

Rosamond's Adventure.

BY LILLIAN CLAXTON.

CHAPTER II.—Continued.

AFTER all it was not a serious offence. At a calmer moment, Rosamond might have laughed at it, but just then she was blinded by rage. She had made herself ridiculous in the eyes of Mr. Thorndale, and by telling Clement of the affair, she started a tale in Calanoosie concerning herself and Ned Vanstone which would never die out but gather in the telling; worst of all to think of, Ned Vanstone himself must have been laughing in his sleeve at her all the time, as he drove her backwards and forwards on her mysterious errands.

She walked wrathfully down the hill. The familiar figure she had learnt to look for, was coming towards her, alas, that Fate should bring him across her path just then! The intensity of her annoyance made her restrain herself, she gave him a cold bow, and would have passed on, but he stopped her.

"What, are we not on speaking terms? Miss Ferrier," with a sudden change of tone, "is it true that you are leaving on Monday?"

"It is quite true," she answered, looking him full in the face, but he had lowered his eyes. *Guilt!* thought Rosamond.

"I—I wanted to know if I might drive you to the station on Monday. I will provide something better than the waggon if I may," with an attempt at a laugh.

"No thank you, Mr. Vanstone, I have had too many drives with you already."

The long lashed brown eyes were raised and looked at her in mute astonishment.

"We will say good bye here," continued Rosamond, "thank you for any trouble you may have taken on my behalf."

Ned Vanstone took off his cap and bowed low, with a mocking smile growing about his mouth.

"Oh, I have to return you this," said Rosamond, suddenly pausing, as she was turning away. She drew out her purse and took three one dollar bills from it.

Ned looked at them.

"I don't understand your meaning, but you have insulted me sufficiently, already Miss Ferrier. Keep your money."

"I refuse to have it," Rosamond responded, and dropped the bills at his foot.

Ned smiling sweetly, but with blazing eyes, stooped, picked up the bills and tore them across.

"The birds possibly may be more avaricious," he said scattering the bits to the winds. "Good afternoon, Miss Ferrier, I do not know who has been poisoning your mind, some day, perhaps, you

will come to your senses, and recollect how a lady should act under any circumstances."

And so they parted, he going up hill, and she down, dashing tears of mortification and disappointment from her eyes as she went.

On Monday Rosamond left Calanoosie, she called at the post office for her letters on her way to the station. There was only one; her face went scarlet when she saw the hand writing, she put it in her pocket, and opened it in the train. This was what it contained:—

"If the photographs of the house on the Lonerock Road, are finished, will Miss Ferrier kindly wrap them up and put them aside, ready to be called for, in case she should be out when the messenger comes?"

"Wretched boy!" said Rosamond, "he

antic routine of woman's work in her quiet little home. Spring time has faded into haying, and haying into harvest, and now the leaves have fallen, and the rowan berries, and scarlet hips and haws, are the only color in the bare country. Bye and bye the minister leaves. Calanoosie is a sort of purgatory on earth for the unfortunate young ministers who are sent there; it is a fiery furnace of trial with its watchful criticizing eyes, its hard work and poor pay. The Rev. James Thorndale succumbed very soon. The old house is therefore left desolate once more, apparently its last brief romance is ended. Rosamond coming down in the Fall without her camera, to pay a flying visit at Mrs. Longton's, where Clement still

began and ended the pleasant spring-time,—let it go.

Mrs. Longton, Rosamond and Clement, were sitting round the supper table one evening in the old fashioned kitchen with its heavy beams, and lattice windows—a cheery little party, Rosamond severely rating Clement for having helped himself to the last piece of hot buttered toast. Suddenly Clement broke out irrelevantly.

"Say, Rosamond, did you ever find out who sent you that letter last May?"

"Yes," said Rosamond, stiffly, "of course it was Mr. Vanstone."

"That I am positive it was not," returned Clement, who had got over his momentary pique about the matter, "for I was talking to him about it after you left, and he was as puzzled as could be, and as innocent as a baby."

"He was pretending," said Rosamond, with a slight curl of the lip, but anyone looking closely might have seen an expression of uncertainty gather in her eyes, she looked with knitted brows at her cousin.

"That he was not, I'll stake my life on it. Men don't tell lies to other men about such things as that. He declared up and down that he knew nothing about it. I think you owe him an apology. From all I hear, you were pretty hard on him," wound up Clement virtuously, with his happy knack of forgetting his own short comings in any matter.

"He shall have it," said Rosamond faintly, "if ever I see him again."

"Which you're not likely to do," rejoined her cousin, "though I believe his people expect him home for Christmas, but that is more than a month off, and you leave next week. But to return to the writer of this letter, it is more complicated than ever. It must have been the ghost!"

A few days later Rosamond had occasion to go along the Lonerock Road on an errand for Mrs. Longton. On her way back, she glanced at the white house. Here the first little romance of her life had begun and ended. She paused a few moments by the roadside, in the red sunset light and keen frosty air.

Hark! was it only in her imagination, that a voice came singing down the road the road.

"The auld house, the auld house,
What though the rooms were wee?"

No, it was not imagination, Ned Vanstone himself was cowering swiftly down the road. She stepped forward to bar his progress, just as he had once stopped her, coming down the hill at Calanoosie.

"Mr. Vanstone!" she cried.

To her horror, consternation and surprise, Ned Vanstone raised his hat, made her a swooping bow, and—passed on. She could not run after him, she could not beg him to stop or call her apology after him. Tears of mortification began to gather for the second time, in her eyes, for Rosamond really liked this young man, she had thought far more about him that past summer, than she would have cared to have owned. She walked dojectedly home and had no appetite for the cakes Mrs. Longton had made especially for her tea.



HURRAH FOR JANUARY—

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means to brazen it out to the last, and pretend that he did not do it."

CHAPTER III.

Calanoosie is deserted at last, at least so far as having lost the two brightest figures that had lately trodden its hilly roads. Ned Vanstone no longer rattles along in his waggon, singing as he goes, or chats with the idle group of loungers in the village post office; the little photographic lady never now meets the merry young man on the Lonerock Road, or waits within her studio, to portray the natives of Calanoosie. The studio itself has vanished, a cheese factory is being erected on the spot. Ned is toiling with book and pen in the busy city Rosamond is going through the ordinary unrom-

boarded, quite thought so. She would stroll sometimes with a rather wistful face, past the deserted place. Was it only six months ago, she would wonder, since that gay young voice went singing down the road,

"There no'er can be a new house,
Will seem so dear to me!"

What a fuss she had made about that unfortunate letter! What a little thing it seemed now, looking back over six months—a piece of boyish folly! How absurd, even undignified, certainly unladylike, her anger! So she would reproach herself, taking all the blame upon her own shoulders, as we all do at times, often, alas! too late in the day. Well it had been a pleasant acquaintanceship,