LORD KILLEEN'S REVENGE

"It was a mere trifle; a matter of every-day occurence," she said, with a flavor of bitterness in her low voice. "I happened to find out that he was making love to—to another woman, whilst pretending an affection for me."

"I see," said Stronge. He understood as well as though she had said it that it was Mrs. Dundas who had worked this mischief. He dug little holes into the ground at his feet with his stick, and watched them with what seemed an extraordinary interest, because he could not bring himself to look at the proud, pained face of this girl who was so inexpressibly dear to him. He could only think that Featherston had made her unhappy, and a kind of rage of hatred rose in his heart against him.

"The man is very poor," he said at last, in a tone, low, but so bitterly contemptuous that it startled her. "So poor that one must pity him. And for such a woman to lose so much! To lose all!"

"I have a great deal to thank him for, however," said Constantia, with a curious smile. "If he had not, by a fortunate chance, betrayed himself that night, I might perhaps have permitted him to—make me wretched."

The smile was tremulous, and Stronge told himself that she still regretted Featherston, though to herself she would not acknowledge it. But in this he was wrong.

"That was a hateful night," she said, after a rather lengthened pause that she had not sought to break. She alluded to Donna's ball.

"For many reasons." He was studying her as he spoke. "You are greatly changed since then in some ways."

"So are you," she responded, quickly, "in every way."

"Not in one, at all events. For that, I am the same now as I was then, and as I shall be always."

Her color deserted her, and the flowers she held in her hand, and on which her eyes were bent, began to tremble.

"How in earnest you can be!" she said. "It is a great charm nowadays. I wonder, however, if your own way—is worth it?"

"I am quite sure of that."

"Is it a secret?" said she, with an air so indifferent that it roused him to anger.

"Not from you, certainly," he said, with badly subdued indignation. "What does it advantage you to know me still your lover? What purpose do you gain by making me again declare that I can not drive you from my heart?"

He turned aside impatiently, and moved toward the distant stile, as if determined on thus leaving her abruptly, without so much as the courtesy of an adieu. He walked quickly, led by his thoughts, which were now feverish. He cast no look behind.

Constantia, left in this way alone, let the flowers she held fall to her feet, and looked with troubled eyes at Stronge's rapidly retreating figure. Did he mean to go? And if he went now, would it be forever? She hesitated for a full minute, until he had almost reached the corner, and then nature grew too strong for her. She took a step forward; a sudden desperate resolve fired her eyes; she threw out her hands impulsively.

"Andrew!" she cried.

CHAPTER XLV.

He started as the sound reached him, and turned to look at her. He could not see very distinctly the expression on her face, and all that was clear to him was that she stood there a very gracious presence on the soft greensward, to all appearances calm and self-possessed. Yet surely she had called to him. He had heard her. And by a name she had never used before, that he had never hoped to hear her use. Was it mere coquetry?

"You called me?" he said, when he had returned to a proper speaking distance, but no further. He felt passionately self-contemptuous, as he knew how his voice must betray to her the intensity of the emotion he was feeling.

"Yes; because—" Her face was as white as snow. "You say you love me still," she said at last very faintly.

He came nearer to her.

"I see no one as sweet, as beautiful, as lovable," he replied, simply. "Why then should I ever cease to love you?"

"Once—you asked me to marry you."

"And you refused."

"I know," slowly. "But if you still love me—"

"Connie! Connie! What is it you are going to say to me?" cried he, in an agony of doubt. But a moment later he forgot everything, even his doubt, and caught her in his arms.

"Why don't you ask me again?" whispered she, half laughing, half crying.

Stronge, with a hardihood he would not an hour ago have believed himself capable of, actually put her away from him for a moment, to look into her face. It was the shortest moment on record, yet it satisfied him. It was all true, then!

She had yielded to his embrace. There was no anger, there was only love in the upraised eyes. He held her unrebuked within his arms, this sweet, dear girl, whose hand he would not have dared to kiss only yesterday. Who was he, that such happiness should fall to his lot?

"I never hoped for this. I never believed in it," he said at last.

"Nor I." She was now looking at him in a sort of strange, if glad surprise. "I never knew, until five minutes ago, that I loved you."

This was an opportunity not to be lost. He sifted the tender matter thoroughly during another five minutes, and having made her say she really did love him, in half a dozen different ways, was partially content.

"But how did you know it five minutes ago?"

"Well, I think it must have been a little more than that—perhaps even ten minutes. It just dawned upon me when I knew that Mr. Featherston had come here to—to ask me to marry him—and when I thought you had come to advise me to—"

"To what darling?"

"Oh, I don't know; it was absurd, of course. I know that now," with a little happy laugh; "but I was stupid enough to think then that you were going to befriend him in his suit. Oh, if you had!" she said. She looked quite angrily at him, but this anger was inexpressibly sweet to the innocent culprit.

"Why, all that happened quite half an hour ago," said he, with a view to diverting her thoughts, "and you said five minutes."

"It's all the same," said she, with a truly delightful broadness of thought; "don't you think so?"

This sudden question put him out a little. He did not think five minutes the same as thirty, but he felt it was his duty so to think, now that he knew she thought so. His hesitation was infinitesimally short, but she noticed it.

"No?" she said, regarding him with a certain severity. "You found, then, the time—(this half hour, is it?)—spent with me long—terribly long"

"Nonsense," said he, so indignantly that they both laughed. "I should have found it long, however," he said presently, "considering how you scolded me from the first minute of it to the last."

"I was unjust to you," she said, remorsefully.

"I am glad of it; you wouldn't have been unjust if you hadn't loved me." He started a little as he said that, as if at the presumption of it. "You do love me," he said, drawing her into his arms once more with a gentle, tender, protecting touch; and then: "to think I, of all men, should be able to say that!"

"Why not you above all men?" said she, softly. "I do not believe there is one on earth so good as you."

"We won't go into that," said he, smiling; "but, at all events, there is not one so happy." Then a thought struck him. "Connie, say that you are happy too," he said.

All at once, as the word fell upon her ears, there rose before her the scene that had taken place on this very spot last evening. Happy!—was she really permitting herself such happiness as excluded from her mind all remembrance of Lady Varley's impending trouble? Even now time was pressing. If anything were to be done to help her, it should be done at once. To-morrow would be too late, and already it was drawing toward evening. She had promised the girl Kitty to interfere in some wise for the defense of her mistress and the overthrow of her enemies, but as yet, even after a sleepless night, inspiration had not come to her.

Oh, if this terrible thing should happen! If Lady Varley were to be crushed, and rendered even more miserable than she now was through Donna Dundas—through her, Constantia's cousin—she felt as though she could never again look at Yolande with honest eyes, or clasp her hand. Dishonor would come to her through her friend's kinswoman, and surely some of the taint would fall upon the "friend."

How time was rushing away—not gliding peacefully as it often did, but hurrying, as though eager to see consummated this hateful crime! And what was to be done? To speak to Yolande to disclose all to her. That would be the kindest, the wisest, the cruelest course; and she felt she could not be the one to do it.

Stronge had put his earnest question to her, and was waiting in a strange silence for her answer. How long it was in coming! A little chill seized upon his heart at last, and, unable to endure the suspense, he repeated his words more slowly, more fearfully, this time.

"Connie answer me. Are you happy?"

It was too much. Happy! She? With Yolande on the brink of such a horrible pit? She drew a quick breath and all suddenly burst into tears.

"Happy? No! I am wretched," she cried, forgetful of all save Lady Varley just then—even of him.

"Wretched! Constantia, what a thing to say to me! Are you now going to tell me," growing very pale, "that all my hope is—"

"No, no," clinging to him, "you are everything to me; it is not that; how could you think it? But I have heard such dreadful news. Yesterday, after you and Garrett left me, I heard it; and I have been so miserable ever since, until," lifting her eyes to his, "a little while ago."

He made her a lover's acknowledgment of this sweet admission, and then she went on:

"It is a terrible thing. All last night I lay awake wondering about it, and troubled, because I could not see my way to be of use to her. But you—you are very clever. I will tell you all about it, and you, perhaps will think of something."

She lifted her pretty, sorrowful face to his with such perfect trust and expectation in it as made his heart beat. Something in his earnest glance gave her hope.

"Oh, what a comfort it is to have you to consult with!" she said, with a sigh of deepest relief, laying her cheek against his arm.

Was there any man in all this world, then, so proud as Andrew Stronge?

He drew her closer to his heart and held her there.

"I never thought I should live to be as happy as I am this minute," he said, in a low tone. "Now go on, my sweetheart, and tell me all about it." As yet he was in the dark as to her exact meaning, but she trusted him, she leaned upon him, he was not ignorant of that.

He was, too, when all the sad story was laid before him, as concerned, as astounded, by her intelligence, as she could possibly desire. But hope he could not give her. It was plain to her from the beginning that he believed the miserable affair to be not only possible but probable.

"Good heavens! what is to be done?" he said at last.

"At all risks Lady Varley must be prevented from hearing it," said Constantia, eagerly; "it would kill her, coming so soon on that last grief. You remember? That little child—she will never forget. Oh, no, she must not hear of this thing. We must manage it so that it never comes to her ears."

"But is that a very wise arrangement, do you think?" asked Stronge, gently. "Why should she, whom it most concerns, be the last to hear of it? Connie, do you know I often think that half the fatal mistakes in the world are caused by keeping back the truth from those who should be the first to learn it? Why should Lady Varley be left in ignorance, darling, of what is of such vital importance to her, whilst you and I, to whom it is a mere outside sorrow, are acquainted with it? Surely she, being one of the chief actors in this evil drama, should be the best judge of how to bring the play to a successful conclusion."

"I understand. I follow you," she said, in a distressed tone. "But who would have the courage to lay the truth bare to her? Oh, think! The cruelty of it!"

"It may be cruel; but nevertheless, it would be the kindest thing to do," replied he, gently. "And I think Lady Varley, at least, would agree with me. Darkness eventually leads to greater depths of darkness where the human brain is concerned. And to keep Lady Varley in the dark now would be to increase her misery hereafter, when all the bold light of a cruel truth was forced upon her."

"But the misery of the present—"

"It would not be so painful to her as it might be to others. There is always this saving clause, that she is not in love with her husband."

"Ah! you have seen that?" said Constantia, quickly.

"I was glad to see it, because it helps me to believe that she will not feel so much—that she will bear the news better. She may even, if told in time, be able so to manage as to lift the man to a sense of decency. At all events, I know she should be told."

"But who is to tell her?" asked Constantia, faintly.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Stronge, thus appealed to, released her in part, and putting her back from him, seized both her hands in his kindly grasp, and looked into her eyes.

"You she loves," he said, simply.

"Ah! you would lay this task upon me?" she faltered. "You think I should go?"

"Not unless **you**, too, think it, my beloved."

"I have thought of it, though I shrunk from it. But, oh, Andrew, is there no one else? Must I be the one?"

He felt she was trembling. "Have you the courage, darling?" he said; "or is it too much for you? Yes, I see it is. Come, then, let us decide upon some other plan."

"No. I shall go. There is no other," said the girl sadly, with a little catch in her breath. "If you think she should be warned, who should warn her save me? I am her friend. What right have to shrink from it?"

Tears rose to her eyes again, and somehow this time she lost her hold upon them, and they rushed over her lids, and ran triumphantly down her cheeks. They cut Stronge to the heart.

"To think you should be crying in this our first hour together!" he said, with deep remorse. Was it not all his fault?"

"In this my very happiest hour," replied she, sweetly. Indeed, it seemed to her just then that all her own fears and difficulties had passed away from her forever, and only peace remained. He was so good, so true, so honest! Such a sense of rest, of comfort, stole over her as she gazed into his gentle, kindly eyes, that for this disgrace that threatened her friend, and the terror of having to face and tell her of it, she would have counted herself only too happy.

"I have no right to lay this burden on you," he said, earnestly. "Will you hate me for it, Connie? Will you"—wistfully—"always look back with distaste upon this day because of it? And yet I could not counsel you otherwise. I feel"—lifting her hand, and kissing the palm of it—"it is only what my brave girl should do."

"It is what you would do yourself," said Constantia. "I follow in your footsteps, and"—warmly—"I desire no better model than you."

"When did you first think of me in—in that way?" asked Stronge, drawing her down upon a garden seat. "How did it all come about? It seems to me the most marvellous thing! Just when I had given up all hope, lo! hope was in the ascendant. Well! I think we shall agree very well together."

He spoke so gladly. Indeed, he felt as though he would like to get up and publish this joy to all the world.

"I think so, too," said Connie. She slipped her hand into his and looked at him from under her long lashes with a glance that was half shy, half amused. A soft little laugh broke from her. Again she had forgotten everything, save the strange, sweet fact that she had really given her heart to this plain, tender, most lovable man.

"Yet it has been a sad engagement-day," said he. "There were tears, and surely they should not have been in it. Perhaps"—he looked at her nervously, with all a true lover's superstitious dread—"perhaps it is unlucky."

"Oh, no. She smiled at him very prettily. "There is no ill-luck where you are."

"No? You think not? That only proves how awfully commonplace I am. I never cared about it before, but I wish, for your sake, Connie, that I was less prosaic, less—you know what I mean—that is, I wish I was better-looking, at all events," he blurted out, shamefacedly.

"What folly!" indignantly. "Now I shall tell you something. Do you know that the very first day I ever saw you I thought to myself that you had the very dearest face, so kind, so earnest; not"—hesitating as if still a little uncertain—"not handsome, exactly, but—"

Stronge gave way to unlimited mirth.

"Well, no, not handsome," he said. "I'll commit myself so far. Oh, Connie, what a humbug you are! And—what a darling girl!"

The sound of a childish voice trilling some fanciful lay came to them behind the flowering shrubs.

"It is Norah," said Constantia, in a quick whisper. "She will be here in another minute. Shall we tell her?"

"Of course! Dear little thing. It is another pleasure to know that she will be, in reality, my sister."

"But not a word of Lady Varley," entreated Constantia, hurriedly. "She would not understand—she could not. And about that. I shall go to her this evening, when the dusk falls."

"Very well. I shall be at the gate to go with you."

"Will you?" brightening. "Ah! that will give me courage." She moved quickly away from him as Norah came from behind the [illegible] ran toward them [illegible] of [illegible] flash I have found you," she cried, [illegible] a comical blending of pleasure [illegible] malicious amusement in her to[illegible] precipitated herself upon [illegible]ia. "Oh, Connie. Aunt Bridget has been in such a dancing rage for the last hour, asking for you, and—" She stopped short suddenly, and looked from Constantia to Stronge, and back again. "I say, how funny you two do look!" she said, at last, in a subdued sort of way.

"How do we look?" asked Stronge, laughing.

"As if something had happened to you—as if you had seen something queer. I think you both look—ashamed," said the child, with a curious glance.

At this Constantia joined in Stronge's mirth, though her color deepened.

"You are right, Norah," said Stronge; "something has happened. Shall I tell you what it is?"

Norah grew instantly full of the liveliest curiosity.

"Don't go explaining things" she said. "Tell me all at once."

"Promise me first that you will be pleased."

"What on earth can it be?" said Norah, half to herself. There was evidently a mental struggle. "Yes, I'll promise," she said, giving this rash word because so borne away by her desire to please.

"Well, then, Connie has made me a present of you."

"Oh, fudge!" said the younger Miss MacGillicuddy, with a disgusted air. "What's the meaning of that, I'd like to know! We aren't African slaves, are we, that we can be sold to people?" She looked with wrathful reproach at Constantia. Was their grand secret nothing, after all?

"Nevertheless, she has given you to be true to your promise, and say you me—as a little sister," said Stronge. "She has given me even more than that: she has given me herself. Now, are glad."

"But—" said the child in a bewildered tone.

"Connie has promised to marry me," said Stronge, oh! so proudly.

"No! Oh, Connie, I am so glad!" cried Norah, flinging herself into her arms. "He is ever so much nicer than Garrett, and as for Mr. Featherston!" She turned up a very contemptuous nose. "You are a lucky girl!"

"You will notice that it is I who have received all the congratulations," said Constantia, with a smile, half shy, half comical, at Stronge, who seemed almost annoyed with Norah.

"Come," he said, "am I not lucky too? I have won Connie. I have won her whole heart, she tells me."

"You have won two whole hearts," cried the child affectionately; and, releasing herself from her sister's clasp, she ran to Stronge, and treated him to a loving hug. "I'll call you Andrew, now," she said, as a sign that she was specially friendly toward him. "I'd go even further, and make it Andy, but I m afraid Con would think that horrid."

(To be Continued.)

ITALIAN CHEESE.

The Process of Its Manufacture—An Important Industry.

Every morning two hours before dawn in winter and one hour when the days lengthen to spring, it is the duty of the cheese maker to call the shepherds by beating a drum. The men who live in the open emerge from their straw boxes at the sound and begin to drive their herds toward the milking shed. There each flock enters its own pen, these smaller pens communicating with a larger one, into which the flocks are admitted in turn; from this central inclosure there are 10 or 20 narrow openings which lead into as many short passages. Near the end of each a man is seated on his stool with milking pail ready, and as ewe after ewe crowds down the narrow corridor the milker throws a two-pronged wooden fork over its neck, thus holding it until it is milked, and so on until the 2,000 or 3,000 ewes have given their tribute of milk.

In some dairies it is the custom to make the ewes pass twice through the milking shed, and it is said that this system has been known to give an increase of production of over 7,000 pounds of cheese. The flocks are then driven to the grazing ground allotted to each by the headman, until the sun sets and the evening milking time comes round again. The milk is meanwhile carried by the milkers to the "vergheria," where it is poured through coarse linen sieves into the caldron; the milk is first slightly warmed, then lifted from the fire till the rennet is added; after that it is boiled until the curd forms a solid block, which sinks to the bottom, of the caldron, leaving only the milky whey.

The cheesemaker's duty is now to divide this curd among the men, who manipulate and press it with their robust arms until it is dry, when it is formed into the round, flat cheese, on which the name of the man who made it is stamped. The remaining whey is boiled a second time, and now it is the duty of a less dignified subordinate to divide large spoonfuls of the coagulated mass, now called "ricotta," to the men, not forgetting the absent shepherds. If any remains it is put into small bowl-shaped baskets of woven withes and sold. And in this routine, repeated each morning and evening, the days pass slowly by.

LIFE BELTS.

Proved Utterly Useless in the Drummond Castle Wreck.

The terrible disaster to the Drummond Castle has been followed by a large number of letters to the London Times on the disgraceful inadequacy of the life belts usually provided on ocean steamers. All the bodies that were recovered from the sea after the wreck of the Drummond Castle were equipped with life belts, and life belts of the most modern type. One of the surviviors of the catastrophe relates that when he was struggling in the water he saw spots of light on the sea all around him. He could not at first understand it, but soon remembered that the life belts were of a special kind, which as soon as they touched the water emitted a light. And yet only three men survived the wreck. The question naturally arises of what use are the life belts if they do not save life? An investigation is to be made, and it is insisted that if modern life belts are useless they should at once be superseded by a more serviceable appliance.

De fox is in de jury box when de goose am tried.

ACROSS THE CHANNEL.

A New Cable Is About To Be Laid Connecting London and Paris.

The London and Paris telephone was opened on April 1, 1891. There were some cautious souls who were inclined to be apprehensive that there would not be found sufficient use for it to make it a paying concern, and, indeed, it has not been so extensively used by the general public of Paris or London as was thought probable.

There are, it appears, not many people who are willing to pay eight shillings for three minutes' gossip with a distant friend on general topics. Edwin, who has been ruthlessly torn away from Angelina, and compelled to stay in Paris longer than he expected, is, of course, feverishly anxious for the sound of her voice, but he cannot stand the price, and whatever little billing and cooing is done over the 297 miles between the two capitals is still carried on by letter or telegraph. Even ordinary business people make comparatively small use of the telephone, though there are some business houses that find it very useful occasionally.

Nevertheless the use of the new means of communication has pretty steadily increased, and is now three or four times as great as it was when first established. The fact is, it has been pretty nearly monopolized by members of the Stock Exchange, who at busy time, and during certain hours of the day, make a great demand upon the wires, so great a demand, indeed, that it has been found impossible to satisfy all comers, and the two Governments have determined to

DUPLICATE THE SYSTEM.

The existing cable has four wires, but as, for telephonic purposes, a complete metallic circuit is required, the four wires constitute only two circuits. Only two persons can use the telephone at the same time, therefore, and during busy hours of the day this necessarily involves a great deal of waiting. All applicants for the use of the wires are registered, and have to await their turn, however urgent their business may be.

For Stock Exchange operations this is sometimes rather trying and vexatious, and, of course, it tends to restrict the use of the system. The greater the facilities the more they will be used, and though, of course, it is a very costly business to duplicate lines, and as purely telephonic extension probably would not pay for a long time at all events, it is thought expedient to do it, partly for the sake of telephone customers, but partly because the new cable will be available for telegraphic communications, also. If it is required for the telephone it will be used; if not it will be a valuable and sometimes a much-needed accession to the ordinary telegraphic system between Paris and London.

For some time past land lines have been in course of construction on both sides of the channel, and this part of the business being now on the point of completion, the new submarine cable will shortly be laid, starting on the English side from a point between Dover and Folkstone. The extension will, of course, make no difference in the practical working of the thing, nor does there appear to be any prospect of reduced charges for the use of the telephone.

WISE SAYINGS.

The carving-knife is mightier than the sword.

Mustard improves lobster, but ruins fowl.

A good digestion is more to be desired than great riches.

He is a fool who indulges to excess either in eating or drinking.

Peace at a dinner-table assists digestion, angry words hinder it.

The tinkle of the dinner-bell is a pleasanter sound than the blare of the trumpet.

Praise your housekeeper for her successful dishes, and regard her failures leniently.

Never accept the invitation of a man to take "pot luck" with him. He degrades the name of dinner, and insults you.

Nature is a great physician. Don't be afraid to trust her; she looks carefully after the interests of her patients' stomachs.

Let an invalid have whatever he calls for to eat; it is not he who craves it, but Nature, and she will not permit him to eat to excess.

A few spoonfuls of good soup taken on an empty stomach give it tone, and prepare it to receive acceptably more substantial fare.

In the progress of civilization the frying-pan disappears with the advent of the gridiron.

A drop or two of lemon juice and a dash of cayenne on an oyster may be tolerated, but it is best eaten directly from the shell, flavored with its own juice.

A dyspeptic has no right to dine among civilized beings. He should take a sea voyage or go into the wilderness and live for a while, like John the Baptist, on locusts and wild honey.

LITTLE CURIOUS NOTES.

It is estimated that a lightning flash is only visible 1-20,000 part of a second.

It is believed that the temperature of the earth at depth of 200 miles is not less than 18,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

The exact distance to either the North or South Pole from the equator is 6,000 miles.

If cannon ball could maintain its initial velocity for 24 hours it would beat the sun in his apparent journey around the world.

A block of best steel four feet square would be reduced to a cube of little more than nine inches if it could be [illegible] to the center of the earth.

[illegible] water entozoa is but one-tenth of an inch in length. It lays 30,000 eggs in a single season of less than 17 days.

It has been discovered that the coloring matter in the emerald is of organic basis, and that it is easily destroyed by the heat.

J. Dubois, a French opera house manager, has "invented a rainbow that shows up naturally on the stage."