain

for it, as he would get angry and might assault me. But I said it had to be done, and the sooner it was over the better. I had told the Viper I would 'phone her, and when I did it she must be sure and tell somebody in the hotel that I had 'phoned that the Captain was beating me and needed aid to protect me. This she did, by calling, before leaving, the proprietor of the Village Green Hotel.

She said to him, "Florence has called me to come and says the Captain is beating her and raising hell."

Then she left and took her part in the murder as had been arranged.

There has always been a doubt in the minds of the public as to how the murder was actually committed. I know the District Attorney, the detectives and the Captain's Friend were certain I did it, and they were right. My attorneys and "Bill Broomstink" also knew it positively, for I told my lawyers and they told the Judge, and a certain official in Media jail overheard it.

When I returned from the Village Green Hotel I made sure that the servants were in the kitchen, and I lost no time, for I knew that with Poulson away it would be the best chance I would have.

I went upstairs as if I was going to bed and then slipped down again and hid in a closet for a moment to see if the coast was clear, and then I unlocked the door so the Viper could get in according to our arrangement.

Then I again went upstairs, with the search light in my hand, picked up the brass cuspidor, a heavy one, and began to pound on the Captain's door with it. I could hear the Captain's voice say as if aroused from sleep.

"What's the trouble, wait a minute, until I get up."

Then I could hear him get out of bed, and move about a bit. I kept up the pounding, and waited. I knew the Captain would come out as I had uttered no sound and he would naturally come out to see who was pounding on the door. I turned around the end of the hall just as the Captain came out of the long hall from the bathroom. He started to look around the corner to see who was there. On my way around the corner I had seized a heavy vase of flowers off a stand, and I flung it at him fiercely as soon as his head appeared.

The vase crashed on his head, breaking in fragments. The blow dazed him for a moment, and then just as he was about to straighten up, opposite his bedroom door, I rushed at him with the search light, and brought it down on his head with all my strength. He started to fall, and then I gave it to him again in the face, and he fell and began to squirm about in semi-consciousness without making a sound.

The second blow broke the top of the search light and as I saw I had not finished him, I rushed into my room, and seized the heavy iron tool which was described in the trial as a screwdriver. It was a tool used by my brother to pry up floorboards when he was doing plumbing work at Red Gables, and was given me by him to break open the wine cellar.

With this in my hand, I rushed out again, and as the Captain was just struggling to his knees, I brought it down with all my strength on the bald spot of his skull, and it crashed to the bone, and he sank down on his face, bleeding like a butchered sheep and quivering in every muscle. He was lying very still then, with the blood streaming to a red pool on the floor, and I thought I had done a complete job.

After that I quietly got a broom from my room, went through the bathroom, unlocked the Captain's door and swept up the glass and put part of it in the cuspidor, and then realizing that this might be noticed by somebody, and look suspicious, I put the cuspidor in the Captain's room and partially closed the door. I then went to the 'phone, and called up the Viper, who was waiting for the message.

I left my room with my revolver in my hand, as I could hear Beatrice, the maid, going up to her room by the back way. I was fearful she might see something, and if she did I had determined to kill her too, as dead people tell no tales.

I looked to see if the Captain showed any signs of life, and I thought I saw signs of a struggle to regain consciousness.

Just then I looked up and saw Beatrice looking over the top railing, from above. I was startled for a moment, but as she was not in a position to see the Captain I don't think she knew then, but I was not taking any chances, and determined to do her. I motioned her to come down, as I did not want the servants below to hear me.

Beatrice started to come down the stairs, and as she got partly down, she must have had some kind of a premonition, or have seen my revolver, for she shook her head, turned, went back and descended to the kitchen by the back way. That act surely saved her life, for I would surely have beaten her brains out.

Just at that moment the Viper arrived, and I never saw such a fiendish look on the face of a human being. Her one eye blazed with fury and she was panting and growling like a tiger about to make a kill. The Captain at that moment was moving a bit. He partially raised his arm, and with a muttered curse the Viper ran over and began to stamp with her heels on his face, and the shock made the Captain open his eyes. The last face he looked on was that of his hated enemy, the Viper, the cruel, vicious,

blood-sucking, inhuman Nemesis, who had followed him relentlessly, mercilessly, without natural cause or reason, to the bloody shambles where he was writhing in death throes, and whose venomous look of hatred in the dying victim's eyes, brought from him that last scream of deadly fear, that the servants heard, and attributed to me.

Believe me, I have always been glad that I was not the last person he saw for I have heard that God's wonderful alchemic power photographs forever the face of the victim on the murderer's brain and night or day it never fades from mental vision.

After the Viper had kicked him half a dozen times on the body, she turned to find something to finish him. Then I feared the Captain would recover, and I called to the Viper to get out of the way as I was going to shoot.

The Captain again raised his arm in a partial effort to arise, and I was standing near my door with the revolver in my hand. As the Viper drew away to look for a weapon, I started to shoot.

The first bullet shot off one of his fingers, and then I pumped in rapid succession three more bullets into his body. As I advanced to get a good shot at his bald spot which I never missed, the thought occurred to me, as quick as a flash, that it would make it look more like self-defense if I fired wild. The last two shots I fired at random.

Then the Viper, who was laughing quietly with very joy at the bloody scene, took the revolver from my hand and beat him on the face and head with the butt of it.

She had again worked herself up to frenzy, and was about to dabble her hands in the Captain's blood, when I dragged her away by main strength, and tore the sleeve of her shirt waist. That must have been a Providential act for it was the only evidence of self-defense we had to offer at the trial, but proved sufficient.

The Viper tore away again and was about to return to the attack. She hovered over the Captain's body, and with her one eye blazing with fury, she reminded me of a vulture about to shred carrion. She again tried to dabble her hand in the Captain's blood, but I made her desist, and led her gently into my room, and told her to drop the revolver near her and to be sure and faint when the servants came in.

Then I went downstairs and told the servants that sister had shot the Captain. This is absolutely the true facts of the murder, told to three lawyers in the Media jail in the presence of the Viper and another person who I have since suspected as being an enemy of mine and who is a member of a certain secret order.

CHAPTER XI.

THE VAMPIRE RELATES THE TRUE TALE OF THE AWFUL TRAVESTY OF JUSTICE THAT BROUGHT ABOUT THE ACQUITTAL OF TWO SELF-CONFESSED MURDERERS AND SHOCKED THE ENTIRE STATE.

Probably the most interesting portion of my story is that which pertains to the work done to escape conviction. I may as well tell the entire story as I and my lawyers know that it has been traced in the minutest detail by the Captain's Friend, and the truth is so apparent there is no use in attempting to deny it. To make it clear I will state that my plans were absolutely laid out before I was taken to Media jail, and I knew I had the power to fulfil them with the aid I could demand from the Captain's false friends. I had a list of the people who I knew must do my bidding, or suffer exposure that was worse than death.

I wrote every one of them and demanded a liberal contribution. In no case did they fail me. I had already engaged my lawyers, "Robber Fraudfield," "Frowsy Rhouges," and "Cloudy Alexander." I held a consultation with them and demanded that they bring habeas corpus proceedings at once and get me released absolutely.

I told them clearly how it could be done and brought people to my aid, who stood high in judicial circles in Delaware county, and who had enjoyed the Captain's hospitality, who would not dare refuse. My lawyers demurred at the idea of absolute discharge, but I told them that it was necessary in order to convince the Viper, who had committed perjury when she said she killed the Captain, that I had a powerful hold on certain persons in high judicial circles, who would eventually free both of us.

The Viper was weakening. This fact has been verified after the trial by an unwise statement made by "Frowsy Rhouges" to a prominent Philadelphia citizen, to whom he told the whole story of the perjury manufactured, and how it was done. This person will also swear to the conversation if it becomes necessary. I then told my lawyers exactly how the murder was committed, and how the plan must be operated to get us free. It was first necessary for me to gain my freedom, even if I had to stand trial which I knew I could fix all right if I was free. The proper, legal course would have been to bring proceedings before another high

judicial who I shall call "Ike Jokeson." However I protested to this strongly, and I won out. The story was given out that as the election for a judge in Delaware county was on, "Jokeson" would have to be busy with that. Therefore the matter was given into the hands of "Bill Broomstink."

However, that did not ease the mind of the Viper. She demanded that if I had the power I claimed over "Bill Broomstink," she also should be included in the habeas corpus, or she would confess. This was a predicament, and baffled the lawyers. Finally as a compromise, she promised to be satisfied that I could do what I claimed, if I would have "Bill Broomstink" order her to appear in court at the habeas corpus and that would satisfy her. Of course that was easy and I nearly had a fit when that dear old man ordered that the Viper be brought into court and roasted the District Attorney and the Philadelphia lawyers, and declared that he would set us both free, if there was any further kicking about the five hundred dollars bail that he suggested peremptorily.

The Captain's Friend, my friends, and the lawyers know why I made this choice. The awful travesty of justice shown in the action of the \$500 bail, aroused such a storm of indignation that it was deemed wise to take the matter out of the hands of "Bill Broomstink," and place it in the hands of "Ike Jokeson," where it was just as safe. The fact that I had made good my boast to get out on such trifling bail, cheered the Viper very much, but later, as soon as it became known that the public was thoroughly aroused, she began to get frightened again, and the lawyers and myself had a hard time to keep her to the perjury story.

I outlined the story that we had to teach the Viper and also my story. This was done with the aid of my lawyers and another person, who suggested many of the details. I rehearsed it day after day, and arranged for the different climaxes during the trial, such as fainting and other episodes. The story was all arranged by my attorneys in logical order and was worked at the trial by signals. Day after day I was subjected to severe cross-examination by my attorneys to forestall any attempt on the part of the District Attorney to break me down.

I will say now, that the District Attorney was the only one connected with the entire trial that we feared and regarded as honest, but we knew he had no chance to win, as he was youthful, inexperienced, impotent, and deadly afraid of the court, and the jury was fixed.

Then the real task began of making the Viper stand up and learn by heart the perjured story so that it would look plausible, and she could not be shaken. The lawyers took turns in drilling

her day after day after "Frowsy Rhouges" had written it. It was an arduous task, for the Viper was still in fear of the gallows.

Day after day we visited her in jail and the lawyers talked and urged her in pleading tones to not send her sister to the gallows. They pointed out to her that if I was convicted the whole story would come out and it would wreck the entire social fabric of Delaware county, and ruin a score of people. It would also let loose a scandal that would shake the public faith in the entire judicial system of the nation.

She still hesitated. They also pointed out to her that the confession that she had committed the murder would be used against her on a charge of perjury, and that nothing could prevent her from going to prison for a long term, or to the gallows as an accessory. It was also pointed out to her that as far as the jury was concerned a plan had been made whereby a certain man surely would be placed on the jury, who would absolutely control it, and that there was no chance for a conviction of either of us. Even this did not suffice. Then we tried another plan. We made the Viper's cell as comfortable as a hotel, and sent in the finest of food and wines. I dined with her every day.

It took a good deal of hard work, but with the aid of our lawyers and other kind friends, who visited the jail every day, we managed to get a perjured tale that hung together long enough to get to the jury, that dealt the stacked deck.

Then we still had trouble when the Viper found out that "Broomstink" was afraid to try the case and had retired in favor of "Jokeson." The Viper was deadly afraid that the prosecution would bring out the true story of our lives, unless "Broomstink" was on the bench to prevent it. We finally convinced her that while "Broomstink" was not going to preside he had promised to be around to keep an eye on things, and had already matters arranged so that nothing at all would be allowed on the trial to show our true characters, but we would have full swing to villify the Captain as much as we pleased. She would not agree to this until we had shown her positive evidence that a certain line of procedure had been guaranteed for the conduct of the trial by "Broomstink."

Even this did not completely satisfy the Viper, and finally "Broomstink" played the trump card. He told the Viper in confidence that "Jokeson" would have to do his bidding, for he had never been admitted to the bar, and was absolutely acting as judge illegally.

He also, in his successful attempt to convince the Viper of the truth of his statement that "Jokeson" was ignorant of the law, handed her a record of the murder trials presided over by him

in the past three years, and out of fourteen there had been but one conviction.

That conviction was one of manslaughter in which the murderer had made a written confession which "Jokeson" read to the jury in his charge.

The Supreme and Superior Court records had also been examined during his long career on the bench, and this showed that of all the cases appealed from his court, 86 per cent of his decisions had been reversed by the higher courts.

This array of facts satisfied the Viper perfectly and she yielded.

It was a hard job to make the Viper perfect, but the lawyers persisted, and after much demonstration with a revolver, we soon had things ready to begin operations on the jury.

The fixing of the jury was an easy task. I have already told of my close relations with "Vile S. Litzzenbug," a juror who really saved the day for us. However, we did not take any chances. I got busy and sent for more than a score of prominent men who had been to Red Gables on different hilarious occasions when the Captain was absent, and issued orders to them. I gave them the ultimatum of seeing and fixing every man on the jury panel or of standing for certain exposure. My lawyers had a list of the panel of jurors before they were drawn. There is no use in trying to deny this for the Captain's Friend has investigated it and the facts were verified.

"Broomstink" was also our friend in this transaction, as a certain county official and the Captain's friend can testify. The work was well done, and the one who really deserves the most credit is "Dr. Hammershame." He was very useful, as he and the Captain belonged to the same secret order, and he could approach many of the panel by reason of this and convince them that the Captain was a brute and I was a poor, persecuted, forlorn wife, who was being hounded by the Captain's friends.

"Dr. Dickerdung" also deserves my gratitude, but he was not very wise as he talked to one man who was honest, and somehow or other the Captain's Friend got track of the whole thing that way.

I would not like to say how much money my friends spent in this task, but it left no doubt of the result. And I want to say now that my friends stood by me loyally in the hour of peril, and they are still doing it. I shall be able to abide in luxury anywhere in the world I choose as long as a single one of the false friends of the Captain are able to produce.

Finally when we had arranged enough of the jury panel so that it was satisfactory to my friends, we took up several other points. One of them was raised by the Viper. She claimed that the

friends of the Captain had shown by certain newspapers after the habeas corpus proceedings that they were alert and determined, she was afraid evidence would be introduced in court about our past career. Finally she determined that she must see the character of the evidence that had been placed in the hands of the prosecution.

This was satisfactorily done through our friend "Broomstink," and it was read aloud in the jail by a third person, who took notes. The entire outline of the case was there, including every affidavit. After this the Viper was satisfied for a time, until she saw another article in the newspaper that shook her nerve, and she demanded that the lawyers get busy and do a little of press work for her. For her benefit this prophetic article was written by "Fraudfield" and "Rhouges," and sent to a Philadelphia afternoon paper by the Media correspondent, after it had been passed on by the Viper:

"DEFENSE IN ERB CASE

"Media, Pa.—Confident that they have in the two women, under suspicion of murdering Captain J. Clayton Erb, the only two eyewitnesses to the awful tragedy at 'Red Gables,' and many other witnesses besides, counsel for the two prisoners are quietly preparing a case which one of the lawyers said this morning would acquit them. Said he:

"We realize well that there is a great concerted movement being made against the two prisoners on the part of those persons who called themselves Captain Erb's friends. We see what sort of material they are giving out to the newspapers daily, but we do not in the least fear sentiment in this county will be so aroused it will be hard to get a jury at the trial. Such things might have some effect in Philadelphia. They will not with the people of Delaware county. Let them go ahead and say or print anything they choose. I am confident that both will eventually be cleared.

"I can assure you we are preparing a case that will surprise the prosecution and the public at its strength, and also at the ease with which we will acquit these two poor, persecuted women."

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH THE VAMPIRE REVEALS MANY SECRETS THAT SHOW THE ROTTENNESS OF JUDICIAL METHODS IN DELAWARE COUNTY.

The next point to be arranged, according to the suggestion of our advisor, was to arouse the antagonism of the District Attorney against the Philadelphia detectives and friends of the Captain, and the lawyers who were seeking justice. This was done adroitly by "Broomstink," who excited the natural conceit of the District Attorney, by stating that he had a chance to make a reputation for himself by trying the case with no outside assistance in court and he was foolish not to do it. Judge "Jokeston" also told him in the presence of a third person, a county official of Media, that the presence of the Philadelphia lawyers and detectives would likely have an effect on the jury that the women were victims of persecution by powerful politicians and would hurt his case. He also assured the District Attorney that he would look out carefully that the rights of the people were protected and that the guilty women were convicted, and he need not fear, even if he did not know all the law.

This had the desired effect, and so strongly did it appeal to the District Attorney's conceit he would not even permit his fellow townsman lawyer, William Shaffer, to sit by him in court for fear he would share some honor.

This fact turned out to be provocative to us during the trial a lot of fun. At night at dinner at Reilley's, where I stayed during the trial. I used to give imitations of how "Jokeston" would turn and growl and bark like a big shaggy dog at the poor little District Attorney every time he got up to beg permission to ask a question. The timid little fellow's plight was laughable. He used to drop back in his seat with an abject apology for his temerity in daring to make any attempt to arouse a doubt in the minds of the jury as to our innocence and appeared to be afraid of contempt of court.

There was another thing, however, the Viper demanded that she didn't get. She demanded that the trial should be called so that we could be acquitted on Christmas eve so that all of us could have a jolly Christmas party. We did succeed in getting the date set for that time but "Broomstink" thought that would be going

a little too strong for a Quaker community like that of Delaware county, and he rebelled and had the date of trial changed. However, it did not matter for we had the swellest dinner you could think of sent into jail by some of our friends. Accompanying it was a card:

"From your devoted followers, who have had many a pleasant time at your beautiful home, Red Gables. We're off to the hunt."

There is another episode I may as well tell about, as I know the Captain's Friend also ran that to earth.

It will be remembered that in my trial the District Attorney asked me who was present in a party given at Red Gables one night when the Captain was absent at the Chicago convention in June last.

I swore it was two cousins of mine and two chums of my brother. Here is the true story. Two colored maids, both deadly enemies of mine, and admirers of the Captain, waited on the party that night. There were four ladies and four gents in the party, and I want to say now that never in the history of my many social successes in Delaware county was there anything that approached that night for real naked speed. The gents in the party were "Lewd Stacklouse," "Frankie Riznercur," the shoe man; "Broomstink," the high judicial official; and "Dr. Hammershame." The "ladies" in the party were "Mrs. Walkermire," the Vulture; myself, the "Vampire;" and my sister, the "Viper."

The Viper and myself were the hosts. Every one was in good fettle. I jimmied the Captain's wine closet, and we got a case of champagne. It would be hard to describe all we did. There were all kinds of dances by all hands. I did a high kicking stunt on the table, while "Bill Broomstink" sat on a chair and roared with delight and applauded wildly.

Then I did a thing that brought down the house. We gave a fox hunt. I sent one of the maids upstairs to my boudoir, and had her bring down a long red ribbon. This we braided in the whiskers of "Broomstink" and used it for a rein, and then I rode all about the room astride his back playing fox hunt. All the rest barked and bayed like hounds.

Then "Riznercur" and "Dr. Hammershame" did one of the funniest things I ever saw. They slipped upstairs to my room and ransacked my closet and got two pairs of my unmentionables and two of my old bonnets, and came downstairs, and did a hootchie kootchie, with their bare legs showing.

I surely thought the dear old "Broomstink" would die with glee. He screamed, and almost choked while drinking his wine. The colored maids also screamed with delight when "Dr. Hammershame" imitated the actions of a woman.

It was a great night, and if it had not been for "Dr. Hammershame" himself, the Captain's Friend would never have heard of it, for I know the Captain only had a suspicion which I gave him.

It seems at the gathering that night "Dr. Hammershame," known at that time to the maids as the "Tall Doctor," promised to give them a nice present later if they would say nothing to the Captain about the party or those present. The maids promised, but the doctor neglected to keep his word promptly, and they reminded him of it on another occasion.

The other occasion was a birthday party the Captain gave to his newspaper and other friends. During this occasion "Hammershame" came in an automobile and was a guest of the Captain. He was introduced to all the guests present and was very popular. The maids reminded him quietly of his promise to send them a present, and he gave them each ten cents, and apologized. I have found out that act of liberality, on the part of the "Tall Doctor" was what led the Captain's Friend to the whole truth. I was not sure the Captain had heard anything about that episode, or was suspicious of my relations with "Dr. Hammershame" and I determined to find out.

One Sunday the Captain and myself was invited to dinner to the house of a neighbor. I did not want to go, but the Captain pleaded that it would make him look small not to accept, as they would want to know the reason.

At the dinner table, I was mad and wanted to show my contempt for the Captain and I said: "What do you think, the Captain accuses me of having 'Dr. Hammershame' for a lover, and that he sleeps with me every night at Red Gables when he is away."

My indignant hosts at once ordered me from the house, and in my presence before I left the neighbors took each of the Captain's hands. The hostess was white faced and shocked and the host said:

"Captain, my purpose in inviting you and your wife here to-day was to see if I could not effect with the aid of my wife a reconciliation because you are a good man, but now I am firmly convinced that the stories told about this woman are true, and I am now satisfied that you are the victim of false friends who are trying to wreck your home with her aid. If I were in your place, I would be very careful, or your life will be wrecked."

That was the first idea the Captain had that "Dr. Hammershame" was a false friend and had violated the most sacred obligation of a secret order of which they were brother members.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN WHICH THREE IMPORTANT CHARACTERS GREATLY
AIDED THE VAMPIRE AND THE VIPER IN THEIR PLOT
TO MURDER THE CAPTAIN.

There was one important person who was closely connected with my career at Red Gables, and aided myself and the Viper in carrying out our plans to make the Captain's life miserable. This was Mrs. Elizabeth "Grayslut," my governess. It will be remembered on the stand in my trial Mrs. "Grayslut" testified that the Captain on many occasions had beaten and assaulted me, and had made my life miserable.

I am sorry I did not make more liberal arrangements to take care of her after the trial, for she got mad at me, when I refused to visit her where she is stopping on Darien Street, near Columbia Avenue, and give her some money. I understand the Captain's Friend got hold of her and got her drunk and she told the entire story, of how she had perjured herself on the stand and of her career at Red Gables and how sorry she was now that she had done it. However, I shall tell the story in my own way.

Mrs. "Grayslut" was the former keeper of a number of brothels and bed-houses in Philadelphia, and Atlantic City.

I first met Mrs. "Grayslut" at a house of ill-fame she kept at 1418 Mount Vernon Street. That was after I had trapped Rothermel. She was raided by the police, but I was absent at that time, stopping in her other house of ill-fame at Atlantic City.

Afterward, when I found she had been driven out of business, I brought her to Red Gables to help me in driving the Captain off the place. She helped a great deal. She was addicted to drink, and I kept her supplied freely. She did the most disgraceful and disgusting things imaginable before the Captain and the servants at all times. The Viper and I used to think up things for her to do to shock the Captain particularly, when there were any visitors around.

One night she came into the library where the Captain was reading, raised her clothing as high as she could and danced about the room, and dared him to put her out.

Another time she got drunk, and fell at the foot of the stairs. The shocked Captain, who expected neighbors to call and talk over contemplated road improvements in the vicinity, had to call

to his aid the coachman to help him and carry her up three flights of stairs to her room. The Viper and I were enjoying this from my room. Then we went downstairs and threw a pitcher at the Captain for interfering with my governess.

I knew the prosecution at the trial had her record, but "Ike Jokeston would not permit it to be used in the trial.

As for Miss Atkynsin, my nurse, I also owe her a debt of gratitude. She stood by me through thick and thin during my ordeal. In order to give the details of my connection with "Miss Atkynsin," I must go back a little time. I might as well tell it all as I know the Captain's Friend has investigated it and a former waiter connected with the Garrick Hotel has helped him, as well as a former nurse at the hospital. You will also remember that I swore my visit to the hospital at that time was due to the brutality of the Captain.

In April, 1907, the Captain was in Chicago, arranging for the coming national convention in June. The Viper also trailed him this time to the station. At that moment I was in the Captain's Thirteenth Street house. I requested the housekeeper to bring me a bottle of wine from the cellar and she refused. I raised such a fuss she finally did as I requested. Then I went to the Garrick Hotel and met my friend "Riznercur," the shoe man, and a friend of his, named "Charles Kooper." We had a glorious time drinking wine, for several hours, and after that we separated. The Viper had to go home, and so did "Riznercur." "Kooper" and myself went to his rooms in a Walnut Street apartment hotel, and I did not get to the Thirteenth Street house until three o'clock in the morning.

I had what is usually called in sporting parlance a good old-fashioned hang-over and I raised the house with my screams. Finally I fell asleep in the bath room, and the next morning I felt the effects of it. I went to the 'phone, and called up a certain lawyer who knew the Captain and told him I was suffering with nervous breakdown from the Captain's treatment of me, and I wanted him to send me a doctor at once. I made a hysterical noise over the 'phone, and I could realize the lawyer was somewhat startled and I demanded he send me a doctor.

The lawyer, who knew something about me, was skeptical. So I began to wail again and moan in a hysterical manner:

"Oh, oh, I'm dying, I'm dying, send me help at once."

Finally I was assured by the change in the lawyer's tone he had been convinced, for he said:

"I'll send for a doctor at once, who do you want?"

"Oh, quick, quick," said I, "send Dr. Brooklets."

When the doctor arrived, the housekeeper who came to my

room to announce him was shocked at my scant attire, and requested me to put on a suitable garment to receive the doctor. I was wrapped loosely in a sheet showing my form, and was stretched on a lounge, and told the housekeeper to mind her own business.

The doctor found that as a result of my excesses for months past, which culminated in the present debauch, an old chronic ailment that had been dormant for years had revived, and he at once sent me to the Howard Hospital. The doctor circulated among my friends the report that I was the victim of the Captain's brutality, and he told the Captain on his return I was suffering from nervous breakdown, due to change in life. I have since learned that in examining the records, the Captain's Friend found that I had been treated for "pelvic inflammation."

It was at this hospital I met my nurse, "Miss Atkynsin," who was a splendid help to the Viper and myself during our trying ordeal with the Captain at Red Gables. There was another strange trait connected with "Miss Atkynsin." That was her strong love and affection for the Viper. As a rule most of the women folks of our acquaintance despised and loathed the Viper, but "Miss Atkynsin" seemed to be possessed of a deep affection for her. This was commented on by the servants. Often, when I was away, the two would be contented to spend hours and hours together in the seclusion of my room, with now and then a bottle of wine brought from the Captain's wine cellar by "Mrs. Gray-slut."

I found "Miss Atkynsin" a very intelligent person, and one whose thoughts run mainly in the same channels as my own. We had long discussions in the hospital regarding deadly drugs and quick poisons, and I understand that one of these conversations overheard, was the means of starting the Captain's Friend on the right road to discover the source of the poison used in the Captain's highball. However, the nearest he came to finding out about that was a strong probability that "Miss Atkynsin" and myself could account for a quantity of poison that disappeared from the hospital laboratory, that was the same as the deadly drug used in the first attempt to kill the Captain. I will state now that my kind friends of Delaware county are taking good care of "Miss Atkynsin," who stood by me on the trial, and perjured herself as readily as did the Viper, myself and my lawyers.

It will be recalled that during my trial the District Attorney asked me if, on a certain night in July, while the Captain was attending to his military duties in camp, two men did not stay all night at Red Gables with myself and the Viper.

I admitted it because I knew that previous arrangements had been made to not reveal the names of the false friends if I would admit that much. The reason this arrangement was made was because one of the crooked lawyers for the defense was one of the guilty culprits, and the District Attorney had been made to think it would be a grave violation of professional ethics to reveal the name of the low cur who had broken a man's home, and wrecked his life, simply because he was a brother lawyer. This was in total disregard of justice.

When I learned the Captain would not be home, I 'phoned the Viper to meet me at Media station that night. I then 'phoned to "Cloudy Alexadder," and instructed him to get in touch with an old friend of the Captain, whom I will call "Frank Shandlerbum," who is connected with a prominent firm of shipbuilders and lives in Philadelphia, within fifty feet of the Thirteenth street home of the murdered Captain. I told "Cloudy" to bring his friend to Media and the Viper and I would meet them and we would have a night of it at Red Gables, as the Captain was away. I told them that there was plenty of wine on ice, and not to fail.

Towards evening I had the coachman hitch up a team and drive me from Red Gables over to Media, where we met the Viper, "Alexadder," and "Shandlerbum." The men were in "Cloudy's" red dog cart, which was often seen at the trial in Media, and which was used to bring me to and from the home of Mrs. Reily, where I was boarding, after my indictment for murder, and for my daily visits to court. The dog cart is a peculiar one. It is extremely heavy, and the only one of the kind in Delaware county, and was recognized one day at the trial in Media and materially aided the Captain's Friend in getting at the facts.

The boys greeted us so warmly that we had to caution them to look out for the coachman, who was looking sour. On the way back we raced and the harness of our team broke, and while we were fixing it a neighbor of ours, who I knew was an honorable friend of the Captain, drove up and offered help, and both of our guests tried to keep their faces hidden from view but he saw and knew them both, and I don't know whether he gave any information to the Captain's Friend or not, but I think he did.

I shall never forget the furious fun we had that night. We certainly tore things loose. I kept my word, by breaking open the Captain's wine room and bringing up a case of champagne.

The boys were in fine form, and so were the Viper and myself. Both of them put on a pair of the Captain's pajamas, after one of them had danced the hootchie-kootchie in a pair of the Viper's unmentionables. Then the Viper and myself disrobed and put

on silk kimonos which I had bought at Gimbel's department store last May, and had charged to the Captain's account.

Then the fun grew fast and furious. We joined hands and played ring-around the rosy, and gave exhibition of the "Salome" dance and other startling "parlor" stunts. Then we posed, as living statues, and from one of these poses "Alexadder" selected one that I had photographed later in the studio of an artist who was closely connected with the trial as can be seen by scanning the list of jurymen and which I understand the Captain's Friend has. The fun kept up until "Alexadder" swore he had seen a black face peeping in the window, which was open. I went to the window and called "Poulson" but got no response, and I could see nothing. I assured the boys they must have been mistaken as I had ordered Poulson, after putting up the teams to go home and not come back until morning. We occupied my room and the Captain's that night, and in the morning after their departure I questioned Poulson closely, but he swore he had gone home as soon as he had put the horses away.

The Captain had his suspicions aroused by finding some hair pins in his bed a few days later, but when I denied it he did not make any further inquiry. However, the Captain's Friend did, and therefore I am telling the whole truth, for if somebody else ever told the story something might be said that would reflect on the boys, who were both warm friends of the Captain and who have often enjoyed the hospitality of his home, and it might create a false impression that would injure them socially and professionally.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN WHICH THE VAMPIRE AND THE VIPER EXPRESS DEEP GRATITUDE TO THE REPORTERS OF THE PHILADELPHIA NEWSPAPER COMBINATION FOR THEIR GENUINE AND KINDLY AID DURING THE TRIAL AND THEIR GLEEFUL MANNER IN BESMIRCHING THE MEMORY OF THE CAPTAIN.

As for the trial in court, I do not think it necessary to go into all the details, as it has already been outlined in my story of the perjury preparation for our acquittal. And they were also given in detail by my friends of the Philadelphia newspapers, the reporters present, who I wish to thank now in these memoirs from the bottom of my heart. Early in the trial I had a consultation with my lawyers, and it was decided that "Frowsy Rhouges" should act as press agent and at once get in touch with the members of the press and try them out. I was afraid that if they told the truth they would arouse the public. I was surprised after the interview with "Frowsy" when he told me that there was only two present who had ever seen a murder trial before and that one of the two had a grouch against the Captain and that he had already got a promise from nearly all of them to say all the nice things they could think of the Viper and myself, and to roast the Captain's memory whenever they got a chance as they were under orders.

"Frowsy" certainly did his work well. Every day he would meet the reporters at the noon recess, and tell them pathetic stories of my lonely life at Red Gables, of the Captain's brutality, and of my pure, saintly beauty, and how their daily assurances of our innocence was a solace to our bleeding hearts and an aid to the jury. Their efforts at pathetic description were, as the Viper said to me one day, "fine and dandy."

How we used to laugh at night after the adjournment, at their descriptions of my beauty. One of them wrote:

"Pale, ivory face, like a Venus, with alabaster brows, and eyes that reflected the soulful misery of a broken heart that was only longing for freedom from a life of unrequited love, and only awaiting the summons to soar heavenward to the eternal rest, free from the brutality of man and the misery of it all."

Another one, who wore a college button, in describing my widow's weeds, said:

"The gown of diaphonous black, fitted the weeping, sorrowing Venus like the models usually displayed in the windows of a lady's tailor in order to sell the goods to passersby."

But there was another touch that made the Viper and I and the lawyers laugh when we read it. It was when the bloody pajamas were opened. It had been arranged in the rehearsal for me to break down at this point, and I did so. Here is a bit of word painting that I have had framed:

"The sorrowing widow's eyes opened wider and wider. With intensity of feeling she gazed. Suddenly a rush of tears flooded her eyelids and great drops ran down her oval cheeks and dropped from her chin, dampening the veil of deep mourning that the widow had worn throughout the trial. A groan came from her throat and she fell upon the shoulder of her sister.

"When this occurred there was great excitement in the courtroom. Several doctors rushed forward. The Judge leaned over and said to the court officers:

"Get water, get water. Oh, somebody please get water."

"The older sister, whose love for the younger and frailer sister has been daily manifest, was much disturbed. In fact, her own eyes welled full of tears.

"With tenderness and devotion such as it is given only woman to show, she wrapped her arm around the heart-broken younger sister and gathered her close to her bosom. She softly patted her cheek with a gloved hand.

"Cold water soon restored the sufferer, but the judge was still a little alarmed. The coroner was hoarsely ordered to shut up his exhibit in the roll, from which he had taken it, and court was adjourned for ten minutes, that the sister defendants might be taken out into the cooler air."

I can assure these brilliant young journalists they really did a great service to us in expressing every day their belief in our innocence and justification of the murder, and predicting our acquittal. It was read every day by the jurors, and it had a strong effect in giving the members of the jury a loophole to justify the awful verdict of acquittal, by claiming after the trial that the newspapers all were of the same opinion.

I also know that after the trial one of the jurors, a gardner, told his employer, who told the Captain's Friend, that "Litzenbug," every night used the newspapers in the jury room to point out the fact that if the women were not acquitted the public would be aroused and the newspapers would censure all of them as could be plainly seen by their expressed opinion.

But really some of the dear little authors of the future were too sweet and amusing for anything. The Viper and I used to laugh quietly at the efforts of some of them to flirt with us. However, they were useful in another way. Several of them wrote notes and passed them to our lawyers regarding so-called scandal they had heard of the Captain in his political career.

In the beginning I was afraid some of them might be shamed into taking the Captain's part at least by giving him some kind of a square deal in their reports, for I knew that the Captain had for years been doing generous deeds of all kinds for nearly every one of the newspaper men in Philadelphia, and had a long list of financial favors he had extended them, and which were never paid, and never will be.

Besides these favors I know that every newspaper man in Philadelphia knows that for the past twenty years the Captain has never failed to help and succor them in sickness and trouble, and the right hand never knew what the left hand did. They also knew that at his own expense he had maintained and paid for the keep of a free burial lot for the wrecked derelicts of the press, who were left stranded and starved to death, by the heartless, wine-guzzling, free-banquet, slave-driving, penny-pinching proprietors of a majority of the papers of the city of Brotherly Love.

Of course we argued from these facts that some one in the crowd might be possessed of a strong enough sense of decency and loyalty to give the poor Captain's memory a little charity in their reports, but there was not one. They frequently winked slyly at "Frowsy," and assured him that they knew we were both perjured liars, but that did not make any difference. They assured him they were working under orders from the head of the Philadelphia "newspaper trust," which has laid down an inviolable rule, no matter what the occasion, that every time the name of any person, no matter how reputable or prominent in the affairs of government in city, state or nation, is mentioned in the columns of the subsidized press, he must be villified, besmirched, befouled and ridiculed until such times as the people see fit to permit the proprietors of the newspapers to dictate all political nominations, frame all laws, and fill their coffers with the lowest, most useless form of public graft, "municipal advertising," without question.

There was one event, however, at Red Gables, that I guess per-

haps some of the reporters might have been vexed at me if I had succeeded in one attempt I made to dope them. It was at a Sunday party given by the Captain. I don't think the Captain ever told this, but it is true.

While the dinner was in preparation I slipped into the kitchen while the cook was momentarily absent, and poured half an ounce of croton oil in the coffee pot. Then I ran upstairs, but I found out afterwards that the cook had seen me from an adjoining room and at once poured out the coffee and made another supply. However, she kept a half-basin of this doped coffee and showed it to the Captain later. Later I scared the guests good and plenty. Just as they were leaving I pumped my revolver out of an upper window at them and I thought I would die laughing to see them scatter like sheep. They ducked and dodged through the shrubbery and one little man, who carried an umbrella, raised it for protection and ran straight ahead like a bullet with his coat tails waving behind and screaming in fright. That little man was the one the Captain used to call the "Quiller," why he never would say.

Many of the reporters also showed the effects of these iron-clad orders in their discourteous treatment of the sisters. Every time one of them would show their resentment at some particularly foul lie against their dead brother, drawn out by a question from "Robber Fraudfield," some of the reporters would laugh and wink at me and whisper, "They're faking."

By the way, there is a matter connected with the treatment of the sisters in court that has been made public since the trial by a certain court official, that I may as well tell.

The Viper and myself, before the trial, dreaded the ordeal of meeting face to face the Captain's sisters in court, for we knew they had knowledge of many things that the world did not know, and also knew I had ensnared their brother, but they did not know how. Therefore, the Viper and myself arranged a plan to avoid this unpleasantness that worked completely.

"Broomstink" was consulted by "Fraudfield" and "Rhouges," and they told him of our fears. They told him if the Erb sisters were given a seat next the District Attorney, where they rightly belonged, it would work on the Viper's nerves so she would break down.

It was then agreed by "Broomstink," that the sisters should be placed in a position as far away from the defendants as possible, and be in a location where they could not by any manner look into the faces of the defendants or the witnesses, or take part in the trial.

This was done under the instruction of "Broomstink," given directly to a court officer the day before the trial. He was instructed to meet the Captain's sisters at the door of the court and as soon as they came in on the opening day, he was to act as if he was paying kind official attention to them and show them to seats that had been reserved for them. These seats were outside of the court railing, back against the wall, behind the audience, where in court days colored witnesses usually sit. The seats were so located that none of the occupants could see the witness on the stand, and could hear nothing but indistinct murmurs.

This outrageous shame was noticed the second day by a friend, after "Ike Jokeson" had frowned at one of the sisters when she arose to get a look at a witness, and the friend protested to the District Attorney. That official absolutely refused to interfere and was positively insulting to the person who had made the request that the poor, grief-stricken sisters be given the seats they were entitled to in order to aid in defending their dead brother.

On the fourth day of the trial the sisters, despite the protest of the court officer, appropriated seats where they were a little closer, but even that did not give them a chance to see the witnesses or hear them. When this was done "Jokeston," when he noticed what they did positively scowled at the sorrowing sisters of the Captain. This filled the Viper and myself with joy, for we knew then how we stood with the court, and every once in a while I turned and leered at the sisters when they wept.

CHAPTER XV.

IN WHICH THE PERJURED CHARACTER OF THE ONLY LETTER INTRODUCED BY THE DEFENSE IS CLEARLY PROVEN.

There was another very essential matter connected with the trial that we prided ourselves on as being so cleverly arranged it would never be found out. However, I discovered later that the Captain's Friend had run it to earth, and I may as well tell it. It is concerning the only letter introduced by us in the trial, and which was an absolute fake. It is as follows:

RED GABLES, VILLAGE GREEN, PA.

"This is the solution of all the trouble in my life with my husband—before I married him, I told him every secret of my soul, and this is what he goads me with until I am driven almost to destroying myself. If it were not for the fear of hell, death would, indeed, be a relief. This morning he again informed me how he would get a divorce through foul means, and he actually has had his attorney, G. Horavitz, to believe him when he says he did not know I could not bear a child when I married him. Is he not an infamous liar?"

"He evidently has forgotten the conversation he, you and I had on the porch of the Summer street house, the day after I returned home from Price's Hospital, after my operation. That is not all—I have numerous proofs of his knowledge of me. Sometimes I think he really will kill me when he is in that drunken state. Oh, how I wish you and brother could be near me, I need you so badly. It is dreadful to be deprived of every friend and to live in this big house day in and month out without a living creature to speak to. In my prayers each night I ask: How long, oh Lord; how long? Call me on 'phone when you think he is not here, for you know if he is he will not let us talk. Distressed

FLORENCE."

The idea of this letter came while framing the perjured defense. We found that something was necessary to make the

Viper's story plausible, that her reason for visiting Red Gables was to protect me from the Captain's brutality. We also knew that the detectives had discovered the "Dear Peggy" letters, and something strong must be devised to offset them.

Our dear old judicial benefactor and friend, "Broomstink," suggested this brilliant piece of rottenness, which I understand is legal grounds for a criminal action for perjury. He suggested the form of the letter, and it was written by me at the dictation of "Frowsy Rhouges," and "Cloudy Alexadder." It was passed on by "Fraudfield" and "Broomstink," with the understanding that it should be mailed from Village Green. Then it was pointed out that grave danger of discovery might arise if the District Attorney should happen to develop sense and legal accumen enough to look at the date on the envelope. That would surely expose the fraud.

The Viper came to the rescue with another brilliant and clever idea of villainy. She said she remembered a letter written by me in which I had told her about sending some dress goods, and was in her home in Philadelphia. My brother-in-law was communicated with, and two days later he brought the envelope to Media, with the date of March 10, 1908, on it, and it was the one presented in the trial. Later I discovered that the Captain's Friend had found another fact that absolutely proved the letter to be fraudulent.

In the letter I very unwisely mentioned the so-called conversation with the Captain on the Summer street house porch, in which I referred to the operation in Dr. Price's Hospital. It was found, from the records of Dr. Price that the operation referred to in the letter was performed in 1894, long before I had ever met the Captain.

It also developed that I never paid the doctor for the operation, and when he insisted on it, I tried to ruin him by writing anonymous letters to his friends and patients. I shall now make clear the other letters presented by the prosecution, but which were never read by the jury, for certain reasons.

The first letter was written when I was in the Howard Hospital, the records of which show I was suffering with "pelvic inflammation," as the result of indiscretions which "Dr. Brooklets" said was nervous prostration:

"My Dear Peggy: Mrs. Gray tells me that the room assigned you at the hospital is not satisfactory—too much noise, that you cannot rest. For you to get well, your mind must be contented. If you think best, come home. Bring your nurse and keep her until you are absolutely

well. If you have confidence in your doctor, make your medical arrangements. If you will obey your nurse and medical orders, I believe your home will do you more good. But take your physician's advice. Everything possible will be done to restore your health, and if possible will arrange to send you to Hot Springs, Va., or to Clifton Springs, N. Y., if so advised. Now, my dear girl, brace up and get cheerful. CLAYT.

"N. B.—Send me all bills. Don't haggle about them."

The second letter was written when Mrs. Walkermire and myself were taking one of our famous "wine-rest" cures, in the same room, as the register of the hotel showed, and also the bills which were paid by the Captain. I gave it out to the hotel people that the Captain's brutality had driven me away from Red Gables. When I get time, I am going to raise Cain with that little brat of a bell boy who got liberal tips for waiting on us, and then was mean enough after to tell the Captain's Friend all he saw. And he had left the hotel, too, and was living in New York, where we sent him before the trial.

"Mrs. J. Clayton Erb, St. James Hotel, Thirteenth and Walnut Streets, Philadelphia.

"Dear Peggy: Come home and be a good girl. Do not further injure your health by injudicious acts. Your health is improving so nicely, and don't go and upset everything. LET YOUR GOOD NATURE PREVAIL. Again, do not do rash and unwise things that you may regret hereafter. Yours, CLAYT."

The next letter was also written to the hotel, after I had told the Captain's Friend, his superior officer in the National Guard, that I was afraid of a quarrel if I went home.

"Peggy: Just think. There is nothing to quarrel about. We had last year a happy Christmas. Look back over the fifteen years of your life of constant strife and struggle. Now you have won, why not be tactful? If you are wrong, do what I have done; say so. It relieves all feeling. If I have done wrong I will say so. Happiness beats misery, and no one knows this better than you, yourself. Do you constantly repeat your past life? I know you do not.

"Your sister is a bad adviser, because of her hatred for me. A friend who has never in five years deserted you should be carefully considered as against those who from time to time in adversity deserted you, and who now in prosperity cling to you. CLAYT."

The last letter was written on February 25, 1908, and was evidence to the Viper and myself that the Captain was getting suspicious, and we then determined to work all the harder.

"Peggy: I am astounded at your conduct yesterday morning. Why you should quarrel over the fact 'that Mr. Forrest was in town or out of town,' and should show such bitter feelings, is incomprehensible to me. Can you enlighten me on the subject? Peggy, what influences you to constantly do such irritating things? Why, you hardly let a day pass by without doing something that creates discord. You calmly think over yesterday morning and let me know your reasons. I am trying to solve the trouble. Is it a conspiracy to place me in a false position? Give me some reason.

Yours, CLAYT."

CHAPTER XVI.

IN WHICH SEVERAL MATTERS ARE EXPLAINED REGARDING
CERTAIN PERJURED WITNESSES AND OTHER ESSENTIALS
CONNECTED WITH THE TRAGEDY.

Speaking of the Kolonial, I had a hard time to keep from laughing outright when my dear old friend, "Wagnarbum," proprietor of the Kolonial, got on the stand. He swore he was a great friend of the Captain, that he had never visited Red Gables, and that he only knew me slightly, and that I never had any company or callers at the Kolonial that he knew of.

I wonder if he really did forget, or if he was only trying to shield me. He surely must have remembered the birthday party I gave on the night of March 9, 1906, at the Kolonial, at which he and "Lewd Stacklouse" and "Dr. Dickerdung," the Viper, "Mrs. Karoo," the niece of a prominent Media judge, and myself were present.

I made great preparations for the event. I visited the Captain's house in Philadelphia and despite the protestations of the housekeeper, got a half dozen pints and a half dozen quarts of champagne. My friend "Riznercur," who could not be present, sent me a half dozen quarts of Three-Feather rye.

The party did not break up until daylight and I can assure you that never in the history of that dear old swell Quaker Hotel was there anything that could compare with it for the rapid pace we set. I've had many a gay time in Media and Red Gables but that was the limit.

There were very few guests in the house and my dear friend "Wagnarbum" told us to cut loose and he set the pace.

I'm really ashamed to go into details but there was a waiter there who I threatened to horsewhip afterwards and I am sure he told somebody.

Therefore, the party turned out bad for me, for it leaked out somehow and I was ordered from the hotel a few days later by a certain indignant woman, who claimed that the number of men visiting me in my room was driving the respectable guests away from the house. It was "Stacklouse's" fault for he fairly haunted the place there, night and day.

After that my friend, "Wagnarbum," used to send his three children over to Red Gables for a visit and they would stay for days

at a time, and he would often come over to see if the little darlings were all right.

I had lots of fun with those kids, they were perfect little devils, and I used them to make the Captain furious. They found out that it pleased me, and they would break and destroy everything they could get their hands on—furniture, dishes, glassware, flowers and shrubbery.

One day they nearly ruined the entire crop of strawberries, when the gardener was absent. I found out that the Captain wanted to bring his own nephew down there for a visit and I kept the kids there for nearly a month. Then I told him if he did bring his nephew, I would fix the brat so that he would never want to make another visit to Red Gables, and he never came.

I knew that the Captain's nephew was deadly afraid of the Viper's dead eye. That was the only threat necessary.

Perhaps it might be well for me to mention the real aid we also had from one member of the bar that did not appear on the surface. That person was supposed to act as an assistant to the District Attorney and I shall call him "Rhoring Robinsgut." He was really one of the strongest friends I had in the court room.

He was the one who assured the District Attorney that "Litz-enbug" was a personal enemy of mine, and a strong friend of the Captain.

"Robinsgut" had been assigned the duty of making a report to the District Attorney of the qualifications of the different jurymen on the panel. On that report was marked "friendly to the Captain," every person who served on my jury, and all those who might have rendered an honest verdict were marked "friendly to the defendant."

One evidence of the truth of this is shown by the fact that "Robinsgut" was absent from court all the day the jury was being drawn, and the District Attorney was compelled to follow the "suggestions" on the list handed him by "Robinsgut."

I have never had any "personal" connections with "Robinsgut" but I had a strong pull on him through another source. I had one dear friend that I met at the Kolonial, who I shall call Miss "Karoo." She and "Robinsgut" were as close as "two peas in a pod."

She sat in court during the trial and was seated where she continually made insulting remarks to the Captain's sisters. That was a suggestion of mine to give the sisters an idea of the feeling of the women of Chester County against them and the Captain.

By the way I must tell about the jardiniere I sold to the Captain. For years past I have used my reputation as a painter to great advantage. While I can truthfully say I am a "painter" I

do my work by a peculiar process. I ascertained the secret from a firm that advertised to sell prepared designs which are pasted on the surface to be painted, and when the paper is removed the design and colors are left on the surface. Then I touch it up with a brush and make it look something like the real thing. It will not fool anybody that knows anything about art but it is very likely to deceive an unthinking person, and has been sufficient for my purpose of making people believe I was talented and refined. That was the occupation I invariably gave as my method of earning a living in my many fake suits for damages against the trolley companies.

There is another matter I might as well refer to, as it may have a good effect in the final trial in the high court above. In a sense it is a sacred matter and many people might think, after reading of my life, that I am not sincere in relating it.

It will be remembered that during the trial the witnesses for the prosecution fixed the relative time I killed the Captain by the ringing of the chimes in the Convent near by. I cannot get that thought out of my head and neither can the Viper. I think of it every time I hear a bell toll, and the Viper tells me she cannot sleep at night when she hears a bell. The story is a pretty one, at least I think it is. The Captain, while he was not of the religious faith of the inmates of the convent which is my creed, had very deep convictions regarding the sacredness of their calling, and always spoke of the good they were doing.

He instructed the servants to do everything they could to show them that they were welcome at all times to use the grounds of Red Gables, as the former tenants had refused them the privilege of using a private lane leading from the convent. The Captain also sent them daily fresh vegetables, and flowers and fruit and all kinds of farm products.

On the morning after the murder, the nurse and I were standing at one of the windows, chatting and waiting for the detectives to come and take me to jail, when two of the sacred sisters came slowly towards the house with heads bowed in prayer. I at once instructed one of the county officials, a friend of mine, to meet them at the door and turn them away, as the sight of them had a queer effect on me. They said they simply intended to say a prayer for the Captain's soul, but the official turned them away. The two went down the walk a short distance, knelt and turned their faces to the house and uttered a prayer. I can assure you that sight has never left my mind.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN WHICH THE VAMPIRE AND THE VIPER ARE ABUNDANTLY PROVIDED FOR LIFE, AND THE APPROACHING MARRIAGE OF THE VAMPIRE IN PARIS.

There is no doubt that after my acquittal my attorneys and all the friends of mine were more worried at what confronted them in solving the problem of placing and maintaining me, than they had been with getting me free.

On the day following, a consultation was held in the office of "Frowsy Rhouges," and besides my lawyers, who were present, there were Wm. O'Reilly, where I stopped during the trial, and a certain jail official who had been in the jail every day during the incarceration of the Viper, and who I have always suspected.

The jail official was present (apparently) for the purpose of ascertaining where he should send to me a package of silverware I had left at the jail for safe keeping. That was the Red Gables loot the detectives failed to locate. Then the discussion arose as to what they could do with me. The question was opened by "Rhoughes," who said:

"Now that we have thoroughly aroused the indignation of the public, and have the woman on our hands, what can we do with her?"

All sorts of suggestions were made, and finally "Fraudfield" turned to O'Reilly and said:

"O'Reilly, would your wife keep the Vampire at your home if she were guaranteed liberal pay by several prominent Delaware County people including a high judicial official?"

In a few moments O'Reilly returned and said:

"Gentlemen, my wife told me to say to you, she would consider it a distinguished honor to have the Vampire as a permanent member of her household despite what her gossiping neighbors might say."

After a time at the O'Reilly home, I found that every decent resident of Media had cut Mrs. O'Reilly cold.

After this I made arrangements to have my future financial condition assured as long as I live by a fund guaranteed by many of the Captain's false friends in Delaware County, and placed in the Equitable Trust Company of Philadelphia, in the name of a prominent Philadelphia doctor who was active in my defense.

To give an idea of the strength of my position, I will state that one of my friends who has a large family in Delaware County and is prominent in fox hunt and business circles sent me a nine hundred dollar mink coat in gratitude for my clever work in the trial, in preventing the exposure of my friends and I made a great hit with it.

The Viper is also included in this plan.

It has also been decided by my friends that in order to regain my health, which was rudely shaken by the Captain's brutality, that I should make a tour of Europe, accompanied by my nurse, Miss "Atkynsin."

And now I shall tell the real romantic part of my plans. I am going to get married, I have had a great deal of fun out of the story that I purposely circulated, that I was going to take the veil and retire to a convent. I recently told a reporter who asked me about the story that the only veil I would take was one with orange blossoms. That is true, as I shall show.

In the last letter the Captain wrote me he referred to a mysterious "Mr. Forrest." Well, that is the person who will be the happy man.

He is foreign buyer for a large jewelry firm in Chicago, and is now in Paris awaiting the happy day impatiently. He met me at the Kolonial Hotel and was my intimate friend for months before the Captain was killed.

He was madly in love with me, and wanted me to run away with him. In some mysterious manner the Captain's Friend found out the facts. I am not sure how, but I think it might have come from a letter I received during my trial and accidentally dropped in the Media jail. It was from Chicago, written on the letter head of the jewelry firm detailing the future plans after my acquittal, which included a trip abroad and a wedding.

However, I understand the Chicago firm has now become deeply interested, and it is possible a new buyer will represent them abroad soon.

And now before I finally conclude these memoirs, I wish to make more convincing my statement that my career has been followed from the cradle to the grave, and that my actions are still under close surveillance by the Captain's Friend. After arrangements had been made for my keep at O'Reilley's I found that I had to go somewhere else until I got ready to sail for Paris to meet my future husband. I made arrangements to stay at the Imperial Hotel in Chester as no other hotel would take me in. Nobody knew of the arrangements, I thought, but I found out differently. While there I was visited frequently by "Alexadder" and "Rhoughes." We concluded to try and frighten the Erb sisters so they

would give up any idea of ever living at Red Gables, and would be glad to let me have it. I did this by means of Black Hand letters printed with a red lead pencil on black paper. I told them the neighbors were all glad the Captain had been killed, as he was a brute, and had a past that would some day be told if they ever got possession of Red Gables.

I also wrote them several letters warning them that some day they would be killed if they ever visited Red Gables, as every county official hated the Captain and would not stand for any of the Erb family living at Red Gables. I knew the Erb sisters were terribly afraid of us, as they knew how desperate we are and how determined we are to get Red Gables. In order to give a practical demonstration of our intentions, I 'phoned the Viper and told her the trial for the possession of Red Gables was coming up on May 17, and that the Erb sisters had been summoned. I also told her to get on the job early and trail them to the train and be sure and take the same train. I told her to wait until the train had started, and then to make a demonstration that would thoroughly frighten the Erb sisters. The Viper carried out my instructions to the letter, and the train conductor had to take a seat where he could protect the sisters from the Viper who was raving up and down the aisle like a mad woman and shrieking:

"Yes, I killed the dog, and I am glad of it and your turn will come next."

One day "Miss Atkynsin" at the request of "Cloudy" and myself, called up the Captain's sister from the office of "Cloudy" and she told her that somebody had removed the memorial flag from the Captain's grave and placed a tin soldier on it, and had committed other desecrating acts that are unmentionable. This conversation was heard by a certain writ server who had come to see me in regards to the replevin we had decided to issue, on the advice of "Bill Broomstink," in order to loot Red Gables.

In one of the Black Hand letters I sent the Captain's sister I declared that I would make good my oft-repeated threat to the Captain to burn Red Gables and now I shall show how I made an attempt to do it.

I will state now that the postponement of the suit to get possession of Red Gables was a severe blow to us. We had less fear of the result than we did in the murder trial. Then we decided to loot Red Gables and thereby get enough out of that to pay the lawyers, as my friends in high society absolutely refused to be blackmailed further in that line. Therefore it was decided to replevin. Then the question arose as to the giving of a bond. "The whole outfit" according to "Cloudy" had not enough collateral to buy a square meal for a louse, and it looked blue. Then I

came to the rescue by suggesting a trust company located in Media, there were several persons connected with that concern who had to do my bidding, including "Frowsy" who is a director in the concern. "Frowsy" at first protested but when I showed him the pull I had, he consented and the \$3,000 bond was arranged without a dollar of real collateral, and then we had free rein to loot the place.

After that we secured three vans and went to Red Gables. In the party were myself, "Mrs. Alexadder," "Cloudy Alexadder," Deputy Sheriff "O'Kelley." We rode in "Alexadder's" carriage. When we arrived the caretaker "Patrick M'Cuen" refused to give up the keys without authority from his employer, and the deputy sheriff, at the request of myself and "Cloudy" broke down the front gates. Then he also broke open the doors of the house and gained an entrance. Under my instructions we loaded every stick of furniture in the van with the exception of the ancestral bed I had lured the Captain from to murder him. We screwed off the fancy gas fixtures and took everything we could find. The most of the furniture had been sent to Red Gables from the Ero home at Tioga and belonged to his sister. The only belongings I brought to Red Gables are still there. They are in the garret, and when the deputy sheriff in his last hunt asked me who they belonged to I was ashamed to tell him and they are still there.

After the vans had been loaded, I called "Cloudy" and stationed him at the top of the cellar stairs. Then I went down and brought from a place where I had concealed it months before, a large carriage candle, and lit it and placed it on a shelf, close to a wooden partition and surrounded it with a bed of straw and shavings. I knew it would not burn down for hours, and was satisfied that I had at last made good my threat to burn Red Gables. I told "Cloudy" and he said it would be a good thing for it would wipe out a lot of scandal. We waited anxiously that night for news of the fire, but it never came. The next day "Cloudy" found that at an early hour in the night the caretaker, who had been warned, saw the reflection of the flames from the cellar window and had rushed inside in time to extinguish them, and had again frustrated my plans. But either I or some of my friends will surely make good my vow unless my lawyers are paid soon.

There was another incident that I must not forget that shows how the crime of the Viper and myself is regarded by the legal fraternity of Delaware County. I must admit it was an appalling and indecent thing to do, but "Cloudy," who suggested it, insisted that it was the proper thing to show the people that Delaware County did not care what the public sentiment might be.

The function was at a dinner given in the Continental Hotel

in Philadelphia, on the evening of February 13, by the Delaware County Bar Association, with Judges "Ike Jokeson" and "Bill Broomstink" as guests. The feature of the dinner was a mock trial of the Erb murder case. The principals in the case were District Attorney "McDade" and "Cloudy Alexadder."

A few days after at my room in a hotel, "Cloudy" and "Frowsy" gave us a detailed description of the novel dinner feature, and everybody present including a waiter named Waterson, who saw the whole thing, nearly died with laughter at the funny stunt. They gave an exhibition of both the judges going into paroxysms of laughter at the imitations given at the dinner of my fainting fits, and the grief of the jurymen. One clever wag, a prominent lawyer, poured some claret on a napkin and waved it before the judges as the bloody pajamas. It was certainly a clever thing all the way through, and "Cloudy" and "Frowsy" suggested that if the real story of the murder and the trial should ever become public, and any of the persons connected should be compelled by public sentiment to leave the community, it would be a good idea to have Mrs. "Walkermire" write a vaudeville sketch, and all hands could go on the stage and make a fortune.

I also wish to thank my dear friends of the Delaware bar who showed by their presence at the dinner their appreciation of our career in Delaware County, and the action of the Court in legally sanctioning the murder of the Captain, and I now pledge myself to extend them the hospitality of Red Gables at all times, as soon as my lawyers succeed in getting it for me.

I think some people have an astounding nerve to interfere in my private affairs.

However, there is an old saying as true and as sure and as inevitable as God's vengeance.

"MURDER WILL OUT"

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