

# FORTUNE FAVORS THE BRAVE,

## OR, A LOOK INTO THE PAST

### CHAPTER IV.

"Nancy, come out at once!"—  
Imperiously.

"I can't."

"You must!"

Nancy came to the window and looked down at her sister by adoption, a world of love shining in her magnificent eyes.

"Who dares say must to me?" she demanded, with a smile.

"I do," Dorothy answered, lazily; "you have sat over that Italian stuff quite long enough; I do not intend to let you sit any longer on such an exquisite day."

"It is lovely," agreed Nancy.

The two girls were standing at the back of the Hall. Dorothy outside on the grassy lawn, and Nancy inside her room, a delightful, picturesque apartment, which she adored.

It was summer; the stately trees moved faintly in the soft breeze, the scent of the lilies mingled with the roses, the old-fashioned sweet-william and carnations pranked the garden plots. Nancy's heart thrilled with the sense of peace and happiness that was her daily lot now.

"Why on earth you work so hard I can't think. I don't bother myself about it."

"You are not me, Dolly," answered Nancy, ungrammatically.

"It is too hot to puzzle that out," Dorothy laughed, and then she flung up a dewy fragrant rose to the girl leaning out of the window. "Come along, darling, I am so lonely," with an artful little wail in her voice.

That was quite enough for Nancy. The next instant she was on the lawn and had slipped her hand through the other girl's arm.

"Now, then, my fair one with the golden locks," she asked, playfully, "what are we going to do?"

"Get into our hammocks and go to sleep."

Dorothy suited the deed to the word by flinging herself down on the swinging net and cushions. Nancy pulled up a low chair and sat beside her, and gazed at the lovely little face, with its golden locks and sweet eyes, thoughtfully.

"What are you staring at?" asked Miss Leicester, lazily. "How dreamy you eyes are, Nancy."

"They are great goggles," observed our heroine, putting one hand over the orbs in question.

"What are great goggles?" inquired a voice from behind.

"Merefield! you again!" exclaimed Dorothy.

"I only came yesterday," Lord Merefield said, apologetically, and looking rather hurt.

"You will live here next."

"Dolly, you are rude!"

"Oh! it is all right, Miss Hamilton, I don't mind what she says; in fact, I—I rather like it."

And Lord Merefield drew up another chair—sat down by the hammock, too, endeavoring to seem as if he did not mind his cousin's ungraciousness in the least, and failing miserably.

Nancy Hamilton leaned back and smiled; this was a daily occurrence, and she knew it by heart.

"How is Aunt Priscilla?" snapped Dorothy, after a pause. She always spoke of his mother in this way, although Lady Merefield was only her father's cousin.

Then there was another pause.

"Well, haven't you any news, Merefield? You are the dullest person I know," was the next remark.

"Oh—yes. I—I quite forgot—you were asking me the other day, Dolly, if any one ever lived at the manor, that queer old place near us. It has been empty a long time, but it is let now up to next winter to a very rich man—a Mr. Crawshaw, I think."

"How delightful—we shall have some one worth talking to at last!" Nancy rose.

"You are two silly children," she declared, laughing, "and I am not going to sit here and listen to your squabbling. The first of our guests arrived to-day, and I promised Sir Humphrey to help him. So au revoir, and don't—please don't come to blows."

"Merefield is capable of any enormity," Dorothy cried, promptly.

"I fully expect I shall be black and blue when you see me again, Nancy."

And with poor Lord Merefield's expostulations ringing in her ears, Nancy walked away.

She had grown very nearly accustomed to her new and luxurious life now, and was almost beginning to forget the bitterness of the one she used to live. Contrary to all expectations, Dorothy had not tired of her new companion, but seemed to grow fonder and fonder of her each day; while Sir Humphrey boldly declared he could not do without his Nancy now.

She had dropped into her pleasant position both naturally and gracefully, and no two people rejoiced more over her phenomenally good fortune than her old friend Dr. Grantley and Nurse Wortley. Both Sir Humphrey and Dorothy knew everything about her, and they loved her none the less because of her former menial duties and vulgar surroundings; and the fact that her father's relations had so cruelly deserted her only served to endear her still more strongly to them. Of course her presence at Ripstone Hall had given rise to great and much discussion, in which Lady Merefield, the young earl's mother, participated vigorously, but no amount of argument or persuasion could move either Sir Humphrey or Dorothy from their determination to keep Nancy Hamilton with them.

"She saved my darling's life, and she makes her happy, that is enough for me," Sir Humphrey always answered his cousin; "even if she were all you try to make out, Priscilla, I should love her still, but Nancy is just the sweetest and best girl in all the kingdom."

"She belongs to us now and shall never leave us!" Dorothy declared, pugnaciously, "and if Aunt Priscilla can't come here without being disagreeable, why she can stay away, that's all. Nancy is my own dear friend and sister, and I won't have her insulted."

All this was declared over and over again to Lord Merefield, who protested in return that Dorothy was quite right and his mother quite wrong, and that he loved Nancy very much, as he would have protested if he loved a scorpion if his cousin Dorothy had wished it, though, as a matter of fact, he did like Nancy immensely, and he was not too simple-minded to see that her companionship was an excellent thing for the beautiful, spoiled little heiress.

With her Uncle Henry, Nancy held no communication, though she got occasional news of him from Dr. Grantley; and gradually the past, with all its miseries, its bitter despair and drudgery, faded into oblivion.

Now, as she walked back to the Hall, she was busy thinking about the guests who were to come to-day. Dorothy had determined on having a lawn-tennis tournament, and, of course, it was decided at once this was to take place.

"It will be a good opportunity to introduce Nancy to the county, papa," she had said, and Sir Humphrey quite agreed with his darling.

"Let me see, one—two," Nancy mused to herself, "Capt. and Mrs. Fairfax, four, and—and I wonder if he will come."

"He" was Derrick Darnley, whom she had not seen since that memorable evening in Sir Humphrey's den; perhaps it was because his name was so often on Dorothy's lips that Nancy remembered him; but most certainly he rose to her mind with wonderful persistency.

The housekeeper was waiting to receive all her orders, and Miss Hamilton was very busy for the next half-hour; she found that all the servants waited on her with great deference and respect with one exception, and that exception was a footman named William, whose manner sometimes had the effect of making the girl most uncomfortable, though she could scarcely have told why. She said nothing about it, however, for she

knew that, had she complained, the man would have been dismissed at once, and she had too kind a heart to desire this; besides, he never ventured to show any disrespect before Sir Humphrey or his young mistress; it was only when she happened to see him alone that she experienced a disagreeable sensation in his presence, and even then she was tempted to laugh down the feeling as being ridiculous and beneath her notice. It is wonderful, however, how small things affect us; on this morning, for example, as Nancy left the housekeeper's room, and, passing through the wide hall, met the footman William, she was made quite uncomfortable by his insolent stare at her, and she resolved to bring him to task for his offensive manner at once.

"William," she said, sharply, "carry those chairs out onto the lawn."

The servant took no notice, only smiled; he was quite safe, there was no one near.

Nancy repeated her command, the color mounting to her cheeks.

"I don't take no orders 'cept from the mistress of the house," the man answered, insolently.

Nancy stopped and looked at him for an instant, then said, slowly:

"You are quite right, I am not the mistress of this house; but there is a master, and he shall deal with you."

"Don't you go and get me my notice," William muttered, putting himself before the girl; "don't, I say, or it will be the worse for yer, Miss Nancy Hamilton. D'yer understand?"

And with that the man put his hand lightly on the girl's arm.

Before she had time to utter a word he had removed it, and was slipping quickly away, when Sir Humphrey's voice said, in a deep, determined way:

"Stop!" Then looking at him sternly, he went on: "Nancy, what is this—did I hear that man threaten you?"

Nancy hesitated; she had felt very angry for a moment, but there was not a grain of malice in her nature.

"It is nothing; he meant no harm," she answered, hurriedly.

Sir Humphrey kissed her gently. "Go away, my dear, and leave me to deal with this fellow."

Nancy paused for an instant, then seeing that no word of hers would do any good now, turned and walked away.

She never knew what passed between Sir Humphrey and the man; but she learned from the housekeeper, a few hours later, that William had been summarily dismissed, and had already left Ripstone Hall for ever.

After a momentary sensation of regret that she should have been the unwilling cause of depriving the man of his livelihood, she could not help feeling relieved that he was gone. It had been very absurd, of course, but William's persistent insolence had been the only dark



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cloud on the horizon of her present great happiness.

When her household duties—at Dorothy's particular request she had taken them in hand—were done, she returned to her old love, her studies. She had shared with Miss Leicester during the last few months all the benefits that the best masters could give, and with her natural aptitude and love of learning she had made gigantic progress. Dorothy, on the other hand, was neither clever nor desirous of being so.

"Derry always calls me a dunce," she would say to Nancy, "his lovely little dunce; and you know I really don't care to be anything else."

It was an undoubted fact that Dorothy kept religiously to this resolution, and succeeded admirably.

"But with such beauty, such surroundings as hers, what does she want more?" Nancy would think to herself, "and her nature is none the worse for her literary defects."

The only thing for which Nancy was sorry was the way in which the little heiress treated her kinsman, the Earl of Merefield, for already she knew that it was the dearest wish of Sir Humphrey's heart that his daughter and this young man should make a match of it. Nancy was only too anxious for anything that would give the genial, kind-hearted father happiness.

"They are only two children," she said, as she heard their voices come toward her on the breeze—Dorothy's shrilly indignant, and Merefield's beseeching—"and will get wiser each day. I—I wish Mr. Darnley would come home; I fancy he has more influence over her than any one else."

(To be continued.)

### STEPPING TO THE FRONT.

Boy With a Resolution Better Off Than One With Money.

Many youths are trained along the lines of least resistance. Their careers are watched so that they may not run against obstacles and disappointments. They get all the money, clothes, idling, pleasures they want, without making a single effort to possess them. "We want John to have a good time now, for after a while he may not have it," is the philosophy upon which many parents act.

It is great folly. The boy who is put on the lines of least resistance and meets with few if any adversit-

ies, gathers little strength of mind or character. There is no gliding forward. There is no step in advance that does not involve an effort. The boy whose path is made smooth and easy for him is like the pupil in school who studies arithmetic with a key. He got his lessons, but he died, at last, in an infirmary.

Just mark it down, oh rich and loving parent, that your boy, raised in ease and comfort, and with every advantage ready at hand, provided by your bounty, will not amount to a hill of beans out in the world, where heroism is in demand and true worth is the best of manhood.

It is unfortunate for any boy not to have a struggle during the formation-period of life, and a boy with a resolution to make his way is far better off than a boy with money to buy it. Stick a pin right there.

### THE MOST FATAL DISEASE.

This is the terrible appellation which Col. Seeley, the British Under-Secretary for the Colonies, gives to the sleeping sickness of Africa. This disease is communicated by the famous tsetse, and Sir David Bruce has reported that out of hundreds of thousands of cases he did not know of a single recovery. A strange fact is that the sleeping sickness has spread enormously since the coming of white men into the regions affected by it. Heroic efforts have been made to stay the scourge, but it is not yet arrested, although encouraging progress has been made. The plan of removing the natives from the infected lake shores has not proved so effectual a remedy as was hoped.

### HINTS FOR THE HOME.

To clean pewter wash in hot water and fine silver sand, then polish with a leather.

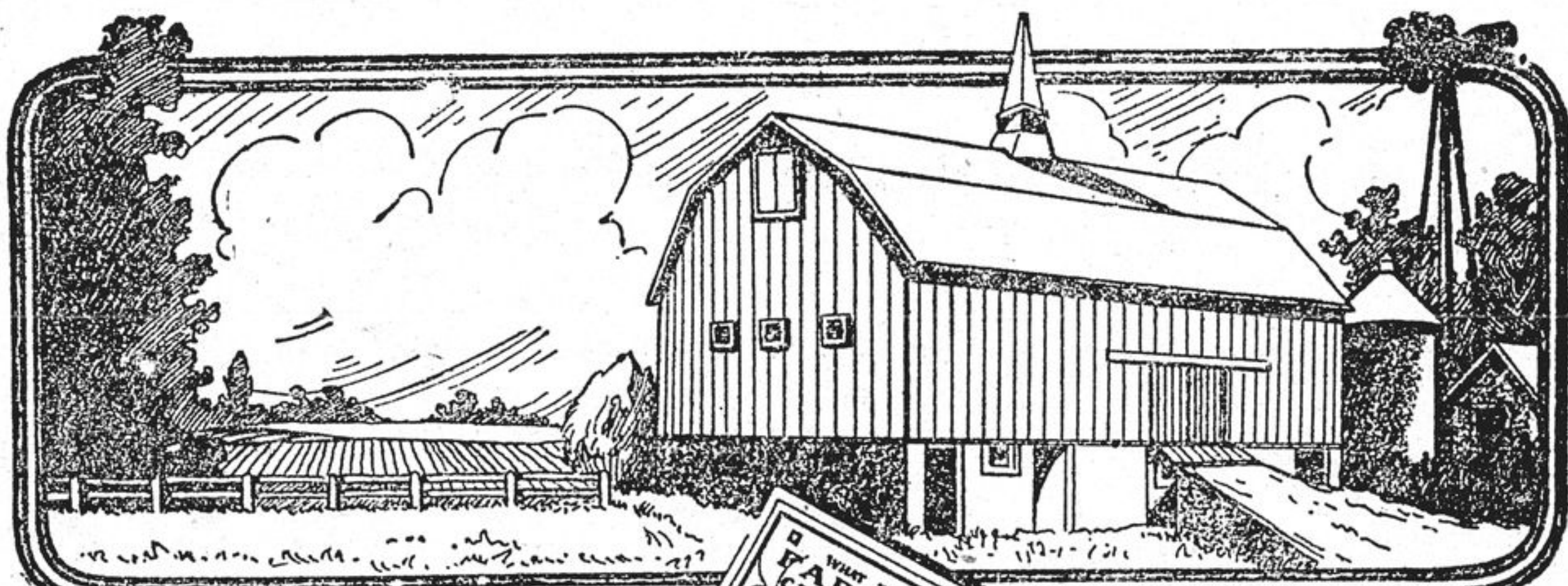
Warm the dish covers as well as the dish, or you will often spoil a carefully prepared meal.

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