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EW GILLET COMPANY LIMITED
TORONTO, ONT. MONTREAL

**Love in a Flour Mill,
OR,
The Romance of Two
Loyal Hearts!**

CHAPTER XXIV.

Dexter Reece rose and followed, as if to prevent him ringing.

"It's late!" he said, with barely concealed agitation. "She will have retired for the night. To-morrow—"

"To-morrow the marriage will be performed," said Raven, with a smile and a gesture. "It will be only kind, considerate, to prepare Cara. You agree with me, I am sure."

He rang the bell, gave a message to the servant, came back to the table, and, filling the glasses, raised his, saying:

"To your future happiness!"

Dexter lifted his glass to his lips; but he could not drink, and he set the wine down untouched. His brain was in a whirl. Up to the present, he had been calm, self-possessed enough; he had even been able to control himself when Raven had agreed to share the proceeds of the ruby; but this prospect of marrying the girl who was Sir Mortimer's daughter shattered his self-command, overwhelmed him. Moreover, Raven's cool acceptance of the proposal staggered Reece; the idea that Raven thought it possible—in fact, absolutely certain—that he could compel the girl to marry whom he pleased seemed to Dexter Reece simply preposterous; and it was some minutes before he realized that he was in a foreign land—in Italy—where such sudden contracts are still not infrequent.

Then, again, he was impressed by the unscrupulous nature of the man with whom he was dealing, and, unconsciously, he began to reflect as it were Raven's audacity. All the same, Dexter Reece was too clever not to know that he was being dragged out of his depth. But could he draw back? He himself had proposed the marriage; could he now declare that the idea was too preposterous, too melodramatic—in fact, impossible?

The minutes passed. Dexter Reece sank in a chair, with his hands thrust in his pockets, his head lowered, listened in a kind of stupor to the other man, who continued talking in a momentous voice, as if to himself, of the places where the Giant Ruby could most safely be offered for sale. Presently the door opened; there was a rustle of silk—a girlish figure, wrapt in a silk peignoir, stood regarding them.

Dexter Reece sprang to his feet, and looked at her half fearfully. As he did so he recalled the face of the girl who had stopped the horses outside the mill. Could it be possible that this was the same girl? The change in her smote even his callous heart. She was lovely still, lovelier perhaps than when he had seen her last; but her face was pale, her eyes wore an expression of sorrow, of anxiety, almost of despair—there were dark shadows beneath them; the face was thin and hollow. The bird had indeed fluttered and pined in its gilded cage! But she still held herself erect, her eyes met Dexter Reece's with the old pride, the old hauteur and defiance; the expression in them now was too contemptuous for surprise; and she waited with perfect self-possession and composure, as if he were nothing more than a servant.

Dexter Reece lowered his eyes before her steady gaze, and stood quite

still, with his hands pressed on the table.

"You sent for me?" said Cara in a low voice, coldly, steadily.

"A thousand pardons for disturbing you, dear one!" said Raven, with exaggerated courtesy. "I have to speak to you on important business. You will take a seat, will you not, Cara mia?"

She made a faint gesture of refusal.

"No?" he said. "Ah, well!" the business will not take long. This gentleman—you know him; you met him at Thorden Hall, there in England—it is some time ago; but he has not forgotten you. You still linger in his memory, in his heart; and he has come here to seek you, to ask you to be his wife."

Cara stood perfectly still; the expression of her face did not change. She looked from one man to the other, and waited.

Raven stood with his head on one side, regarding her with a malevolent smile.

"You are startled, dear little one," he said; "you have lived so long out of the world that you have not thought of a lover—a husband. Ah, yes! but I have been thinking for you; and behold!" he motioned to Reece—"this is my choice. He is an Englishman; you are fond of the English. That is well, for they are good and wise. This is one of the best of them. Mr. Dexter Reece is a man of wealth. You will travel—he will take you to England; he will make you very happy. But—he spread out his hands, including them both in the gesture—"he shall speak for himself."

She turned her eyes on Dexter Reece, and waited, as if she were compelled by force to play a part which could have but one ending.

Dexter Reece moistened his lips, and approached her; but something in the sorrow-stricken eyes kept him from coming near to her.

"I am afraid you are startled, shocked, by the suddenness, the abruptness—" he began, with something of his usual ingratiating suavity. "You have almost forgotten me, I fear, Miss Cara."

She spoke at last.

"No, I have not forgotten you," she said, quite calmly and gravely, with a contempt which cut him like a whip.

"I remember you very well. Will you tell me what this means? Is it a jest? It cannot be true, this that my father says, that you want to marry me! Why have you come to insult me? I have only seen you two or three times. You treated me then as if I were a servant-girl. You know nothing of me; and yet you say you wish to marry me! What is it you expect me to say?"

"I beg you will listen to me," he said. "I know how strange it must sound to you, this—this proposal of mine; you will think that I am insincere, that I have some purpose to serve—"

She broke in upon him at this. The scorn now flashed from her eyes as they swept from one man to the other.

"What else could I think? You know that I am a prisoner here—yes, a prisoner; you come to insult me, knowing that I am helpless to protect myself. You ask me to marry you; you expect an answer—is it really that you expect an answer? Then I will give it to you—No!"

Dexter Reece moistened his lips again, and drew his hand across his brow; he felt like a whipped cur.

"I—I cannot but accept," he stammered.

But Raven, who had been regarding them with a sinister smile, stepped forward and held up his hand.

"Tut, tut!" he said. "Too much words!—too much words! Cara, mia, you are very foolish; you speak in haste. You have not considered; you require time, dear child; it is only natural; it is only proper. Retire, dear one, to the rest we have disturbed, and think. To-morrow the ceremony will take place. Alas! it is necessary that we hasten the matter; Mr. Reece is leaving Italy."

He opened the door for her, with a mocking bow. She stood for an instant, regarding Reece with a mixture of contempt and curiosity; then turned and left them.

Dexter Reece dropped into his chair, and drew a long breath.

"I told you," he said thickly. "For heaven's sake, let the thing drop!"

Raven smote him on the shoulder.

"Tut, tut!" he said. "You are a craven kind of lover, Mr. Reece. But dispel your fears. As I have said,

we are not in England; we manage our daughters differently."

"You will never manage her," said Dexter Reece, with impatient contempt of the man's self-confidence.

"We shall see," retorted Raven. "I have managed her hitherto, my friend."

"By force!" returned Dexter Reece. "You will not be able to force her to marry against her will."

"Be here to-morrow morning at ten o'clock, and I will show you," said Raven, darkly.

Dexter Reece jerked his head incredulously.

"I will come," he said; "but I warn you, it will be useless. Now, the ruby!"

"Ah, yes! the ruby," muttered Raven. "I will fetch it."

How To Get Rid of a Bad Cough

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If you have a bad cough or chest cold which refuses to yield to ordinary remedies, get from any druggist 2 1/2 ounces of Pinex (50 cents worth), pour into a 16-ounce bottle and fill the bottle with plain granulated sugar syrup. Start taking a teaspoonful every hour or two. In 24 hours your cough will be conquered or very nearly so. Even whooping cough is greatly relieved in this way.

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He left the room; and Reece, unable to remain still, sprang up and paced up and down, his face working, his hands twitching. Would the man return; or would he play some trick, escape him after all? The cold sweat stood on Reece's forehead; he felt choking, and he tugged at his collar. The door opened presently, and he sprang forward as Raven came softly across the room. The two men stood opposite each other at the table, looking into each other's eyes.

Raven drew his closed hand from behind him, extended it, opened it, and showed a small wooden box.

Dexter Reece felt sick and faint. Ever since he had heard of it, he had lived for this ruby, had hungered and thirsted for it all day, had dreamt of it at night. He had hard work to keep himself from snatching at the box.

"Open it!—Open it!" he said, in a hoarse whisper.

(To be continued.)

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The temperature of a child's sick room should never be under 60 degrees nor above 65.

Two level table-spoonfuls of rice to a pint of milk will make the proper rice pudding.

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**Evening
Telegram
Fashion Plates.**

The Home Dressmaker should keep a Catalogue Scrap Book of our Pattern Cuts. These will be found very useful to refer to from time to time.

1525. — A NEW AND PRACTICAL FROCK FOR MOTHER'S GIRL.

1525

Plaid gingham in blue and red tones is here combined with white pique. The style is also good for chambray, percale, galatea and linene, repp, poplin, mixed suitings, shepherd checks and serge. It could also be used for velvet, or corduroy. The dress is a one piece model, with deep plait in front, forming a wide panel. The belt is worn over the front, and under the back, where the fullness is gathered. The sleeve is trimmed with a shaped facing, in wrist length. In elbow length it has a turn back cuff. The neck edge is cut deep, and finished with a collar in new outline. The pattern is cut in 4 sizes: 4, 6, 8 and 10 years. It requires 3 3/4 yards of 38 inch material for an 8 year size.

A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 10c. in silver or stamps.

1534. — A SEASONABLE POPULAR STYLE.

1534

A leading and becoming style is here shown, youthful and trim, and cut on graceful lines. The waist and skirt fronts are combined. The side portions and back of the skirt join the waist at hip length. Tiny revers facings outline the neck and meet a jaunty flare collar. The sleeve is close fitting and shaped at the wrist. The plaited fullness of the skirt is a good style feature. This model is nice for serge, poplin, velvet, gabardine or broad cloth. Taffeta or satin in matched shades are good for its trimming. The Pattern is cut in 3 sizes: 16, 18 and 20 years. It requires 5 1/2 yards of 33 inch material for an 18 year size.

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