



**The Romance of a Marriage.**

**CHAPTER V.**

Bob stares, so calm and cool as the speaker's voice and manner.

"Hope you had a good time of it?"

"Yes," says Bob. "Oh, yes! Not much in my line, though."

Silence again, during which Bob stares with a pardonable curiosity at Paula. Is he to do all the talking? What has come to her? Usually her tongue runs nineteen to the dozen.

"I don't know whether you have a pipe after breakfast?" he says, getting up. "I always do. Paula, where did you put the tobacco?"

Paula gets up and fetches the dog-head tobacco-jar, but still without a word.

"I'll have a cigarette, thanks," says Sir Herrick, and he takes out a case on which is balanced the Powis arms. "No use offering you one, if you go in for a pipe."

"No, thanks; no use to me," says Bob. "Now I'll show you my flies. Paula, will you get me my fly-book? It's in the left-hand pocket of my shooting-jacket. No it isn't, though; it's in my fishing-basket."

Paula glides out, and then, outside, draws a long breath.

Sir Herrick Powis! The last of the Powises! What on earth must he think of her? In her thought. Then, with the fly-book in her hand, she stands outside the door and recalls Bob's words of the preceding night.

A gambler, a spendthrift, wild and bad. Oh! impossible, with that quiet face, that frank smile! At any rate, Bob has kept his word; he has made him welcome. But, then, Bob would make the greatest outcast on earth welcome, if he came at meal-times. Bob's hospitality is Arabian.

She goes in quietly with the fly-book. They are sitting opposite each other in the two easy-chairs, Bob puffing at his pipe, Sir Herrick smoking his cigarette; and as she enters she hears Bob's laugh, and she sees by his face that Sir Herrick—the gambler and the spendthrift, the everything that is bad—has won Bob's heart.

"Oh, here's the book," he says. "Thanks. Now I'll show you the proper fly. Paula, take hold of this line. That's the fly; they can't withstand that. Here, take it; I've got plenty more. We'll go and try the mill-pond directly."

The door opens and May appears.

"Mr. Jackson, sir, about the calf."

Bob rises at once, as if Sir Herrick were nobody.

"All right, tell him I'm coming. Excuse me, will you? A man on business," and off he goes, with his pipe in his mouth.

Paula stands with the fishing-line in her hand, and looks round meditating flight, if she can find some excuse; but before she can invent one, Sir Herrick rieg.

"Miss Paula," he says, flinging his cigarette in the grate, "I'm afraid you are offended!"

"Offended?" says Paula.

"Yes, I know you have good reason to be so. It was awfully cool cheek of mine last night. I'm very sorry. It was done on the spur of the moment; and, after all, there wasn't much harm, was there?"

"You mean the dance?" says Paula, with downcast eyes.

"Yes, the dance," he says in such a tone that Paula feels an irresistible inclination to laugh. "It was all my fault," he says. "I ought not to have done it, but—well, with a pause—it was an awfully jolly dance."

At this Paula's effort breaks down, and she laughs, a low, rippling laugh.

"I don't think you are very penitent," she says.

Then he laughs, and his eyes, resting on her face, laugh with his lips.

"Not a bit," he says; "and if you aren't, what does it matter? But you were right about your brother. He is a brick!"

"Isn't he?" says Paula, quickly.

A word in praise of Bob is the way to reach her heart.

"He is," he repeats, "a perfect brick. And—looking round the room—what a delightful room this is! I'm glad I came to Hampden."

"Are you?" says Paula.

"Yes, very, very glad," he says, and he comes nearer to her, looking down at her—he is only a head taller. "I shall stay as long as I can. Don't trouble with that line, Miss Paula; give it to me," and he takes hold of it gently; but Paula has managed to get it wound round her white, shapely fingers, and as he endeavours to release it, his fingers get entangled with hers.

"What a mess it is in!" he says.

"Oh, never mind," says Paula, and she tries to get rid of the cord, for the touch of his hands has called up a strange sensation, which is as embarrassing as it is strange. "It doesn't matter. It is only—an old line."

"One moment," he says in a low voice, and he bends over her hands.

"There!"

Paula whips her hands behind her as Bob enters.

"I'm very sorry, Sir Herrick," he says, "but I'm afraid I can't go with you this morning. A man has come over on business, and I'll have to go with him. It's Jackson, Paula, and he says there are some pigs at Wolf-den Market. I shall have to go and see them."

"Doesn't matter in the slightest," says Sir Herrick, walking up to him. "Any other day will do."

"But this is just the morning for fishing," says Bob, regretfully, "just the morning."

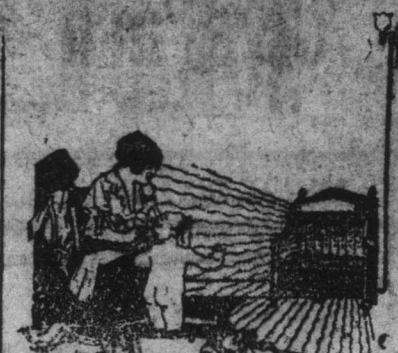
Then a brilliant idea strikes him.

"Here, Paula," he says, cheerfully, "you go with Sir Herrick, and show him that place just below the mill pool."

"Oh, I couldn't trouble Miss Paula," says Sir Herrick; but his eyes brighten as they rest on her downcast face.

Bob laughs.

"Oh, it's no trouble. She can throw a fly as well as I can—pretty nearly—and she knows all the best places."



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Don't you, Paula?"

"Yes," Paula murmurs in confusion.

"Let her go with you," says Bob, all forgetful of the character he had given his guest. "She'll put you on the proper spots. Mind, Paula, the end of the mill pool, just in the shallows."

"But," says Sir Herrick, remonstrating, "Miss Paula may not care—"

Bob cuts in with a short laugh.

"There's nothing she'd like better, Sir Herrick. Get your hat on, Paula."

And Paula, after a moment's hesitation, dutifully obeys.

After all, what else can she do, unless she should be downright mulish?

**CHAPTER VI.**

Of course it is not the proper thing for a young lady to accompany a young gentleman, alone, after the first few moments of introduction; especially if she has also been guilty of the indiscretion of waiting with him on a gravel path the preceding evening, without any introduction at all. But what can Paula do?

Bob, who knows about as much of the conveniences and etiquette generally as a bull knows of crochet-work, and who looks upon Paula as little better than a child—who is wont, indeed, on occasions to call her "the kid"—has simply issued his orders, and she can scarcely turn round with a blank refusal, or explain that Bob's suggestion is shocking.

Sir Herrick could help her if he likes, and he does mutter something about "troubling Miss Estcourt, and taking up her time;" but Bob cuts him short with a laugh.

"Oh, Paula," he says, with all a

brother's indifference. "It's no trouble to her; she'll enjoy it; her time's her own. You can take my rod, if you like," he says to her, graciously, and adds, for Sir Herrick's information, "she throws a very decent fly."

Paula gets her hat and Bob's lightest rod, and when she comes down finds Sir Herrick standing under the verandah with his rod in his hand.

He greets her with the smile that seems almost familiar to her now.

"The ladies are gracious to me," he says. "Are you really coming, Miss Paula? Don't, if you'd rather not. I'll accept any excuse, I assure you."

"I haven't got one ready," says Paula. "Besides, Bob's word is law—when my sister Alice is not about. I think I'd better go."

"I breathe again," he says. "I thought you would back out of it."

"This way," says Paula, with a laugh.

He lights a cigarette and slings his fishing-basket on his shoulders, then he lays hands on her rod.

"I'll carry that," he says, gently; and Paula relinquishes it.

They go down the winding path and across the meadows, and presently the brawl of the river, as it tumbles over the stones, smites upon their ears. Paula is very quiet, and Sir Herrick smokes in respectful silence. There is an air of attentive respect with which he opens gates for her and assists her over stiles, that is not lost upon Paula.

But given a lovely morning in June, and two young people of different sexes walking across meadows fresh with the breath of summer, and silence is rather difficult to maintain.

"And you go in for fly-fishing?" he says.

Paula colours as if he had accused her of a crime.

"I learnt it of Bob," she says, apologetically.

"A rattling good thing to learn," he says. "I only know one woman who could do it; and I often wondered why it didn't come into fashion with ladies; just the sport they could use to perfection. Wants a light hand and a keen eye, and those are just what women have. What a lovely morning! Ah, this is beautiful!"

And he stops short as they reach the river, and looks round.

It is a perfect little picture: the bright, blue sky above, just flecked here and there with white, fleecy clouds, the trees clad in their summer greenery, the silver steam bubbling over the smooth stones and boulders.

"Beautiful!" he says, drawing a long breath. "Jove! how happy you must be."

"Happy?" says Paula, with a smile.

"Yes, I suppose we are happy. Better put our rods up here."

He takes her rod and fits it for her, and follows suit with his own. Then he hands her his fly-book. It is a serviceable one of time-stained leather; but Paula notices that it is emblazoned with the Powis crest—two hawks with outstretched wings.

"You had better choose the fly," he says.

Paula nods and opens the book, and her dark brows come together thoughtfully, as she turns over the leaves.

He stands looking, not at the book, but at her; stands looking with the light of admiration in his eyes; there is so much of youthful beauty in the face as it is bent over the book that he wishes—as many a man wishes—that he had the power of transferring it to paper or canvas.

"That's the fly," she says, looking up suddenly, and very narrowly escaping his direct gaze.

"I'll put one on each line," he says, rather quickly, for her glorious eyes, in their intent look, startle him.

"There! Now you shall have the first throw."

"No," says Paula, firmly; you shall. You are the visitor, you know," and she laughs.

He is too well-bred to argue, and stepping to the edge of the stream throws the fly lightly on the water, and Paula stands a little way back watching him.

There is a cloud over the sun just at the moment; a most favourable time in which to ensnare the silvery trout; but they rise before him, he does not succeed, and Paula smiles.

Not as if he saw her, he turns his head.

"You are laughing at me," he says. "I won't throw another cast until you have!" and he steps back with a smile and a shake of the head.

(To be Continued.)

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The men had wrestled 2 hours 24 minutes without any sign of result, when the mighty Pole once more lifted his opponent high in the air and was whirling him around, trying to make him dizzy, with the possibility of securing a fall by the flying route. But Stecher was evidently doing some thinking during his involuntary merry-go-round ride, for, as he went to the floor, he was on the giant's head like a cat, pinning him down with a head, scissors and arm lock.

It was all done so quickly that few spectators had realized what happened. The Pole, himself dizzy from his revolutions, could offer only feeble resistance as the deadly combination of holds closed on him. His shoulders neared the canvas and then stuck there.

**All About It There.**

A mutual friend of mine told me a good story recently concerning the new Ambassador.

It appears that soon after his father bought Cliveden, his stately "ne-

near Maidenhead, there occurred a flood in the Thames Valley.

Lord Astor (he was plain Mr. Astor then) was in America at the time, and being wishful to know if the beautiful grounds at Cliveden had suffered any damage, he cabled to his eldest son in England:

"Send particulars of flood."

Now it chanced that Mr. Astor junior was away in Scotland at the time, and had heard nothing of the Thames inundation, which, as a matter of fact, was not very serious.

He could make neither head nor tail of the cablegram, so eventually thinking it must be some new kind of joke on his dad's part, he cabled back:

"Look in the Book of Genesis."

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