

# DIAMONDS FOR THE BRIDE

Or, a Proposal by Proxy

## CHAPTER XI.—(Cont'd)

Never did a sun so slowly climb the heavens as the sun of that morning. The Archdeacon came across from the Court, and went with Hungerford into the church, which the Swaynes' gardener was decorating with pot plants—white azaleas and lilies, set off by the green of ferns. Other decorations had been set up overnight, and Gower, walking down to meet his best man at the station, saw arches here and there along the road, gay with bunting and evergreens, and bearing the legends, "Long life to the happy pair," "Health and happiness to Mr. and Mrs. Gower." There was sunshine for a fortunate omen, there were these evidences of good-will; surely now the hour approached and was about to strike, he need not remember the evil forecast of his dreams. But yet, so wilful in the mind of man, they did recur to him again and again in the light of that day. He would not be fully at ease, he thought, until the ceremony was over, until he had lifted the bride's veil and found that it covered Dulcie's face.

## CHAPTER XII.

If the sun made slow ascension in those morning hours for Gower, they seemed to pass rapidly amid the preparations at Fortune's Court. The interval was filled full between breakfast and half-past noon, when Dulcie, in a dressing-gown slipped on over lace-trimmed petticoats, was lurching in her room off a cup of soup and sandwiches, before assuming the glories of a finished toilet. She was a composed bride, not in the least agitated or tearful. She tasted her cup of soup critically, and observed that a certain spice had been overdone; the sandwiches were consumed with a sufficient appetite. Stephens was of opinion the bride should take a glass of wine, but Dulcie refused it, nor was it needed to sustain her spirits. Margaret and Mrs. Swayne were with her, but Stephens would be paramount till the great feat of dressing was accomplished. There was now a pause, an interval for refreshment, in which conversation was not out of place. Mrs. Swayne had carried up the bride's bouquet with her own hands, and it lay breathing sweetness into the room, a sweetness which was almost over-great. A few pale pink roses, delicate as the inner tinting of a shell, were mingled in the bouquet with the white.

"It isn't quite the regulation," said Dulcie, explaining and hovering over it, sandwich in hand. "George said he wouldn't have the bouquet all white, because it reminded him of funerals. And I told him I did not care, provided the color was not strong enough to show. I was afraid he might insist on sending me scarlet geraniums."

The name struck sharply on Margaret's ear whenever spoken, and it was perpetually dropping from Dulcie's lips. The name is an ordinary one—commoner perhaps a century ago, than in the present generation; but still frequent enough to make it far from surprising that the husbands of two sisters should both be so called. And here was another coincidence. Margaret remembered how the other George—her George—had shown the same prejudice against white flowers for a bride. Did all bridegrooms share it, she wondered? She remembered what he had said about it, and the very words he had spoken. "I shall break through all the rules, my darling, and send you a red rose to fasten on your breast. It is the fittest emblem of love, my love for you; and I hate white flowers at a wedding, for they look like death."

She had had no bride's bouquet with her simple toilette, but the red rose had breathed its fragrance while she made her vows, and, far away at Barbizon, in some treasure-casket, its petals were cherished still.

"I hope the children have something nice," said Dulcie, fingering the satin ribbons of her bouquet. "Baskets theirs are, of course? Did you see them, mamma? Are they downstairs?"

"Stephens can fetch one, if you like," suggested Mrs. Swayne. "Yes, they are pretty; tied like yours with white satin, and filled with roses of the same pale pink. And there is a rosebud buttonhole for Ernest."

"Ernest looks such a dear," the bride went on to Margaret. "There couldn't be a prettier page than he makes in his cap and feather." Stephens murmured assent, and then added, "I think he'll be real careful with your beautiful train, ma'am, once he understands."

"Of course he will," said Dulcie, as one to whom trains will be in the future. Stephens nodded. "He had ought

to be careful," she said impressively, "for 'tis a real beauty, as Miss Swayne can see."

The splendid dress was spread out on the bed, satin and lace and chiffon, with a court train of brocade woven with silver threads. It was almost too stately in appearance for so young a bride, but the style and the material had taken Dulcie's fancy, and she would have her way. Stephens was taking the wreath out of its florist's box, a slight affair of orange-blossom and myrtle, with a mingling of white heather.

"Now, Margaret, you had better go and dress," the bride commanded. "See, mamma is dressed already, and nobody must be late. Stephens will have me ready by the time you are back again, and then you shall help to put on the veil."

Margaret went as she was bidden, to her own smaller chamber. Her dressing was a simple affair, but all the same, the touch and sight of that soft muslin gown stirred her heart. She had worn it in its first freshness at her own quiet wedding, and since then it had been reverently laid aside. Such a different wedding from this of Dulcie's, with all its pomp and circumstance. The civil marriage had come first, and then the religious ceremony, in which she and her George, a lonely man and woman, had knelt hand in hand for a blessing on their vows. Never bride in splendid attire lifted a more thankful heart for God's great gift to her of a man's true love; and now for every throb of happiness which belonged to that former time, there was an empty ache of pain.

She had not minded the loneliness, for her husband was going to be all in all to her; with her hand in his she would no longer miss father, sister, home, nor the dead mother in her grave. But alas! how few had been the days of joy in which that clasp sustained her; how long and dark, stabbed through with every anguish of uncertainty and suspense, the widowhood which came after! The sight of herself so attired was almost more than she could bear, but she owned no other gown in which she would have been fitly dressed to stand at Dulcie's side as a guest of that day.

There were soft folds and edgings of lace which crossed upon her bosom, marked yet with the fastening upon them of the red rose of her marriage day. A knot of narrow velvet took its place; the hue of sorrow instead of the hue of love. Nothing could have been simpler, but all was exquisite in its fitness, purely white. "You look perfect!" was Dulcie's exclamation as this elder sister went back to the bride, who was now fully arrayed, her train spread behind her on the floor. But some last adjustment had proved necessary, and Stephens was at work on the confetti with a needle and thread.

Perhaps the needle was just then at an awkward angle; perhaps it was the sudden movement on the part of the bride as she looked round at her sister, for Dulcie was an impulsive little person, unpractised in the art of holding still. Whether Stephens' fault or her own matters little, though it was afterwards somewhat hotly debated. The result was a long scratch deeply torn in her fair arm, bare below the elbow—a scratch deep enough immediately to run with blood.

"Oh, look here! Stephens, how could you? Quick, a handkerchief!" cried Dulcie in an agony. But the handkerchief was not in time; before it could be applied a couple of spots had fallen, crimson on the pure satin of her gown. "Oh, what shall I do? My dress is spoiled; no one could fail to see it, here in front. And blood is so unlooky!" The bride was thoroughly wretched, and I attribute my recovery entirely to the regular use of Grape-Nuts food. It has, I assure you, proved an inestimable boon to me.

"Tch—tch! ma'am, you should have kept still," protested Stephens; "you knew I had the needle." But despite recrimination the maid's distress was equal to the mistress's, and she could have wept too. There was no time to waste in scolding; it was necessary to decide at once what must be done. Stephens insisted that if Miss Dulcie was careful how she held her bouquet, the stain would never show; but the bride was hysterically positive that church-going was for her a thing impossible unless it could be covered. Mrs. Swayne had gone downstairs, so there was only Margaret to keep the peace and to suggest, and at first the suggestions did not please—the altering of a festoon of lace to come up higher, or the sewing on of flowers cut from the bouquet.

"You will have to tell George I can't come," sobbed Dulcie in her anger.

"No, no; we will devise some-

thing," returned Margaret. "Have you any oil paints? I think—I am almost sure—I could paint over it to cover it just for now, and then your dressmaker must put in a new width before it is worn again."

It was the best expedient thought of in the hurry of the moment. Under Dulcie's direction the paints were found—palette and brush and drying medium, and soon Margaret was busy blending them to the exact ivory hue of the rich white. There was a patch upon the brilliant texture of a different surface, but that could not be helped; the disfigurement of the red stain disappeared under the covering over-laid. If Gower could have seen her, the white bending figure, the manipulation of the palette, might have recalled his dream of the night.

"I suppose that must do," said the bride grudgingly, when the operation was over; her natural graciousness was too much jarred to admit of thanks. "I don't think it shows much. But it will spoil all my pleasure to know it is there. And then you know"—with another sob—"it is so unlooky!"

The glass of wine, refused before, had to be administered before there could be a final drying of tears. The blemish was a double one; the marred gown and the ugly strip of plaster on her arm, hidden as it was under the long glove—a glove it would be needful to take off for the ceremony, but which, directly after, might be assumed again. Then came the final dropping of the veil over the exquisite small figure, and the fastening it in place with a couple of diamond pins, a gift sent by Lady Swinton to her niece. Margaret put in the pins, for, in her ruffled temper, Dulcie would hardly let Stephens touch her. Then at last the bride was ready, and the train gathered on her arm to go downstairs.

She pouted at her own reflection in the glass at the last moment before turning away. "I'm always hideous," she said, "when I have been crying. My eyes are red; it is no use saying they are not, for I can see it, and my nose is pink. I call it quite a tragedy!"

This was the final word of the toilet, and then the two sisters descended to the hall, where they were somewhat anxiously awaited.

Here the household were now gathered to see the bride in her splendor, and the little page half-brother was instructed in his office of train-bearer. Cousin Joan was there with her two lovely children, who were the bridesmaids. A path of red cloth had been laid down, and in the clear weather of that day carriages were dispensed with, the wedding party intending to walk the short distance between house and church. Dulcie began to recover her spirits and forget the disaster. She enjoyed the admiration, the importance; her huge bouquet was a shield to the damage, and now her arm hardly smarted at all, covered as it was from the air.

The sunshine was coming out from behind the temporary cloud, and, immersed in her own concerns, she had no eyes for the look on her father's face, seen for the first time that morning. May was there to see her, and he stabbed through and through by the arrow of her beauty; and presently there would be Hungerford, another victim. Yes, she thought as she waited on Colonel Swayne's arm for the signal of departure, it was funny, really funny, that Hungerford should be marrying her in a different sense to the one he wished, and in her private breast she would have given much to know if her priestly lover minded, and what he was thinking now.

(To be continued.)

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A lady lecturer writes from Philadelphia concerning the use of right food and how she is enabled to withstand the strain and wear and tear of her arduous occupation. She says:

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Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

## THE LION'S ROAR.

Famous Hunter Says It Denotes a Sense of Satisfaction.

"One of the most notable characteristics of the lion is his roar, which is one of the grandest and most awe-inspiring sounds in nature," says F. C. Selous, the well-known African lion-hunter, in the "Encyclopedia of Sport."

"But fully to appreciate this magnificent music of the wilderness one must hear several lions roaring in unison, in the immediate vicinity of one's camp; and it is quite possible to have passed several years in the hunting-grounds of Africa without having met with such an experience, although lions would of course frequently have been heard roaring at a distance of a mile away and upward. The volume of sound produced by four or five lions all roaring together more than a mile away will, even at that distance, be so great as to make one believe that they are within a hundred yards; but when they are really close, the hiss of their breath can be heard at the end of the grunts with which each lion concludes his actual roaring."

"To compare the booming call of the male ostrich with the roar of the lion appears to me altogether unjust to the latter, as an ostrich calling three hundred yards away could only be mistaken for a lion roaring in the far distance, and could never be mistaken at all by an experienced ear, as the ostrich has only three notes, the first two short and the third long-drawn-out; and although the quality of the sound is somewhat similar, the call as a whole is absolutely different from the roaring of the lion, which, beginning with a low humming purr, rises gradually into a magnificent volume of sound, and then dies down and ends in a few short hissing grunts."

"In my opinion, lions roar freely only when full and satisfied; and when going down to drink in this pleasant frame of mind, they often stop at intervals of about ten minutes, and after indulging in a good roar, again proceed on their way. At other times they will roar all night long intermittently round the carcass of an animal on which they are feasting. Usually, therefore, I consider that the loud roaring of lions denotes a sense of satisfaction; but sometimes it must mean defiance, as I remember once hearing lions roaring loudly some three miles from my camp, and on riding out at daylight to look for them, found first of all a single big male, and then another male in the possession of four females, which I feel sure the former was anxious to annex, and the latter determined to hold for his own, each of them giving vent to his feelings by roaring, in which the females very likely joined."

"When a lion comes prowling round an encampment or a wagon outspanned in the wilderness, with intent to seize an ox or horse or some other domestic animal, he does not make a sound, and his presence is generally first realized when he has actually got hold of his victim. I presume, therefore, that the same very natural tactics are pursued when he is hunting for game, and that at such times also he does not go about announcing his whereabouts by roaring."

"Sometimes I have heard lions emit a kind of low purring growl, which is very difficult to locate. Such low growls I fancy sound a note of disappointment at not being able to find game, or of chagrin after being baffled, perhaps by the watchfulness of dogs, in an attempt to raid an encampment."

## LORD AVEBURY'S PET WASP.

The wasp is becoming a nuisance, and there are few who would choose a wasp as a companion. But Lord Avebury, who was Sir John Lubbock, is among the few, says the London Chronicle. Some years ago he captured a wasp in the Pyrenees and he kept her for nine months. "I had no difficulty," he writes, "in inducing her to feed on my hand; but at first she was shy and nervous. She kept her sting in constant readiness, and once or twice in the train, when the railway officials came for tickets and I was compelled to hurry her back into her bottle, she stung me slightly. I think, however, entirely from fright. Gradually she became quite used to me, and when I took her on my hand apparently expected to be fed. She even allowed me to stroke her without any appearance of fear, and for some months I never saw her sting." The wasp ultimately succumbed to the rigor of an English February, "and she now occupies a place in the British Museum."

A man went into a druggist's store and asked for something to cure a headache. The druggist held a bottle of hartshorn to his nose, and he was nearly overpowered by its pungency. As soon as he recovered he began to rail at the druggist, and threatened to punch his head. "But didn't it ease your headache?" asked the apothecary. "Ease my headache!" gasped the man. "I haven't got any headache. It's my wife that's got the headache."

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## LETTERS OF A SON IN THE MAKING TO HIS DAD.

—By REX McEVROY

[Mr. McEvoy will write for this paper a series of letters from the west. They will appear from time to time under the above heading, and will give a picture of the great Canadian west from the standpoint of a young Ontario man going out there to make his way. These letters should be full of interest for every Ontario father.]

No. 4.

Calgary, Sept. 4th, 1911.

My dear Dad:—

You will see I am still in Calgary. It is not that I am particularly taken with the town, but I have been knocking about with Mr. Renwick and finding out something about the country. You know I told you in my first letter that he and his three sons were on their way out to take up some of the C. P. R. irrigated lands. I was out to his place last Friday and stayed overnight with them. It is what is called a ready-made farm. The Canadian Pacific will break, harrow, seed and fence from 50 acres up, will put up buildings, and bore a well, so that you can go right on the farm with the crop growing and move right into your house. Of course they don't do it for nothing, but as you can pay for it in ten annual instalments along with the ten instalments for the land, it is spread over pretty well. Mr. Renwick reckons the farm will carry itself after the first year. He is all enthusiastic over the district. The company has demonstration farms close by, and they have pure bred sires of first rate breeds of live-stock, which are free for settlers' use.

Mr. Renwick knew some people who have located here, and that is why he came out. They say that the irrigation is like insurance against the loss of the crop through lack of moisture at the growing time. In 1908 oats were over 100 bushels to the acre, wheat 60 bushels and barley 91.

Mr. Charleton, who has a place near Strathmore, says that 1910 was the driest season for many years, yet all the people round there had some sort of a crop even without irrigation. With irrigation in the fall they are sure of good crops. People differ as to when the water should be let in from the irrigation canals. P. J. Umbrite, who has a place near Gleichen, says some people don't believe in putting the water on newly sown land, but he never cut finer oats than where he did this. He says that the best time to irrigate is late in the fall when the crops are off, and in the spring.

Quite a few people are going in largely for growing sugar beets in this district. They grow a good quality and can sell all they have at \$5 a ton anywhere in the irrigation block. This block is so small thing. It is forty miles north and south and 150 miles east and west. There are 1,500,000 acres in it. You strike the irrigation canal on the train a couple of hours before you get to Calgary, and it certainly looks a big work. They say it is the largest in the western hemisphere. It cost \$5,000,000, and there are 2,900 miles of ditches—imagine! If they were put end to end they would reach from Toronto to Vancouver and stick out into the ocean at that! And it is said that the company intend to spend \$12,000,000 more in extending the irrigation system. The winters here are quite mild—so

mild that they don't go in for any sports at Calgary that require snow. Horses are wintered out. Alberta is still quite a cattle raising place. The cured prairie grass puts on a finish, so they say, almost as good as grain. There is a big trade in cattle with British Columbia and the Yukon, as well as a big export trade.

The country is building up at a tremendous rate. Alberta has a population of 400,000, and when you go through it all stowed away. You would think that there would be more houses along the railway than there are. But when you think that Alberta is bigger than either France or Germany, and twice as big as the British Isles with their millions, it is easy to understand that there is plenty of room for 400,000 without overcrowding. But just to show how the country is developing—in 1900 there were 807,000 acres in the Province sown to wheat, while in 1909 there were 305,000 acres. That's going some. Last year, 20,000 acres were settled every day in Alberta alone. They say that 200,000 Americans came into Canada in 1910, bringing with them in cash and settlers' effects as much as \$250,000,000. There were about the same number of settlers from Great Britain and Europe. The western provinces keep pace with the growth of population in the matter of schools, and the people here say that the rural schools are in no way behind those in Ontario.

The cities, of course, are growing just as quickly as the country. Why, ten years ago Regina had a population of only 2,000, and now it has 22,500. Regina is the centre of a district of about 60,000 square miles with a population of 400,000. Amongst other things the town is the distributing point for agricultural implements, threshers and engines. Last year the agricultural implements distributed through this town were valued at \$20,000,000. In 1910, two new towns were incorporated in Alberta every week. This city of Calgary, sometimes called the "Sandstone City," because of the amount of building stone that is right here and is largely used in the stores and churches, was only founded in 1882, yet it has grown so rapidly that the C. P. R. has found it necessary to spend a quarter of a million on the new station. The building is a handsome one, and one that every one of the 60,000 population of Calgary and its suburbs can be proud of. In the last ten years the city has increased its population by seven times. It is six miles square, and there is quite a bit of real estate dealing going on in that square, too. You can judge that when you know that there are 200 licensed real estate dealers in town, to say nothing of the hundreds of people who are interested in "deals." There seems to be a real estate fever about. Three doctors who came out this year to practice have caught it and are in real estate instead.

Well, it's getting late now, and I must close up. I shall be going on to Vancouver to-morrow, so that I shall be glad if you would send the paper on to Uncle John's address. Thanks very much for sending it; I have always been glad to get it. Love to everyone at home. JIM.

Lots of people with sharp features are really dull.

Don't attempt to light your path through life by burning the candle at both ends.

The Youth—"Yes, I'm in business for myself, but I don't seem to be able to meet with any success." The Sage—"Nobody ever meets with success, young man. He must overtake it." "Of course," sneered the youth, sarcastically, "you think you know what's what?" "No," replied his old father, with fitting humility; "I simply know what used to be what when I was a boy."

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