



Happiness Secured AT A Heavy Cost!

CHAPTER V. A MAN WITH A HISTORY.

"No," she replied, smiling at me with those clear gray eyes. "I don't think there is much danger of any such calamity as that, Lesley. As a physician, I like and trust him; as a—"

"Lover or husband, you would prefer a man of whom you stood a trifle less in awe, I should think," I rejoined, with a laugh.

But for many days after this, during which poor Len's life seemed literally to hang in the balance, we had so many cares and troubles of our own that I quite forgot my shyness of the "pharm" as I still called him in the privacy of my own mind, and learned to wait as anxiously for his coming as my sister; and, oh! the comfort of that slow, firm tread on the stairs—that strong, grave face in the room—though never once, either to Addie or myself, did the sternness of his manner relax.

At last came a change for the better, followed by a peaceful slumber, a tranquil waking to rationality; and the doctor smiled for the first time as he came in one morning and told us that the dear life over which we had watched so long and so anxiously was out of danger.

From that hour my brother's recovery, though slow, was steady; but Doctor Fuller, who, to Len's satisfaction, had got into the habit of dropping into his study occasionally, where the two—shut up in a thick haze of tobacco smoke—indulged in long gossipes on art, politics, and science, began to talk about the necessity for that change of air that first gave rise to the Deepdene project.

"And of all the advantages to be derived from a sojourn at the family estate, we have omitted to mention the chief," I remarked one day, as we were busy preparing for our departure into Devonshire. "If we leave London I shall get away from Doctor Fuller's terrible black eyes; and what I've suffered, wondering what that man must have thought of me,

would fill a second book of martyrs. Did Addie ever tell you, Len, how he came in that night you were so ill and overheard me describing him?" I asked, taking a precarious seat on a rickety little chair, which instantly proceeded to indulge in one of its ugly old tricks of folding up suddenly and landing me in the most unexpected manner on the floor.

"She did; but what of that?" he asked, as I picked myself up from the floor of the studio with a bruise on my elbow for which the very liberal amount of dust contracted by my dress seemed hardly to compensate. "Hope you haven't been laying the flattering unction to your soul that a man like Fuller cares in the least what an impudent child like you may think of him!" was Len's very brotherly response. "Don't suppose," he heard anything about it; and if he did, he'd doubtless set you down for a brainless little simpleton, and think no more about you!"

"Oh, well," I replied, failing to find as much consolation in the assurance as Len seemed to expect; "he's used to simpletons, or if he isn't he ought to be! I'm sorry if I hurt his feelings. Ill-favored people are so sensitive, they say."

"Do you suppose everyone sees with your eyes, Lesley?" Addie inquired, a shade impatiently. "Some people might consider Doctor Fuller quite an attractive man. His wife does, I suppose, or she would hardly have married him!"

"His wife!" repeated Len, in a tone of amazement. "Upon my word, girls, it strikes me that you are making a slight mistake. Our friend the doctor isn't married! Doesn't care for women—I believe he never did! Shows his sense; and looks upon the fairer half of creation as a mistake, except as a mere anatomical study, perhaps."

"You don't say so!" I laughed. "Why, I quite thought he was an appropriate blessing. Oh, come, Addie, there's a chance for you after all, it seems! You like remarkable people, you know you do! and, goodness knows, the doctor is remarkable enough to suit the most exacting taste in that way! Upon second thoughts, I'm not certain I shouldn't like him a little bit myself, if only he wouldn't put on that 'quarter-deck' court-martial style of manner whenever he finds himself in my distinguished presence."

"Come now, girls, none of that, if you please," said Len, with a majestic air. "None of your tricks with the doctor. He's too good and genuine a fellow to be criticised at a woman's whim, and I give you fair warning that I won't have it!" he added, with as much gravity as if Addie and I were a couple of the most arrant coquettes, and Doctor Fuller the most susceptible of mortals.

"He is a man with a history," Addie replied, evidently considering the possibility of working him up as a highly effective character in some present or future story. "There's a romance of some kind, and not a happy one, I'm afraid, in the doctor's past!"

"Very likely," Len agreed. "He certainly does strike me as a man who has somehow contrived to miss his aim in life. He has no business, a man of his talents, to be plodding away as a poor doctor in an obscure



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part of London at his time of life. Been knocking about in the world a good bit, I fancy. Served as army surgeon in India. But if there's any romance, as you call it, in Fuller's life, your curiosity on the subject is not likely to be gratified. He's not the man to let the world into the secret of his private heartaches. Whatever his hurts, he'll take them in silence, asking pity and sympathy of no man living, nor woman, either," as my lord Hamlet hath it. Especially, the women."

"But for all that I've a presentiment that I shall some day know the story of Doctor Fuller's past, and it is somehow destined to affect my future," Adelaide returned.

"Poor little Addie! how little we thought, Len and I, as we laughed at the quiet air of conviction with which she said it, how sadly her prophecy was to be verified in the sorrowful days to come!"

On the morning of our departure from London, Len, looking like a haggard ghost of his former good-looking self, was preparing to accompany us to the station, when the doctor, dropping in unexpectedly, vetoed the plan on the score of the weather.

"Stay where you are, Kendrick," he said, in his quiet, authoritative way. "I'll see you sisters off for you with pleasure; this piercing northeaster is hardly the thing for you to be out in."

"But my dear doctor, I can't go on being treated as an invalid forever," Len began; but in spite of his remonstrances it was the doctor who took our tickets, settled us in our cars with a liberal supply of grave and comic literature, and then held out his hand to say good-by.

With a gay little smile Adelaide put hers into it; but when my turn came, something in the rugged face, that struck me as it had never struck me before, seemed to tie my tongue and hold me silent; and it certainly was strange how sorry I suddenly felt to part with him.

"Good-by, and a pleasant journey," he said, shaking hands. "Enjoy your country life all you can; but don't quite forget old friends," he added, a little hesitatingly.

"We shall never forget you at all events, doctor," I replied, betrayed by the unusual softening of his manner into one of my impulsive little outbursts, in which the words seem somehow to slip out before I have time to think. "And, oh! Doctor Fuller," I added, with a rush of miserable gully tears dimming my sight as I thought of the poor return I had made him for all his patient kindness, "do forgive me, please! if you only knew how bitterly I have regretted those foolish remarks you overheard me making about you that night, I really think you would! Indeed I am sorry! sorry from the very bottom of my heart."

"You need not be, indeed!" he returned, in a tone of surprise, as, taking my hand in a warm, close clasp, he smiled good-humoredly down into my pleading eyes, evidently astonished for once, quite out of his usual stolid sternness by my unexpected little outburst. "Believe me, Miss Kendrick, my want of loveliness was a tolerably well-established fact in my mind long before I ever saw you," he added, with an amused little smile that softened the stern, dark face into something that was better than beauty.

"Ah! but I don't think so now—that is, it was just a foolish first impression. People look so different when you get to know them better," I stammered, by no means clear in my

own mind what I wished to say; "and if I only thought you would forgive me, I should be quite happy."

"Then be happy; you are quite forgiven, believe me," he returned, in his coldest tones, the gentleness that marked his manner a moment ago disappearing, leaving him colder, stiffer, more frigidly stern than ever, if possible; and the final good-bys were spoken, the train was in motion, and all the bustle and confusion of London Bridge Station, with the doctor standing tall and grave on the platform, were left behind, and we were en route for Devon.

"Well, on the whole I'm rather glad to think that I had it out with him," I remarked, in a tone of pique.

"Had it out with whom, dear?" Addie inquired, with provoking indifference.

"The doctor, of course," I replied impatiently. "It makes me wretched to feel that I have behaved ungratefully to any one; but I don't think he need have gone and stiffened up like that, though, immediately after I had begged his pardon. I believe I might just as well have held my tongue. I suppose he never gave way to a sudden impulse in his life, and thinks me a greater simpleton now than he did before; and I don't care if he does—so there!"

"Which means that you do care very much indeed," Addie replied, with a smile that seemed to rasp on my nerves. "Poor little Fire and Fury! Always in one extreme or another. Oh, well, never mind, Lesley. Why need you care what Doctor Fuller thinks of you?"

"Why, indeed? That is the very question that puzzles me, though I am vaguely, miserably conscious that for some mysterious reason I do care. Not in consequence of any particular liking that I entertain for him, certainly, but rather in spite of it, as it seems to me; and perhaps a little because of a natural propensity in the human heart to covet the unattainable; and Doctor Fuller's approbation is a very unattainable prize, so far as I am concerned, I believe."

(To be Continued.)

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Headquarters of the Italian Army, July 29. (Associated Press.)—"Victory of the Allies is a certainty, in my opinion, and I am sure the American Army will be the one to deal the knockout blow," said Major General Eben Swift to the correspondent of the Associated Press, last year in charge of Camp Gordon, Ga., and now commanding the American military mission to Italy. "I tell you we will win so soon as we get enough men over here and these men get hold of the fighting ideas peculiar to this war, as they are rapidly doing now through association with the French, English, and Italian troops."

I do not believe in bragging, prefer to admit all the claims the enemy makes for himself. But giving a credit due the Germans for the gains, I maintain we are going to smash them. I know the American man, what kind of a soldier he makes, and I insist that he is going to turn out a most formidable fighter, standing comparison with any soldier in Europe. I have visited the armies of the Allies and have seen the kind of men they have, and I am sure we are going to be proud of our soldiers when they have had the advantage of learning from our Allies and at the same time doing some fighting with the enemy himself. The Germans are no fools and I believe they already fear us."

"One of the big factors in making our army great is that of discipline. The men commanding our army are said to be merciless in matters affecting discipline, in questions of putting the right officer in the right place, of eliminating favoritism and unfit men, and this is as it should be. By merciless discipline, however, I do not mean ill-treatment of soldiers or anybody."

"This army of ours that we are building up will lead to the final defeat of the Germans for somewhat the same reason, perhaps, that Napoleon was defeated in Europe after fifteen years of victory, or that the Confederate Army was defeated in our civil war. Time is working in favor of the Allies. The Germans have not succeeded in obtaining any overwhelming decision in this war, and the day will come when the Allies, backed up by the great American manpower, will themselves demand and obtain the decision that we call victory. I do not believe in paying compliments to ourselves or our Allies unless deserved, but this is a situation as I see it in its purely military aspect."

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