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**For Love of a Woman;**

**New Romeo and Juliet.**

CHAPTER XXIX.  
WICKED LORD STOYLE.

"Yes, they are," said Lord Cecil, and he turned the remaining jewels over as he searched for something.

"What are you looking for?" demanded the marquise, his eyes fixed with a strange expression upon the pearls in Lord Cecil's hands.

"I am looking for the ring. I suppose there ought to be one to make the set complete. There is everything else here."

The marquise's face seemed to grow grey; then he laughed a dry, harsh laugh.

"The ring is missing," he said, almost inaudibly. "It went with—"

"No, no," cut in Spencer Churchill, softly. "I saw it at the bottom of the box a moment ago; but really, my dear Cecil," he continued, hurriedly, as if to prevent the marquise contradicting him, "I don't think they would suit dear Lady Grace as well as some of these other things. Now, if I might suggest, may I?" and, with smooth deftness, he took the case from him and picked out a diamond-and-ruby bracelet. "Now, that is the kind of thing which would please dear Lady Grace. These pearls will be more suitable when she is married."

The marquise took the bracelet, and Lord Cecil fancied that the claw-like hands trembled slightly, and looked at it absently. Then he dropped it on the table and turned aside with listless indifference.

"The pearl suite will do," he said, curtly. "Take it and give it to her. Will you be good enough to send my man to me?" he added, as a hint that he desired to be rid of their presence.

"Good-day, sir, and thank you," said Cecil, moving to the door.

"Stop, my dear Cecil—the safe. You must put those jewels away and lock it, you know."

"Let him go. You can lock it," said the marquise, with icy impatience.

"Oh, Cecil will lock it," murmured Spencer Churchill. "I am going to get some lunch, marquise," and with a nod he went to the door, but there he turned. "Oh, would you like a newspaper, marquise?" he asked, and as he waited for the reply he watched Cecil lock the safe and deposit the keys in the cabinet drawer.

"No!" answered the marquise, almost fiercely, and the two men went out.

Spencer Churchill locked his arm in Lord Cecil's reluctant one.

"Dear marquise!" he murmured, softly. "So generous and—er—thoughtful! You have made him very happy, my dear Cecil, and be sure that his happiness will find its reflection in your own heart. Ahem! Did you notice, my dear Cecil, how—er—unwell and, so to speak, generally feeble he looked?"

"No," said Cecil, gravely.

"No? Then perhaps—indeed, I fervently hope—that it was only my fancy; but I certainly did think that I saw a change in him since last I was here. I do hope it was only fancy! The world could ill afford to lose so great and kind-hearted a man as our dear marquise! And so you are going to marry the beautiful and charming Lady Grace! Ah, youth, youth! what a blessed possession it is! How I envy you, my dear Cecil!"

"Thanks!" said Lord Cecil, curtly. "I'll tell Lady Grace, who will feel duly complimented, I've no doubt."

"Yes, yes; tell her, you happy rogue!" said the philanthropist; and, with a playful nod and a laugh, he watched Cecil go down the hall and out at the door.

Then his face changed to one of keen reflection, and, as he went into the dining-room to the little lunch he had ordered, he muttered:

"Yes, the one I want is there; and the keys are in that drawer, which he always keeps locked. I must have that will; but how?"

When the invitations to an evening party at Stoye House were issued, they caused as much astonishment to the recipients and the world at large as if the trustees of the British Museum had announced their intention of giving a dance at that revered institution.

Only a very few of the last generation remembered any entertainment at Stoye House, and they declared that the rumour must either be false, or that the marquise had at last, and very appropriately, gone out of his mind; and it was not until signs of the vast preparations for the event made themselves felt that the world began to realise the truth.

Then arose such a struggle and scramble for tickets as occurs in connection with one of the events of the season, and Lady Grace was worried and pestered for an invitation as if it were a permit to Paradise itself.

For a couple of seasons she had been the acknowledged belle, but now it seemed as if suddenly she had become one of the veritable queens of society. Wherever she went she was surrounded by a crowd, eager to lay their tribute of adulation at the feet of the beautiful girl who had succeeded, where so many had failed, in securing handsome Cecil Neville, the future Marquis of Stoye. Women who envied and hated her approached her with faces wreathed in smiles and voices soft and affectionate. Her carriage or her horse in the Park was surrounded by men eager to claim acquaintance with the future marchioness, who could give them invitations to so many shooting and hunting parties "when the old marquise died!"

And Lady Grace bore herself through it all with charming moderation. She delighted in all this worship; but it may be truly said that she was never happier than when Lord Cecil was by her side. Some of us tire of the prize we scheme and toll so eagerly for; but in Lady Grace's eyes the prize she had so basely won increased in value day by day.

She had loved him the first night they had met at Barton Towers, and her love, perhaps by opposition and the struggle she had made to win him, had grown into an absorbing passion. She was restless and nervous when he was absent, and those who knew her well could tell when he was in the room or near at hand, by the joyous smile on her lips and the soft glow in her eyes.

"Always thought that girl had no heart," remarked one keen observer. "Only shows how a fellow can be mistaken in a woman. She's as clean gone upon Cissy as a girl can be."

"And Cissy?" queried the man to whom he spoke; "what about him?"

The cynic shrugged his shoulders.

"Don't know. Seems as if he's got something on his mind, and couldn't get it off. Never saw a man so changed in all my life. Perhaps his happiness is rather too much for him."

And yet Lord Cecil's conduct gave no cause for evil comment. No man could be more attentive to his fiancée. He was with her every day, was by her side at nearly all the "at homes," was seen at the crushes at concerts and balls, her shawl upon his arm, the arm itself always at her command; and yet the old "Cissy" had gone, and in its place was the tall, grave-faced man, with the look as if he had something on his mind.

The night of the party arrived. Some preparations had been necessary, and they had been made with the lavish hand. The big house, which had sheltered so many generations of the Stoyle through so many London seasons, was ablaze with lights, which shone upon the handsome decorations of the great saloon and the magnificent dresses of the women.

Only at one of the state balls could have been seen such a display of diamonds, and very soon after the ball commenced it was declared by the experienced that it would prove the event of the season.

It was not until the fourth dance on the list had been reached that the marquise put in an appearance. Lady Grace, magnificently dressed—robed, one might say—had been questioned concerning his absence by the throng that surrounded her, but had shaken her head with a charming smile as she answered:

"He has promised to come into the room, if only for a few minutes; but I don't know when he will come."

She was, by right of her beauty and position, the queen of the brilliant assemblage, and she reigned in truly queenly fashion. Lord Cecil, moving about as host during his fiancée's absence, glanced towards her now and again, and said to himself that if he needs must choose a mate, he could not have chosen a more beautiful or more splendid one. But he sighed as he made the admission, and there rose before him the vision of Doris's ivory-pale face, with its wealth of dark hair and witching blue eyes; and he would have given half that remained of his life to be sitting at her feet once more—only once more!

He was roused from one of these fits of reverie by a subdued murmur of interest and curiosity, and, looking up saw the tall, thin figure of the marquise entering the room at one of the doors leading from his private apartments.

The clean-cut face was deadly pale, but the dark eye shone with a hard, steel-like brilliance, and the thin, cruel lips wore a reflection of a smile as he came forward and greeted those near him.

There was no vulgar pushing and crowding; but somehow, in an impalpable kind of way, a circle gathered round him, and then the marquise of old, or a shadow and semblance of him, shone forth. The polished wit, like a rapier long disused, leapt from its scabbard and set the group admiring and laughing as of yore. As he moved from one to the other, addressing his courtly flattery to the women and his biting cynicisms to the men, a feeling of wonder ran through the room.

"By Heaven!" exclaimed an old man, who remembered him in years gone by, "it is like a resurrection! It is like going back a quarter of a century! That is the kind of wit we were accustomed to, sir! Look at him, and compare him with the young fellows of the present day! And don't tell me that he haven't degenerated!"

Lord Cecil stood a little apart, looking on at the success which the marquise was making, the enthusiasm which he was arousing, when he felt a hand softly touch his arm, and Spencer Churchill's unctuous voice purred in his ear:

"Do you see the dear marquise, Cecil? Wonderful, isn't it? Quite like what he used to be, I assure you! Remarkable man. Really, it fills me with admiration and—er—astonishment. Did you hear that brilliant repartee of his at which they are all laughing?"

"No," said Cecil, gravely.

"Astonishing! Ah, my dear Cecil, he is a marvellous man. They were saying that he was going to dance—a square dance, of course, just a—walk through a quadrille; but I shouldn't think—oh? Why, yes, he is!"—he broke off, smoothly—"actually is!"—and followed by Cecil, he made his way towards a circle that surrounded the marquise, who was seen going towards Lady Grace.

"These young people have set me thinking of old times, Lady Grace," he said in his clear, metallic voice. "Will you dare to brave their ridicule by giving your hand to an old man? Or perhaps you would prefer a more suitable partner?" and he shot a sarcastic glance at Cecil, who had now reached his side.

(to be continued.)

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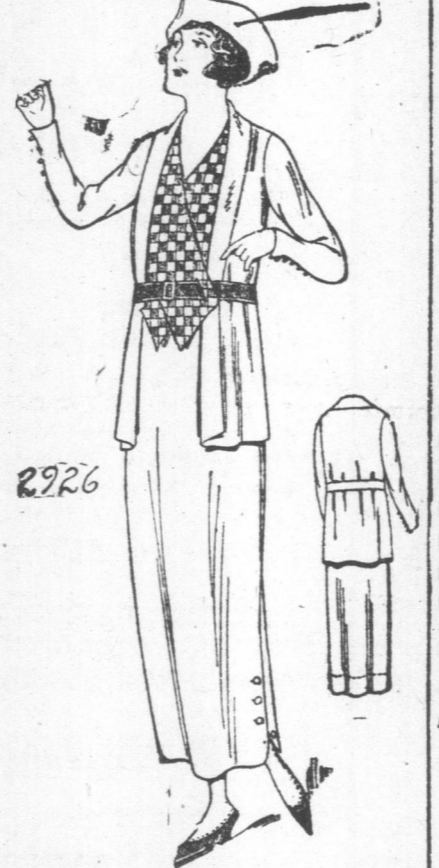
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2720—Seersucker, gingham, galatea, drill, khaki, percale, lawn and linen may be used for this style. The sleeve may be in wrist or elbow length. The dress is a one-piece model.

The Pattern is cut in 7 sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. Size 38 requires 6 1/4 yards of 36-inch material. Width at lower edge is 2 1/4 yards.

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2926—For this style, tricotine, serge, taffeta, velour, gabardine, or velvetene could be used. The vest may be of contrasting material as illustrated or of the cloth, braided or embroidered. The skirt is cut so that the side seam edges may be unconfined at ankle length, but if preferred, the seam may be closed.

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