

Heiress and Wife.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—Continued.

She heard people speak of her approaching marriage as "a grand wench"—she heard him spoken of as a wealthy Southerner, and she laughed a proud, happy, rippling laugh. She was marrying Rex for love; she had given him the deepest truest love of her heart.

Around a bend in the terrace she heard approaching foot steps and the rippling of girlish laughter.

"I cannot have five minutes to myself to think," she said to herself, drawing hastily back behind the thick screen of leaves until they should pass. She did not feel in the humor just then to listen to Miss Raynor's chatter or pretty Grace Alden's gossip.

"Of course every one has a right to their own opinion," Grace was saying, with a toss of her pretty-brown curls, "and I, for one, do not believe he cares for her one whit."

"It is certainly very strange," responded Miss Raynor, thoughtfully. "Every one can see she is certainly in love with Rex; but I am afraid it is quite a one-sided affair."

"Yes," said Grace, laughing shyly, "a very one-sided affair. Why, how you ever noticed them together—have Pluma watches his face and seems to live on his smiles? And as for Rex, he always seems to be looking over her head into the distance, as though he saw something there far more interesting than the face of his bride-to-be. That doesn't look much like love or a contented lover."

"If you had seen him this morning you might well say he did not look contented," replied Miss Raynor, mysteriously. "I was out for a morning ramble, and, feeling a little tired, I sat down on a moss-covered stone to rest. Hearing the approaching clatter of horse's hoofs, I looked up and saw Rex Lyon coming leisurely down the road. I could not tell you what prompted me to do it, but I drew quietly back behind the overhanging alder branches that skirted the brook, admiring him all unseen."

"Oh, dear!" cried Grace, merrily, "this is almost too good to keep. Who would imagine dignified Miss Raynor peeping admiringly at handsome Rex, screened by the shadows of the alders?"

"Now don't be ridiculous, Grace, or I shall be tempted not to tell you the most interesting part," returned Miss Raynor, flushing hotly.

"Oh, that would be too cruel," cried Grace, who delighted in anything bordering on mystery. "Do tell it."

"Well," continued Miss Raynor, dropping her voice to a lower key, "when he was quite opposite me, he suddenly stopped short and quickly dismounted from his horse, and picked up from the roadside a handful of wild flowers."

"What in the world could he want with them?" cried Grace, incredulously.

"Want with them?" echoed Miss Raynor. "Why, he pressed them to his lips, murmuring passionate, loving words over them. For one brief instant his face was turned toward me, and I saw there were tears standing in his eyes, and there was a look on his face I shall never forget to my dying day. There was such hopeless woe upon it—indeed one might have almost supposed by the expression of his face, he was waiting for his death-sentence to be pronounced instead of a marriage ceremony, which was to give him the queenly heiress of Whitestone Hall for a bride."

"Perhaps there is some hidden romance in the life of handsome Rex the world does not know of," suggested Grace, sagely.

"I hope not," replied Miss Raynor. "I would hate to be a rival of Pluma Hurlhurst's. I have often thought, as I watched her with Rex, it must be terrible to worship one person so madly. I have often thought Pluma's a perilous love."

"Do not speak so," cried Grace. "You horrify me. Whenever I see her face I am afraid those words will be ringing in my ears—a perilous love."

Miss Raynor made some laughing rejoinder which Pluma, white and trembling behind the ivy vines, did not catch, and still discussing the affair, they moved on, leaving Pluma Hurlhurst standing alone, face to face with the truth, which she had hoped against hope was false. Rex, who was so soon to be her husband, was certainly not her lover.

Her keen judgment had told her long ago all this had come about through his mother's influence.

Every word those careless lips had uttered came back to her heart with a cruel stab.

"Even my guests are noticing his coldness," she cried, with a hysterical little sob. "They are saying to each other, 'He does not love me'—I, who have counted my triumphs by the score. I have revealed my love in every word, tone and glance, but I can not awaken one sentiment in his proud, cold heart."

When she remembered the words, "He pressed them to his lips, murmuring passionate, loving words over them," she almost cried aloud in her fierce, angry passion. She knew just as well as though she had witnessed him herself, that those wild flowers were daisies, and she knew, too, why he had kissed them so passionately. She saw the sun shining on the trees, the flower-beds were great squares and circles of color, the fountains sparkled in the sunlight, and restless butterflies flitted hither and thither.

For Pluma Hurlhurst, after that hour, the sunshine never had the same light, the flowers the same color, her face the same smile, or her heart the same joyousness.

Never did "good and evil" fight for a human heart as they struggled in that hour in the heart of the beautiful, willful heiress. All the fire, the passion, and recklessness of her nature were aroused.

"I will make him love me or I will die!" she cried, vehemently. "The love I long for shall be mine. I swear it, cost what it may!"

She was almost terribly beautiful to behold, as that war of passion raged within her.

She saw a cloud of dust arising in the distance. She knew it was Rex returning, but no bright flush rose to her cheek as she remembered what Miss Raynor had said of the wild flowers he had so rapturously caressed—he had given a few rank wild flowers the depths of a passionate love which he had never shown to her, whom he had asked to be his wife.

She watched him as he approached nearer and nearer, so handsome, so graceful, so winning, one of his white hands carelessly resting on the spirited animal's proudly arched, glossy neck, and with the other raising his hat from his brown curls in true courtly cavalier fashion to her, as he saw her standing there, apparently awaiting him on the rose-covered terrace.

He looked so handsome and lovable Pluma might have forgotten her grievance had she not at that moment espied, fastened to the lapel of his coat, a cluster of golden-headed daisies.

That sight froze the light in her dark, passionate eyes and the welcome that trembled on her scarlet lips.

He leaped lightly from the saddle, and came quickly forward to meet her, and then drew back with a start.

"What is the matter, Pluma?" he asked, in wonder.

"Nothing," she replied, keeping her eyes fastened as if fascinated on the offending daisies he wore on his breast.

"I left you an hour ago smiling and happy. I find you white and worn. There are strange lights in your eyes like the slumbrous fire of a volcano; even your voice seems to have lost its tenderness. What is it, Pluma?"

She raised her dark, proud face to his. There was a strange story written on it, but he could not tell what it was.

"It—it is nothing. The day is warm, and I am tired, that is all."

"You are not like the same Pluma who kissed me when I was going away," he persisted. "Since I left this house something has come between you and me. What is it, Pluma?"

She looked up to him with a proud gesture that was infinitely charming.

"Is anything likely to come between us?" she asked.

"No; not that I know of," he answered, growing more and more puzzled.

"Then why imagine it?" she asked. "Because you are so changed, Pluma," he said. "I shall never perhaps know the cause of your strange manner toward me, but I shall always feel sure it is something which concerns myself. You look at me as though you were questioning me," he said. "I wish you would tell me what is on your mind?"

"I do not suppose it could make the least difference," she answered, passionately. "Yes, I will tell you, what you must have been bling not to notice long ago. Have you not noticed how every one watches us with a peculiar smile on their lips as we come among them; and how their voices sink to a whisper lest we should overhear what they say? What is commented upon by my very guests, and the people all about us? Listen, then, it is this; Rex Lyon does not love the woman he has asked to be his wife. The frosts of Iceland could not be colder than his manner toward her; they say, too, that I have given you the truest and deepest love of my heart, and have received nothing in return. Tell me that it is all false, my darling. You do care for me, do you not, Rex? Tell me," she implored.

"Good heavens!" cried Rex, almost speechless in consternation; "do they dare say such things? I never thought my conduct could give rise to one reproach, one unkind thought."

"Tell me you do care for me, Rex," she cried. "I have been almost mad with doubt."

There was something in the lovely face, in the tender, pleading eyes, and quivering, scarlet mouth, that looked as if it were made for kisses—that Rex would have had to have been something more than mortal man to have resisted her pleading with sighs and tears for his love, and refuse it, especially as she had every reason to expect it, as he had asked her to be his wife. There was such a look of unutterable love on her face it fairly bewildered him. The passion in her voice startled him. What was he to do with this impetuous girl? Rex looked as if he felt exceedingly uncomfortable.

He took her in his arms and kissed her mechanically; he knew that was what she wanted and what she expected him to do.

"This must be my answer, dear," he said, holding her in a close embrace. In that brief instant she had torn the daisies from the lapel of his coat with her white, jeweled fingers, tossed them to the earth, and stamped her dainty feet upon them, wishing in the depths of her soul she could crush out all remembrance from his heart of the young girl for whose memory this handsome lover of hers wore these wild blossoms on his breast.

As Rex looked down into her face he missed them, and quickly unclasped his arms from around her with a little cry.

Stooping down he instantly recovered his crushed treasure and lifted them reverently in his hand with a sigh.

"I cannot say that I admire your taste, Rex," she said, with a short, hard laugh, that somehow grated harshly on her lover's ears. "The conservatories are blooming with rare and odorous flowers, yet you choose these obnoxious plants; they are no more or less than a species of weeds. Never wear them again, Rex—I despise them—throw them away, and I will gather you a rare bouquet of white hyacinths and starry jasmine and golden-rod bells."

The intense quiver in her voice pained him, and he saw her face wore the pale of death, and her eyes were gleaming like restless fire.

"I will not wear them certainly if you dislike them, Pluma," he said, gravely, "but I do not care to replace them by any others; daisies are the sweetest flowers on earth for me."

He did not fasten them on his coat again, but transferred them to his breast-pocket. She bit her scarlet lips in impotent rage.

In the very moment of her supreme triumph and happiness he had unclasped his arms from about her to pick up the daisies she had crushed with her tiny heel—those daisies which reminded him of that other love that still reigned in his heart a barrier between them.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"I do think it is a perfect shame those horrid Glenn girls are to be invited up here to Rex's wedding," cried little Birdie Lyon, hobbling into the room where Mrs. Corliss, busily engaged in hemming some new table-linen, and throwing herself down on a low hassock, at her feet, and laying down her cutlery beside her—"it is perfectly awful."

"Why," said Mrs. Corliss, smoothing the nut-brown curls back from the child's flushed face, "I should think

you would be very pleased. They were your neighbors when you were down in Florida, were they not?"

"Yes," replied the little girl, frowning, "but I don't like them one bit. Bess and Gertie—that's the two eldest ones, make me think of those stiff pictures in the gay trailing dresses in the magazines. Eve is nice, but she's a Tom-boy."

"A wh—at!" cried Mrs. Corliss.

"She's a Tom-boy, mamma always said; she romps, and has no manners."

"They will be your neighbors when you go South again—so I suppose your brother thought of that when he invited them."

"He never dreamed of it," cried Birdie; "it was Miss Pluma's doings."

"Hush child, don't talk so loud," entreated the old house-keeper; "she might hear you."

"I don't care," cried Birdie. "I don't like her anyhow, and she knows it. When Rex is around she is as sweet as honey to me, and calls me 'pretty little dear,' but when Rex isn't around she scarcely notices me, and I hate her—yes, I do."

Birdie clutched her little hands together venomously, crying out the words in a shrill scream.

"Birdie!" cried Mrs. Corliss, "you must not say such hard, cruel things. I have heard you say, over and over again, you liked Mr. Hurlhurst, and you must remember Pluma is his daughter, and she is to be your brother's wife. You must learn to speak and think kindly of her."

"I never shall like her," cried Birdie, defiantly, "and I am sure Mr. Hurlhurst don't."

"Birdie!" ejaculated the good lady in a fright, dropping her scissors and spools in consternation; "let me warn you not to talk so again; if Miss Pluma was to once hear you, you would have a sorry enough time of it all your after life. What put it into your head Mr. Hurlhurst did not like his own daughter?"

"Oh, lots of things," answered Birdie. "When I tell him how pretty every one says she is, he groans, and says strange things about fatal beauty, which marred all his young life, and ever so many things I can't understand, and his face grows so hard and so stern I am almost afraid of him."

To Be Continued.

FRIENDLY WARNING.

A popular doctor tells this story of a bright boy, his own, who has reached the mature age of nine, after an early career marked by many wild and mischievous pranks.

His restless nature has made him something of a torment to his teacher at times, and one afternoon not long ago she kept him after the others were dismissed, and had a serious talk with him. Perhaps she was a little afraid that her admonitions were falling on stony ground. Anyway, she finally said:

"I certainly will have to ask your father to come and see me."

"Don't you do it, said the boy."

The teacher thought she had made an impression.

Yes, she repeated, I must send for your father."

You better not, said the boy.

Why not? inquired the teacher.

"Cause he charges \$2 a visit, said the scamp."

A REGICIDE'S PUNISHMENT.

The abolition of capital punishment has certainly in Italy given place to an alternative that might well act as a more powerful deterrent against the assassin's knife. What could be more appalling than the account of the prisoner at Bagno, to which the murderer of King Humbert has just been moved? The prison is a fearful place. It is built on a steep rock jutting out into the sea, and gloomy walls that inclose the solitary cells are like those that shut in tombs. Only a small strip of sky can be seen through the skylight, which is the only window of the cell, fast sealed as it is by iron-bound door and grille. Through this the sentinel watches the prisoner. Food is passed through the grille, but no word is ever exchanged with the prisoner, who is doomed for life to be silently watched in this terrible confinement.

THEN HE HURRIED UP.

He was too modest to be a successful lover, and he had let forty years of his life go by without ever coming to an emotional point.

He was in love with a fair being of suitable age, but he would not tell her so, and though she knew it, she could not very well give him a hint on the situation.

She was willing, because she had arrived at that time of life when a woman is not nearly so hard to please as she might have been at some other time, but he was stupid and went away without a word.

He was gone a long, long time, and when he came back he found her still ready.

I have come back after many years, he said to her, as he took her hand in greeting.

She had learned something in the years since she had seen him last.

Well, for goodness' sake, Henry, she exclaimed fervidly, why don't you take them? I'm 35 now. How many more years do you want?

Then a great light shone upon him, and he did not wait for any more.

London, whose population was not more than 1,500,000 when Queen Victoria came to the throne, has now as large an aggregation of human beings within its boundaries as the whole of Ireland.

SUFFERING WOMEN.

A MESSAGE OF HOPE TO THE WEAK AND DEPRESSED.

A Grateful Woman Tells of Her Release From the Agonies That Afflict Her Sex After Three Doctors Had Failed to Help Her.

The amount of suffering borne by women throughout the country, can never be estimated. Silently, almost hopelessly, they endure from day to day afflictions that can only fall to the lot of women. The following story of the suffering and release of Mrs. Charles Hoeg, of Southampton, N.S., ought to bring hope and health and happiness to other sufferers. Mrs. Hoeg says:—"For nine out of the thirty-two years of my life I have suffered as no woman, unless she has been similarly afflicted, can imagine I could suffer and yet have lived. Three weeks out of four I would be unable to move about and, indeed, at no time was really fit to attend to my household duties. I consulted physicians—three of the most skillful doctors in the county of Cumberland at different times had charge of my case. These all agreed in their diagnosis, but the treatment varied, and while at times I would experience some relief, at no time was there any hope given me of a permanent cure. Many a night when I went to bed I would have been glad if death had come before inquiring. I never had much faith in proprietary medicines, but at one time I took a half dozen bottles of a blood-making compound that was highly recommended. This, like anything else, failed to help me. There seemed to be not a particle of blood in my body. My face was absolutely colorless, and my appetite almost entirely deserted me. I often saw in the newspapers letters testifying to the merits of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, but nine years of suffering and discouragement had made me too sceptical to see any hope of relief, when doctors had failed to effect a cure. But at last I came across the story of a cure near home—that of Mr. Moses Boss, of Rodney. I knew that at one time he had been regarded as a hopeless consumptive, and his cure through Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, determined me to try them. I had not taken two boxes before I began to feel better, and grew confident of a cure. I kept on taking the pills, all the time feeling new blood in my veins, activity returning to my limbs, and the feeling of depression gradually wearing away. To many women it may seem incredible that the mere making of new blood in my veins could restore to a healthy condition misplaced internal organs, but this has been my happy experience. My pains have all left me, and I am now as healthy a woman as there is in this place. This health I owe to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, which have rescued me from a life of suffering, if not from the grave."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are especially valuable to women. They build up the blood, restore the nerves, and eradicate those troubles which make the lives of so many women, old and young, a burden. Palpitation of the heart, nervous headache and nervous prostration speedily yield to this wonderful medicine. These pills are sold only in boxes, the trade mark and wrapper printed in red ink, at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50, and may be had of druggists, or direct by mail from Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Brockville, Ont.

INFORMATION WANTED.

A man who contemplated buying a bicycle wrote this letter to a manufacturer says an exchange: My nephew bot hisself a new bicycle and sent me his old one by frate, and I've learned to ride same. It's a pile of fun, but my bicycle jolts considerable. A feller com along day before yesterday with a bicycle that had holler-injun rubber tires stuffed with wind. He let me try hissen, and mi, it run like a kushen. He told me you sell injun rubber just the same as hissen. Mine is all iron wheels. Do you punch the holler hole through the injun rubber or will I have to do it myself? How do you stick the ends together after you get it done. If your injun rubber is all ready will it come any cheaper empty? I can get all the wind I want here.

There is a curious little anecdote told of Victoria when about 12 years of age. It was on the occasion of a visit to Wentworth House, the seat of Earl Fitzwilliam. One morning after a rainy night she was running about the grounds, when an old gardener who saw her about to descend a sloping piece of lawn called out, "Be careful, Miss. Its slape!" "What's slape?" said the Princess, and the next moment measured her full length on the damp grass. The old gardener hastened to help her up and remarked, "That's slape, M.s.s."

CHARACTER IN MEDICINE.

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revitalize the wasted nerve cells, Dr. Chase determined to formulate the preparation now known as Dr. Chase's Nerve Food. Dr. Chase put character in this medicine. It stands as a monument to his memory—the most successful spring medicine that money can buy.

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