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STUART STRATHY, General Manager

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MISS DICK:—DURHAM:—

# HIS COURTSHIP

By HELEN R. MARTIN, Author of "Tillie: A Mennonite Maid."

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## CHAPTER XIX. MR. AND MRS. MORNINGSTAR held counsel together and came to some astute conclusions.

"If that there Doc didn't have some-thing up his sleeve to down us with he wouldn't have the dare to speak up to us so positive," Mr. Morningstar gloomily reasoned. "To be sure, I wouldn't give in to him and make over all that there money to the girl if I didn't have afraid he'd squeeze me fur more'n that yet—like what he said he'd do."

"Abram Morningstar, you ain't going to up and throw \$3,000 at that girl!" his wife exclaimed incredulously. "Will you leave me know, then, how I'm gettin' out of it?" he demanded.

They were together in the kitchen just after Kinross' departure on his week's absence. Mr. Morningstar was still too ill from his cold to leave the settle, and his wife was in the act of putting a mustard plaster on him when he opened up the discussion of what lay so heavily on their hearts.

"He must have took a shine to Eunice," Mrs. Morningstar lamented, "to be takin' up fur her like what he's doin'. I don't know what's got into the men, such dumm taste as they all show. There's Ollie—thee's twice as fat and has nicer clothes and near twice the schoolin' as what Eunice's got. The girl's just that tricky she makes eyes at the men behind our backs, pop, that's wot!"

"I've been thinkin' it out how we could spite him back," Mr. Morningstar said, lowering his voice and indicating with a twirl of his thumb the departed boarder. "If we do have to give Eunice them \$3,000 we kin keep it in the family and get ahead of that darned townyer by marryin' her to Abe right aways. Ain't? You see, what that city sharper's after is to git them \$3,000 fur himself. It ain't often a girl—even a townyer—has that much to bring to her mister. Abe couldn't git no girl round here with that much. If we do have to give her the money we couldn't do better by Abe than to leave him marry her."

"Well, mebbe," Mrs. Morningstar answered, considering the matter as she buttoned her husband's shirt over the plaster. "But it would rile me to have to marry our Abe to a girl we bring up on charity."

"That ain't neither here nor there," Mr. Morningstar sneered irritably at this sentiment. "What we want is to settle these here finances without no more loss than we can't help." "There's this to say," Mrs. Morningstar added—"if she marries Abe mebbe that underhand Hen Muckleheny will be comin' back to our Ollie when he sees he can't have Eunice."

"Yes, we'd be spittin' him too," Mr. Morningstar fairly smirked his lips with satisfaction. "The hand of Providence would be in it, and it would all work out for his honor and glory. Yes, I tell you the Lord sees a many a thing head of hisself that way!"

"You're spittin' every one but the one I'd like to spite," snapped Mrs. Morningstar, "and that's that deceitful girl, with her sneakin' ways and her playin' her tricks behind a body's back after all we do done fur her 'ready!"

"Seems we haven't darst to talk about that no more—what we done fur her. Seems she done everything fur us," Mr. Morningstar sarcastically added.

"Now, look a-here, morn: we'll fix it up between Abe and Eunice before the Doc gits back. See? I'll go ahead and tell Abe he has the dare to pass his promise to Eunice, and you kin tell her she dare have Abe now without workin' no more tricks to git him."

It was a bitter thing to Mrs. Morningstar, this task allotted to her, but it was to become more bitter still before she was through with it.

It appeared for a moment that it was going to be made easy. Abe, entirely unsuspecting of what was brewing, came to his mother that very evening after his day's work was over with a passionate protest against her opposition to his marrying Eunice and a plea that she "leave" him have the girl.

"To be sure, Eunice she knows you're agin' it, so she putrends she don't want me. You go tell her you're in fur it—our gettin' promised together—and certainly then she'll be only too glad to git me."

This was Abe's point of view. "Glad to git you! Well, I guess mebbe!" Mrs. Morningstar retorted. "It's a wonder you wouldn't look higher, Abe Morningstar."

"I have wonderful tired, mom, of hearin' of this 'lookin' higher.' I got my age—I'm a man—and it's my own affairs if I look high or low for my wife. Eunice she suits me all right. Even if she won't have no aussteuer and ain't got nothin' comin' to her, she's anyhow not one to spend at the clee or to run, and she's so handy at the work I'd never have to hire fur her. So if I am lookin' low, I ain't doin' so bad, takin' it all in all. If you and pop would only stop kickin' I'd soon git her to pass her promise. And I tell you right here, mom, I'm goin' to marry her, anyhow—whether you like it or whether you don't. So you might as well stop your kickin'! To

be sure it would make me less work persuadin' Eunice if you would stop kickin'. She's awful stubborn headed about it."

Mrs. Morningstar sniffed contemptuously. "Och, but men is dumm things! Her stubborn headed about takin' you—when she's been makin' eyes at you and tryin' to git you ever since you was in long pants 'ready and she was in long frocks!"

"I ain't took notice she was tryin' to git me," Abe answered sullenly. "I can't never git her to be even sociable with me. And before she'd go buggy ridin' or to a circus with me? Cert'ly that was because she had afraid of you."

"Well, Abe, seein' this here's the way you feel and you bein' my own son that way, I'll put to aside my regrets and leave her have you. I'll tell her tomorrow."

Abe was astonished at his easy success with his mother. He had anticipated a complete routing.

"Will you make it all right with pop?" he eagerly and gratefully inquired.

With subtle diplomacy she answered that she would.

It was not until the next evening that she brought herself to broach the subject with Eunice.

When the evening chores were finished and the girl was about to take her lamp to go up to bed, she stopped her and made her sit down with her in the kitchen.

"I got to speak somepin to you," she began in a tone of sullen reluctance, her whole person bristling with the antagonism she felt against her enforced concession. "Me and pop's been talkin' it over, and we conceted we'd tell you that you'd worked pretty good and steady fur us and now that you're got your age and ain't got no more claim on us we wouldn't like to see you throwed out on the world neither, seein' how we bring you up like our own."

So we just conceted that rather'n let you unpurctected on the world we'd keep on bein' parents to you, though, to be sure, we thought to look higher fur our Abe, him bein' our only son."

Eunice, sitting opposite her at the kitchen table, was looking at her rather vaguely. But at this reference to Abe her eyes lost their absent gaze, and she met her foster mother's eyes with a fixity which the latter found almost disconcerting.

She made no reply, but waited in silence for Mrs. Morningstar's ramblings to come to a focus.

"To be sure, our Abe could do a lot better. But then, seein' you've got him so's he thinks he wants you, why, us we're not puttin' no hindrance in your way. You kin have him."

She looked for some joy or gratitude from Eunice, but the girl continued to regard her fixedly and without replying.

"We mean it," she said testily. "You're got the dare to marry him, seein' you want him so bad. To be sure, I guess it's hard fur you to take it in that we're leavin' you have your way!"

Still the girl had nothing to say.

"Well!" cried Mrs. Morningstar impatiently. "What are you got to say fur yourself? Can't you even speak saddy (thank you) to a body?"

"I wonder what you expect me to say?"—the girl's soft voice at last answered the woman's rough tones—"to thank you for offerin' me your son?"

"That's little enough to expect anyhow," Mrs. Morningstar retorted. Eunice rose slowly and stood resting her hand on the table. "Had you any-thing else to say to me?"

"You needn't go right aways. Set awhile," she commanded. "There's



"Had you anything else to say to me?" answered the woman's rough tones—"to thank you for offerin' me your son?" "That's little enough to expect anyhow," Mrs. Morningstar retorted. Eunice rose slowly and stood resting her hand on the table. "Had you any-thing else to say to me?" "You needn't go right aways. Set awhile," she commanded. "There's

some things we'd better talk out now we're at it." "What things?" Eunice asked hesitatingly, not sitting down. "Och, I'd like to know how soon you and Abe thinks you would like to stand up to say 'Yes' (get married), and when you'll want to be buyin' your aussteuer, and when you want to go to housekeepin'—things like them."

"We need not discuss those things. I will not marry Abe." Mrs. Morningstar stared at her uncomprehendingly. Eunice waited.

"What d'you say?" "I will not marry Abe." "Och," the woman said impatiently, "what's the use foolin' time away with purtendin' and talkin' so dumm?"

"I am feignin' nothing. I would not dream of marryin' Abe." "Is it that you want to be coaxed or whatever?" Mrs. Morningstar demanded, an angry red in her cheeks. "There I am fur stoppin' when it would come to coaxin'. I ain't coaxin' you any."

"It would be useless, certainly." "What do you mean?" asked the woman, fairly bewildered at such unexpected and incredible behavior.

"Why should you think I want to marry Abe?" the girl suddenly asked. "I have long wondered why you thought I must necessarily wish you—she hesitated an instant, while Mrs. Morningstar could only stare at her in blank amazement—"because," continued Eunice, "there is no fate which I would think more tragic than being married to your son."

"You ain't talkin' sincere?" the woman cried. "I'd like to know how you think you could do better or half as good?"

"I think I could not do worse." "Couldn't do worse'n marry our Abe! You!"

The girl was patiently silent. Something convincing in her bearing made Mrs. Morningstar begin to suspect that she actually meant what she said, and even greater than her indignation at this unbelievable slight to her son was her sudden dread of having that \$3,000 go out of the family.

"It's her thinkin' that there money's comin' to her makes her so sassy and high minded about Abe," she thought, "or mebbe Hen Muckleheny got a chance to see her unbeknownst to me, and she thinks she'd be doin' better to take him."

"So this here's your gratefulness fur all we done fur you 'ready?" she upbraided the girl.

A look of weariness came into Eunice's eyes. She took up her lamp and turned away from the table.

"Who do you want to marry, then?" Mrs. Morningstar stopped her with the question.

"That is not a matter that it is necessary to discuss."

"Don't give me none of your back talk! And what do you do with usin' high language as if you was educated?"

Eunice did not answer. "Is it Hen Muckleheny you're after?"

"He is not quite so objectionable as Abe, but I'm not after him."

Inasmuch as Hen was considered by the Morningstars quite good enough for Ollie, this rejection of him by Eunice was an offense almost as great as her refusal of Abe.

"I'll tell you what!" Mrs. Morningstar harshly exclaimed. "You're after that there Doc Kinross; that's what! Him and you fixed it up between you somehow, though fur the life of me I don't see when, fur you certainly ain't never out of my sight long enough to make up to no man. A body'd have to keep you locked up in a closet yet to keep the men away from you or contrawise to keep you from makin' eyes at the men and temptin' 'em! It's the \$3,000 you think's comin' to you has made you all of a sudden so stuck up about our Abe! And now you think with all that money you kin marry a townyer yet!"

A hot color burned in Eunice's cheek, but she looked at Mrs. Morningstar steadfastly.

"Three thousand dollars coming to me? What do you mean?"

"You want to purtend you don't know yet!" the woman said sarcastically, though her eyes wavered from the girl's face doubtfully. Was it possible she did not know?

"Will you explain to me what you mean?" Eunice repeated.

"It ain't neither here nor there! I didn't mean nothin'. Is Doc Kinross sweet on you?"

The girl's lips quivered, and her eyes suddenly glistened with tears.

"Do you want to know what he thinks of me?" she asked, her voice vibrating with suppressed bitterness. "He thinks so poorly of me as to believe me capable of marryin' Abe!"

Her hopeless tone implied that he could think no worse. Mrs. Morningstar was dumfounded. Such a view of Abe was incomprehensible. And that it should be held by this girl whom she scorned, seemed past belief.

And yet, deep down in her heart she knew that Eunice spoke sincerely; that passing strange as it seemed, she actually did not want to marry Abe; that if that \$3,000 was to remain in the family, she must stoop to coax! She coax this pauper girl, her serf, to marry her Abe! It was a bitter humiliation.

She began at first diplomatically. She said that of course they wouldn't "leave" their adopted daughter go penniless to her husband and that if she did marry their son they would give her a nice purse full of money—up in the hundreds.

But Eunice did not rise to the bait. Then the woman humbled herself to plead with her and to speak of Abe's love for her. But this, too, failed. "Let us talk of it no more," Eunice gently begged, feeling utterly exhausted after a half hour of the futile discussion. "It is of no avail to talk."

Continued on page 1.

## GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY HOMESEEKERS EXCURSIONS

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## CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY TIME TABLE

Trains will arrive and depart as follows, until further notice:—

Read down A.M. P.M. 6:45 3:00 Lv. Walkerton Ar. 8:40 12:55 6:58 3:13 " Maple Hill " 9:27 12:42 7:06 3:23 " Hanover " 9:19 12:2 7:14 3:33 " Allan Park " 9:11 12:2 7:28 3:42 " Durham " 8:57 12:12 7:38 4:03 " McWilliam " 8:47 12:02 7:50 4:17 " Priceville " 8:35 11:40 8:00 4:30 " Sauguenay " 8:25 11:40

R. MACFARLANE, Town Agent.

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