

**THE MARCH OF FATE.  
A NOVEL, IN THREE  
VOLUMES, VOL III**

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The march of fate. A novel, in three volumes, Vol III by B. L. Farjeon

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**B. L. FARJEON**

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THE MARCH OF FATE.



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The Fourth Link—Retribution.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

THE PALACE OF PLEASURE.

It was the night before the Derby, and the Royal Palace of Pleasure was crowded. Every portion of the palatial building, with one exception, was packed by an audience drawn from all classes of society, St. James and St. Giles and all their various intermediate grades being fully represented. To these mixed qualities, from the highly intelligent to the idiotically vacuous, the entertainment provided by the enterprising managers of the Royal Palace of Pleasure appeared to be equally palatable. Even the thoughtful-

mind sat, and looked, and listened with apparent satisfaction.

The one unoccupied portion of the music hall was a capacious stage box on the O. P. side, which the habitual humble frequenters of the Palace of Pleasure regarded with some such feelings as they would have regarded the Throne Room of a real Royal palace. That it was engaged and was intended to be occupied some time during the evening was evident from the preparations which had been made for expected visitors. Costly bouquets had been provided, and special programmes printed on satin; and it was observed by the aforesaid habitual frequenters that new chairs with gilt backs had been put into the box. Communicating with this box at the back were two private apartments, completely hidden from the view of the audience, one a dressing-room for ladies, the other a saloon luxuriously furnished. At the present moment it was more than usually attractive with a display of glass, and fruit, and flowers; and a promise of revelry was held out by two



ice pails containing some dozen bottles of '74 Pommery.

"I say Bill," whispered a woman to her neighbour in the gallery, "who's a-coming to-night in that box there? Some swells, I should say, by the looks of it."

"I did 'ear," replied Bill, who was generally supposed to be gifted with witty and sarcastic power, "that 'er between-July-and-September Majesty the Queen is going to honour us with a visit, for the special purpose of 'earing wot's going to win the Derby. She's got a dollar or two she wants to put on."

"Git out with yer," said the woman. "Wot d'yer mean with yer between-July-and-September Majesty?"

"Don't yer know?" exclaimed Bill. "You've been nicely brought up, you 'ave. Wot month comes between July and September?"

"August, o' course."

"That's it," said Bill, chuckling. "That's wot they call the Queen—her August Majesty."

"Wot do they call 'er that for?"

"There yer floor me," said Bill. "Blest if I know. The next time she comes to see me I'll arks 'er."

"Wot's going to win the Derby, Bill?" asked the woman coaxingly.

"D'yer think I'm going to tell yer for nothink?" retorted Bill. "Not me."

"I'll stand yer a pint, Bill, if yer give me the tip."

"All right, old gal. The favourite's going to win, as sure as yer've got a 'ead on yer shoulders. I ain't going to break my jaw in pernouncing 'is name. It commences with A, and ends with A, and it's got a lot of A's in the middle. There's the straight tip for yer, and don't yer forgit it."

"Ain't Morning Glory got a chance, Bill?"

"Morning Glory!" exclaimed Bill, with intense feeling. "Not a ghost of a chance. I got it from 'Arry Lobb—he's in the training stable, yer know. Well, he ses, ses 'Arry, that the favorite's on the job this time, and nothink can stop 'im. I wouldn't tell it to everybody, but I'll tell it to you, 'cause you

ain't 'arf a bad sort—put your bottom dollar on the favourite, and yer'll see 'im romp in. I got four to one a month ago, and now it's a even chance. My brother the Lurcher ses he to me, he ses, 'If I vos you, Bill, I'd 'edge.' 'Edge! Not if I know it. It ain't orfen yer git a certainty, and this is too good a thing to throw away. Wot do *you* think?" The speaker suddenly paused, and with two curled palms of his hands before his eyes made as if he was looking through a pair of opera glasses. "Well, I'm blest! D'yer see that bloke there in the box, looking at the flowers?"

"Yes, I see 'im, Bill."

"That's Mr. Redwood, as the favourite belongs to. I'll bet that's 'is private box, and that he's got a party coming to night. He used to race in the name of Larkworthy, but he sails in 'is own boat now. All through a woman, I've 'eerd, as he's nuts on."

"Who's the woman, Bill?"

"You know 'er. Everybody knows 'er. 'Onoria. She's a lucky one, she is—and what