

# The Gypsy's Sacrifice

## OR A SECRET REVEALED

CHAPTER XXIV.—(Continued). He looked at her and understood that her object was to accustom Madge to the place, and to keep her out of the way of the countess and Seymour for at least one morning.

"Oh, he may come as far as the stables, may he not?" said Irene. "And he need no throw his cigar away need he, Madge?"

"He walked beside them, his hands thrust into the pockets of his shooting jacket, his handsome face full of happiness; and that happy-go-lucky cheerfulness which went so far to win hearts for him; and the sight of one and two ladies and "Master" Royce created a sensation in the stable yard. It seemed as if every man from the coachman to the smallest help, wanted to do something for them, and was eager to attract their notice.

The coachman came forward and touched his cap; his ruddy face beaming with a smile of gratitude for Royce's hearty "Morning, John, horses-right?"

"Yes, Master Royce. Beg pardon, sir, beg pardon—Mr. Royce no."

"Got promoted since my marriage," you see," said Royce laughingly to the two girls. Madge blushed.

"This is my wife, you know, John," he said.

The coachman touched his hat with deep respect and admiration.

"I wish you every happiness, ma'am; we all do."

"Yes, yes, the other men murmured eagerly.

Madge's color grew still deeper, and they knew she murmured "thank you," though they could not hear her; and they would have raised a cheer, but that they remarked her timidity and were afraid of frightening her.

The coachman led the way into the stables, and Madge's first sensation was one of amazement and delight; her next of sadness; for as she looked at the splendid animals in their polished oak stalls, saw the costly apparatus for ventilation, the tiled floor, every bit of iron and steel bright and glittering, noticed the scrupulous cleanliness of the whole, she thought of the poor people she had seen in some of the towns, crowded together in small houses, stifling for want of air, living in an atmosphere of disease and dirt, and the contrast smote her painfully.

Royce went up to the beautiful creature, the coachman had so considerately offered Seymour, and the animal whinnied a loving welcome as his master put his hand over the arched neck and patted it.

"You haven't forgotten me, old fellow," he said, "said the man. "Not if you were to be here five years! I've kept him as fit as I could, Master Royce."

"He is in splendid condition," said Royce, and he laid his hand gratefully upon the coachman's shoulder. "I've seen a good many nags since—while I've been away, but none to beat him! I must have a turn on him some time to-day."

"Yes, sir!" said the man proudly. "He's as glad as the rest of us to see you back, Master Royce. You'll be wanting one for Mrs. Landon, sir. I thought of that directly. I heard of your marriage, Master Royce, and I think I've got one that will suit Giles, fetch out that new mare."

Giles, the man who had seen Royce at Markham Fair and brought the news to Seymour, came forward and touched his hat, but by neither look or sign indicated any previous knowledge of Madge, and going into a stall, brought out the horse.

"She'll do, I'll try her with a rug, you'd have her if that's necessary—if you pass her, John."

The gratified man looked round at his master as much as to say, "Ain't he a proper kind of gentleman, eh?"

"And where's Miss Irene?" Ah, she remembers me too!" and he went up to the fire and fondled her. Irene stood looking on, her face pale, and the dark shadowy ring under her sweet eyes showing very plainly, but she said not a word. They went the round of the stalls.

"I've got a likely young thing in the paddock, sir," said John. "We'll see that another day," said Royce. "Miss Irene wants the ponies now."

"Yes, sir. They're all right. She shall have 'em at once."

Irene and Madge departed to put their jackets on, but Royce, with marvellous self-denial, refrained from following them.

They passed from the stables into a little paved court beyond which was the paddock.

"That was a beautiful horse of yours, Irene," said Madge.

"Yes," said Irene absently, "I am very fond of it." Royce broke it for me—she pulled up short, then went on hurriedly, "and that will be a very nice one of yours. Royce will soon teach you to ride her, dear; there is no one so patient as he is."

"She stopped again and bit her lip. It was hard, all in one short week, to teach herself not to speak of Royce as if he belonged to her. That is the young horse they spoke of," she went on quickly.

Madge stopped and looked over the railing, and a girlish desire to show Irene that she, Madge, could do at least one thing well took possession of her.

"It is very pretty," she said with a mischievous affection of timidity. "Do you think it would let us come near it?"

"Oh, yes, I should think so," said Irene. "John would not buy it unless it was 'out'."

had reached the town her face had cleared.

She noticed that wherever they went they were received with a respect so profound as to almost amount to awe.

They made several purchases in the town shops, and various points of interest, as they passed, were pointed out to Madge by Irene. Then the ponies drew them at a brisk pace to Gorse Common.

"Here we are," said Irene. "I love this place. One can breathe here even on the hottest days; not that it is hot now. Are you well wrapped up, Madge? What would Royce say if I let you catch cold?"

"I should have to try very hard to catch cold. I never had a cold in my life," she said simply.

"I know you must be strong, dear, by the way you sprang on that colt and held it."

"Yes," said Madge smiling ruefully. "I am as strong as one of those savages Lord Seymour was telling us about last night; and as ignorant."

"Seymour; you mustn't call him 'Lord,'" said Irene. "If you don't like Seymour, you might say 'Landon,' or the earl; he is your brother, dear."

"Yes," said Madge. "But it is hard to realize it yet. I will try."

"There is—madam's pensioner, would you like to see her? She is a very nice woman, but very nervous and timid. She has had a very unhappy life. I think, though I do not know anything about it. She is always pleased to see us; shall we go?"

Madge assented, and Irene drove to the cottage gate.

Marta Hooper came out, dressed with her usual neat and humble style. She flushed and grew pale by turns when she saw that Irene was not alone; and her thin, worn face grew troubled and anxious when Irene said:

"How do you do, Mrs. Hooper? I have brought Mrs. Landon. Mr. Royce's wife, to see you."

Mrs. Hooper made a courtesy, and opened the gate with a trembling hand.

"Thank you, Miss. Will you come in, ladies? I have a cup of tea."

Irene always found it best to be quick and almost abrupt with her; it is the best way with most nervous people, whose nervousness is increased by any sign of it in others.

"Thanks, Mrs. Hooper. Yes, we should like a cup of tea, although it is the morning. It is the very thing."

Mrs. Hooper called a boy, who stood staring at them, to mind the pony, and preceding the two girls, opened the door of the usual cottage parlour.

"If you will go in and sit down ladies," she said, "I will come in one moment; the tea is made."

The parlor had the ordinary unused look and smell of such apartments, and Irene said with a smile:

"How much more comfortable we should have been beside the fire in the kitchen! But poor Mrs. Hooper would have had a fit if I had proposed such a thing, and when I came up, I picked up something from the ground."

"Why! Yes, it is madam's pearl bracelet!"

"Then just gallop round once more, dear, for it is delicious! I thought I could ride a little," Royce always said."

Madge let the colt go, and round the paddock. The exercise brought the color into her cheeks, her eyes were sparkling as she pulled the colt up; then suddenly the color faded away, and her eyes became fixed on her face—her eyes.

"I saw nothing wrong in it, dear Madge. And I am sure Royce would have not; and it is he you have to think of."

"Ah, yes! It is he!" said Madge.

"As safe as it can be," said Irene.

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## FARM FIELD FARM GARDEN

### MAKING A CEMENT FLOOR.

Excavate to a depth of six or eight inches and make bottom level where cement floor is laid. Fill in with gravel or broken stone, or both, thoroughly wet and tamp down solid. For stables, give the surface a slant from manger to gutter of one and one-half inches. The tamping of foundation is very important to prevent splitting and cracking the cement.

Mark place for gutter at from six feet three inches to six feet eight inches, according to size of cow. Gutter should be dug three inches wider and deeper than wanted when finished.

It should be nearly level from end to end and when finished eight inches deep. Make a box four feet long and  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 18 in outside measure, to use in laying the gutter.

If foundation posts are used, measure back from manger the proper distance and drive pieces of one-inch pipe eighteen inches long into the ground, leaving six inches above surface to set foundation posts on by boring hole in the lower end to receive the pipe. Posts set in the corner will decay. Take a  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 6-inch piece, long enough to reach across the floor the short way and a  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 6-inch strip of same length.

Fill thoroughly one part cement to nine parts gravel, then sprinkle until tamper is dry enough to walk on.

Leave the mixture of sand free from dirt, in proportion to one part cement to three parts sand.

Use board for a straight edge and set box in bottom of trench and set concrete to within one-half inch of top.

When last strip of concrete is laid across cow stalls it is ready for the finishing coat.

Place  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 6-inch strip on top of the concrete and apply on top of the concrete a layer of cement and sifted sand free from dirt, in proportion to one part cement to three parts sand.

Use board for a straight edge and strike off the top. Leave surface slightly rough, as cows will slip when floor is troweled off perfectly smooth.

The instructions are plain and by them any farmer can lay such a floor himself. There is one thing to be kept in mind: The gravel used in mixing the concrete must be absolutely clean and free from sand, clay, or loam. If stones are to be had they may be crushed or broken and used for the first or foundation layer, but sharp gravel is necessary for the finishing coat. Only the best cements should be used.

### VALUE OF FANNING MILLS.

Improvement in live stock and grain, largely in the order of grain, is the greatest factor in the progress of the nation, and the value of grain to the farmer of the twentieth century.

When land is worth \$100 per acre we must get more out of it than when it is worth only a tenth of that amount.

To do this we must adopt modern methods and must work within the laws of nature.

Like produces like. This is a principle well established. If we sow poor seed we need not expect to raise a good crop any more than we would expect to raise a good calf from a poor cow bred to a poor bull.

We have to-day a large number of excellent fanning mills on the market capable of so grinding our grain as to make it possible to separate the poor kernels from the good ones and thus materially aid in keeping up the yielding power of our grains.

The old theory that a variety necessarily "runs out" after a number of years has been exploded. The reason varieties deteriorate is simply because enough care is not exercised in grading the seed from year to year; the fanning mill is not used as much as it should be. This is a great mistake. Even if a farming mill could be put to no other use than to thoroughly grade the seed each year it would be great money-saving piece of machinery for the farmer.

Suppose a man raises 80 acres of small grain per year, and that he has gone to some expense in procuring good varieties. If he neglects to save the best seed each year his grain at once begins to deteriorate.

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