

A Double Disobedience.

CHAPTER VII.—Continued.

Kilmeny from her hiding place shivered as she caught sight of his face. This was not the man who was so kind and considerate to her, who excused her inattention, pitied her loneliness, and made himself more necessary to her every day. This Lord de Bruyne had steely eyes which glittered with anger, and had a look stamped on his face which might have matched Lady Penryth's own for its cruel coldness.

"I was prepared for this Lady Penryth," he said, folding his arms and compelling her attention. "I suspected that you would try to steal a march on me and break off the marriage. The letter which you were kind enough to write to Miss Daryl disclosing the falsity of the stories that you undertook to make up about Christopher Warrender reached my hands instead of hers, and let me into the game that you intended to play. It struck me as something new and refreshing that you should turn virtuously at the close of your career, and desire to confess and make amends."

"I knew it was only a chance, my letter reaching her," Lady Penryth answered. She had recovered her composure, and stood opposite to him with an expression quite as malignant as his own. "I dare say other letters were suppressed, too, and perhaps visits from her old friends. I heard something about a Doctor Richmond calling and being denied admittance in Miss Daryl's name."

"That is my affair. You do not think I am such a fool, when I have succeeded so far as to allow the girl to slip through my fingers by handing her disturbing letters or allowing disturbing visits? You thought that you would revenge yourself on Miss Daryl by the stories which you told Mrs. Marsh about Warrender when you knew that she was close by listening to them, but you played into my hands. But for that scene, she would never have accepted me. You may return home knowing that I owe my success solely to you."

"Not solely!" she cried, moved at last to anger by the thought that her purpose had been foiled. "If I do not mistake, Miss Daryl heard some of the lies about Warrender from you yourself. I wish you joy of your ingenuity. A girl who could believe Warrender to be a villain on the word of two such paragons of virtue as you and myself must indeed be innocent enough to suit you! What will you do when she finds out about it, as she is sure to do one day? You may keep watch on her closely enough until she is married to you, but how about afterwards?"

"Leave me to manage that," he answered curtly. "Miss Daryl may be simple enough to be shocked at indefinite stories about her friends—Lady de Bruyne will soon be wiser."

Lady Penryth laughed scornfully, and Lord de Bruyne went on without heeding her.

"You may go!" he said sternly. "And let me warn you to beware how you meddle with me or my concerns. I have taken care of my own interests hitherto, and I can take care of them in future. You have tried in every way to injure me and break off the marriage that I intend to make, but you have failed in every particular. The girl shall be my wife to-morrow, and after that I defy you!"

CHAPTER VIII.

The steps of Lady Penryth and Lord de Bruyne had long ceased to be heard, and still Kilmeny sat motionless where she had left her. It seemed to her as if she had suddenly come to the very brink of a chasm and was about to step into it. She had been deliberately trapped into her marriage engagement by a series of falsehoods invented to blacken Chris Warrender in her eyes, when all the time he had been innocent. As Kilmeny rose to her feet, her mind was made up.

She returned to her own room, and directed her maid to inform Mr. Daryl that she would remain alone for the rest of the evening. She dared not make any attempt to escape while daylight lasted, but in the end of October the dusk soon falls. She sat, apparently busy over a book, but with every power of her being thrilling intensely at what lay before her. If she could but carry out her plans, she might see the doctor and his wife that very night, she might turn her back on the nightmare of the past six weeks, and wake to freedom and love once more, leaving no word or line behind her.

Her maid brought tea to her, and she declined dinner. When she knew that her grandfather would be engaged, she slipped down to the conservatory and unlocked a small door at the farther end. She carried the key back to her room with her.

Four hours later, when everything was quiet, she dressed herself tremblingly in the gown which she had worn on the day when she came to her grandfather's house, and, taking her shoes and hat in her hand, went softly to the door. She turned the handle with all the firmness and quietness that she could command. It refused to open. She was locked in!

The discovery was a terrible shock. She had been so sure of escape that the thought of this had never occurred to her. Lord de Bruyne had been put on the watch by Lady Penryth's attempted visit to ensure that Kilmeny should not be tampered with. He had declared that the marriage should not be broken off, and it seemed to Kilmeny in her first shock of horror that he had spoken the truth.

Her hands dropped despairingly by her sides, and she restrained herself by an effort from sinking down upon the ground.

But in a moment her courage rose again. She would not tamely submit without at least an effort for freedom. She dared not strike a light, but she took a pencil and felt in the keyhole to discover whether the key remained outside or not. The pencil went clear through, letting her know that there was no obstruction. She stole to her dressing room for the key of it, but only to meet with a second disappointment. The key of that room had been removed also.

As Kilmeny stood helpless, a thought suddenly occurred to her. The key which she had brought with her from the conservatory might be of use. In another moment she had softly fitted it into the lock. It turned, and she was free!

She withdrew the key, having locked the door behind her. If the rest of her way were clear, her flight would not be discovered until the next morning, by which time she hoped to be safe. Slowly, listening and pausing between every step, her heart beating with almost audible throbs, she stole down the staircase and along the hall until she reached the conservatory by the door through which Lord de Bruyne had taken her on the night of her engagement. She felt hot and cold by turns as she groped her way to the far end and laid her hand on the door of escape. It opened easily, and in a moment she stood in the cold night air.

She closed and locked the door, and made her way as quickly as possible into the shade of the trees. The solemn darkness and the unusual stillness frightened her as she crept along, leaving the sleeping house behind her. All the stories that she had ever heard of midnight robbers prowling about and waiting to begin their deeds of wickedness crowded back on her, terrifying her. She had been afraid to put on her shoes, lest she might make a noise, and the stones hurt her feet as she hurried along. She had been so intent on escape that she had forgotten to form any plans beyond that point. She felt that if she could but get out from under the blackness of habitation once more, she would be able to think again, but just then everything was a horror and confusion. She remembered, with a little repressed sob, that when she had first trodden this path Chris had been beside her, and she felt that, if he were only there once more, she should almost die, the joy would be so great. But she was alone, and she must hurry on—hurry on.

She climbed the stile when she came to it, and went along the sidepath towards the little cluster of houses which was near the cottage that Chris had offered to Mrs. Richmond. She was uncertain what to do when she got there, but she knew that she would feel safer if she were near living beings even though they were asleep. The whistle of a train close by gave her a sudden thought. She hurried on her shoes and hat, tied her veil closely, and ran on to the station.

It was a night train, and paused for scarcely a moment. Kilmeny waited for no ticket, but rushed into the first carriage that she could see. No one noticed her, and in a moment she was off.

She was free!

The train stopped at Redminster, where Kilmeny jumped out and escaped without notice. Ten minutes later she was standing before the well-remembered door of her early home, and in the darkness could discern the outlines of the house looming near and thankfulness, pressed her hands on the beloved door, her face against it. She had reached home at last.

At length she summoned up strength to pull the night bell. She could hear the peal resounding in the house, and presently a window opened above. Doctor Richmond's voice was heard asking if the case was urgent and Kilmeny answered in trembling tones under her own name that it was. In a few minutes she could hear his steps as he came down the stairs, and then the bolts and bars being withdrawn. He opened the door, and the light which he held in his hand fell full on her.

He did not recognize her at once, but as she stumbled into the hall and clamation which she never forgot. The crying and laughing and half straggling him with her embraces. Nina grand house which she had left, and it was the old Kilmeny Richmond, vehement, loving like a child, who had come back.

Mrs. Richmond, hearing a commotion in the hall, came in her dressing gown, trembling a little, to the head of the stairs, and then, with a joyful cry, rushed to embrace her darling. Kilmeny presently found herself in the familiar dining-room, with her head on Doctor Richmond's shoulder, while her arm encircled her, and Mrs. Richmond kneeling beside her, holding her hand and dwelling on her with overflowing eyes of love and sorrow while she told her story. They wanted her to wait until the next day but she could not be persuaded to do so. She did not hear the sound of another foot—another auditor as she poured out her words.

Christopher Warrender, as well as Doctor Richmond, who had hastily returned from America on receipt of his wife's letter informing him of Mr. Daryl's claim on Kilmeny—had exhausted every means to warn Kilmeny of the character of the man whom she was about to marry, but in vain. Their letters never reached her, and a personal interview was not permitted. Christopher had come that very day to Redminster, to consult anew with

Doctor Richmond as to any possible way of averting the contemplated marriage, even at the eleventh hour, and he stole in and stood behind Kilmeny. He had wished at first to withdraw, but Doctor Richmond signed him to remain. As he stood, leaning over Kilmeny's chair, as her story came to an end, his eyes were dim and his heart full of thankfulness that he felt he could never express, even if his life should be prolonged threefold beyond the ordinary span.

"And now," Kilmeny's faltering voice concluded, "I have come home again. Oh, if I would ever be wicked or ungrateful enough to regret anything, or repine at any sorrow which may befall me as long as your love is left to me may the remembrance of the terrible experience I have just had come back to me to recall me to my better self! I know that Chris can never forgive me. I believed the lies which were told about him; I wounded and insulted him past atonement. I was on the point of marriage with a man lost to every right principle and feeling. I deserve to be punished for all that, and I will bear my punishment as bravely as I can. Let me come back and be your daughter once more; let me live my life here with you, and remember that if I have lost Chris' respect you at least do not cast me off and despise me as I deserve to be despised."

"I think, my dear," Doctor Richmond said, smiling at his wife, "the girl would be the better for a cup of tea, if you will make it for her, and we can talk about her mistakes and their punishment to-morrow. And meanwhile I believe that Chris would like to say something for himself which may perhaps put a different face on matters and make Kilmeny's future not quite such a doleful one marked out for herself."

"Chris here!" cried Kilmeny, starting up with a little scream to find him close beside her.

Dr. Richmond judged it best to withdraw with his wife to make the tea, and, on the whole, it was the very best thing that they could have done.

Kilmeny's flight was not discovered until the morning. Her maid received the key early from Lord de Bruyne and unlocked the door, but did not enter her young mistress' room for some time, thinking that she slept. The knowledge that she was gone convulsed Mr. Daryl with an anger that he could not control. In his ungodly fury he disclosed the reason why he had hurried on Kilmeny's marriage with Lord de Bruyne and had hesitated at nothing which could separate her from Mr. Warrender. One of that young man's relatives, whose death had brought the Merridale property to Christopher, and had had him brought to justice for some of his misdeeds. Through him, Mr. Daryl's heir had spent some of his time in prison.

The old man could never forgive this public disgrace, and the name of Warrender became hateful to him ever after.

One of his strongest reasons for separating her from Christopher, whose attachment to her he suspected from the beginning; and the bitterest that she had returned to her friends, came into contact with the man whom he hated. In the transport of his anger, he declared, that he would compel Kilmeny to come back and force her to marry Lord de Bruyne, a statement which was received by that nobleman with contempt.

The next news was that Lord de Bruyne had left England for an indefinite period.

No—not quite the next! Two days after Kilmeny had returned home Christopher Warrender came softly into the parlor where she was sitting in the dusk, and taking a seat beside her, passed his arm round her.

"Are you quite recovered from that night, Kilmeny darling?" he whispered. "Can you bear to hear something else—something which will shock and grieve you? I have only just been told of it, and I was afraid that it might come to you suddenly and find you unprepared."

"What is it, Chris?" she asked, trembling. "You and papa and mamma and the children are here safe and well. It must be something connected with that—that time which we wish to forget. My grandfather—"

"He was found dead in his bed this morning. The news has just come." And it was true. With the frustration of his hopes and schemes, the old lawyer had suddenly gone out. The last revenge by cutting off his property, but death had stepped in and prevented it. Kilmeny became sole party to his vast wealth, and the pro-Warrender at her marriage with him. Had once wished to be, but the time of and her residence under his roof had ferreted eye. She developed into a noble woman, and her blithe spirits in which she moved.

ABOUT AUCTIONEERS.

The ways of auctioneers in different parts of the world vary greatly. In England and America the seller bears the expense of the sale, but in France the purchaser bears the cost, 5 per cent. being added to his purchase. In Holland it is still worse, the buyer being required to pay 10 per cent. additional for the expense of the sale.

WONDERFUL DEVELOPMENT.

Watts—the development of the sense of touch in the blind is something always a wonder to me. Gotrox—I have it pretty well developed myself. I have got so I can tell a borrower two blocks away.

YOU ARE A FOOL.

According to the Verdict of a Well Known Physician.

"It's not the big accidents, bad colds, and the germs of disease which are in every human being which are responsible for the pain and sorrow in the world which follows in the track of illness," said a leading physician, "but the crass foolishness of the ordinary man."

"Now, nearly every one knows that when he crosses his legs he is inviting dyspepsia. Yet does he desist? You have a slight cough, and instead of trying to stop it you inflame your throat by coughing as hard as you can, although you have been told time and again that by so doing you are only aggravating it. To please your vanity you wear boots and shoes which do not fit you. Out of pure carelessness you sit in an unhealthy position at table and at your desk; you eat food which you know does not agree with you; you drink a large tumbler of water before a meal because, like a child, your reason is not stronger than your thirst; you go away from a hot fire into the night air, and then grumble at catching a cold; you smoke too much, stay indoors too much, or take too much exercise, and then come grumbling to us doctors to make a new man of you. I often feel when some man, whose physique I can see must have been perfect, comes to me a hopeless wreck, that the best kind of physic would be the rod, served very hot."

THE INVALID'S CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

Is there among your friends a weary invalid, for whom you are longing to do something beautiful and helpful at the coming holiday season? If so, you cannot do better than to undertake the preparation of a wonder bag for Christmas, or a friendship calendar for New Year's day. Both these plans, though they may seem formidable on account of the large expenditure, not of money, but of time and labor, are well worth trying. They are potent in their power of bringing cheer and sunshine into a sickroom. Not only once, but many times, during the weary months of suffering. A wonder bag is a large bag filled with gifts from many friends, which are to be drawn out on special days, according to accompanying directions. It may be arranged to last for any length of time—three months, six months, or a year—drawings being made once, twice, or thrice a week, as may seem best. Since the recipient of the bag is not given a list of the donors, nor informed of the character of the gifts, a double surprise awaits her at such drawings. This contributes not a little to the novelty and charm of the scheme.

In preparing the bag the first step is to make a list of all friends who might wish to join in such a labor of love. Naming the date on which it is to be packed, ask each to contribute a suitable gift for it as early as convenient. Since these friends will probably be scattered far and wide in the home land, and perhaps in foreign lands as well, it will be necessary to begin preparations early—the earlier the better, for there are likely to be delays.

Make a strong bag of suitable material—cretonne, denim, canvas, or linen. Embroider it with initials, a monogram or other suitable design, and furnish it with stout drawstrings of broad ribbon. Since it is to hang in the sickroom for so long a time, it should be made not merely durable and serviceable, but also dainty and attractive.

Wrap each article in tissue paper, using many tints, mark it with the name of the donor, and tie it securely with narrow ribbon of a contrasting color, leaving one end long enough to be used in drawing it out. Pack the parcels carefully in the bag, heavier ones at the bottom, and let the long ribbons hang outside at the top.

Gifts appropriate for special days, such as the invalid's birthday, April 1, Easter Sunday, Feb. 22, a "very early day," a "stormy Sunday," etc., may be their ribbons. Most of the gifts, however, should be left without dates, in order that the invalid may have the privilege of deciding which ribbon to draw.

Such a wonder bag was recently sent by a lady in Ohio to an invalid friend who had removed to California. Filled with a great variety of beautiful and useful articles contributed by friends in many states, it proved a wonder bag indeed. Its pleasant surprises were a source of constant delight, and the attending physician was loud in its praise, testifying to its beneficial results.

This bag contained books, handkerchiefs, boxes of stationary, paper-cutters, a pair of invalid slippers, an ice-cream shawl, an embroidered stand for letters, cups and saucers of dainty china, and many articles especially helpful in a sickroom. Several friends who felt unable to contribute gifts, wrote charming letters, which were greatly enjoyed and much appreciated.

The preparation of this bag, which had gifts enough to last six months, occupied fully two months. It might perhaps be accomplished more speedily, but it would be most unwise to undertake it on a short allowance of time. If for any reason the bag could not be completed in time for Christmas, it could be sent later as a birthday gift.

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"She is stronger to-day than she has been for months, thanks to Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills. I am sure there can be no better remedy from their remarkable effects in Mrs. Armstrong's case."

Laxa-Liver Pills cure Constipation, Sick Headache and Dyspepsia.

AN ISLAND OF SULPHUR.
In the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand, is one of the most extraordinary islands in the world. It is called White Island, and consists mainly of sulphur mixed with gypsum and a few other minerals. Over the island, which is about three miles in circumference, and which rises between 800 and 900 feet above the sea, floats continually an immense cloud of vapor attaining an elevation of 1000 feet. In the centre is a boiling lake of acid-charged water, covering 50 acres, and surrounded with blow-holes from which steam and sulphurous fumes are emitted with great force and noise. With care a boat can be navigated on the lake. The sulphur from White Island is very pure, but little effort has yet been made to procure it systematically.

ACROSS THE DIVISION FENCE.
First Lady—I'd lick ye in a minute only I wouldn't dirty my hands on ye!
Second Lady—Course you wouldn't. You'd clean 'em!
The riot call was sent in about three minutes later.

GREATEST MATCH STRIKERS.
More matches are used in England than in any other country in the world. It has been estimated that English people use an average of eight matches each person per day, and annually over 1,700,000,000,000 are burned.

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