# The Pall Mall

## By FRANCIS WADE

### ILLUSTRATIONS by C.D. RHODES

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CHAPTER XXVI—Continued.
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"I must be going," she said, rising. "If you will give me my envelope?"

He crossed to the safe and got it for her. His curiosity was still keen-edged, but he beat it back manfully.

"I wish you wouldn't hurry," he said hospitably. He was searching the changeful eyes for the warrant to say more, but he could not find it.

He was obliged to let it go at that; but when they reached the phaeton and the horse-holding clerk had been relieved, he spoke of another matter.

"I'm a little worried about Kenneth," he told her. "He came down this morning looking positively wretched, but he wouldn't admit that he was sick. Have you seen much of him lately?"

"Not very much"—guardedly—"Did you say he had gone home?"

"I don't know where he has gone. He left here about half an hour before you came, and I haven't seen him since."

"And you are worried because he doesn't look well?"

"Not altogether on that account. I'm afraid he is in deep water of some kind. I never saw a person change as he has in the past week or so. You know him pretty well, and what a big heart he has?"

She nodded half mechanically.

"Well, there have been times lately when I've been afraid he'd kill somebody—in this squabble of ours, you know. He has been going armed—which was excusable enough, under the circumstances—and night before last, when we were walking uptown together, I had all I could do to keep him from taking a pot-shot at a fellow who, he thought, was following us. I don't know but I'm taking all sorts of unfair advantage of him, telling you this behind his back, but—"

"No; I'm glad you have told me. Maybe I can help him."

He put her into the low basket seat, and tucked the dust-robe around her carefully. While he was doing it he looked up into her face and said: "I'd love you awfully hard for what you have done today—if you'd let me."

It was like her to smile straight into his eyes when she answered him.

"When you can say that—in just that way—to the right woman, you'll find a great happiness lying in wait for you, Edward, dear." And then she spoke to the Morgan mare and distance came between.

As once before, in the earlier hours of the same day, Miss Grierson took the roundabout way between the Raymer plant and Mereside, making the circuit which took her through the college grounds and brought her out at the head of upper Shawnee street. The Widow Holcomb was sitting in her front porch, placidly crocheting, when the phaeton drew up at the curb.

"Mr. Griswold," said the phaeton's occupant. "May I trouble you to tell him that I'd like to speak to him a moment?"

Mrs. Holcomb, friend of the Raymers, the Farnhams, and the Oswalds, and own cousin to the Barrs, was of the perverse minority; and, apart from she had her own opinion of a young woman who would wait at the door of a young man's boarding house and take him off for a night drive to goodness only knew where, and from which he did not return until goodness only knew when. So there was no stitch missed in the crocheting when she said, stiffly: "Mr. Griswold isn't in. He hasn't been home since morning."

Miss Grierson drove on, and the most casual observer might have remarked the strained tightening of the lips and the two red spots which came and went in the damask-peach cheeks. But it was not until she had reached Mereside, and had gained the shelter of the deserted library, that speech came.

"O pitiful Christ!" she sobbed, dropping into a chair and hiding her face in the crook of her arm; "he's done it at last!—he's trying to hide, and that's what they've been waiting for! And I don't know where to look!"

But Matthew Broffin, tilting lazily in his chair on the dowgtown hotel porch, knew very well where to look, and he was watching the one outlet of the hiding place as an alert, though outwardly disregardful, house cat watches a mouse's hole.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Quality of Mercy.

On no less an authority than that of the great doctor who came again from Chicago for a second consultation with Doctor Farnham, Andrew Galbraith owed his life during the two days following his return to consciousness to the unremitting care and devotion of one person.

Seconding the efforts of the physicians, and skillfully directing those of the nurses, Margery threw herself into the vicarious struggle with the generous self-sacrifice which counts neither cost nor loss; and on the third day she had her reward. Her invalidmartyr guest and charge was distinctly better, and again, so the two doctors declared, the balance was inclining slightly toward recovery.

It was in the afternoon of this third day, when she had been reading to him, at his own request, the sayings of the Man on the Mount, that he referred for the first time to the details of the accident which had so nearly blotted him out. Upon his asking, she related the few and simple facts of the rescue, modestly minimizing her own part in it, and giving her companion in the catboat full credit.

"The writer-man," he said thoughtfully, when she had finished telling him how Griswold had worked over him in the boat, and how he would not give up. "I remember; you fetched him out to the hotel with you one day; no, you needna fear I'll be forgetting him." Then, with a shrewd look out of the steel-gray eyes: "How long have you been knowing him, Maggie, child?"

"Oh, for quite a long time," she hastened to say. "He came here, sick and helpless, one day last spring, and—well, there isn't any hospital here in Wahaska, you know, so we took him in and helped him get over the fever, or whatever it was. This was his room while he stayed with us."

Andrew Galbraith wagged his head on the pillow.

"I know," he said. "And ye're doing it again for a poor auld man whose siller has never bought him anything like the love you're spending on him. You're everybody's good angel, I'm thinking, Maggie, lassie." Though he did not realize it, his sickness was bringing him day by day nearer to his far-away boyhood in the Inverness-shire hills, and it was easy to slip into the speech of the mother-tongue. Then, after a long pause, he went on: "He wasna wearing a beard, a red beard trimmed down to a spike—this writer-man, when ye found him, was he?"

She shook her head. "No; I have never seen him with a beard."

The sick man turned his face to the wall, and after a time she heard him repeating softly the words which she had just read to him. "But if ye forgive not men . . . neither will your father forgive . . ." And again, "Judge not that ye be not judged." When he turned back to her there were new lines of suffering in the gray old face.

"I'm sore beset, child; sore beset," he sighed. "You were telling me that Mistress Garland and Johnson will be here tonight?"

"Yes; they should both reach Wahaska this evening."

Another pause, and at the end of it: "That man Broffin; you'll remember you asked me one day who he was, and I left ye he was a special officer for the bank, in the still here?"

"He is; I saw him on the street this morning."

Again Andrew Galbraith turned his face away, and he was quiet for so long a time that she thought he had fallen asleep. But he had not.

"You're thinking something of the writer-man, lassie? Don't mind the clavers of an auld man who never had a chick or child of his ain."

Her answer was such as a child might have made. She lifted the big-jointed hand on the coverlet and pressed it softly to her flushed cheek, and he understood.

"I thought so; I was afraid so," he said, slowly. "You say you have known him a long time; it canna have been long enough, bairnie."

"But it is," she insisted, loyally. "I know him better than he knows himself; oh, very much better."

"Ye know the good in him, maybe; there's good in all men, I'm thinking now, though there was a time when I didna believe it."

"I know the good and the bad—and the bad is only the good turned upside down."

Again the sick man wagged his head on the pillow and closed his eyes.

"Ye're a loving lassie, Maggie, and that's a' there is to it," he commented; and after another interval: "What must be, must be. We spoke of this man Broffin: I must see him before Johnson comes. Can ye get him for me, Maggie, child?"

She nodded and went downstairs to the telephone, returning almost immediately.

"I was fortunate enough to catch him at the hotel. He will be here in a few minutes," was the word she brought; and Galbraith thanked her with his eyes.

"When he comes, ye'll let me see him alone—just for a few minutes;" he begged; and beyond that he said no more.

It was after the click of the gate latch had announced Broffin's arrival that Margery drew the shades to shut out the glare of the afternoon sun, lowering the one at the bed's head so that the light no longer fell upon the instruments of the small house telephone set mounted upon the wall beside the door.

"Mr. Broffin is here, and I'll send him up," she said. "But you mustn't let him stay long, and you mustn't try to talk too much."

The sick man promised, and as she was going away she turned to repeat the caution. Andrew Galbraith's eyes were closed in weariness, and he did not see that she was standing with her back to the wall while she admonished him, or that, when she had gone to send the visitor up, the carpiece of the house telephone set had been detached from its hook and left dangling by its wire cord.

Miss Grierson went on into the library after she had met the detective at the door and had told him how to find the upstairs room. When the sound of a cautiously closed door told her that Broffin had entered the sick-room, she snatched the receiver of the library house phone from its hook and held it to her ear. For a little time keen anxiety wrote its sign manual in the knitted brows and the tightly pressed lips. Then she smiled and the dark eyes grew softly radiant. "The dear old saint!" she whispered; "the dear, dear old saint!" And when Broffin came down a few minutes later, she went to open the hall door for him, serenely demure and with honey on her tongue, as befitted the role of "everybody's good angel."

"Did you find him worse than you feared, or better than you hoped?" she asked.

"He's mighty near the edge, I should say—what? But you never can tell. Some of these old fellows can claw back to the top o' the hill after all the doctors in creation have thrown up their hands. I've seen it. What does Doc Farnham say?"

"What he always says: 'While there's life, there's hope.'"

Broffin nodded and went his way down the walk, stopping at the gate to take up the cigar he had hidden on his arrival.

"So Galbraith's out of it, lock, stock and barrel," he muttered, as he strode thoughtfully townward. "I reckoned it'd be that-a-way, as soon as I heard the story of that shipwreck. And no, I ain't so blamed sure that it's Raymer a-holdin' the fort in them pretty black eyes. The old man talked like a man that had just been honeyfuggled and talked over and primed plum' up to the muzzle. Why the blue blazes did he want to see me, then? Reckon he's got a message for Raymer, and is afraid to trust it to the telephone? Mighty queer, anyhow, that he should have sent for me at all. Reckon I'll have to go back and see what he's got to say."

"He's Trying to Hide and That's What They've Been Waiting For."

Broffin's return to the hotel was checked by the sight of a familiar figure in the doorway of the office. It was the figure of a man who was known to the police of two states as Hank Billings, and who was known to Broffin as one of the most slippery of the many slippery characters with which the detective had had to deal in the course of his professional career. Billings was talking with the clerk, and Broffin, passing on into the office, heard the clerk say that Mr. Griswold was not in the hotel, and that he had not been there since morning.

Billings turned away from the desk, and Broffin, who had stopped to light his cigar, followed him out to the porch. "Looking for somebody, Hank?" he asked, genially.

"Not as I know of," was the reply. "Reckon I'll have a cocktail before supper, though. Come along and have one with me."

Broffin shook his head. "Can't do it, Hank; I'm on the water wagon. Have you seen anything of Jim Hollister lately?"

"Not for a month of Sundays. Jim's in the penitentiary, you know. Got a ten-year stretch for that Fairfield bank job. Say, you're looking for somebody, yourself. Who is it?"

"Nobody that I know of. I'm just taking a little vacation, and looking around to see what's doing. Reckon I'll have that cocktail with you, after all."

Billings led the way into the bar-room, and Broffin followed. When they had drunk, Billings said: "Reckon I'll be moseying along. Got to meet a man at the depot. So long."

Broffin watched the departure of the man he knew to be a crook of the deepest dye, and then went back to the office. "Who was that fellow you were talking with?" he asked of the clerk.

"Why, that was Mr. Griswold," was the surprised reply.

"Griswold, eh? Are you sure?"

"Certainly I'm sure. I've known Mr. Griswold ever since he came here."

"Oh, all right," said Broffin, and he went out to the porch again, and sat down to think.

"Griswold, eh? Then Griswold and Hank Billings are pals, and Griswold has been lying to the clerk. Now, what's the game? Griswold's got a message for Raymer, and he's afraid to trust it to the telephone, and he's afraid to go himself, and he's got Hank Billings to do the errand. Looks like Griswold was afraid of Raymer, and was trying to get him out of the way. Reckon I'll have to go back and see what he's got to say."

Broffin rose and went back to the office. "Mr. Griswold has come in, I see," he said to the clerk. "Tell him I'd like to see him a moment, please."

The clerk went to the telephone