

# Heiress and Wife.

**SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS:**—Rex Lyon secretly married Daisy Brooks. They are separated by force of circumstances on their wedding day. Daisy thinks that Rex has cast her off. He is true but believes that she is dead. According to his mother's dying wish he engages himself to Pluma Hurlhurst, the daughter by the first marriage of the master of Whitestone Hall. Mr. Hurlhurst's second wife, whom he loved better than the first, died and her child is supposed to have died with her. After seventeen years' silence, his dying housekeeper confesses that his child did not die, but was stolen. He sets out to find her.

## CHAPTER XXX.—Continued.

Poor old Mason was literally astounded. What had come over his kind, courteous master?

"I have nothing that could aid them in the search," he said to himself, pacing restlessly up and down the room. "Ah! stay!—there is Evalia's portrait! The little one must look like her mother if she is living yet!"

He went to his writing-desk and drew from a private drawer a little package tied with a faded ribbon, which he carefully untied with trembling fingers.

It was a portrait on ivory of a beautiful, girlish, dimpled face, with shy, upraised blue eyes, a smiling rosebud mouth, soft pink cheeks, and a wealth of rippling, sunny-golden hair.

She must look like this," he whispered. "God grant that I may find her!"

"Mr. Rex Lyon says, please may he see you a few moments, sir," said Mason, popping his black head in at the door.

"No; I do not wish to see any one, and I will not see any one. Have you that satchel packed, I say?"

"Yes, sir; it will be ready directly, sir," said the man, obediently.

"Don't come to me with any more messages—look everybody out. Do you hear, Mason? I will be obeyed!"

"Yes, sir, I hear. No one shall disturb you."

Again Basil Hurlhurst turned to the portrait, paying little attention to what was transpiring around him. "I shall put it at once in the hands of the cleverest detectives," he mused; "surely they will be able to find some trace of my lost darling."

Seventeen years! Ah, what might have happened her in that time! The master of Whitestone Hall always kept a file of the Baltimore papers; he rapidly ran his eye down the different columns.

"Ah, here is what I want," he exclaimed, stopping short. "Messrs. Tudor, Peck, & Co., Experienced Detectives, — Street, Baltimore. They are noted for their skill. I will give the case into their hands. If they restore my darling child alive and well into my hands, I will make them wealthy men—if she is dead, the blow will surely kill me."

He heard voices debating in the corridor without.

"Did you tell him I wished particularly to see him?" asked Rex, rather discomfited at the refusal.

"Yes, sir," said Mason, dubiously. "Miss Pluma, his daughter, wishes me to speak with him on a very important matter. I am surprised that he so persistently refuses to see me," said Rex, proudly, wondering if Pluma's father had heard that gossip among the guests—that he did not love his daughter. "I do not know that I have offended the old gentleman in any way," he told himself. "If it comes to that," he thought, "I can do no more than confess the truth to him—the whole truth about poor little Daisy—no matter what the consequences may be."

Fate was playing at cross-purposes with handsome Rex, but no subtle warning came to him.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

The preparations for the wedding went steadily on. It was to be a magnificent affair. Inside and outside of Whitestone Hall fairly glowed with brilliancy and bloom.

Rex's deportment toward his promised bride was exemplary; he did his best to show her every possible attention and kindness in lieu of the love which should have been hers.

There seemed to be no cloud in Pluma Hurlhurst's heaven.

She had no warning of the relentless storm-cloud that was gathering above her head and was so soon to burst upon her in all its fury.

She walked among her guests with a joyous, happy smile and the air of a queen. Why should she not? On the morrow she would gain the prize she coveted most on earth—she would be Rex's wife.

Her father had gone unexpectedly to Baltimore, and the good old housekeeper had been laid to rest, but in the excitement and bustle attending the great coming event these two incidents created little comment.

Mirth and gaiety reigned supreme and the grim old halls resounded with laughter and song and gay young voices from morning until night.

Pluma, the spoiled, petted, willful

heiress, was fond of excitement and gay throngs.

"Our marriage must be an event worthy of remembrance, Rex," she said, as they walked together through the grounds the morning before the wedding. "We must have something new and novel. I am tired of brilliant parlors and gas-light. I propose we shall have a beautiful platform built, covered with moss and roses, beneath the blossoming trees, with the birds singing in their boughs, upon which we shall be united. What do you think of my idea is it not a pretty one?"

"Your ideas are always poetical and fanciful," said Rex, glancing down into the beautiful face beside him. "My thoughts are so dull and prosy compared with yours, are you not afraid you will have a very monotonous life-companion?"

"I am going to try my best to win you from that cold reserve. There must not be one shadow between us; do you know, Rex, I have been thinking, if anything should ever happen to take your love from me I should surely die. I—I am jealous of your very thoughts. I know I ought not to admit it, but I can not help it."

Rex flushed nervously; it was really embarrassing to him, the tender way in which she looked up to him—her black eyelids coyly drooping over her dark, slumbrous eyes, inviting a caress. He was certainly wooed against his will, but there was no help for it; he was forced to take up his part and act it out gracefully.

"You need not be jealous of my thoughts, Pluma," he replied, "for they were all of you."

"I wonder if they were pleasant thoughts?" she asked, toying with the crimson flower-bells she holds in her white hands. "I have heard you sigh so much of late. Are you quite happy, Rex?" she inquired, hesitatingly.

The abruptness of the question staggered him; he recovered his composure instantly, however.

"How can you ask me such a question, Pluma?" he asked, evasively; "any man ought to be proud of winning so peerless a treasure as you are. I shall be envied by scores of disappointed lovers, who have worshipped at your shrine. I am not as demonstrative as some might be under similar circumstances, but my appreciation is none the less keen."

She noticed he carefully avoided the word—love.

In after years Rex liked to remember that, yielding to a kindly impulse, he bent down and kissed her forehead.

It was the first time he had caressed her voluntarily; it was not love which prompted the action—only kindness.

"Perhaps you will love me some day with your whole heart, Rex?" she asked.

"You seem quite sure that I do not do that now?" he remarked.

"Yes," she said, clasping his arm more closely, "I often fear you do not, but as time passes you will give me all your affection. Love must win love."

Other young girls would not have made such an open declaration without rosy blushes suffusing their cheeks; they would have been frightened at their free-spoken words, even though the morrow was their wedding-day.

She stood before him in her tall, slim loveliness, as fair a picture as any man's eyes could rest on. She wore a most becoming dress, and a spring blossom was in her hair. Almost any other man's heart would have warmed toward her as she raised her dark eyes to his and the white fingers trembled on his arm.

Rex was young, impulsive, and mortal; tender words from such lovely lips would have intoxicated any man. Yet from that faithful heart

of his the words did not take one thought that belonged to Daisy; he did his utmost to forget that sunny, golden memory.

To Pluma, handsome, courtly Rex was an enigma. In her own mind she liked him all the better because he had not fallen down and worshipped her at once. Most men did that.

For several moments they walked along in utter silence—until they had reached the brink of the dark pool, which lay quite at the further end of the inclosure.

Pluma gave a little shuddering scream:

"I did not mean to bring you here," she cried. "I always avoid this path; the waters of the pool have always had a great dread for me."

"It should be filled up," said Rex, "or fenced around; it is certainly a dangerous locality."

"It can not be filled up," she returned, laughing; "it is said to be bottomless. I do not like to think of it, come away, Rex."

The magnificent bridal costume, ordered expressly from Paris, had arrived—perfect even to the last detail. The bridesmaids' costumes were all ready; and to everything in and about the Hall the last finishing touches had been given.

All the young girls hovered constantly around Pluma, in girl-fashion admiring the costume, the veil, the wreath, and above all the radiantly beautiful girl who was to wear them. Even the Glenn girls and Grace Alden were forced to admit the willful young heiress would make the most peerless bride they had ever beheld.

Little Birdie alone held aloof, much to Rex's amusement and Pluma's intense mortification.

"Little children often take such strange freaks," she would say to Rex, sweetly. "I really believe your little sister intends never to like me; I can not win one smile from her."

"She is not like other children," he replied, with a strange twinkle in his eye. "She forms likes and dislikes to people from simply hearing their name. Of course I agree with you it is not right to do so, but Birdie had been humored more or less all her life. I think she will grow to love you in time."

Pluma's lips quivered like the lips of a grieving child.

"I shall try so hard to make her love me, because she is your sister, Rex."

He clasped the little jeweled hands that lay so confidently within his own still closer, saying he knew she could not help but succeed.

The whole country-side was ringing with the coming marriage. No one could be more popular than handsome Rex Lyon, no one admired more than the young heiress of Whitestone Hall. The county papers were in ecstasies; they discussed the magnificent preparations at the Hall, the number of bride-maids, the superb wedding-presents, the arrangements for the marriage, and the ball to be given in the evening.

The minister from Baltimore who was to perform the ceremony was expected to arrive that day. That all preparations might be complete for the coming morrow, Rex had gone down to meet the train, and Pluma strolled into the conservatory, to be alone for a few moments with her own happy thoughts.

Out on the green lawns happy maidens were tripping here and there their gay laughter floating up to her where she stood.

Every one seemed to be making the most of the happy occasion. Lawn-tennis parties here and croquet-parties there, and lovers strolling under the blossoming trees or reclining on the rustic benches—it was indeed a happy scene.

Pluma leaned her dark head against the fragrant roses, the breeze, the perfume of the flowers, all told one story to the impassioned girl—the story of her triumph and her mad, reckless love.

She gathered a spray of the fairest flowers, and fastened them in the bodice of her dress.

"To-morrow I shall have won the one great prize I covet," she murmured, half aloud. "After to-morrow I can defy Lester Stanwick to

bring one charge against me. I shall be Rex's wife—it will avail him nothing."

"Speaking of angels, you often hear 'the rustle of their wings.' I believe there is an old adage of that sort, or something similar," said a deep voice beside her, and turning around with a low cry she saw Lester Stanwick himself standing before her.

For one moment her lips opened as though to utter a piercing cry, but even the very breath seemed to die upon them, they were so fixed and still.

The flowers she held in her hand fell into the fountain against which she leaned, but she did not heed them.

Like one fascinated, her eyes met the gaze of the bold, flashing dark ones bent so steadily upon her.

"You thought you would escape me," he said. "How foolish and blind you are, my clever plotter. Did you think I did not see through your clever maneuverings? There shall be a wedding to-morrow, but you shall marry me, instead of handsome, debonaire Rex. You can not fly from your fate."

She set her lips firmly together. She had made a valiant struggle. She would defy him to the bitter end. She was no coward, this beautiful, imperious girl. She would die hard. Alas! she had been too sanguine, hoping Lester Stanwick would not return before the ceremony was performed.

The last hope died out of that proud, passionate heart—as well hope to divert a tiger from its helpless prey as expect Lester Stanwick to relinquish any plans he had once formed.

"I have fought my fight," she said to herself, "and have failed on the very threshold of victory, still, I know how to bear defeat. What do you propose to do?" she said, huskily. "If there is any way I can buy your silence, name your price, keeping back the truth will avail me little now. I love Rex, and no power on earth shall prevent me from becoming his wife."

Lester Stanwick smiled superciliously—drawing from his pocket a package of letters.

"Money could not purchase these charming billets-doux from me," he said. "This will be charming reading matter for the Honorable Rex Lyon, and the general public to discuss."

She raised her flashing eyes unflinchingly to his face, but no word issued from her white lips.

A splendid morsel for the gossip to whisper over. The very refined and exclusive heiress of Whitestone Hall connives to remove an innocent rival from her path, by providing money for her to be sent off secretly to boarding-school, from which she is to be abducted and confined in a mad-house. Your numerous letters give full instructions; it would be useless to deny these accusations. I hold proof positive."

"That would not screen you," she said, scornfully.

"I did not carry out your plans. No matter what the intentions were, the points in the case are what actually happened. I can swear I refused to comply with your nefarious wishes, even though you promised me your hand and fortune if I succeeded," he answered mockingly.

"Will not money purchase your silence?" she said, with a deep-drawn breath. "I do not plead with you for mercy or compassion," she said, haughtily.

Lester Stanwick laughed a mocking laugh.

"Do not mistake me, Miss Pluma," he said, making no attempt at love-making; "I prefer to wrest you from Rex Lyon. I have contemplated with intense satisfaction the blow to his pride. It will be a glorious revenge, also giving me a charming bride, and last, but not least, the possession at some future day of Whitestone Hall and the Hurlhurst Plantation. A pleasing picture, is it not, my dear?"

To Be Continued.

## A DAY IN BED.

Oh, what is so rare as a day in bed,  
A season of rest complete,  
A day of delight from morning till night,  
With plenty of good things to eat,  
For scientists say, and we must believe,  
If we want a wise, clear thinking head,  
And a body that's tough, of the right kind of stuff,  
We must give it a day off in bed.

Imagine the yawning and stretching and all  
Of the joys such loafing would bring;  
Imagine the bliss of a day spent like this,  
While the world was a-toll and a-swing!  
Just fancy the envy of all fellow men  
Who knew you were bunked for the day!  
Why, the malice you'd spread by your day off  
In bed  
Would more than atone for lost pay.

Oh, naught is so rare as a day in bed,  
Not even a day in June,  
And blest be the man who invented the plan.  
Who deserves a far loftier rune!  
I beg you to try it and see for yourself  
(Though I haven't myself, it is true),  
For there's nothing, I say, so rare as a day  
In bed, unless it is two.

## POWDER AND BALL.

Krupp's 130 ton gun fires two shots a minute. Each costs \$1,500.  
The tube of a 12 inch gun has 50 special grooves, causing its projectile to revolve 75 times per second as it leaves the muzzle.

Clearchus, the Spartan, laid down as one of the maxims of war the statement that a soldier ought to wear his own general more than he did the whole hostile army.

The German naval programme, which, according to the original announcement, was not to be completed until 1916, is now, it seems, to be finished by 1906. In that year Germany will have at least 40 ships, 20 large cruisers and 28 small cruisers.

# The Spring Feeling.

NOT EXACTLY SICK—BUT NEITHER ARE YOU WELL.

Close Confinement During the Winter Months Has Left You Weak, Easily Depressed and "Out of Sorts."

The words "weak and depressed" expresses the condition of thousands of people in the spring time. It is one of nature's signs that humanity cannot undergo months of indoor life, in badly ventilated buildings with impunity. Sometimes you have a headache; slight exercise fatigues you; your appetite is variable; you are easily irritated or depressed; perhaps there are pimples or slight eruptions that indicate the blood needs attention. Whatever the symptoms may it should be attended to at once, else you will fall an easy prey, to graver disease. Do not use a purgative in the hope that it will put you right. Any doctor will tell you that purgatives weaken, that they impair the action of the liver and create chronic constipation. A tonic is what is needed to help nature fight your battle for health, and there is only one always reliable, never-failing tonic, and that is Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. These pills have no purgative action. They make rich, red blood, strengthen the tired and jaded nerves, and make weak, depressed, easily tired people, whether old or young, bright, active and strong. Among those who have proved the health-bringing qualities of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills is Miss Emma Chappin, of Lake Talon, Ont., who says:

"I cannot thank you enough for the good I have derived through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I honestly believe that but for them, I would now be in my grave. My health was completely broken down. My face as white as chalk, and if I made the least effort to do any housework I would almost faint from the exertion, and my heart would beat violently so that I feared I would drop where I stood. I was a great sufferer from headaches and dizziness as well, and my appetite was so poor that I scarcely ate at all. I tried several medicines, but they did not help me, and then I decided to send for some of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I got six boxes and before I used them all I was as well as I had ever been, with a good healthy color, a good appetite and an entire freedom from the ailments that had made me so miserable. You may be sure that I will always have a warm regard for your invaluable medicine."

Do not experiment with other so-called tonics—you are apt to find it a waste of money and your health worse than before. You will not be experimenting when you use Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. They have proved their value the world over, and you can rely upon it that what they have done for others they will do for you. If you cannot get the genuine pills from your dealer send direct to the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont., and they will be mailed post paid at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50.

## Not Unprecedented.

"Here is a story about a man who worked for 27 years without ever taking a day off."

"Hm! That's nothing. He was probably the proprietor of the establishment."

## A Traveler's Opinion.

Mrs. Quizzer (who wants to know everything)—Now, what do you consider to be the most curious thing you ever saw, professor?

Professor Trotter—A woman, madam.

## Mary's Lamb.

Mary had a little lamb  
Possessed of many rocks  
And also very much inclined  
To deal in railroad stocks.

The lambkin down on 'change one day  
Was spotted by a bear,  
And when he left the pit he was  
Away up in the air.

Now Mary has no little lamb,  
For, having a great head,  
She shook him when he lost his fleec,  
And took the bear instead.

## An Unpleasant Prospect.

"Professor Thompson says that electric cars will travel at the rate of 100 miles an hour."

"By gum! It's hard enough to get 'em to stop for a fellow now!"

## Incurable.

"The doctor says there's one complaint he can't cure."

"What's that?"

"The one his patients make about their bills."

## An Injustice.

"You do me an injustice, gentlemen," said the star boarder meekly as he reached over and swiped the two last pieces of pie, "when you accuse me of a lack of piety."

**Favorable Conditions, Certainly.**

Belle—So Maude has accepted Charley! Would you have accepted him if you had been in her place?

Lena—Very likely. She was in his lap at the time.