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Sweet Eva!

CHAPTER XVIII.

She looked at him as he sat opposite to her in the carriage and saw the worry in his eyes, and with sudden impulse she leaned over and touched his hand.

"Philip—I am sure there is no cause for alarm. I am sure he will be much better when we get there. I daresay he asked Mr. Calligan to send for you."

Philip looked down at the hand resting on his, he said with an effort "Yes, I hope so, too."

He let the window down and stared out over the darkening country. How everything had changed in the three days since they left it; then the sun had been shining gloriously; now it might have been a chilly October day judging by the keen, damp air, and the pungent smell of the wet earth and fields.

He rose to his feet with unutterable relief as the train ran into the station. He was out on the platform before it had properly stopped, looking eagerly up and down.

"Someone ought to be here to meet us," he said. "I wired. I thought perhaps Calligan . . . Here he is."

He turned eagerly as Calligan came quickly towards them. He was muffled to the eyes in a big waterproof coat. He glanced once at Eva and hurriedly away again.

Philip caught his arm.

"How is he? Better? What happened? He was all right when we went away."

"It was a stroke. I—Phil, old man—I'm so horribly sorry, but—but you're too late. He died half an hour after I wired."

There was a very real emotion in Calligan's kind voice. He knew what a bitter blow this would be to his friend.

He was desperately sorry for Eva, too. What a home-coming for her! For a moment Philip stood quite still. Great as the dread in his heart had been, he had not expected anything so bad as this. The shock robbed him of all power of speech or even thought. Then he began to walk on blindly.

Eva followed with Calligan. The tears were running down her cheeks. She had had such a happy life, even in the days when they were poor, and now it seemed as if it was to be nothing but tragedy upon tragedy.

A car from the Highway House was waiting for them outside. Calligan put Eva in to it and Philip followed.

"I'm going in front with Banks," Calligan said. He gave them no time to object; he shut the door.

Philip moved forward with his face buried in his hands. He had forgotten his wife; he had forgotten everything—the awful shock of the news.

It had been a vain sacrifice after all. He had striven at the very foundations of his own happiness in a blind endeavour to save his father from disgrace, and now his father was dead.

Eva sat beside him silently till she could bear it no longer. She slipped her hand through his arm.

"Oh, I am so sorry, so sorry, dear," she said. The little word of endearment slipped out without her knowledge.

"If I could only do something to help you."

He moved his arm away from her. He felt that her sympathy would be more than he could bear just now.

"It's all right," he said unseeingly. "I'm sorry for you, too . . . If you'd rather go home—to your people . . ."

It won't be very cheerful at the Highway House just now. I'll tell Banks to stop if you'd rather go home."

For an instant she struggled with her pride. Was she so little to him that he did not care to take her with him even now? Then she remembered that he was in sore trouble, and that her place was by his side.

"I will come with you, of course," she said quietly.

He made no comment, and presently the car turned in at the gates of the old house.

Everything looked so different from what it had done when they left it only three days ago.

The flowers in the garden beds were beaten down by the rain. The house was almost in darkness, and silent—so silent.

Eva shivered as she followed her husband into the hall. She felt as if a lifetime must have passed since she was here before.

A red-eyed maid took her coat and bag; she heard Philip asking where his mother was; heard Mrs. Winter-dick's voice from upstairs: "Phil! oh, Phil . . ."

Philip went up the stairs two at a time.

Eva looked at Calligan with a little quivering smile.

She felt oddly out of it and unwanted, and he seemed to realize it, for he held out his hand—

"I dare say you are cold and hungry. I told them to light a fire—let me get you something to eat."

He took her into the drawing-room and put her into an armchair; he took the pins from her hat with clumsy fingers, and fetched a stool for her feet.

"It's no use all of us being uncomfortable," he said when she protested. He rang for a maid and ordered coffee and sandwiches.

"Philip's all right for a little time," he said cheerily. "We'd far better leave him alone."

He made her eat and drink; he noticed how pale and unhappy she looked, and he thought apprehensively of Peter's incoherent story.

"I'm glad I happened to be here," he said presently. "It was an awful shock to everyone, of course . . ."

"I'm glad you are here, too," Eva said.

She was glad; she felt instinctively that there was someone who would be a kind friend to her.

She wondered why he coloured as their eyes met.

"Have you seen any of my people?" she asked him presently. "Father—or Peter, or any of them?"

She felt that she had been away for years, and that she wanted to hear news of them.

"I've seen Peter once or twice," Calligan told her. "I sent a message

over this afternoon to say that we'd wired for you."

She looked at him gratefully.

"You seem to think of everything," she said.

She held her hands to the fire and watched the light shining on her wedding ring. There was a little silence. Calligan was watching her with thoughtful eyes.

He was more glad than he could express to see her again. He was conscious of a sort of quiet content at being with her.

Eva looked up suddenly and met his earnest gaze.

"What are you thinking about?" she asked impulsively. Calligan started guiltily.

"I was wondering why you hadn't finished your coffee," he said, with pretended severity. "Haven't I put enough sugar in it—or too much—or—"

He stopped as the door opened and Philip came into the room.

Eva rose at once and Calligan slipped away.

"I've been wondering what is the best thing for you to do," Philip said. He spoke to his wife without looking at her.

"I don't want you to stay here if you would rather go to your own people, but my mother, of course—"

Eva interrupted, her colour deepening a little.

"I shall stay here; at least—I I shan't be in the way," she added rather pathetically.

Philip seemed more of a stranger to her now than ever before, and yet she knew that deep down in her heart she had never cared for him so much. Ever her first romantic love for him had not touched the depths which these last three days had reached so easily.

He looked a little relieved.

"Thank you—I am glad," he said. "Your rooms are ready for you and mother would like to see you, if you will go to her."

She waited a moment, but apparently he had nothing more to say, and she passed him with drooping head. Her heart seemed to be breaking with passionate love and pity for him. She longed to go back and tell him that she could not live this life any longer, but she went on steadily, and the door closed behind her.

She met Calligan in the hall; he saw the tragedy in her eyes, though Philip had been blind to it.

He asked a hurried question.

"Are you all right? Is there anything I can do for you?"

"No—nothing, thank you."

He went to rejoin his friend.

He was sure now that disaster of some kind had befallen these two, and already, without the least knowledge of facts, he condemned Philip; his face was a little untriedly as he entered the drawing room.

"The winter tells me that you've been a brick," Philip said. Calligan shrugged his shoulders.

"I happened to be here—that was all."

"I wish to God that I had," said Philip.

There was a little silence.

"It's rough on your wife—coming home to this," Calligan said then deliberately.

"Yes," Philip got up and began roaming restlessly round the room.

"I suggested that she went to her own people," he said presently. "I thought it would be better for her; but she preferred to stay here."

Calligan stared.

"You suggested—" he began blankly, then stopped; he was afraid of saying too much.

There was a little silence.

"I should have thought you would have wanted her here rather particularly," he said then dryly; for the life of him he could not have kept the words back, but Philip hardly seemed to have heard. He came back to where Calligan stood by the fire.

"I hope you'll stay here for a bit with us," he said. "Can you manage it, do you think?"

Calligan laughed rather dryly.

"I can manage it—but . . . wouldn't you rather I cleared out? I should have gone back this morning, only . . . well, you know."

"I should like you to stay if you haven't anything better to do."

"My dear chap, when have I ever had anything better to do?" Calligan had been thinking lately with a sort of chagrin of the rather aimless existence he had led since his "various days."

A small income, just sufficient for his not very extravagant wants, had been his ruin.

There had been a time when he had had great ambition, and when people had prophesied a future for him; but he had drifted—there had never been any real incentive to get on; he was a singularly friendless sort of man.

He had often thought in an abstract sort of way of getting married and having a home of his own, but he had never met a woman who had helped the abstract idea to mature until a week ago when he came to the Highway House and met Eva Dennison.

And she, of course . . . He looked at Philip with a cynical smile in his eyes.

(To be continued.)

DINNER TO-NIGHT—THE C.L.B.C. Old Comrades are holding their annual dinner in their Club Rooms, C.L.B. Armoury, to-night.

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DIVORCES MADE EASY.

Buenos Aires.—The Uruguayan divorce laws have made the city of Montevideo the Mecca of the ill-matched couples of the neighboring republic of Argentina. The Buenos Aires newspapers refer to Montevideo as a "matrimonial safety valve" and drily observe that up-to-date divorce legislation has been rendered unnecessary in Argentina by the enterprise of the Uruguayan law-givers. According to La Razon of Buenos Aires, the Montevideans (possibly in a fit of repentance for having dissolved so many Argentine unions) are now endeavoring to hold the balance even by making marriage an easy and expeditious matter in their capital. So far have they gone in the latter direction that they have been condemned by both Uruguayans and Argentines. One cynical scribe, however, remarks that the "marriage while you wait" system should serve as an excellent feeder to the divorce court in the slack season.

Fashion Plates.

A PLEASING APRON DRESS.



3821. This model supplies the place of a house dress and is adapted for all house keeping activities. It has comfortable lines and ample pockets. Checked or striped gingham with pique for the facings would be good for this style. Voile, percale, poplin, cotton crepe, chambray, linen and unbleached muslin are also good for this style.

The Pattern is cut in 4 Sizes: Small, 34-36; Medium, 38-40; Large, 42-44; Extra Large, 46-48 inches bust measure. A Medium size will require 5 yards of 36 inch material.

A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 15c. in silver or stamps.

A POPULAR STYLE.



3814. An ideal winter costume. Soft woollen serge, poplin, rep, gingham, linen, pongee and taffeta are attractive for this model. The sleeves may be joined to the dress or gumpie.

The Pattern is cut in 4 Sizes: 6, 8, 10 and 12 years. A 10 year size will require 2 3/4 yards of 27 inch material for the gumpie and 3 3/4 yards for the dress.

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HENRY BLAIR

A Million Hours Ago.

FIGURES TO MAKE YOU GASP! Scientists are fond of telling us of things which happened ten, twenty, or thirty million years ago; but does anybody realize what these immense periods of time mean?

What was happening a million days ago? If you make a simple calculation, you will find that a million days is 2,739 years; a million days ago, about the year B.C. 80, Rome had not been built, King Uzziah was reigning at Jerusalem, and two hundred years were to elapse before the Jews went into captivity in Babylon.

Counting for Two and a Half Days.

Of what happened a million weeks ago we know nothing except what we can deduce from prehistoric bones, implements, and weapons!

A million hours ago—in 1870—the Battle of Trafalgar, fought two years before, was fresh in men's memories; we were in the midst of our struggle with Napoleon, which did not end for eight more years.

A million minutes? Two years all but thirty-six days! Well then, what of a million seconds? Surely that cannot be a very long time! A million seconds is eleven and a half days. If you were to count rapidly, without

stopping for a moment, it would take you from eight o'clock on Monday morning until midday on Wednesday to reach a million.

Just People!



A six-year old girl submitted the following composition on "People" to

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THE NEW FRENCH REMEDY THERAPION

her teacher:—"People are composed of girls and boys, also men and women. Boys are no good at all until they grow up and get married. Men who don't get married are no good either. Boys are as awful bother. They want everything they see except soap. My ma is a woman, and my pa is a man. A woman is a grown-up girl with children. My pa is such a nice man that I think he must have been a girl when he was a boy."