

LOVE REASONS NOT.

CHAPTER LXI.

AN APPROACHING TEMPEST.

The Countess of Lanswell was in despair. Any little social difficulty, the exposing of an adventuress, the setting aside of a marriage, intrigues, or a royal invitation, "dropping" people when it was convenient to do so, and courting them when she required them, to all and each of these deeds she was quite equal; but a serious case of cruel jealousy, a heart-broken, desolate wife on one hand, an obstinate husband on the other, was past her power of management. Lady Lanswell had written to ask her to come to Stoneland House that day.

"I have something of the greatest importance to say to you," she wrote. "Do not delay; to-morrow may be too late." Lady Lanswell received this urgent note just as she was sipping her chocolate, luxuriously robed in a dressing-gown of silk and softest velvet, a pretty morning cap of finest Mechlin lace on her head. Her handsome, haughty face grew pale as she read it.

"It is a wretched piece of business from beginning to end," she said to herself. "Now here is my peace of mind for the day gone. I was to have seen Madame Adelaide soon after noon about my dresses, and the dentist at three. I know absolutely nothing which I can say to a jealous wife, I know nothing of jealousy. Most of the wives whom I know are pleased rather than otherwise when their husbands are away from home. Marion takes things too seriously. I shall tell her so."

But any little speech of that kind she might have tried to make was forgotten when she caught the first glimpse of Lady Marion's white, tragic face.

"My dear child, what is the matter? What a face! why, you must have been crying for hours, I am sure," said the countess. "Marion, you should not go on in this way, you will kill yourself."

"Lady Lanswell, I wish that I were dead; my husband has ceased to love me. Oh, God, let me die!" cried poor Lady Marion, and the countess was seriously alarmed.

"My dear child, pray be reasonable," she cried; "how can you say that Lance has ceased to love you?"

"It is true," said the unhappy wife; "he refused to give up Madame Vanira, and what seems to me more dreadful still, she is going to Berlin, and he insists on going also. I cannot bear it, Lady Lanswell!"

"We must reason with him," said the countess, grandly, and despite the tragedy of her sorrow, Lady Marion smiled.

"Reason with him? You might as well stand before a hard, white rock and ask roses to bloom on it; you might as well stand before the great heaving ocean and ask the tide not to roll in, as to try to reason with him. I do not understand it, but I am quite sure that he is infatuated by Madame Vanira; I could almost fancy that she had worked some spell over him. Why should he care for her? Why should he visit her? Why should he go to Berlin because she is there?"

The countess, listening, thanked Heaven that she did not know. If ever that secret became known, it was all over with the House of Lanswell.

"I have said all that I can say," she continued, rising in great agitation; "and it is of no use; he is utterly shameless."

"Hush, woman! I will not have you say such things about my son; he may like and admire Madame Vanira, but I trust him, and would trust him anywhere; you think too much of it, and you make more of it than you need. Let me pray of you to be prudent; want of prudence in a wife at such a juncture as this has very often occasioned misery for life. Are you quite sure that you cannot be generous enough to allow your husband the pleasure of this friendship, which I can certify is a good one?"

The countess sighed; the matter was indeed beyond her. In her artificial life, these bare, honest human passions had no place.

"Over the journey to Berlin," she said, "you are making too much of it. If he enjoys Madame's society, and likes Berlin, where is the harm of his enjoying them together?"

So she spoke; but she shrank from the clear gaze of those blue eyes.

"Lady Lanswell, you know all that is nonsense. My husband is mine, and I will not share his love or his affection with any one. Unless he gives up Madame Vanira, I shall leave him. If he goes to Berlin, I will never see him again."

"You are very foolish, my dear. I heard yesterday, on very good authority, that my son, Lord Chandos, will be offered the vacant Garter. I believe it is true, I feel sure of it. I would not for the world anything should happen now, any disgrace of any kind; and these matrimonial quarrels are disgraceful, Marion. You should trust your husband."

"I have done so, but he does not love me, Lady Lanswell; my mind is quite made up. If he goes to Berlin, I shall never see or speak to him again."

"But, my dearest Marion," cried the countess, "this is terrible. Think of appearances, think of the world—what will the world say? And yours was supposed to be a love match. It must not be. Have you not the sense to see that such a course of proceeding would be simply to throw him into Madame Vanira's hands? You will be your own worst enemy if you do this!"

"I shall do what my own heart prompts," she said; "no matter what the world says; I care nothing for the world's opinion. Oh, Lady Lanswell, do not look so angry at me. I am miserable; my heart is broken!"

And the unhappy girl knelt at Lady Lanswell's feet, and laid her head on the silken folds of her dress.

If there was one creature in this world whom Lady Lanswell loved more than another, it was her son's wife, the fair, gentle girl who had been a most loving daughter to her; she could not endure the sight of her pain and distress.

"I have made up my mind," sobbed Lady Marion; "I shall appeal to the Duke of Lester; he will see that justice is done to me!"

"My dearest Marion, that is the very thing you must not do. If you appeal to the duke, it becomes at once a serious quarrel, and who will say how such a quarrel may end? If you appeal to the duke, the whole thing will be known throughout the land; there is an end to all my hopes of the vacant Garter; in fact, I may say there is an end to the race of Lanswell. Think twice before you take such an important step!"

"No one thinks for me!" cried Lady Marion.

"Yes, I think of you and for you. Give me your promise that for a week at least you will say nothing to the Duke of Lester. Will you promise me that Marion?"

"Yes," said Lady Chandos, wearily; "I promise you that, but not one day longer than a week; my heart is breaking! I cannot bear suspense!"

"I promise you that in a few days there shall be an end of all your trouble," said the countess, who had secretly made her own resolves. "Now, Marion, put your trust in me. You have had no breakfast this morning, I am sure."

Raising the delicate figure in her arms, the countess kissed the weeping face.

"Trust in me," she repeated; "all will be well. Let me see you take some coffee."

The countess rang and ordered some coffee; then, when she had compelled Lady Marion to drink it, she kissed her again.

"Do you know how it will end?" she said gently, "all this crying and fasting and sorrow? You will make yourself very ill, and then Lance will never forgive himself. Do be reasonable, Marion, and leave it all with me."

But after the countess had left her, Lady Marion still felt very ill; she had never felt so ill; she tried to walk from her dressing-room to her bedroom, and to the great alarm of her maid, she fell fainting to the ground.

The doctor came, the same physician who had attended her for some years, since she was a child, and he looked very grave when he heard of the long, deathlike swoon. He sat talking to her for some time.

"Do you think I am very ill, doctor?" she asked.

He answered: "You are not very well, my dear Lady Chandos."

"Do you think I will die?"

"Not of this illness, please God," he said.

"Now, if you will promise me not to be excited I will tell you something," and bending down he whispered something in her ear.

A flood of light and rapture came in her face, her eyes filled with joy.

"Do you mean it? Is it really true?" she asked.

"Really true; but remember all depends on yourself; and the doctor went away, leaving behind him a heart full of emotion, of pleasure, of pain, hope, and regret.

Meanwhile, the countess for the second time had sought her son. Her stern, grave face, her angry eyes, the repressed pride and emotion that he saw in every gesture, told him that the time for jesting or evasion had passed.

"Lance," said my lady, sternly, "you are a man now. I cannot command you as I did when you were a boy."

"No, mother; that is quite true. Apropos of what do you say that?"

"I am afraid the sin of your manhood will be greater than the follies of your youth," she said.

"It is just possible," he replied, indifferently.

"You have heard that you have been mentioned for the vacant Garter, and that it is highly probable you may receive it?"

"I have heard so," he answered indifferently.

"I want to ask you a straightforward question. Do you think it worth your while to risk that, to risk the love and happiness of your wife, to risk your fair name, the name of your race, your position, and everything else that you ought to hold most dear? Do you think it worth while to risk all this for the sake of spending three months in Berlin, where you can see Madame Vanira every day?"

Lord Chandos looked straight in his mother's face.

"Since you ask me the question," he replied, "most decidedly I do."

My lady shrank back as though she had received a blow.

"I am ashamed of you," she said.

"And I, mother, have been ashamed of my cowardice but I am a coward no longer."

"Are tears and prayers of any avail?" asked Lady Lanswell; and the answer was:

"No."

Then my lady, driven to despair between her son and his wife, resolved some evening to seek the principle cause of the mischief—Madame Vanira herself.

him. It would spoil his career. My lady had carried herself proudly among the mothers of other sons; hers had been a success, while some others had proved, after all, dead failures; was she to own to herself at the end of a long campaign that she was defeated? Ah, no! Besides which there was the other side of the question—Lady Marion declared she would not see him or speak to him again if he went to Berlin, and my lady knew that she would keep her word. If Lord Chandos persisted in going to Berlin his wife would appeal to the duke, would in all probability insist on taking refuge in his house, then there would be a grand social scandal; the whole household would be disbanded. Lady Chandos, an injured, almost deserted wife, living with the duke and the duchess; Lord Chandos abroad laughed at everywhere as a dupe.

My lady writhed again in anguish as she thought of it. It must not be. She said to herself that it would turn her hair gray, that it would strike her with worse than paralysis. Surely her brilliant life was not to end in such a fiasco as this. For the first time for many years hot tears blinded those fine eyes that had hitherto looked with such careless scorn on the world.

My lady was dispirited; she knew her son well enough to know that another appeal to him would be useless; that the more she said to him on the subject the more obstinate he would be. A note from Lady Chandos completed her misery, and made her take a desperate resolve—a sad little note, that said:

"DEAR LADY LANSWELL,—If you can do anything to help me, let it be done soon. Lance has begun to-day his preparations for going to Berlin. I heard him giving instructions over his traveling trunk. We have no time to lose if anything can be done to save him."

"I must do it," said the countess, to herself, with desperation. "Appeal to the woman I fear he loves. Who could have imagined or prophesied that I should ever have been compelled to stoop to her, yet stoop I must, if I would save my son!"

With Lady Lanswell, to resolve was to do; when others would have beaten about the bush she went direct.

On the afternoon of that day she made out Leone's address, and ordered the carriage. It was a sign of fear with her that she was so particular with her toilet; it was seldom that she relied, even in the least, on the advantages of dress, but today she made a toilet almost imperial in its magnificence—rich silk and velvet that swept the ground in superb folds, here and there gleaming a rich jewel.

The countess smiled as she surveyed herself in the mirror, a regal, beautiful lady. Surely no person sprung from Leone's class would dare to oppose her.

It was on a beautiful, bright afternoon that my lady reached the pretty house where Madame Vanira lived. A warm afternoon, when the birds sang in the green shade of the trees, when the bees made rich honey from the choice carnations, and the butterflies hovered round the budding lilies.

The countess drove straight to the house. She left her carriage at the outer gates, and walked through the pretty lawn; she gave her card to the servant and was shown into the drawing-room.

The Countess of Lanswell would not have owned for the world that she was in the least embarrassed, but the color varied in her face, and her lips trembled ever so little. In a few minutes Leone entered—not the terrified, lowly, loving girl, who braved her presence because she loved her husband so well, this was a proud, beautiful, regal woman, haughty as the countess herself—a woman who, by force of her wondrous beauty and wondrous voice, had placed the world at her feet.

The countess stepped forward with outstretched hands.

"Madame Vanira," she said, "will you spare me a few minutes? I wish to speak most particularly with you."

Leone rang the bell and gave orders that she was not to be disturbed. Then the two ladies looked at each other. Leone knew that hostilities were at hand, although she could not quite tell why.

The countess opened the battle by saying, boldly:

"I ought, perhaps, to tell you, Madame Vanira, that I recognize you."

Leone looked at her with proud unconcern.

"I recognize you now, although I failed to do so when I first saw you. I congratulate you most heartily on your success."

"On what success?" she asked.

"On your success as an actress and a singer. I consider you owe me some thanks."

"Truly," said Leone, "I owe you some thanks."

The countess did not quite like the tone of voice in which those words were uttered; but it was her policy to be amiable.

"Your genius has taken me by surprise," she said; "yet, when I recall the only interview I ever had with you, I recognize the dramatic talent you displayed."

"I should think the less you say of that interview, the better," said Leone; "it was not much to your ladyship's credit."

Lady Lanswell smiled.

"We will not speak of it," she said. "But you do not ask me to sit down. Madame Vanira, what a charming house you have here."

With grave courtesy Leone drew a chair near the window, and the countess sat down. She looked at the beautiful woman with a winning smile.

"Will you not be seated, madame?" she said. "I find it so much easier to talk when one is seated."

"How did you recognize me?" asked Leone, abruptly.

"I cannot say truthfully that I recognized your face," she said; "you will not mind my saying that if I had done so I would not have invited you to my house. neither should I have permitted my daughter-in-law to do so. It has placed us all in a false position. I knew you from something my son said about you. I guessed at once that you must be Leone Noel. I must repeat my congratulations; how hard you must have worked."

Her eyes wandered over the magnificent face and figure, over the faultless lines and graceful curves, over the artistic dress, and the beautiful, picturesque head.

"You have done well," said the countess. "Years ago you thought me hard, unfeeling, prejudiced, cruel, but it was kindness in the end. You have achieved for yourself fame, which no one could have won for you. Better to be as you are, queen of song, and so queen of half the world of fashion, than

the wife of a man whose family and friends would never have received you, and who would soon have looked on you as an incumbrance."

"Pray pardon me, Lady Lanswell, if I say that I have no wish whatever to hear your views on the subject."

My lady's face flushed.

"I meant no offense," she said, "I merely wished to show you that I have not been so much your enemy as you perhaps have thought me," and by the sudden softening of my lady's face, and the sudden tremor of her voice, Leone knew that she had some favor to ask.

"I think," she said, after a pause, "that in all truth, Madame Vanira, you ought to be grateful to me. You would have known the extent of your own genius and power if you had not gone on the stage."

"The happiness of the stage resembles the happiness of real life about as much as the tinsel crown of the mock queen resembles the regalia of the sovereign," replied Leone.

"It would be far better if your ladyship would not mention the past."

"I only mention it because I wish you to see that I am not so much your enemy as you have thought me to be."

"Nothing can ever change my opinion on that point," said Leone.

"You think I was your enemy?" said the countess, blandly.

"The most cruel and the most relentless enemy any young girl could have," said Leone.

"I am sorry you think that," said my lady, kindly. "The more so as I find you so happy and so prosperous."

"You cannot answer for my happiness," said Leone, briefly.

"I acted for the best," said the countess, with more meekness than Leone had ever seen in her before.

"It was a miserable best," said Leone, her indignation fast rising, despite her self-control. A wretched best, and the results have not been in any way so grand that you can boast of them."

"So far as you are concerned, Madame Vanira, I have nothing to repent of," said my lady.

Leone's dark eyes flashed fire.

"I am but one," she said, "your cruelty made two people miserable. What of your son? Have you made him so happy that you can come here and boast of what you have done?"

My lady's head fell on her breast. Ah, no, Heaven knew her son was not a happy man.

"Leone," she said, in a low hurried voice, "it is of my son I wish to speak to you. It is for my son's sake I am here—it is because I believe you to be his true friend and a noble woman that I am here, Leone—it is the first time I have called you by your name—I humble myself to you—will you listen to me?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A CRY FOR HELP.

Great Distress in Newfoundland—The Government Unable to Adopt Adequate Remedial Measures—Nearly Every Home in the Land Affected.

The following appeal for aid, from St. John's, Newfoundland, has been issued:—

It is with mingled feelings of the deepest distress and regret that we have to appeal to the benevolent for support in our great emergency. We remember your hearty sympathy and practical charity at a time when fire devastated our city and rendered thousands homeless and destitute. That calamity, however, was slight compared to the present one. St. John's alone suffered then, but nearly every home in the land is affected to its serious detriment by this financial collapse on the part of our monetary institutions. The results indeed are already appalling. The difficulty and needs are daily increasing. It is calculated that at the present moment 1,000 families in St. John's alone are seeking relief—a number daily increasing—but the greatest fear and apprehension exist that these numbers will be magnified by an influx from the neighboring outports, and intensified by the already growing cry of want in the more distant settlements.

Usually, the Government, under circumstances of public distress, provide works of relief, but the same causes operate upon them, and they are unable to adopt any adequate remedial measures. The local charities are doing and have done much, but their resources are limited. Our leading citizens and the general public, ever ready to respond to such personal sacrifice, are themselves overborne with surpassing difficulties. Labor has been largely curtailed, and a long and arduous winter is before us. The savings of the thrifty and industrious are either completely lost, or so depreciated in value that many who never knew want will need assistance. It is with such circumstances as these we are called upon to deal. Indeed there lie before us all the conditions of distress that touch to the quick human hearts. And therefore we appeal to those "who love their fellow-men" to respond with what liberality they may to our call in this our hour of great and trying need.

All contributions, in money or kind, should be addressed to the care of "The secretary, Clerical Committee for Relief, St. John's Newfoundland." Money may be remitted direct through the Bank of Montreal. (Signed) Llewellyn Newfoundland, chairman; John Scott, Roman Catholic Administrator, vice-chairman; W. Graham, Presbyterian, secretary; G. S. Milligan, LL. D., president Methodist Conference; Edward Botwood, Archdeacon of Newfoundland; John Ryan, Roman Catholic, dean of Diocese of St. John's; A. D. Morton, Methodist, assistant secretary; G. W. Siddall, Congregational.

The Fate of Tamalus.

Mrs. Scribber (impressively)—Whatever you do, never, never marry a newspaper man.

School Chum—Why not?

I married one, and I know. Every night my husband brings home a big bundle of newspapers from all over the country, and they most drive me crazy.

The newspapers?

Indeed they do. They are just crammed with the most astonishing bargains, in stores a thousand miles away.

THE CHICORA'S ONE SURVIVOR.

A Small Yellow Dog, and His Name, Like His Experience, is Rough.

In a warm corner of the big railway freight house at Benton Harbor, Mich., stands a wicker basket. In the basket, which is filled with cotton, lies a little yellow skye terrier. You say to the basket "Come, Rough," and the cover pops open and thirty-five pounds of yelping, wiggling joyous skye terrier jumps up to lick your hands. And that little yellow dog, with his snappy eyes and his ecstatic yelp, is the only living thing that has come from the steamer Chicora. He is frost-bitten, bruised, and torn, but very much alive and very glad of it, for despite his bruises he wags his little tail with furious enthusiasm whenever a voice he knows says "Come, Rough."

Farmer Solom Cutler heard a great scratching and moaning at his kitchen door when he rose to build a fire last Tuesday morning. He opened the door and Rough, covered with ice and almost blind, flopped into the kitchen. Solom Cutler picked up the bedraggled little waif and carried it tenderly into his wife's bedroom. She said, "Poor little thing," and promptly got out a box of ointment, with which Rough was anointed. Then they put him in a basket and set the basket under the stove.

Rough was never beautiful. He is little and yellow—the kind of yellow that is pronounced "yaller" and has legs that can only be described as stumpy. He is little more than a foot long and his hair is tumbled and tangled. His eyes are of a washed-out green. Altogether Rough is not a beauty. There are those who have spoken of him as "ornery," but he is bright—wonderfully bright—and possessing an amount of strength and endurance truly marvellous. Rough's appearance of chronic and long-standing hard luck was several degrees accentuated when he came into Mrs. Cutler's hands. His skin was cruelly frost bitten, one of his paws was frozen, and he was covered with ice from the tip of his little russet nose to the tip of his rigid little tail.

Farmer Cutler lives at Pottowotamie Park, eight miles north of St. Joseph. It is only a little station, and the inhabitants there are composed mostly of the occupants of the Cutler farmhouse. So it was late Thursday evening when Farmer Cutler heard the Chicora had gone down. He and his wife compared notes. They had heard a steamer blowing distress whistles—four short blasts, a pause, and four more blasts—as they sat down to supper Monday night. They heard the distress whistles several times, and went to the door to look out. They saw the lights of a vessel heaving up and down way out in the lake.

"I guess she must be two miles out," said Solom. "I guess she is," said his wife. Then they slammed the door and sat down to supper.

Thursday night when told about the wreck of the Chicora, he at once thought of Rough. He had been wondering where Rough could have come from. They took the basket and the dog and drove into Benton Harbor. "Do you know this dog?" he said to a sailor he met near the docks. "Lord, yes; that's Rough. Where did you get him?" Cutler told the story, and the sailor said that Rough must have come from the wreck of the Chicora.

It seems that the dog has a great fancy for lake travel. All the year round he goes back and forth between Benton Harbor and Milwaukee on the Graham and Morton ships. He loves the water, the boats, and sailors, and the sailors love him. He went with the Chicora on her last trip—there are sailors who remember seeing him leave the dock and pass onto the main deck—and he is the only living thing to come back from her.

In the English Courts.

The inequalities of sentence in the English criminal courts are strongly criticised in the English law journals. The Law Times, the most influential of the English law periodicals, is publishing a series of articles on the criminal law and its administration, and in a recent number gives the opinion of Justice Hawkins, the best-known criminal judge of the country. He believes that great care should be taken in considering the past history and the surroundings of each prisoner before sentence is pronounced. Though he has the reputation of being a severe judge, he is strongly opposed to flogging, and never imposes a sentence in which that is a part of the punishment. Some of the judges approve the lash as a means of punishing criminals accused of acts of violence but most of the judges believe that it has little efficacy. He says of the duty of a judge administering the criminal law:—"Let him consider well before passing sentence upon a prisoner. Let him consider the nature of the offense committed, the injury to individuals and society resulting from the offense, and then, with even justice, having a regard to all surrounding circumstances and the previous history of the criminal, firmly but humanely put in force the power with which the country intrusts him for its protection and the welfare of the criminal."

Drawing the Line.

Typewriter (angrily)—I'd just like to know what you call that butter you sent to my house?

Grocer—That's print butter.

Typewriter—It is, eh? Well, I'm a printer myself, and I suppose I might stand butter that suggests a composing-room, but I'll be hanged if I'll eat butter that tastes like a press-room.

Wouldn't Insult Them.

Miss Youngthing—What do you think I wrote a poem last week. Didn't take me any time at all. I sent it to the Highbump Magazine.

Miss Beenthere—Did you inclose stamps?

Miss Youngthing—Of course not. If the Highbump Magazine can't afford to stamp the envelope when they send me a check, I think it's a pity.

Until the skating season shall have closed a man's bumps has nothing to do with phrenology.