

# HIGHLAND PARK NEWS-LETTER

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## JOHN ENDICOTT'S COUSIN

Apparently there was something pathetic in my descriptions on the hours of the night when I had sat beside my sleeping mother and kept myself awake by conning volumes which my lover had recommended—abstruse words which he had spoken of rapturously, but which he had probably never suspected that I should read.

"Did you enjoy them?" asked his cousin.

"No," I replied, "not at first; the taste grew upon me, and now he and I will be able to talk them over together. I shall not feel quite such an ignoramus. We shall have some subjects in common."

"You love him very dearly, of course?" said my companion.

I did not answer. An odd, embarrassed sensation overcame me. I cast down my gaze. I rose hurriedly and walked to the other end of the deck. He did not follow me, but sat gazing moodily seaward. I fought a battle with myself before I rejoined him. I was reluctant to speak, but speak I would. He should know what reason I had to love John Endicott, he should hear that history of self-sacrifice, of entire disinterestedness. I think I must have been even more eloquent than I imagined, for the color flickered in his face.

"Happy John!" he exclaimed.

I glanced at him critically. Though still young, his hair was gray, his face thin and lined. I wondered why he envied his cousin. Was it only because he was younger and stronger? He met my glance with another far more piercing. He seemed to read my thoughts.

"I do not envy John Endicott," said he.

"Why not?"

"Because you do not love him, child."

I was about to utter a fierce disclaimer. How dared he say so? How dared he question my affection?

"You have no right to speak in that way!" I cried. "Am I not his promised wife?"

"Yes, but you do not love him. You love me, and me only. I know it!"

His arms were about me, his lips touched my cheek. It was all as clear as daylight now. I understood. For a moment I lay with my head upon his shoulder; then I disengaged myself and stood apart.

"It is quite true," I said in a broken way. "Quite true! Oh, if I had but discovered it earlier, if I had but known what the new feeling meant! But indeed I did not; I only knew that I was very happy—happier than I have ever been before. Sometimes I have wondered why, and reproached myself, for my dear mother has been dead only so short a time. Sometimes—"

He interrupted me without ceremony.

"If you had known, what would you have done?"

"I think I would rather have jumped into the sea than have let myself love you," I answered fiercely.

By L. E. TIDDEMAN

### SPECIAL TRAIN SERVICE

During June and July for the Damrosch Concerts at Ravinia Park

In addition to the regular service a special train for the accommodation of Lake Forest and Highland Park patrons will run daily as follows:

Leave Lake Forest, Deerpath Ave., 8:05 p. m.

" Highland Park, Moraine Station, 8:15 p. m.

" " " Central Ave., 8:20 p. m.

Arriving Ravinia Park..... 8:25 p. m.

There will also be special train service after the concert with ample accommodations for all.

"And what will you do now that you do know?"

I eyed him for a while, taking in every line of the face that had grown so familiar. I loved each line. Others might have called them disfiguring, but not I. They were part of him, they were characteristic, and I would not have smoothed one away. I would not have had him other than he was in the slightest particular.

"Now that I know," I said gently, "I blame myself and myself alone, not you—not you!"

My voice broke. I advanced and, standing on tip-toe, raised my face to his. Then I kissed him.

"Good-bye," I said—"Good-bye!"

"You still intend to marry this other man," he said—"this cousin of mine?"

"Yes, and I will be a good wife to him. He shall never know. Heaven bless him! How trustful he has been, how patient! I would die for him if that were possible, but, since it is not possible, I will live for him."

He pressed me to his heart. I rested there a moment until he stooped and kissed me. There were tears in his eyes as he also said "Good-bye."

After that I left him; after that I fought my battle alone. Sometimes I reproached myself more bitterly than the most rigid moralist would have done. Sometimes I prayed that I might die, at others I lay prostrate, wearied by the strength of my own emotions. And again I looked in the glass—this time with a fierce hatred of my own beauty. If I had been a plain woman, Will Derriman would not have learned to love me. I should have gone to my future husband heart-whole if—

All our lives turn upon an "if." I had thought myself so strong, and others had the like opinion of me. How I scorned myself now! Yet self-contempt

would not help John Endicott. I owed him more than that—owed him recovered self-esteem.

I bathed my eyes and put on my neatest and most becoming dress. I would meet him with a smiling face. He had waited patiently, he should receive his just reward. No matter what I suffered, he should be spared all pain.

I strained my eyes in search of the figure which I felt would still be familiar in spite of the years that had rolled over us. I had not changed, why should he? I longed to hear the ready laugh that had once cheered me. Alas, I was doomed to disappointment!

His cousin, whom I had not seen since our memorable interview, joined me. His manner was constrained, and he approached me timidly. Doctor Endicott was unavoidably prevented from meeting me, so he said, but a carriage awaited me, and my lover would call in the evening. I was not chilled. A strange sense of relief took possession of me—a little time still remained to me.

Will Derriman and I shook hands in painful silence, and our eyes did not meet. Had all the wealth of the Indies been offered me I could not have spoken.

I was driven to the house of an elderly lady who, out of mingled kindness of heart and gratitude towards her doctor, had offered his fiancée shelter beneath her roof until the day came that she should leave it as a bride.

She welcomed me kindly, and was loud in her praises of my future husband. I listened greedily to every word she uttered. I wanted to realize my position more fully. I wanted to impress upon myself that I was about to marry a good, true man—a man whom everybody respected and admired.

I was glad when my hostess left me alone in the drawing-room. There, in the gloaming, I could think my own thoughts. I could recall the distant period when John Endicott, for pure goodness' sake had tended my dear mother, bringing her back to life from the brink of the grave.

The clock struck seven. Why did he linger? Every moment of delay would, I felt, make the meeting more painful to me. The servant entered and offered to bring me lights. I declined them. It seemed to me that it would be easier for us to meet thus. I dreaded to look John Endicott in the face. I feared lest the keen eyes I knew of old should meet mine with a question in their quiet depths—a question I could not answer. I dreaded lest, in an utter abandonment of self-reproach, I should shriek out my secret and so leave no room for atonement. I buried my face in my hands and waited, listening with painful eagerness.

At last he came. But I did not hear him. He entered unannounced and stood behind my chair. By a strange instinct I became aware of his presence. A moment later he was bending over me. His hand covered

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