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A MYSTERIOUS QUEST.

CHAPTER XIV.

Master of the Situation. (continued)

'Oh, yes; oh, yes. But I must not see him. Why has he come here? It is fatality, I must go.'

'I will go with you,' she said; and they left the summer-house together, not turning their heads, though the temptation to do so was equally strong for both.

'I saw him when I left the flowers at your house,' observed Miss Aspinwall, as they hastened over the lawn.

'He came in before I left. Is he an old friend of yours? Pardon me if I appear too curious.'

'He was not a friend; he never came till that day, and then he came on business. He is an artist.'

'I know that; I recognized his face; he is well known in the city. His pictures, such as I have seen, are exquisite.'

'Miss Aspinwall was smiling. Her gait and manner were redolent with joy.'

'The signorina, on the contrary, seemed to have weights on her feet. She stumpled once or twice, and her restless eyes had a sort of terror in them. Suddenly she asked:

'You know his name, then?'

'Certainly; it is one that New York is proud of. Hamilton Degraw. Surely you have heard of it?'

'Yes.'

'They were now at the foot of the steps leading up to the huge portico of the great pillared mansion. As the signorina uttered this assent, she looked back. Miss Aspinwall followed her example. No one was visible on lawn or walk.

the language of which it would have been hard to interpret. Then she started again to her feet, and opening her trunk, took from it a telegram-blank, upon which she wrote one line. But before she had signed it, she paused again, and stood so long with it fluttering in her hand that she might have been taken for an exquisite statue of irresolution. Finally she tore up the contemplated telegram saying as she did so, in the sweetest of musing tones:

'I will not meddle with fate. Let it bring me what it will. Its gifts may be better than any I have lost, that any I have sought for.'

CHAPTER XV.

A STARTLING INTRODUCTION.

Miss Aspinwall's hospitality was of the notable order. An orphan with no relations, she had cultivated friendship to its last extent, and consequently, never at a loss to fill her house with congenial and delightful companions.

This summer she had for chaperon an elderly widow well known in New York circles, around whom she had gathered a dozen or more young people of both sexes, so that the house was as merry as youth and gaiety could make it.

She herself was the balance-wheel to all this mirth and joyousness. Though cheerful by nature, she had suffered too many griefs, and felt too keenly the responsibilities of wealth, to be ever over-joyous. Yet there was in her smile so much sympathy and joy that the lightest-hearted felt their measure grow greater when they drew near Hillary Aspinwall.

Though alive to mirth, she had for sorrow a still greater sympathy. In the midst of the laughing tribe that scattered itself over the lawns, or gathered in merry groups about her halls and piazzas, there was one from whose lips the laughter rang false, or whose eyes a shadow lay deeply hidden, she was sure to catch the broken tone or mark the secret tear; and though she would make no betrayal of her discernment at the time, when night came she would steal into the presence of the young girl whose grief she had surprised, and, taking the seemingly happy one into her arms, so win her confidence by delicate questions or silent caresses that the brimming heart would overflow, and the secret trouble be told almost without its sufferer's own volition.

As! she was a noble woman, Hillary Aspinwall, as many a crushed heart which she has comforted can testify; and if in the face which Hamilton Degraw calls "A Poet's Dream" there are some idealizing touches not to be found in the original, no brush or no fancy could idealize the soul which has informed that face, for it is itself ideal.

For such a one, happiness should be the natural right. Nothing that the earth contains is too good for her, nor any love too rich. Is she to have her reward, then? Are the best treasures of earth to be given to her who

is always heaping treasures in the lap of others? She has wealth, she has honor, she has friends, she has health. Will she have love? Let us look at the circle which surrounds her on this exquisite June eve, and see if we can answer this question.

She is sitting on the large piazza, amid a group that feel the influence of the starry heavens about them, though they do not look that way, but rather into the faces of those with whom they are conversing. The talk is of--what? Who can say? Who would care to repeat? But the looks are for her; that is, the looks of at least three men who stand there; one against the large pillar that shields the moonlight from her eyes, one behind her chair, and one on the outskirts of the group, who, if he does not advance, has another reason for his modesty than that of indifference.

And to any one looking at her now, such interest would seem only natural. Though the other women grouped about her are more or less fair, attractive or vivacious, in none does the pure light of womanliness shine with such a radiance as in her, while in her beauty there burns a chaste fire which is not always to be seen there. What has called it forth? The influence is not fully apparent, yet it is felt by these men who study her this night with their souls in their eyes.

Are her thoughts with them? The man by her pillar has the air of a satisfied lover; but, then, the depths of his purse have never been sounded, and some say that neither have the depths of his conceit. The others do not seem so happy, though one of them stands so near to her that he can hear the short sigh that now and then parts her lips. Do they miss something from her look or glance that they have been accustomed to see there?

It may be, for now there is a change. She has heard a step on the gravelled walk beneath, and mistress as she is of herself, she cannot quite suppress the flutter of expectation which that sound provokes. She moves and others move with her, so that there is quite a stir on the piazza as two figures emerge from the shadows beneath and pause, one in manly grace and the other in feminine beauty, for a mutual smile of glance, before mounting the broad light of steps. Two! and she has perhaps, anticipated but one!

The man is Mr. Degraw, and the woman Signorina Valdi, or, as she is now called, Miss Rogers. He has become a frequent guest at the house and she a recognized inmate, but never before have they been observed together. The sight calls up strange looks on the faces of their youthful companions, and more than one further glance is cast at their silent hosts. But her self-possession is great and there is no lack in the cordiality with which she welcomes the appearance of these two. But when, the first flurry over, they all settle down to renewed conversation in the now brilliantly lighted parlor, those who love her best feel that something has gone out of her manner that made it the sweetest and most encouraging in the world, and one at least of the three men who adore her intercept more than one of her glances that steal, despite the pride of the heiress and woman, to the huge window-seat where sits the artist beside the singer, so happy and proud that he forgets to hide either his satisfaction or his delight.

As for the signorina, she was in that soft mood of unexpected happiness which makes a woman beautiful, whatever her features. She to whom Nature had given the perfection of grace was so much the more captivating. From the crown of her lovely head, drooping with the weight of untold hopes, to the tip of her dainty foot, she was the incarnation of joy shadowed only by the wonder which such joy often brings. Though she did not speak, much less sing, her whole figure breathed forth music, and one person present heard it, and heard it as plainly as if she had walked at her side a half-hour before, and listened as spirits listen, to the vows which the ardent artist had whispered into the beloved one's half-averted ears. Love, pure and perfect, had breathed across this virgin soul, and a deeper love than hers had noted it and taken a lesson therefrom--the lesson of pain and patience, generous sympathy and womanly sacrifice.

The more disinterested persons in the room had collected about the piano, where one of their number was playing thrilling airs from Guonod. As the melody filled the air, more than one tongue was loosed of the secret that burdened it.

'Do you observe the couple over there?' one of Miss Aspinwall's lovers--not the most generous--whispered in her ear. 'Boy Cupid has been busy with one or both of their hearts since we saw them last. I think I can discover the tip of his wings fluttering in and about between them now. What do you think?'

To be continued.

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UNCLAIMED LETTERS, REMAINING IN G. P. to Nov. 25th, 1911.

Table with columns A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z listing names and addresses of unclaimed letters.

SEAMEN'S LIST.

Table listing names and details of seamen, including Kirby Stanley, Rogers, Beskley, Anstey, Richard, etc.

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The Evening



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Fads and Fashions.

Oriental seed pearls are again in favor. There is a veritable rage of this season. Cloth-covered buttons are seen every gown. The fashion of one-sided effects still in power. Fur is used extensively in the making of new hats. Large flat hats of felt and velvet have brims of fur. Black velvet makes a superb lining for white broadcloth wraps. Velled effects are still in vogue among the costume blouses. Platinum takes precedence for the most fashionable jewelry settings. White kid is used to trim some of the stylish new hats for children. For afternoon wear velvet is often combined with mousseline de soie. The black steel-beaded scarf is very charming and blends with every gown. Jewelry this season is delicate and open in design so as to resemble delicate lace. The corsage bouquet of every sort and kind of flowers adds much grace to evening gowns. Black charrusee is a favorite material for gowns to be worn under the long fur coat. Electric Restorer for Men Phosphorus restores every nerve in the body to its proper tension restores vigor and vitality. Penetrates every cell and all excesses are averted at once. Phosphorus will make you a new man. Price \$2 a box, or two for \$3.50. Mailed to any address. The Scotch Drug Co., 100, Catharine St., N. Y. C.