

on the forehead. His whole nature cried out for the touch of her lips, but he was man enough to subdue the passion that burnt within him.

She looked into his face again, and he saw that glad light of love shine through the tears in her eyes. But still she did not speak.

"Agnes, dearest," he said in a low voice, "I have something to say to you, and I must say it quickly. I would have left without saying it, but it must be said now—after what has happened." She turned her eyes away from his face, and he drew her closer to him. He could feel her slim body tremble in his arms.

"Agnes," he said simply, "I love you. It sounds weak to say you are the only woman I have ever loved. It is a stock phrase; the ridicule of cynics; in most cases a lie, that no intelligent woman believes. But in my case it is the real truth. Yet to-night I must leave you, and never see you again. I will not drag you down to my level. But for a moment of weakness, but for the prank that chance has played on us, I should have left without telling you this. Now that I have told it, I must go."

"Arthur," she murmured, but so faintly that the sound hardly came to his ears. It was the first word she had spoken, and all the love of her heart was concentrated in the softly breathed name. An appeal, a despairing cry, a prayer for him to stay. It was all these blended together by love in a single word.

"Yes, I must leave you, Agnes," he continued, "I am no fit husband for you. It is not only that you are a great lady, and I am a poor man. Were I but the son of a farmer on your father's estate, I could look you honestly in the face and ask you to be my wife. But being what I am, I could not drag you down to my level. I see you for the last time, Agnes. I must go now."

"Yes, I think it is time that Mr. Arthur Holme went," said a stern cold voice behind them. They sprang apart and turning round confronted the Earl of Heatherstone. His heavy handsome face was flushed with anger, but he controlled himself with the skill of the trained diplomat. Lady Agnes hid her crimson face in her hands. Arthur Holme clenched his right fist, and said a word that would not look well in print.

"Mr. Arthur Holme is going, Lord Heatherstone," he said. "How long have you been here?" He snapped the last half dozen words out so savagely that Lord Heatherstone shrank back a pace. But he recovered his composure in a moment.

"Agnes," he said quietly, "go up to your bedroom at once. Mr. Holme, I will have a word with you before you go."

Lady Agnes went up to her infuriated father and kissed him meekly on the cheek. "Good night," she said in a low voice. He did not answer, but turned his back on her. She held out her hand timidly to Arthur Holme.

"Good-bye," she said in a whisper. Holme looked at her father, and the devil rose in his heart. He stepped forward to clasp her in his arms and kiss her passionately on the lips. But his finer nature prevailed. He stopped suddenly and held out his hand.

"Good-bye," he said hoarsely, "and God bless you."

She took his hand, and looked for a moment into his eyes, and fled. He turned to the great Earl of Heatherstone.

"Well, my lord," he said sharply, "what have you to say for yourself?" It was characteristic of the man that he assumed the attitude of a judge at the time when his proper place was in the dock.

"It is for you to speak, Mr. Holme," Lord Heatherstone replied; "but let us return to the smoking room. It is cold in here."

The two men went back to the smoking room. Lord Heatherstone flung himself in an easy chair by the fire. Holme remained standing. For a while neither of them spoke.

"Well, sir," said Lord Heatherstone, after a pause.

"As you have been listening, my lord, I think you know everything. It is possibly clear to you that I love your daughter. It is equally clear, if you heard rightly, that I shall not see her again."

"You damned scoundrel!" cried Lord Heatherstone, rising to his feet, "what right have you to speak of love to my daughter! Who are you, you damned ad-

venturer! Don't you know your place, confound you? Do you think that because we—"

"That'll do, Lord Heatherstone," the young man replied; "I know my place quite well. And it is because I know it that I have resolved never to enter this house again. I will wish you good-bye, my lord."

"Stay, Mr. Holme; you cannot go yet. How long has this been going on?"

"It commenced five minutes before you came into the room. It ended when your daughter left it. But I shall answer no more questions. I wish you good-night," and he turned to go.

Lord Heatherstone laughed. "When I was your age," he said in an insolent tone, "I had more pluck. I would not have broken the heart of the woman I loved for all the social distinctions in the world. Bah! I thought there was more fight in you. I do not think Agnes has lost much."

Arthur Holme turned sharply round, and his face paled for all the bronze that the sea and winds had given it.

"There's plenty of fight in me, Lord Heatherstone," he replied in a strained voice. "And, by God, if you rouse it, you will bring the devil into your household. I am man enough to retire without wrecking your home. Even if I thought that your own case had made you lenient to us both, even if I thought that your second marriage with a woman whom you dragged up from obscurity had made you less punctilious about the alliances of your house, I would not offer myself as a suitor for your daughter's hand."

"You have no money," said Lord Heatherstone. "It would, of course, be an impossible match. We do not even know who you are."

"I know this," Holme replied gravely, "that I am no fit husband for any woman. But, mark you, Lord Heatherstone, if you rouse the devil in me, I may cast all scruples to the winds. I am a strong man, and I care little for your lands and your titles. If I did resolve to follow my desires, Lord Heatherstone, I would indeed, leave your house unto you desolate."

Lord Heatherstone sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands. Arthur Holme had struck hard, and struck deep. It was but a month since Lord Overcliffe had died.

Holme was disgusted with the brutality of his own words. He stepped over to Lord Heatherstone and laid one hand on his shoulder.

"I am sorry, Lord Heatherstone," he said quietly, "I did not mean to hurt you. You would forgive me much if you knew what this brief glimpse of love has been to me. Good-night and—good-bye."

(To be continued.)

(Copyright Story.)

# IN DUTY BOUND,

By EDRIC VRIEDENBURG.

{Author of "The Haunted House in Berkley Square," etc.}

He was in duty bound to leave her.

He loved her dearly, she was the whole world to him, and now that he had to turn his back on her and go, that real world that was before him seemed an utter blank, a desolate, dreary waste.

And she loved him as truly and devotedly as he loved her, yet she was in duty bound to let him go. All the dreams of the happy future, all the castles they had built between them, all his ambitions, in which she was to share, were shattered.

Shattered—in such a simple, ordinary, everyday, unromantic sort of way, but nevertheless, shattered to atoms!

It was ruined, that's all, just ruined. Yesterday he had been a man of money, to-day he wasn't worth a shilling. He received the news by telegram, and then by letter; quite a short letter. His trustee had speculated with his money, lost it, and fled the country.

At first he could hardly realise all the loss of the money meant to him, that it meant the loss of his life's happiness, the loss of her he loved beyond all measure. But her father realized the truth immediately; he was a poor man himself and knew the sorrows and sins of poverty, so he quickly opened the young man's eyes, and his daughter's eyes—they were in duty bound to part.

So they parted—John Strong and Muriel Leslie bade good-bye as thousands of lovers have done before, and thousands of lovers will do again; which fact, by the way, does not lessen the individual sorrow in the slightest degree.

Muriel stood at the garden gate to see the last of the man she loved as he walked down the road with the setting sun before him. He came shortly to the point where he had to turn away to the right, so he stopped a moment and waved his hand; then he strode quickly on, and the sun went down behind the hills.

John Strong was by no means a perfect man, he was nothing so uninteresting. He was an ordinary being, with his good points, and his bad. At present, of course, Muriel Leslie was uppermost in his mind, and in conjunction with her in his thoughts was the man who had robbed him, robbed him of all the glorious happiness in store for him; and he cursed this man body and soul, swore that if ever he met him—swore that which he would not utter aloud, swore that which made his blood boil in his veins, and caused him unconsciously to stride along the road like one demented.

John Strong went to London to arrange his affairs. This did not take him long. As a matter of fact he had very few affairs to arrange. There was not even a remnant of his fortune left to give him the trouble in settling. His trustee had cleared off everything, Cash, papers, and himself.

Strong had relations in town, poor relations certainly, but between them they managed to scrape together sufficient money to send him to Australia and to give him a little, very little, cash in hand when he arrived there.

"I will go to the goldfields, and make a fortune, or die for it," he said to himself, which remark certainly shows that he was distinctly an ordinary young man.

"The placing of one sixpence on the top of another is too slow a process for me," he continued, "I shall be old before I have enough to marry on." And then he cursed again the man who had robbed him.

So he went to Australia to make his fortune.

Time and the good ship brought him eventually to the island continent. On board ship he made the acquaintance of two young men, ordinary young men like himself, and the three would talk together of what they were going to do, the fortunes they were going to make, and of their happy return to England; but Strong never mentioned his lost love, it was too deep a feeling for him to speak of lightly, neither did he ever refer to the man who had robbed him; this also was too serious a subject to be idly talked about.

These three young men resolved to try their luck together; they were about the same age, and all equally poor; between them they had only sufficient money to take the train part of the way to the Land of Ophir, to the Land of Golden Nugget and Golden Happiness, so they resolved to walk the remainder of the distance.

It was a foolish, mad idea; but foolish, mad ideas have before now succeeded in the end.

Be that as it may, when they could go no further by train they started out to walk. They walked till they were foot-sore and weary, under burning sun for three days, with little to eat and little to drink. It was in the evening of the third day that, as they dragged their tired legs along, they saw a cottage in the distance. It was a welcome sight, for they were out of the beaten track, and night was upon them; they were confident that the inmates of the cottage would give them such hospitality as they were able, so they pushed on with renewed energy.

A half-starved dog met them in the garden of the miserable little house, while half-a-dozen unhappy looking fowls pecked about the door.

The young men knocked, but no one answered; knocked again and again with the same result, so at last they lifted the latch and walked in. The door opened into a room which was close, evil-smelling, and empty. They stood for a moment in silence, and then one of them shouted. There came a reply, a faint cry from above stairs; they shouted again, and the cry was repeated.

"I will go and see what the matter," said Strong, and he went up to the room above.

He was not long away; he came down hurriedly. His face was white, and his hands were trembling; he went into the garden for air, he breathed with difficulty.

"Why, man, what's the matter!" cried his companions, "have you seen a ghost?"

"Matter—matter little enough. It's nothing," he replied, disjointly. "There are two men lying ill upstairs, that's all, that's all; go and see them."

Strong's two companions wet upstairs and left him alone for a few moments. He was glad to be left alone; his thoughts were running riot.

"To think of meeting him here," he

**NO CURE. NO PAY.**

It will Cost you NOTHING to Try Our IMPROVED and PATENTED ELECTRIC BELTS for NEURALGIA and other DISORDERS. Send for one AT ONCE, and PAY for it within three months after you are PERMANENTLY CURED.

**ELECTRIC APPLIANCE CO.,**  
30 ELIZABETH-ST., SYDNEY.

**BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXIONS.**

The play of delicate colour over your face is possible only when your skin is free from marring signs, such as roughness, undue redness, sallowness arising from skin languor, pimples, blackheads, &c. Few women are free from these marring signs, hence

**WILTON'S HAND EMOLLIENT**

Finds an increasing sale. This skin food is free from grease, fat and oily substances, readily penetrates the pores, cleans the skin, and makes it soft and smooth as velvet.

Be sure to ask for Wilton's Hand Emollient as there are now many worthless imitations on the market.

**CHEMISTS AND STORES.**  
1/6 Per Jar.

**IT IS USED**

HERE THERE EVERYWHERE

**TANIWA SOAP**

IN THE LAUNDRY KITCHEN BATH

Because it is Absolutely Pure.

THE Best Cold-water Soap IN THE MARKET.