

Heiress and Wife.

CHAPTER X.

On the evening which followed the one just described in our last chapter, Pluma Hurlhurst sat in her luxuriant boudoir of rose and gold, deeply absorbed in the three letters which she held in her lap. To one was appended the name of Septima Brooks, one was from Rex's mother, and the last—and by far the most important one—bore the signature of Lester Stanwick.

Once, twice, thrice, she perused it, each time with growing interest, the glittering light deepening in her dark, flashing eyes, and the red lips curling in a scornful smile.

"This is capital!" she cried, exultingly; "even better than I had planned. I could not see my way clear before, but now everything is clear sailing." She crossed over to the mirror, looking long and earnestly at the superb figure reflected there. "I am fair to look upon," she cried, bitterly. "Why can not Rex love me?"

Ah! she was fair to look upon, standing beneath the softened glow of the overhanging chandelier, in her dress of gold brocade, with a pomegranate blossom on her bosom, and a diamond spray flashing from the dark, glossy curls, magnificently beautiful.

"I was so sure of Rex," she said, bitterly; "if any one had said to me, 'Rex prefers your over-seer's niece, Daisy Brooks, with her baby face and pink-and-white beauty,' I would have laughed them to scorn. Prefers her to me, the haughty heiress of Whitestone Hall, for whose love, or even smile, men have sued in vain! I have managed the whole affair very cleverly!" she mused. "John Brooks does not return before the coming spring, and Septima is removed from my path most effectually, and if Lester Stanwick manages his part successfully, I shall have little to fear from Daisy Brooks! How clever Lester was to learn Rex had been to the Detective Agency! How he must have loved that girl!" she cried, hotly, with a darkening brow.

"Ah, Rex!" she whispered, softly, and for an instant the hard look died out of her face, "no one shall take you from me. I would rather look upon your face cold in death, and know no one else could claim you, than see you smile lovingly upon a rival. There is no torture under heaven so bitter to endure as the pangs of a love unreturned!" she cried, fiercely. She threw open the window and leaned far out into the radiant starlight, as the great clock pealed the hour of seven. "Rex has received my note," she said, "with the one from his mother inclosed. Surely he will not refuse my request. He will come, if only through politeness!" Again she laughed, that low, mocking laugh peculiar to her, as she heard the peal of the bell. "It is Rex," she whispered, clasping her hands over her beating heart. "Tonight I will sow the first seeds of distrust in your heart, and when they take root you shall despise Daisy Brooks a thousand-fold more than you love her now. She shall feel the keen thrust of a rival's bitter vengeance!"

Casting a last lingering glance, so woman-like! at the perfect face the mirror reflected, to give her confidence in herself for the coming ordeal, Pluma Hurlhurst glided down to the parlor, where Rex awaited her.

It would have been hard to believe the proud, willful, polished young heiress could lend herself to a plot so dark and so cruel as the one she was at that moment revolving in her fertile brain.

Rex was standing at the open window, his handsome head leaning wearily against the casement. His face was turned partially toward her, and Pluma could scarcely repress the cry of astonishment that rose to her lips as she saw how pale and haggard he looked in the softened light. She knew but too well the cause.

He was quite unaware of Pluma's presence until a soft, white, jeweled hand was laid lightly on his arm, and a low, musical voice whispered, "I am so glad you have come, Rex," close to his elbow.

They had parted under peculiar circumstances. He could fancy her at that moment kneeling to him, under the glare of the lamp-light, confessing her love for him, and denouncing poor little clinging Daisy with such bitter scorn. His present position was certainly an embarrassing one to Rex.

"I am here in accordance with your request, Miss Hurlhurst," he said, simply, bowing coldly over the white hand that would cling to his arm.

"You are very kind," she said, sweetly, "to forget that unpleasant little episode that happened at the fete, and come to-night. I believe I should never have sent for you," she added, archly, smiling up into his face, "had it not been at the urgent request of your mother, Rex."

Pluma hesitated. Rex bit his lip in annoyance, but he was too courteous to openly express his thoughts; he merely bowed again. He meant Pluma should understand all thoughts of love or tenderness must forever more be a dead letter between them.

"My mother!" he repeated, wonderingly; "pardon me, I do not understand."

For answer she drew his mother's letter from her bosom and placed it in his hands.

He ran his eyes quickly over the page. The postscript seemed to enlighten him.

"The course of true love never runs smooth," it ran, "and I beseech you, Pluma dear, if anything should ever happen, any shadow fall upon your love, I beseech you send for Rex and place this letter in his hands. It would not be unwomanly, Pluma, because I, his mother, so earnestly request it; for, on your love for each other hangs my hopes of happiness. Rex is impulsive and willful, but he will respect his mother's wishes."

No thought of treachery ever crossed Rex's mind as he read the lines before him; he never once dreamed the ingeniously worded postscript had been so cleverly imitated and added by Pluma's own hand. It never occurred to him for an instant to doubt the sincerity of the words he read, when he knew how dearly his mother loved the proud, haughty heiress before him.

"I heard you were going away, Rex," she said, softly, "and I—I could not let you go so, and break my own heart."

"In one sense, I am glad you sent for me," said Rex, quietly ignoring her last remark. "I shall be much pleased to renew our friendship, Miss Pluma, for I need your friendship—nay, more, I need your sympathy and advice more than I can express. I have always endeavored to be frank with you, Pluma," he said, kindly. "I have never spoken words which might lead you to believe I loved you."

He saw her face grow white under his earnest gaze and the white lace on her bosom rise and fall convulsively, yet she made him no answer.

"Please permit me to tell you why, Pluma," he said, taking her hand and leading her to a sofa, taking a seat by her side. "I could not," he continued, "in justice to either you or myself; for I never knew what love was," he said, softly, "until the night of the fete." Again he paused; but, as no answer was vouchsafed him, he

went on; "I never knew what love meant until I met Daisy—little Daisy Brooks."

"Rex!" cried Pluma, starting to her feet, "you know not what you say—surely you do not know! I would have warned you, but you would not listen. I saw you drifting toward a yawning chasm; I stretched out my arms to save you, but you would not heed me. You are a stranger to the people around here, Rex, or they would have warned you. Sin is never so alluring as in the guise of a beautiful woman; it is not too late yet. Forget Daisy Brooks; she is not a fit companion for noble Rex Lyon, or pure enough to kiss an honest man's lips."

"For God's sake, Miss Hurlhurst, what do you mean?" cried Rex, slowly rising from his seat and facing her, pale as death. "In Heaven's name, explain the accusations you have just uttered, or I shall go mad! If a man had uttered those words, I would have—"

The words died away on his lips; he remembered he was talking to a woman. Rex's eyes fairly glowed with rage as he turned on his heel and strode rapidly up and down the room.

"Rex," said Pluma, softly advancing a step toward him, "it always grieves a true woman to admit the error of a fallen sister—they would shield her if such a thing were possible."

"I do not believe it," retorted Rex, impetuously. "Women seem to take a keen delight in slandering one another, as far as I can see. But you might as well tell me yonder moon was treacherous and vile as to tell me Daisy Brooks was aught but sweet and pure—you could not force me to believe it."

"I do not attempt to force you to believe it. I have told you the truth, as a loving sister might have done. None are so blind as those who will not see," she said, toying with the jewels upon her white fingers.

"Daisy Brooks is as pure as yonder lily," cried Rex, "and I love her as I love my soul!"

His quivering, impassioned voice thrilled Pluma to her heart's core, and she felt a keen regret that this wealth of love was withheld from her own hungry heart. Rex had never appeared so noble, so handsome, so well worth winning, in her eyes, as at that moment.

"I am sorry for you, Rex," sobbed Pluma, artfully burying her face in her lace kerchief, "because she can never return your love; she does not love you, Rex."

"Yes, she does love me," cried Rex. "I have settled it beyond a doubt, 'She has settled it beyond a doubt—is not that what you mean, Rex?'" she asked, looking him squarely in the face, with a peculiar glitter in her sparkling dark eyes.

"There is something you are keeping from me, Pluma," cried Rex, seizing both of her hands, and gazing anxiously into the false, fair, smiling treacherous face. "You know where Daisy has gone—in Heaven's name, tell me! I can not endure the suspense—do not torture me, Pluma! I will forget you have spoken unkindly of poor little Daisy if you will only tell me where she has gone."

"Sit down, Rex," she said, soothingly; "I will not dare tell you while

you look at me with such a gleaming light in your eyes. Promise not to interrupt me to the end."

A nameless dread was clutching at his heart-strings. What could she mean? he asked himself, confusedly. What did this foul mystery mean? He must know, or he would go mad!

"You may speak out unreservedly, Miss Pluma," he said, hoarsely. "I give you my word, as a gentleman, I shall not interrupt you, even though your words should cause me a bitter heart-pang."

He stood before her, his arms folded across his breast, yet no pang of remorse crept into Pluma Hurlhurst's relentless heart for the cruel blow she was about to deal him.

"I must begin at the time of the lawn fete," she said. "That morning a woman begged to see me, sobbing so piteously I could not refuse her an audience. No power of words could portray the sad story of suffering and wrong she poured into my ears, of a niece—beautiful, young, passionate, and willful—and of her prayers and useless expostulations, and of a handsome, dissolute lover to whom the girl was passionately attached, and of elopements she had frustrated, alas! more than once. Ah! how shall I say it!—the lover was not a marrying man."

Pluma stopped short, and hid her face again in her kerchief as if in utter confusion.

"Go on—go on!" cried Rex, hoarsely.

"Lend me money," cried the woman, "that I may protect the girl by sending her off to school at once. Kind lady, she is young, like you, and I beg you on my knees! I gave the woman the required amount, and the girl was taken to school the very next day. But the end was not there. The lover followed the girl—there must have been a preconcerted plan between them—and on the morning after she had entered school she fled from it—fled with her lover. That lover was Lester Stanwick—gay, fascinating, perfidious Lester—whom you know but too well. Can you not guess who the girl was, Rex?"

The dark eyes regarding her were frozen with horror, his white lips moved, but no sound issued from them. She leaned nearer to him, her dark, perfumed hair swept across his face as she whispered, with startling effect;

"The girl was Daisy Brooks, and she is at this moment in company with her lover! Heaven pity you, Rex; you must learn to forget her."

CHAPTER XI.

When Daisy Brooks opened her eyes, she found herself lying on a white bed, and in a strange apartment which she never remembered having seen before. For one brief instant she quite imagined the terrible ordeal through which she had passed was but a dream. Then it all came back to her with cruel distinctness.

"Where am I?" she cried, struggling up to a sitting posture, and putting back the tangled golden hair from her face. "How came I here? Who saved me from the terrible dark water?"

"I did," answered a young man rising from his seat by the open window. "I saved your life at the risk of my own. Look up into my face, Daisy, and see if you do not remember me."

She lifted her blue eyes to the dark, handsome, smiling face before her. Yes, she had seen that face before, but she could not remember where.

He laughed, disclosing his handsome white teeth.

"You can not guess, eh?" he said. "Then it is certainly evident I did not make much of an impression upon you. I am disappointed. I will not keep you in suspense, however. We met at Whitestone Hall, on the night of the lawn fete, and my name is Lester Stanwick."

Ah, she did remember him, standing beneath a waving palm-tree, his bold, dark eyes following her every motion, while she was waltzing with Rex.

To Be Continued.

OYSTER STEW.

Take of water and milk each three pints, set it on the fire to boil; roll half a pound of butter crackers or soda biscuit fine, and add to the milk and water with a pint of oysters chopped fine; let it boil until the flavor of the oyster is given to the soup, and the crackers are well swelled, then add salt and pepper to taste, and three pints more of the oysters, with a quarter of a pound of sweet butter; cover it for 10 minutes more, then serve in a tureen. A small saltspoonful of cayenne pepper added when the oysters are put in is by most persons considered an improvement.

It seems wonderful that after all these years of investigation and research the physicians are still helpless to relieve and cure one of the most common and most distressing afflictions to which men and women are subject, viz., itching, bleeding piles. In nine cases out of ten the doctors still recommend a surgical operation, with its expense, extreme pain and danger, as the only cure for piles.

Prejudice alone keeps the physicians from prescribing Dr. Chase's Ointment in all cases of piles. It has made for itself a world-wide reputation, and is sold under a positive guarantee to cure any case of piles, no matter how many operations have failed, and no matter how intense has been the suffering.

This letter is but a sample of scores of hundreds of cases in Canada alone in which Dr. Chase's Ointment has proven a truly magic remedy. This letter is quoted because Mr. Duprau is well known throughout Ontario as an earnest minister of the Gospel, and one who has at heart the well-being of fellow-sufferers.

Rev. S. A. Duprau, Methodist minister, Concession, Prince Edward County, Ont., states:—"I was troubled with itching and bleeding piles for years, and they ultimately attained to a very violent form. Large lumps or ab-

cesses formed, so that it was with great difficulty and considerable pain that I was able to stool. At this severe crisis I purchased a box of Dr. Chase's Ointment, but I had little or no faith in it, as I had tried various remedies before, and to no purpose.

"Now, imagine how great and joyous was my surprise to find that just the one box cured me, so that the lumps disappeared, and also the external swelling. I feel like a different man to-day, and have not the least doubt that Dr. Chase's Ointment saved me from a very dangerous and painful operation and many years of suffering. It is with the greatest pleasure and with a thankful heart that I give this testimonial, knowing that Dr. Chase's Ointment has done so much for me. You are at perfect liberty to use this testimonial as you see fit for the benefit of others similarly afflicted."

You are invited to make this test and prove to your own satisfaction the almost magical power of Dr. Chase's Ointment. Ask your neighbors who have used it what they think of Dr. Chase's Ointment. Use it when you have the opportunity, and remember that it is guaranteed to cure any case of itching, bleeding or protruding piles; 60c a box, at all dealers, or by mail from Edmanson, Bates & Co., Toronto.

Dizziness and Nausea

CAUSED BY OVER-STUDY AND CLOSE CONFINEMENT

How a Popular School Teacher Suffered—And How Acting on a Friend's Advice She Tried Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and Was Restored to Health and Strength.

"About the most thorough and popular teacher we have ever had here," is the opinion expressed by the people of Canada, N.S., of their present young lady school teacher, Miss Nellie Cutten. Miss Cutten is possessed of keen intelligence and engaging manners, and has been peculiarly successful in her chosen profession. At present she looks the picture of health, and one observing her good color and buoyant spirits, would never think of associating her with sickness. It was, however, only last autumn that she was almost hopeless of continuing in her work on account of her ill-health, and her condition was a source of alarm to her friends.

"Yes," she said to an Acadian reporter who called upon her recently to learn the particulars of her case, "I suppose it is a duty I owe to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, that I should make public the wonders they worked for me, but perhaps I would not have thought of it if you had not called."

"You see, in addition to my teaching, I had been studying very hard over my 'B' work, and then I was attacked with whooping cough, which did not leave me for a long time, and so I became pretty well run down. I was always considered the embodiment of health at home, but last autumn I was really alarmed over my condition. Sometimes in the schoolroom I would be seized with dizziness, and often I would faint away. I would take vomiting turns also, and had a feeling of nausea and languor all the time. I lost my color and became thin and pale, and it seemed as if my blood had turned to water."

"This condition of things was so different from anything which I had previously experienced that I sought medical advice at once. I was informed that I was suffering from anaemia, and I at once put myself under medical treatment. But although I tried several bottles of prescriptions, my condition seemed to be getting worse all the time. When I went home for my Christmas vacation, I was almost in despair. It was while I was at home, however, that my friends advised me to use Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Acting upon their advice, I took up their use. The first box made its effect felt, but I used four or five and then the cure was complete. Ever since then my health has been excellent and I have felt my real old time self, and am able to attend to my duties, which are by no means light, without the fatigue and languor that made the work irksome. You may depend upon it I will always have a friendly word to say for Dr. Williams' Pink Pills."

If your dealer does not keep these pills in stock, they will be sent post paid at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

A PROPHECIC SERMON.

A Clergyman From Holland Preaching to Boers Foretold the Present Struggle.

The Cape Times says:—"De Patriot has reprinted a remarkable sermon delivered by the Rev. Mr. Epeelstra at Pretoria on June 13, 1897. The reverend gentleman came out as assistant to the Rev. Mr. Goldefroy, but soon tired of the 'cunning, deceit, and corruption' he saw around, and speaking his mind too freely, was requested to return to Holland. In his farewell sermon, on the sins of the nation, he used these prophetic words: 'I hear in the spirit the sound of marching of the hosts of great armies, who come up from all sides to this land. I hear the clash of swords and the rattle of musketry, also the roar of cannon. A hopeless strife follows, a life and death struggle. It is decided. The inheritance of the fathers falls into the hands of the enemy. For the God of the fathers hath been deserted by the children, and He executeth judgment against a faithless and apostate people.'"

VERY SMALL OF HIM.

I'll get even with that fellow, exclaimed Snickers the humorist.

What has he done?

I told him to depict my family tree, and he made it a chestnut.