THE HEIR OF SANTLEIGH

OR THE STEWARD'S SON

CHAPTER XIV.

Norah, as Cyril turned away from the hall, passed the earl and Guildford Berton without a word, intending to go to her own room; but the earl stepped aside, and opening the drawing-room door motioned to her to enter with stately courtesy, and, following her, closed the door.

There was a look of haughty displeasure on his face, and his keen eyes regarded her sternly.

"May I trouble you to give me an account of this accident?" he said, icily.

"It all happened as Mr. Burne said, papa," she answered.

"I prefer to hear it from your own lips," he said.

Nora quietly related the incident; but her voice trembled as she told of her discovery of Cyril's injury.

He behaved very bravely, papa."

"I have no doubt," he said; "but it did not warrant his taking advantage of your situation. He should have sent here for a carriage for you; but I imagine we must not expect grapes from thistles."

"I am sorry he has offended you, papa. It was as much my fault——" She stopped, and her face grew pale. "And he went without a word of thanks," she exclaimed, "as if he had committed a crime instead of doing all he could——"

"Oh, please! There is nothing I dislike so much as heroics. No doubt," with the suggestion of a sneer, "you thanked him sufficiently.'

"But I wish to tell you that I do not desire your intimacy with this young man to continue."

Norah started slightly and looked up at him. If he had treated her with even the semblance of fatherly kindness she would have told him all that passed between Cyril Burne and herself that night; but his cold words froze her lips.

"I do not approve of him."

"But—but why, papa?" she asked in a low voice. "He—he is a gentleman, you said yourself——"

"It seems that I was mistaken. No, I could not be mistaken; but one may be a gentleman and yet not a desirable acquaintance. I have heard enough of this Mr. Burne to be convinced that he is not a person to whom I can extend my friendship."

"You have heard!" said Norah, wonderingly. "From whom, papa? From Mr. Berton?" and her lips grew compressed.

"The name of my informant is of little consequence," he said, coldly. "Enough that I am satisfied with the information. Do not let us continue the subject; it is distasteful to me."

Norah stood for a moment, her eyes bent on the ground, then she murmured—

"Good-night, papa."

He opened the door for her, making no movement toward kissing her, and she escaped.

Once in her own room, she flung her hat aside, and sinking into a chair hid her face in her hands.

Her heart was beating wildly, but stern as her father's speech and manner had been, its throbs were more of joy than of sorrow.

That great crisis which comes in most women's lives had come to hers. A man had told her that he loved her!

Sometimes a girl has to ask her heart the question: "Do I love him in return?" but Norah, though no words of love had ever been uttered to her before, had no need to ask the question. Love needs no instructor. The lesson of his presence is readily learned in every woman's breast; and Norah, as she sat with her face hidden, even from her glass, could feel his words singing in her heart.

She sat and thought of him—how handsome he was, how brave, how kind, how good! Surely, in all the wide, wide world, there was not another man like him. And this best of heroes, who was quick and clever and prompt, who had displayed such courage, hiding his pain from her for so long, loved her!

With the joy of the knowledge there was mixed a thrill of pride that seemed to raise her above all others of her sex.

What could he have seen in her to love? she asked herself again and again. She who was nothing but a simple, ignorant girl while he was so clever and strong, such a hero among men.

How sweetly he had asked her for her dead rose; how humbly he had bent over her hand. She took her right hand from her face and looked at it, and slowly raising it to her lips, kissed it where his lips had touched it.

Did she love him? Why, her love seemed proclaiming itself in every trembling limb. Her heart was full, full of him; his voice rang in her ears. She could feel his kiss upon her hand still.

"Cyril, Cyril!" she murmured unconsciously, and in the stillness of night the faint breeze outside seemed to echo his name lovingly, caressingly.

Then there flashed upon her mind, too full of her lover to have thought of it before, the remembrance of her father's anger, and the words he had spoken. He had forbidden her to continue knowing Cyril Burne; he had heard something. What was it that he had heard? Whatever it was, he must have heard it from Guildford Berton; and as Norah thought of him she shuddered faintly with absolute dislike. He had stood there by the door, saying nothing, with his dark face sombre and sinister.

Why should he have spoken falsely of Cyril Burne—for that he had spoken falsely she was as certain as that she sat there, with Cyril's kiss burning on her hand.

What should she do? Cyril, when he had told her that he loved her, had asked her not to be angry, but to wait. He would speak to her again.

The warm color suffused her neck and face at the thought. Should she listen to him? Could she disobey her father?

The door opened and Harman came in, and as she proceeded to undress her mistress she cast anxious glances at her. At last she said, as if she could not help herself—

"Oh, my lady, I hope you are not hurt!"

"No," said Norah, for she was lost in thought—half delicious, half painful "You heard of the accident?"

"Yes, my lady," replied Harman, "one of the grooms was up in the village and brought down word," and she touched Norah gently and carefully, as if she expected every moment to feel her wince.

"No, I am not even scratched; but I might have been hurt if it had not been for——" She stopped; she could not speak Cyril's name.

"Yes, I know, my lady," said Harman, warmly. "John says that the gentleman risked his life almost, and it was a wonder he wasn't killed."

"Tell—tell me what they say."

Harman gave the account she had heard from the groom, and dwelt upon Cyril's courage as only a woman can, and Norah listened with bent head, seeming scarcely to breathe.

Harman went at last, but Norah still sat in the low chair thinking dwelling with joy that was almost painful in its intensity upon every word he had spoken; going back to the first night she had heard his voice on the terrace, the night he had addressed her, all unconscious that she was near, in words of passionate love.

At last she went to bed, but it was hours before she slept; and in her dreams he still bent over her, his handsome face all anxious and troubled on her account—on hers!

When she awoke the next morning it was with the consciousness that some one was in the room, and raising herself on her elbow she saw Becca South standing beside the bed, and looking down at her with a peculiar expression in her black eyes. Then she remembered that she had not locked her door last night.

"Becca," she said.

"I've come to help you," she said. "Auntie's got one of her bad headaches, and can't move this morning. She's very sorry, she says, and begs your ladyship will overlook it."

"Oh, poor Harman!" said Norah, sympathetically; "I am so sorry! Please go and tell her that she must not think of getting up, and not to trouble about me in the least."

While Becca was gone Norah got up and found a bottle of eau de Cologne.

"Take this and bathe her forehead, Becca," she said, "and tell her on no account to trouble about me."

Becca went again, and returned smelling strongly of the scent. She had poured half of it on her own handkerchief.

"You are very early this morning" Norah said, as the girl brushed out her hair. "Did you sleep in the house last night?"

"No, my lady," replied Becca, dropping her eyes from the glass in which she had been comparing Norah's face with her own. "No, I went home. And I found him in the avenue," she added, in a low voice.

Norah looked up with a start. There was no other "him" in the world for her that morning but Cyril.

"Him! Whom?" she asked.

"The painter gentleman, Mr. Burne," said Becca, with a nod, as if Norah ought to have understood. "He was very bad."

"Bad?" she echoed, faintly.

"Yes," said Becca, taking a long tress in her hand and holding it up to the light, but keeping her eyes fixed on Norah's pale face reflected in the glass. "Yes, he'd fainted."

Norah's hands clasped themselves tightly in her lap, and an inarticulate sound escaped her lips.

"He was dreadfully hurt. Broke his arm, I think."

Norah half rose, with a wild impulse to go to him there and then; then she sank back.

"Go on," she breathed.

"He was as white as—as you are, my lady," said Becca, slowly, "and in dreadful pain. I don't think he'll die, though," she added, calmly.

"Die!" fell from her lips.

"No, my lady. He was able to walk home after a bit," continued Becca, still watching Norah's face.

"Give me—give me my handkerchief, please," said Norah, feeling the girl's eyes on her, and wishing to gain a moment or two for self-control."

"I heard that he'd hurt himself stopping the horses," said Becca, "but he didn't say."

"What—what did he say?" asked Norah, thirsting to hear some words of his.

Becca waited a moment, and fixed her black eyes on the glass intently.

"He said, would you meet him at the place where he painted the dog, at five o'clock to-day," she replied.

"Are you—are you sure that is what Mr. Burne said?" she asked at last, in a low voice.

"Yes, quite sure, my lady," responded Becca.

Norah trembled and her breath came fast. How could she meet him after her father's prohibition? And yet—yet he was ill, had been injured in saving her.

She got up and went to the window. The girl's black eyes seemed to follow and trouble her.

"You may go now, Becca," she said, without looking round.

"Yes, my lady," said Becca. "And Mr. Burne, what am I to say to him if I see him?"

"Say nothing—say that I will come—and see the picture."

"Yes, my lady," and noiselessly she left the room.

"Yes, she would go and see him, and tell him that they must be strangers from henceforth—her eyes filled with tears at the thought!—they must part, never to meet again.

She finished dressing herself and went downstairs. The earl was in the breakfast room, and handed her a note as he bowed her a good morning.

"From Lady Ferndale," he said. "To inquire after your health after the accident, no doubt," he said. "A groom is waiting."

Norah opened the envelope. It was just the kind of letter which Lady Ferndale would write, full of affectionate anxiety and self reproach.

"If I had only sent some one with you, dear!" she said. "I would come over this morning—and will if you are the least ill!—but my husband has asked some people here early. Still, only say the word!"

But it was the next few lines that made Norah's heart beat and sent the blood to her face.

"And to think that that young man should have acted so nobly! Was I out, Norah, in my estimate? The coachman says that the way Mr. Burne flung himself upon the horses was 'grand', and I think it's the very best word to describe it. I am longing to see him, and thank him!"

"Well?" said the earl.

Norah hesitated a moment, then laid the letter beside his plate.

He raised it delicately, and held it out to her with a cold smile.

"Pardon me, but I have always entertained the greatest repugnance to perusing other people's letters," he said. "You had better answer it. Pray do not mind keeping me waiting."

Norah took the letter and put it in her pocket—those few lines had made it very precious—and, going to a writing-table, wrote a brief note assuring Lady Ferndale that she, Norah, was quite well, and, after a moment's hesitation, she added: "Mr. Burne was badly hurt, I fear." That was all; and the words read, ah! so coldly.

At times the hours that day seemed to pass all too quickly, at others they dragged their length wearily along. Norah all day tried to make up her mind what she would say to Cyril, tried even to learn a few sentences, that she might repeat them by heart. A practiced flirt, a London belle of even one season, would have known how to dismiss him gracefully; but Norah was no experienced flirt, she was simply a girl-woman whose heart had been touched for the first time.

At last the great clock chimed half-past four, and, with Casper at her heels, she started for the woods. Her heart beat faster as she approached the glade where she was to meet Cyril, and she paused and waited for a moment or two to try and quiet its beating.

Then she went on among the great trees flecked with the golden sunlight, and presently she put aside the leaves of a huge rhododendron, and stood before him.

Cyril had fixed his easel, and was trying to paint. She saw that his left arm was in a sling, and the sight recalled everything that had occurred on the preceding evening, and a great wave of tenderness passed over her heart.

She stood for a moment by him, then he took out his watch, and, with a sigh of impatience, turned his head and saw her, in all her loveliness, framed by the dark green leaves.

He sprang to his feet and came forward her, then stopped, his eyes, full of the passion that burned in his heart, fixed on her face; and so they stood speechless, so far as words go.

"You have come!" he said, in a low voice.

She put hers into it, and it was imprisoned in his eager grasp.

"Yes, I have come," she said.

"Are you angry with me for sending you the message?"

"No," she replied. "Oh, no, no! But——" she stopped.

"It was wrong—I know!" he said. "I felt it when I had got home and thought of it; but—ah! I wanted to see you, soon, at once, and I did not know how——"

"I am glad you sent to me," she said, so simply, so sweetly, that he could have gone on his knees to her. "You are painting; will you—will you go on?" she faltered.

He understood her, She could talk with less restraint if he worked. He sat down before the easel, and took up his brush and the palette, which he managed to hold in the finger and thumb of his left hand, and painted blindly for a minute or two; then he turned to her as she stood beside him, her hands loosely clasped.

"May I speak now, Lady Norah? I have been counting the hours since I left you last night. I have so longed to see you—to tell you—ah, you know! What can I say but that I love you!"

Norah's hands clasped tightly, and her breath came and went fitfully.

"It broke from me last night, when I should not have spoken," he went on, in a low voice, that trembled with eagerness and rang earnestly with the true ring of pure, whole-souled love. "I ought not to have spoken then, but—I could not help it; and now you know it, what will you say to me?"

He rose, but with a slight gesture she motioned him to his seat, and he sat down again, obeying her, and bent toward her, the sunlight falling on his shapely head and handsome face.

"Were you angry with me last night? Are you angry now? Have you come to tell me that I was presumptuous—ah, don't speak yet," for her lips moved, though no words had come. "Do you think that I have not thought over it all during the long hours I have lain awake? Lady Norah, you cannot feel more acutely than I do how unworthy I am that you should cast a thought to me."

Her lips formed a "No," but he went on, his voice scarcely above a whisper, his eyes sparkling with more eloquent pleading even than his lips.

"You are the daughter of an earl, and I——" he motioned to the easel with his brush, "I am a poor painter one the world—the world to which you belong—regards as very much beneath you. And it is right. But a poor painter may have a heart, and I have given mine to you! I lay it at your feet, Lady Norah! It is yours to do what you will with—to accept or refuse."

He stopped, to control his voice, which his passion had rendered hurried and broken. ...

"I can only say I love you, I love you! I have loved you——" He stopped and then went on, his voice low and dreamy, as if he were speaking from his heart to hers. "Do you remember the evening you came to the Court? As your carriage drove in through the gates I stood there and saw you, and—ah! believe me—the moment I saw you my heart leaped. It seemed to cry out, 'I love you!' I did not know who you were, but you were the one woman in all the world for me from that moment; you will be the one woman until I die."

There were tears in her eyes, though she tried to force them back, and she put up one hand and covered her eyes for a moment, but she stood silent, and otherwise motionless.

"It was no passing fancy," he went on. "All that evening I could not forget you; and at night I stole to the great house, that I might be near you. And I heard you!" he said, his voice scarcely audible; "almost as if in answer to my prayer, you came out on the terrace and spoke, not to me—ah, no, I know, I know!—but you seemed to speak to me. All my life has changed since that moment, for you have taken possession of it. I think of you all day, your face flits between me and the canvas, I hear your voice—" He paused. "Lady Norah, what will you say to me? Will you let me go on loving you—ah, you cannot help that, I must love you!—but will you try and love me a little in return?"

Norah's face grew almost white with the struggle that was rending her heart; the struggle between the desire to answer, "I love you already," and the desire to obey her father.

"Is it so impossible?"

"I—I cannot. The earl, my father—

"The earl," he said, "your father, does not like me."

"He has forbidden you to know me—speak to me?"

"Yes. I am—sorry——"

"Why?" he said. "Ah, I know! I had forgotten—forgive me—the difference between us; but he has not forgotten. You are the daughter of an earl, and I——" He broke off, for she had turned to him at last, a look of entreaty on her face.

(To be Continued.)

CHINESE WOMEN FIGHTERS.

Women in China have the privilege of fighting in the wars. In the rebellion of 1850 women did as much fighting as men. At Nankin, in 1853, 500,000 women from various parts of the country were formed into brigades of 13,000 each, under female officers. Of these soldiers 10,000 were picked women, drilled and garrisoned in the city.

USE FOR LOVE-LETTERS.

At a fashionable wedding at Lynchburg, Virginia, a little boy and girl preceded the bride and bridegroom up the aisle of the church, each carrying a silk pillow stuffed with the love-letters of the bridal pair. The latter knelt on the pillows during the ceremony.

HOW PERFUME IS MADE

DESCRIPTION OF A GREAT FRENCH INDUSTRY.

Processes by Which Tons of Blossoms Give Up Their Odors.

In the southern part of France, which borders on the Mediterranean and extends between the Alps and the Rhone, the culture of flowers has developed into a great industry for the manufacture of perfumes. "In the department of the Alpes-Maritmes the perfumery industry has probably made greater strides than in any other portion of France," says M. Georges Cayes in the Monde Moderne of Paris. "Here are more than sixty factories, the total product of which is valued at more than four million dollars per year, and over over fifteen hundred persons are constantly employed, without counting the multitude of harvest hands. The more important harvests are those of the rose, 4,000,000 pounds, the orange flower 5,000,000 pounds, the violet 600,000 pounds, the jasmine 1,200,000 pounds, the tuberose 300,000 lbs., the geranium 70,000 lbs., and the cassia 300,000 pounds. If we consider the fact that all these flowers are weighed without their stems it is evident that the quantity is enormous. and this fact will be still better appreciated when we say that in order to obtain two pounds of rose leaves no less than a thousand flowers required, while a thousand bunches of violets, each with a diameter of more than a foot, furnish only forty pounds of flowers."

METHOD OF DISTILLATION.

Flowers all go through a preliminary treatment of being placed in a cold room, and plants such as lavender, thyme, spike. mint, roots such as orris, fruits and woods, are passed through cutting and macerating machines. After this has been done the perfume is extracted, the principal methods being distillation. maceration, enfleurage and by the use of dissolvents. Disstillation is only employed when the perfume is not injured by heat or steam. In this case the flowers and water are put in a great alembic and heated. After the water begins to boil it disorganizes the vegetable cells containing the perfume, and this is carried by the steam through the worm and condensed. There is thus obtained a mixture of water and perfume and it is merely necessary now to separate the two. The process of distillation, however, has the great disadvantage of frequently altering the perfumes obtained, and, therefore, when it is desired to obtain finer extracts recourse must be had to other methods.

BOILING IN FAT.

For maceration the flowers are thrown into a mass of fat melted and raised to a temperature of 65 degrees centigrade, and completely submerged, after several hours the perfume being incorporated with the fat. The mass is then strained to get rid of the flowers, after which the latter are soaked in boiling water and compressed hydraulically. In this way all of the perfume is extracted. In the enfluerage method frames are used, the bottoms of which are glass. The frames are placed one above the other, small space being left between the glass plates. The fatty substance is spread on the glass and the flowers are placed in direct contact with the fat. At the end of a certain time, which varies with the flowers, the perfume is absorbed by the fat, after which the flowers are renewed until the pomade is of the desired strength.

DISSOLVING ODORS.

A third method is that of volatile dissolvents. In general the dissolvent employed is an ether of refined petrpleum. The apparata used are of different forms, but they must all contain an extractor, into which the flowers are placed cold with the dissolvent, a decanter where the water contained in the flowers is separated from the mixture, a distilling alembic which forces the dissolvent back through the flowers, and a certain number of reservoirs in which the dissolvent is kept, in a pure state or charged with perfume. The dissolvent after being charged with the perfume evaporates and leaves behind the essential oil. This method is by far the best. In the single department of the Alpes-Maritimes the annual production is 800,000 pounds of pomade and 400,000 quarts of extracts.

LIFE-SAVING INVENTION.

A poor laboring man in Denmark has made a new invention in life-saving. He impregnates clothes with a substance which will keep a shipwrecked person afloat for several days without losing its property. A coat, a vest, a travelling rug—in fact, any piece of wearing apparel impregnated with the stuff is enough to keep anyone above water. The invention has been successfully demonstrated.

WORK FOR THE INSANE.

Work for the insane is a special study at the Villejuif Asylum, Paris. Painting, carving, sketching, and even tattooing are included, and recovery is often due to the employment. In other cases the condition of the patient's mind is mirrored in the work done, aiding the physician in his study of the case more than any long discussions or consultations.