

# FORTUNE FAVORS THE BRAVE; OR, A LOOK INTO THE PAST

## CHAPTER I.

"Good-night, Nancy; pull that woollen thing close about your throat, child; the wind is dead east to-night."

"Good-night, Dr. Grantley," answered the girl, with a weary sigh, as she took the parcel of books held out to her and turned to go. "I will give Uncle Henry your message."

Dr. Grantley frowned slightly as soon as he was alone.

"I wish to Heaven I could do something to alter that child's life. She is in her wrong groove altogether, and it is slowly but surely killing her."

And Nancy Hamilton, going slowly home through the crowded streets, was thinking over bitterly to herself the conversation she had just had with the good, cheery old doctor, the only friend she possessed in the whole wide world.

"Speak to Uncle Henry," she mused, wearily. "How easy it sounds, and yet it is not to be done. Why should I complain to him, poor man? is not his life as hard as mine? And then I must never, never forget what he has done for me. Kept, fed me, clothed me, given me deep, true love, and all against Aunt Matilda." Nancy shivered slightly. "Aunt Matilda," she repeated—she pressed one hand over her hot, tired eyes—is it wrong to hate her? Can I help hating her?" the girl cried, bitterly, to herself. "She is not fit to wipe away the dust from dear Uncle Henry's shoes, and yet she orders him and commands him as if he were an animal and a slave; he is so weak, poor dear; he has no courage, no spirit; yet," Nancy declared, boldly and stanchly, "I love him with all his weakness; he is a good, true, honest gentleman. I am proud to own him despite everything."

She drew the old scarf more closely round her with a shiver born of atigue as much as cold.

"If only my mother had lived," he mused on sorrowfully. "Dr. Grantley is very kind, but he does not quite understand all I feel; bad, wretched, miserable as this life is, I would sooner cling to it—I would sooner starve than write to my father's people. How can I ever forget that they disowned my mother when she came back from India a broken-hearted widow to ask for help?"

"Was it a crime to have married my father secretly and against their wishes? Yet because she was poor, and had gone against their wishes, they left her to die and me to starve. No—no, if my father's people ever want me they must seek me, not I them. Yes, on that point I am resolved, whatever comes!" She sighed a sharp, deep sigh. "It's all very dark and dreary, and it's awful to live knowing that Aunt Matilda hates me; but there is one joy given to me. Uncle Henry loves me; he can't help me or protect me from insult and drudgery, still he loves me, poor uncle."

Two hot, large tears stole slowly down Nancy's pale cheeks and dropped onto the old plaid wrap that was folded round her. She hugged the books she held closer to her with a nervous gesture, which betokened that some new and painful thought had come to oppress and trouble her.

"I could almost grow content," she mused on. "For, at least, try to make myself so, if Aunt Matilda would only meet me halfway; but she grows worse and worse, and since Mr. Moss—ah!"—the girl murmured, suddenly—"I hate that man! I—I am afraid of him. Sometimes I feel as if against myself he will carry out his awful threat and marry me—marry me!" Involuntarily Nancy stopped, a cold shudder ran through her. "I feel so powerless against him, and there is no one to help me; Aunt Matilda encourages him, she thinks him too good for me; she would only laugh, and turn things into ridicule if I were to ask her to protect me from Thomas Moss." She moved slowly on, but she was trembling now in every limb.

She was drawing near to her home. Down at the bottom of the narrow street she could see the flaming gas jet outside the small grocer's shop where she lived.

Nancy stopped suddenly, a man was standing by the door; he was glancing eagerly up and down the street. Nancy knew for whom he was looking. It was Thomas Moss—looking for her.

Without hesitation she turned aside and walked rapidly into a by-street. "Of course Aunt Matilda will rage at me, but better that than a meeting with this man! His persistency is horrible. Can't he see that I hate him! I will not go in until I think he has gone; he can't surely stay long!"

She knew only too well the sort of greeting to expect when she did return.

Mrs. Chaplin was not likely to spare her, but anything was better than to have to listen to protestations of love from such a man as Thomas Moss. There were girls in the street, neighbors, but not her companions, who envied her this successful, coarsely handsome young fellow for a lover.

As to Mrs. Chaplin, she considered it an honor that her husband's niece should be "courted," to use her own terms, by the foreman of the large timber yard close by.

Thomas Moss was a man after Matilda Chaplin's own heart; he had worked himself into his present position by sheer industry, for he had neither kith nor kin, to his knowledge, to help him with money or advice; she considered Nancy, in fact, many degrees his inferior. The penniless child of an English officer and a clergyman's daughter was but a very poor thing in her eyes. If Nancy's parents had been so grand, she informed her husband over and over again, they might have left their girl provided for, and not thrown her on the hands of poor, hard-working people like she (Mrs. Chaplin) was.

It was a never-ending grievance with her, this adoption of his niece by Henry Chaplin. Yes, Nancy knew well that she was regarded enviously, and disliked cordially, by the young ladies who admired Thomas Moss, and aspired to the honor of being his chosen wife; and for her part our heroine would most gladly have renounced him to any, or all of them, for, though she respected the man for his industry and perseverance, she despised his mean, sordid, cruel nature, and hated him for his persistency in declaring love for herself.

She walked as quickly as she could down the side street.

She was very tired, but she seemed to grow easier away from the shop and that form. Suddenly, however, she felt her arm touched, and, turning with a start, she found herself followed and caught by the very man she was hurrying away from.

She shrank back so quickly that Moss could not fail to see it.

"Your aunt's looking for you, Nancy," he said. "I've been watching for you, and I saw you turn down here; what did you do it for? Don't you get into enough rows as it is? And you know it ain't quite proper for you to be out at this time of night alone."

Nancy's lips were trembling. "I—I prefer to be alone, Mr. Moss," she said, nervously, yet with pride and determination.

"That means," he replied, rather huskily, "that you don't want me, don't it, Nancy?"

She drew a deep breath. "You know very well that I do not want you, either now or at any other time," she said, in low, clear tones.

Unconsciously she had commenced to walk on again, and her feet hurried, but Moss kept pace with her.

"Take care, Nancy, take care," he muttered, in a voice heavy with anger and threat. "I'm not going to stand this much longer—you're going too far. Didn't I tell you last night that you can't fight against me? I am too strong for you, Nancy, my girl—too strong for you. You'll have to give in in the end. Why won't you be more sensible? All the people in the neighborhood know what's going on, and that you are going to be my wife. I—"

"How—how dare you talk to me like this?" flashed out poor Nancy, almost distraught at his words. "I will never, never marry you. I will appeal to my uncle; he—he will help me."

"Your uncle?" Moss laughed, shortly. "Why, the old man will only be too glad to be rid of you, and see you in a home of your own. It's common-sense, my dear girl. The shop isn't paying, and you, pretty though you are, ain't kept for nothing. Your uncle, indeed! Why, he couldn't protect a fly!"

"Oh! you are a coward!" Nancy said, in deep, passionate tones, "you know that my uncle loves me. I hate you more even than I did before. I tell you again I will never be your wife. Don't you understand? I hate you! Oh, if I could only tell you how much I hate you, Thomas Moss!"

A smothered execration broke from the man's lips. This girl's indifference, her contempt, her openly-expressed hatred, lashed his passion to fury.

They had neared a quiet corner, across one end of which ran a broader street leading to a more fashionable quarter. Putting out his strong hand, Moss gripped Nancy's arm, and drew her back against the wall.

"I've stood enough for one night," he said, in ominously quiet tones. "Hate me as much as you like, Nancy, you won't alter me. I love you, my girl—love you! You've nearly driven me mad, and I ain't one to stand being fooled for nothing."

His hold tightened on her arm, her heart beat with fear and some indescribable feeling crowded into it. Suddenly he exclaimed:

"Every one sees my love for you, Nancy, and I've come to the end of my patience. You belong to me, and I'm going to keep what's mine!"

He flung his arm round her, and she uttered a sharp little cry.

A man in a loose overcoat, with a deep fur collar, was passing at that moment, and the girl's voice, with its vibrations of pain and despair, came to his ears.

Unconsciously he stopped, though the January wind was whistling bitterly round him in a shrill, unpleasant way.

Moss drew the girl closer to him. "I tell you I'll better you, Nancy; and you belong to me. You shall belong to me!"

With a sudden gesture, he bent his lips to hers.

Nancy gave another cry, even more despairing than the last.

"Let me go! Oh! let me go!" And then a most astonishing thing happened. She left Thomas Moss's arm turn from her, was conscious of a noise and a scuffle, and then realized that she was staring down at his prostrate body, while a voice said—

"Don't be afraid. He won't insult you again, I fancy; at least, not just yet."

"Is—is he hurt?" breathed Nancy, trembling in every limb, and she lifted her eyes to the man beside her.

Her protector gazed at her in astonishment and admiration.

It was strange, indeed, to meet so beautiful a face in such a neighborhood. His wrath against Moss grew redoubled as he gazed; he had simply rushed to Nancy's aid with all an Englishman's impetuous sympathy for a defenceless woman. Had she been old and decrepit he would have acted just the same; but he felt now a decided longing to give Moss a good thrashing as he looked on the childish young face uplifted to him, eloquent with agitation and distress.

"It would serve him right if he were," he answered, hurriedly, as he picked up her books scattered in the fracas. "Such brutes are a pest on the earth. I am sorry you have been so frightened. Can I do anything more?"

Nancy shook her head. "I must go home," she faltered. "Thank you—oh, thank you for your kindness! I—I do not often get any. I—I am grateful."

And drawing the old plaid about her closely, Nancy Hamilton turned and walked quickly away.

The man stood staring after her, and he felt a curious sensation thrilling at his heart.

"Poor little thing!" he said; and then he turned to Moss, who was just trying to push himself to his feet in a bewildered manner.

He was not even scratched. The blow had been magnificently given, stunning him for a moment and felling him like an ox.

"Look here, you coward!" said the stranger, firmly; "don't try any more of your tricks on defenceless girls again, or it may go harder with you next time!"

And with that he turned on his heel and went on his way.

(To be continued.)

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**ECCENTRICITIES OF DIET**

"INSATIABLE HUNGER" HAS MANY FREAKS.

Doctor Declares People With Such Appetites are Bottomless Pits.

W. Saltau Fenwick kept an audience alternately convulsed with laughter and shivering with something that was pretty nearly akin to horror in a lecture he delivered at the Institute of Hygiene, in London, England, on "Eccentricities of Diet." One of his most amusing statements concerned patients he had known who suffered from the disease of "insatiable hunger."

"The earliest notice of it," he said, "is to be found in the Book of Genesis, where Pharaoh consulted Joseph about his dream of the fat and lean kine, in which the lean kine devoured the fat ones without appearing an atom the better for it. That exactly describes the case of the 'insatiable hunger' victims. They will eat almost anything, yet are always hungry, lean and ill-favored."

Then he went on to give instances he had known. A girl of 8, he said, who ordinarily at table ate as much as the seven other members of the family put together, one day escaped to the kitchen and there put away a raw codfish, two pounds of tallow candles and several pounds of butter.

DEVOURS 100 LBS. OF MEAT.

A boy victim, for purposes of medical observation, was allowed


the formation of sodden paper balls in the stomach, which sometimes proved fatal. There were girls who died or got into serious trouble through eating wisps of their own hair; dressmakers, mat, and mattress makers, who had a strange taste for cotton, string or anything at all that they might be working with, and varnishes and polishers who drank themselves to death with their varnish and polish.

Finally, he had a go at the vegetarians. "They are the most difficult people in the world to treat," Dr. Fenwick declared. "Prove to them that vegetarianism is making them shockingly thin, and they will say: 'Oh, but that's my wiry nature.' They are always cold; they never live to a great age; they lead a short but glorious existence. Many of them die of self-inflicted vegetable dyspepsia."

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**CHILDREN EAT PAPER.**

Then he told of patients whose craze was to eat paper, these being mostly children, who would scrape the paper off the walls to satisfy their strange craving, the result be-