MY LADY TONGUE.

BY AMELIE RIVES,

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CHAPTER IV.

REJECTED AGAIN.

"What? Are you blue?" Boughton asked, convinced now that the glisten was not due to the firelight. "On Christmas Eve, too? That will not do in the least in the world. What's wrong?"

She tossed herself back into the open arms of the big chair with a petulant gesture.

"Everything!" she cried—"Everything!"

Boughton sat a moment gazing steadily into the fire.

"Judith," he said, at last, "can't you tell me, dear? I might help you, you know?"

"You couldn't! you couldn't!" she said, still vehemently knitting her chestnut brows, which in that position were absurdly like her father's. "Nobody can. I can't myself. "Oh! dear!"

It is impossible to express the rebellion condensed into that one "Oh! dear!" The room seemed to reverberate with it.

Boughton could think of absolutely nothing to say just then, so he edged along toward her over the deerskin rug, until he could rest his arm on the arm of her chair.

"Tell me," he urged. "Do, Judith. One can never tell. Perhaps I may be the very one to help you."

But she said "No," very curtly, and stared over his head into the fire.

Presently, however, she burst forth again:

"Was there ever such a wild place as the University of Virginia, do you think?" she cried.

At that, "O-h!" said Phil to himself. Dick had of course been getting into trouble, and had cast his burden upon his sister's plucky little shoulders, after his usual brave fashion.

"I don't know much about it, you know," he made answer. "What has Dick been telling you?"

She looked at him sharply.

"Why do you think Dick has been telling me any thing?" she asked, in a rather careful voice.

"How else should you know?" Boughton said, easily. "But of course don't tell me unless you wish."

Suddenly she leaned forward, setting one hand back down in the other as they rested on her knees. Her necklace swung forward from her bending throat, and the fire-light cast dainty, circular shadows from its beads upon the snowy white of her neck.

"Yes, I will tell you," she said, suddenly. "Dick is in debt—the old, old story to sisters—for how much do you suppose?"

"I don't know," said Boughton, stupidly. He was not thinking in the least of Dick just then. He was wondering how many of those little soft round shadows there were on her white breast, and whether he could count them if he tried.

"Well, then—for eight—do you hear?—for eight—thousand—dollars."

"That's not so very bad," said Boughton, reassuringly, "We can pull him through."

"We?" said the girl, haughtily, on the defensive at once. "who do you mean by 'we?'"

All at once he got his arms about her. She felt his hot breath in her hair, on her throat.

"Who should I mean but you and I—you and I—you and I?" he went on repeating, in a sort of intoxication. "Judith—kiss me!"

"Kiss you?" she said, "kiss you?"

She was absolutely rigid with fury. Was ever man so bold as Boughton?—so deaf, one might say. He leaned forward and kissed the pretty blue bow, and the space of white flesh encircled by the blue beads. He looked up and would have kissed her lips, but was stopped by the furious light in her eyes. He started back and freed her in a moment.

"This is the second time," she said, with shut teeth, as he remembered her once before to have spoken—"the second time you have behaved like a beast to me."

"Judith!" he said.

"Yes—a beast!" she said, biting down on the word, as it were, with her sharp little teeth.

"Judith," he said again, "take care—take care!"

"Take care!" she repeated, Take care of what? Of the womanhood that you don't respect? There! Your lips have touched them, they are vile!"

She jerked at the blue necklace with a sharp movement which broke it and the pretty beads went rolling this way and that over the fur rug and the polished floor. The kitten in her Toby-collar pursued one into a distant corner, and thought the episode gotten up for her especial benefit. One or two rolled down into Judith's bodice, and felt very cold and disagreeable, but she was too much wrought up just then to think of physical discomfort.

She stood opening and shutting her hand in sort of helpless gesture of rage.

"How dare you treat me so!" she said, breathless. "How dare you—dare you?—dare you?"

He was on his feet, of course, by this time, and stood facing her with his head well up, and his hands well down in his pockets, an extremely angry man. The lover was quite taken up with indignation.

"How dare you treat me so!" he returned, with rather ominous quietness. "Do you think it is very—er—ladylike to call people 'beasts?'"

"'Ladylike!'" panted poor Judith, who for the time being could not resist echoing him. "Ladylike!" she cried again. "Ladylike—the DEVIL," she said for the third time, bringing down her teeth with a vicious little snap over the terrible word.

Boughton was actually livid.

"Pardon me," he said, bowing and turning on his heel. "Good evening." But as he reached the door he wheeled around and came back to her. "Judith," he said, in a voice that she did not at all find familiar, "I meant to ask you just now to be my wife. Of course I leave at once. I will concoct some story to tell your father and Dick. Good-bye."

He went without so much as touching her hand, and closed the door, opening it again, however, to thrust a little mat out of the way. He did not again look over in her direction. Then he went finally.

And she stood staring at the closed door, thinking in a vague way that it was Christmas Eve, and that she had better ring for her maid to gather together the scattered beads—and that Boughton had gone and that she had lost her temper and forgotten herself utterly.

There was a rigorous wind a-romp in the narrow hall ways and the locust trees without, and in the distant corner the kitten was still scrabbling about with one of the fallen beads. It was quite still save for these noises, and the sound of the wood fire, which was busily "treading snow."

She stood there until the room seemed receding in a golden haze, and then she turned stiffly, and, stooping down, began to pick up the blue beads from the floor. The kitten, seeing her kneeling, scampered up, expecting a frolic. She lifted the pretty little brute to her white breast and held it thus while she went on in laborious search.

Judith did not see Phil again until three years afterward, when she was twenty-one, and the civil war had broken out in all its horror. He was a Colonel on General ———'s staff, and happened to be encamped near Charlottesville, and Colonel Page asked himself and the General to dinner. The latter declined for some reason or other, but much to Judith's amazement, Boughton came.

She watched him dismount from his horse looking through her closed window blinds, and her heart emulated the action of poor Trumpeter's diaphragm on the memorable occasion three years ago. She saw that he had broadened a great deal and was browner—very much browner—in fact, quite dingy as to complexion, and that his undress uniform was abominably shabby.

Then she turned slowly away and went down stairs. She had thought a good deal over her toilet, laying out the four gowns in her possession on her narrow bed. Among them was the creamy one with the little blue bow at the bodice. She was as slender as ever, and could have worn it very well but she tossed it aside decidedly. She finally clad herself in a gray serge, which had originally been a vivid pink, and belonged to one of her great aunts. A rosy tinge was still discernible here and there in the folds, and it was very pretty, to be sure, after the fashion of that in a gray cloud at sunset. She put on a little tucker of old lace which, alack, had been "done up" with bluing, but there were no bows, nor beads nor bronze shoes this time. As for herself, she looked precisely the same as she had done three years ago, save that there was rarely any red cowadays in the brown of her eyes.

She went down slowly, coming to a halt on each shallow stair of the oak stair-case. She was not at all sure of her reception. Would he stare grimly, and be very icy to her? Or would he merely ignore her? Or would he indulge in covert sarcasms, that only she could understand?

She made up her mind at last, however, and turning the knob of the drawing room door, entered abruptly and noiselessly.

The Colonel was established in his red-leathern half-way house, with his gouty foot on a stool, and Boughton sat astride of one of the various spindle legged chairs, with his arms resting on its back, and his chin on his arms. He got up when Judith entered, and came forward to meet her, holding out both hands.

"Well, my Lady Tongue," said he, with the smile she remembered.

There was no trace of bitterness, of sarcasm, of coldness in his voice. It was absolutely natural, if a trifle mischievous, and somehow this perverse young woman wished that it had been either one of the other three, rather than what it was. She found spirit enough at her command, however, to answer saucily:

"Well, Sir Oracle!"

He still held her hands, and looked down at her.

"You haven't changed the least," he said, presently. "Er—that—is—have you?"

"No," she said, with all her own curtness this time, resenting the still very decided mischief in his tone.

"I don't know that I'm sorry," he said, gravely, and then the Colonel called to him, and he turned away to answer.

They saw him very often during the next fortnight. He was always riding down at unexpected moments, and stopping in to dinner or tea. It is true that his conversation was chiefly with the Colonel concerning war matters, and what had been, and what was to come.

Dick had just joined Boughton's regiment, and the Colonel was as anxious to know all about him as though he had been in several engagements, whereas he had not been in any. He came jingling down with Boughton on one day, in all the pride of his new trappings, foolish and really looking quite gallant. Judith had still the advantage of that half inch, but the boy was sturdier than at seventeen, and carried himself very well.

They arrived about sundown, and the Colonel, being confined to his room by a very sharp attack of gout, they had some chocolate in Judith's "Tea Caddy." The hard times of sweet-potato coffee and blackberry-leaf tea had not yet changed, and Judith's chocolate was above praise.

Boughton cast a rather curious look about the room as he sat down, and Judith handed him one of the wide, shallow cups that he remembered. It was all just the same, all except the kitten in the Toby collar, who was now a sedate matron with two children, who had each inherited a Toby collar, as like their parent's as possible.

Boughton took one upon his knee, and Dick captured the other, while Judith ministered to their mamma with bits of cake soaked in the chocolate.

"I say," remarked Dick, suddenly, "by —! if it isn't only a week from Christmas. Do you remember the way you trotted off and left us on Christmas Eve three years ago, Cousin Phil! You do, don't you, Judy?"

Judith said: "Oh, yes," that she remembered, of course.

Boughton, who was smoking one of the Colonel's old Cabanas, lazily stroked the paw of the kitten on his knee with the unoccupied fingers of his cigar hand. Judith thought she detected a smile—the wraith of a smile behind the smoke haze. She drew herself up, and a very haughty look came over her fair, firelit features.

"Assuredly I remember it," said Boughton, all of a sudden, when Dick, who was busily engaged in tormenting his kitten by pulling its Toby-collar half over its ears had forgotten that he had put the question.

"I should think I did," he went on "The thermometer was only fifteen above zero, and the wagon got stalled in a snow-drift before we were half way to the station."

Judith again waxed perceptibly taller. She would have added two or three cubits to her stature if she could have done so. She told herself that she hated her cousin Philip Boughton very much indeed.

"Well, Jude certainly made a lovely present out of you, anyway," laughed Dick. "And, I must say, she appreciated it. I don't believe it's been off of her arm for the last three years."

Boughton could not repress a quick look in Judith's direction. She was making a fire screen out of one of her long hands, and he could not see her expression for the shadows from her fingers. But, by and by, when Dick went out for something or other, he pitched his cigar into the fire and went over beside her.

"Have you really worn that trinket all this time?" he said with more of curiosity than any other emotion apparent in his voice.

"Certainly," said Judith, stiffly. "You were very good in sending it to me, and I was very rude to you."

She got suddenly to her feet and stood in front of him.

"Cousin Phil," she said, in a quick, vibrating tone that he had never before heard her use, "I began three letters to you about that, but I was ashamed to send them. I was afraid you would not read them. I was sorry—I—I am sorry," she ended under her breath.

There was a pause, but before he could speak, she had turned back the sleeve of her gray gown from her pretty, blue-veined arm, and had unfastened the dull gold links, with their sapphire settings.

"Here," she said, holding it out to him; "I—I ought not to have kept it. I—always meant—to return it to you."

"Did you?" said Boughton, in a somewhat curious voice.

He allowed her to put the bracelet in his hands, stood turning it about in the glow from the fire which made daylight in the big, blue stones.

"Of course you don't expect me to keep it!" he said at last, looking up at her.

"Why? why?" she said, rather blanky.

"O, well, because I like to fancy you more consistent than other women, perhaps. You know it would not be very consistent to tell me that you were sorry for a rudeness in one breath, and then to commit another in the next. Would it now?"

"I—don't understand," said the Lady Tongue, who seemed all at once to have forfeited her claim to that title.

"Why, you see," Phil went on slowly, "it isn't very civil to return a gift. May I put it on for you?"

She stood perfectly silent for fully a moment. There was no sound save from the softly crackling fire. Then she held out her arm. As he slipped the bracelet back into its place he said quietly:

"That was a very pretty custom among the Jews, was it not? —the custom of having betrothal bracelets."

"Did they?" said Judith, indistinctly.

"Why, you must have read of it. The lover put on the bracelet and then pushed back his sweetheart's veil for the first time. Your hair is like a veil, Judith."

"Is it?" said Judith.

There was a humming in her ears, and his voice came to her indistinctly. She felt that he was drawing her nearer and nearer to him by the arm that he still held, then his hand was on her hair pushing it back from her temple and eyes. Then his mouth upon her mouth.

She seemed suddenly to break from a spell. She pushed him from her with might and main, and stood apart, shuddering but erect.

"You—you—think that you have only to command, Sir Oracle," she said, in a steady voice. She even smiled a little. Then she took off the bracelet and laid it on the table between them.

"I can not wear it," she said, very clearly. "And dad will be wanting me now. Good night."

She was gone, and Boughton stood for several minutes with his chin set in his thumb and forefinger, looking down at the pretty blue and gold kickshaw.

It was just three days after this that a rather lively skirmish took place in the Mill-Meadow.

It was an encounter between Boughton's men, who were on their way to join General ——— at Gordonsville, and a regiment that had lost its way in following.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

SAMPSON LIVES AGAIN.

He is in London and His Arm is Like a Lady's Waist.

There are many Delilahs, but only one Samson, and he is performing at the Royal Aquarium in London at present, says the Pall Mall Gazette, where his feats of strength are certainly of an original and marvelous character.

The spectator, as he watches, feels that it is better to be friendly with such a man, for with a blow of his fist he breaks an iron chain that will bear a pressure of 3,000 pounds. With his two hands grasping a short chain of 2,300 pounds ascertained pressure, he makes a momentary effort and pulls the chain to bits, and in what seems the most wonderful feat, namely, fastening two tight iron chain bracelets or armlets around his biceps—the spectator may view the process from beginning to end. One hears the strong man take a long breath, sees the muscles of his arm growing bigger and bigger, the cords of his neck swelling with the sustained effort, his face crimsoning, and then in the silence those nearest the stage can hear a curious little sundering snap. It is the double-chain armlet that has broken, and which the next second falls ringing to the floor.

When Sampson's fist is clinched ready to strike the measurement of his upper arm round biceps and triceps is nineteen and one-half inches, which, we may casually remark, is considered a tolerable waist for a young lady.

A Conscientious Young Man.

Everybody was wondering why Willie Washington had said nothing for so long, and a young lady said in a bantering tone:—

"A penny for your thoughts, Mr. Washington."

"Aw, weally; I—aw—wouldn't like to pose as a wobber or a confidence man or anything like that."

And several people realized that maybe Willie wasn't as badly off as he looked.

FOR THE FOUR-DAY SHIP.

The Advantages of a Bow Propeller—A New Fuel Wanted.

A correspondent who has read the article entitled "Build a Four-day Ship" writes to ask how it is possible that a screw placed in the bow of a ship could prove more efficient than one placed in the stern, and cites the well-known fact that when the ordinary screw steamers try to go astern they make poor work of it.

As to the fact it is not now questioned. There are a number of boats in use, notably the ferryboats on the Mersey at Liverpool, where bow propellers are used, and where their efficiency has been demonstrated. The saving of coal amounted to a very large per. cent. when bow propellers were put in. It can be demonstrated scientifically as well, but that would require an elaborate abstruse mathematical calculation. It will be easily understood, however, that in all ships now made the stern has a very different form or model from the bow. The stern is not shaped for splitting the water. When a ship tries to back up she moves slowly, because she is not of the right shape. The bow propeller gets a better grip on the water because the water is unbroken there. No matter what the form of the ship, the water reaches a stern propeller in eddies, and at an angle—the angle which the lines of the stern make with the keel.

There is one other consideration not commonly thought of. Observers have noticed that by the time a stern propeller gets up to its maximum number of revolutions the stern of the ship has settled in the water materially. She is no longer on a level keel. This is because the wheel pumps the water from the sides and beneath the ship so fast that she is not properly supported until she has settled down somewhat. The wheel, in fact, creates a partial vacuum under her. That vacuum is not wholly overcome by the sinking of the stern. Necessarily the screw cannot exert itself to the best advantage under such circumstances. The retarding influence of this slight vacuum is greater than the retarding influence of the current which the bow screw would throw against the bow.

It is only twenty-five years since the leading nautical magazine of England hooted at the idea of screw propellers ever being used where speed was required of a ship, but now the authorities have been brought to see not only the advantages of propellers in the stern, but they are acknowledging the advantage of the bow screws as well. It is likely that there are two considerations that will prevent the immediate adoption of a bow screw: Bow screws would be more likely to be broken; it is not the fashion to use them. "Sailors is the most fashionablest folks there is," as old Jack Servenmallet says.

There is one other hope for the future four-day ship which this correspondent suggests, and that is the use of a lighter fuel than coal. He thinks crude petroleum might be substituted. It might be, doubtless, but for its cost. Ships are run to make money. They make little enough now without adding to the fuel bill. But it is not impossible that some genius will manage to get the heat of coal in a better way. Or it may be that gas will yet be made from water at so low a price that it can be stored in cylinders on ship board, and used as fuel, as illuminating gas is now stored to light railway trains and ferryboats. Well made gas tanks would weigh little more than coal bunkers, while compressed gas would, of course, not compare in weight to coal. Here is a field for an inventor. The man who can substitute a ton of gas for 300 tons of coal, which the City of Paris burns, at the same or a less price, will soon thereafter be able to buy the Grand Trunk, and not miss the price from his pile.

HOW TO USE A WATCH.

Hints for Keeping Your Timepiece in Good Running Condition.

Having obtained a good serviceable article, says a watchmaker, you should, in order to produce satisfactory results, follow out these rules: Wind up your watch every day at the same hour. Avoid putting it on a marble slab, or near anything excessively cold. The sudden transmission from heat to cold contracting the metal may sometimes cause the mainspring to break. Indeed, the cold coagulates the oil, and the wheels and pivots working less freely, affect the regularity of the timekeeper.

In laying aside your watch be sure that it rests on its case. By suspending it free the action of the balance may cause oscillation, which may considerably interfere with its going.

If you would keep your watch clean you must be quite sure that the case fits firmly, and never put it in any pocket but one made of leather. Those pockets which are lined with cloth, cotton or calico, give by the constant friction, a certain quantity of fluff, which enters most watches, even those the cases of which shut firmly.

A skilful watchmaker one day thus reasoned with a customer: "You complained," said he, "that your watch gains a minute a month. Well, then, you will congratulate yourself when you hear me. You are aware that in your watch the balance, which is the regulator, makes five oscillations every second, which is 432,000 a day; so that your watch, exposed to all the vicissitudes which heat and cold occasion it, the varying weight of the air, and the shaking to which it is subjected, has not varied more than a minute in a month, or two seconds a day. It has only acquired with each vibration of the balance, a variation of the 216,000th part of a second. Judge, then, what must be the extreme perfection of the mechanism of this watch."

Frugal Fare of the Czar.

The Vienna correspondent of the Daily Telegraph sends an account of of the Czar's "frugal fare" at Fredensborg. It appears that his Majesty breakfasts at nine upon boiled eggs, ham, roast beef, omelette, and tea, while at noon he recruits his exhausted energies by a luncheon of chicken broth with an egg in it, cutlets, cold fowl, game, river fish, vegetables and cake. At two the Czar consumes a dish of rice boiled in milk. This is a pretty example of "frugal fare." The fact is that the Czar has a truly Gargantuan appetite, and he drinks oceans of champagne at and after dinner, but at the midday meal he contents himself with a bottle of either Bordeaux or Rhine wine.—[London Truth.

Druggist: "Have any calls last night?" Night clerk (absently): "Yes, and I lost $6 on a pat flush."

A CONVERT TO BUDDHISM.

Ceremonies of Receiving an American into the Godless Church.

Recent Ceylon papers contain accounts of a remarkable ceremony which took place recently in Colombo. This was the reception of a gentleman from America, who lately arrived in Ceylon, into the Buddhist creed.

The proceedings took place under the direction of the Buddhist high priest, assisted by eleven yellow-robed monks. The convert knelt before the assembled priests and intimated his desire to be admitted a member of the Buddhist Church. The high priest then catechised him and the assembled monks satisfied themselves that he was fitted to be a follower of Buddha. The gentleman, whose name was Powell, then begged of the high priest" to give him the Pansil," which the latter did, the candidate repeating it after him with the palms of the hands brought together uplifted. Having explained to the convert the responsible duties of a Buddhist the high priest gave him his blessing. A meeting was afterward held at which Mr. Powell explained his reasons for having embraced Buddhism, and described the mental process which he had gone through before he arrived at the conviction of its truth.

It appears that nearly forty years ago, when he was a child, he came across a book in his father's library, in which was a picture. It was the picture of Buddha seated in the conventional attitude on a lotus. Impressed by the expression of peace and love on the face, Mr. Powell got into the habit of going nearly every evening to a room to sit in a position as nearly like it as he possibly could. "On asking who or what picture it was," Mr. Powell said, "I was told that it was the picture of a heathen god, but its memory clung to me, and when I heard its name I never forgot it, but learned later what the symbol was and its meaning." Being, as he said, naturally of a religious turn of mind, and being intended by his father to be a clergyman, Mr. Powell was well educated in the Christian doctrine. "But I recognized and felt that there must be some law that I could work out myself, and that if I controlled my thoughts my life manifested an obedience to that power; but it was long before I recognized that this was the 'law of right thought.'" At one time he appears to have sought a refuge in agnosticism, but soon after he abandoned this mental attitude, and a perusal of "The Light of Asia" aroused in him the desire to take refuge in the law of Lord Buddha.

How the Burmese Work Their Oil Wells.

Dr. Noetling of the Indian Geological Survey, gives an interesting description of the native method of digging the wells. As soon as a native has made up his mind where he is going to have a new well, the workmen, usually four in number, begin to dig a square shaft, the sides of which measure between 4 feet and 4 feet 6 inches. Over this pit a cross beam, supported on stanchions at either side, is placed, in the centre of which is a small wooden drum or cylinder, which, with its axis, is made of a single piece of wood, the latter running on coarse fork-shaped supports. The leather rope used in hauling up the oil passes over the drum, and on it is fastened the workman who is going to be lowered down, as well as the common earthenware pot in which the oil is drawn up. If possible the well is so placed that the men or women drawing the rope walk down an inclined plane along the slope of a hill. The tools employed in digging are quite primitive, and can only be used in soft strata. Timber is used to support the walls of the shaft, and the latter is lined with wood. This wooden wall has considerable strength, but it has to be carefully watched lest it should give way.

The workmen are lowered in an ingenious way. The man sits on two slings formed of strong rope running between his legs and knotted over his left shoulder. To prevent sliding a thin rope runs down from the knot, across the breast, underneath the right shoulder to the back, where it is fastened to the rope forming the slings. A second rope for the same purpose is fastened round the hips. On account of the explosive gas filling the shaft no light can be taken down; the workman, therefore, ties up his eyes previously to descending, so as to enable him to see during the short time he is in the well, otherwise it would take him longer to accustom his eyes to the darkness than he is able to stay down on account of the gas, which renders breathing difficult. The data obtained by Mr. Noetling as to the time occupied in the ascent and descent, and the period during which the laborer can remain below, show that not 25 per cent. of the total working time is really spent in extracting the oil. Two hundred and ninety seconds is the longest time any man, however strong, can remain below without becoming unconscious, while in some he can only remain 60 seconds. With increasing depths the difficulties in obtaining the oil after the Burmese methods become insuperable. Hence the limit is 310 feet, and the workers object to more than 250 feet.

The drawing up of the oil is as primitive as everything else. The rope is fastened round the neck of the ball shaped pot, and, being lowered, is allowed to fill by sinking in the oil below. The oil thus raised is poured into another pot of the same shape, but much larger, and twelve of these are packed on each country cart.

The Hottest Spot on Earth.

One of the hottest regions of the earth is along the Persian gulf, where little or no rain falls. At Bahrin the arid shore has no fresh water, yet a comparatively numerous population contrives to live there, thanks to copious springs which burst forth from the bottom of the sea. The fresh water is got by diving. The diver, sitting in his boat, winds a great goatskin bag round his left arm, the hand grasping its mouth; then he takes in his right hand a heavy stone, to which is attached a strong line, and thus equipped he plunges in and quickly reaches the bottom. Instantly opening the bag over the strong jet of fresh water, he springs up the ascending current, at the same time closing the bag, and is helped aboard. The stone is hauled up, and the diver, after taking breath, plunges in again. The source of these copious submarine springs is thought to be in the green hills of Osman, some five or six hundred miles distant.

All that was Saved.

When the boilers of the steamer Corona exploded, destroying forty lives, nothing was saved except the certificate of the United States boiler inspector to the effect that the boilers were all right.—[Milwaukee Sentinel.