

LADY IRIS' MISTAKE;

— or the —

Hero of 'Surata'

CHAPTER X.

"It was a hundred miles away, mother, and I was twice as tired, I would go," he said; and, pleased with her own penetration, his mother laughed and said to herself that she knew what was the matter with John.

John Bardon was delighted at the thought of seeing Lady Iris again; moreover, he was full of hope—the interest she had taken in him justified it, he thought. His father told him that Chandos was full of distinguished visitors; but what did that matter to him? He could hold his own amongst them if she would only be kind to him. Since he had seen her last, his one dream had been of her. He was touched by his mother's anxiety as he left home. She had a way of hovering about him when she was uneasy. She did not like to say anything to him about Lady Iris; but when he was starting, she went with him to the hall door.

"I wish I could throw an old slipper after you, for good luck, John!" she cried.

"Why, mother, I am not going to be married!" he replied. "There is no such luck for me."

"You deserve the best luck in the world, John!" she said; and to herself she added, "Lady Iris might do worse than favor him, if she had but the sense to see it."

It was a warm evening, and as he drove along the white high-road that led to Chandos the sun had never seemed so bright nor the summer wind so sweet. What would Lady Iris say to him? Would she appear languidly different; or would she wear that proud, queenly look, which always reminded him of the distance between them? Would she greet him with a calm, cool smile that would chill him, or with a bright, warm look that would send the blood coursing through his veins? How slowly the carriage seemed to move! More than once he called out to the coachman to drive faster; he feared he would be late.

At length the gray walls and the ivy-clad towers rose before him, and his heart beat fast. A little later he stood in the pretty white drawing-

room at Chandos, with Marie, his sister, by his side. He turned to her with trembling lips.

"Where is she, Marie?" he asked. "Do not look as though you did not know to whom I referred. I am interested only in one person—I forget all others."

"Lady Iris is well; she will be here directly. She thought you would like to see me for a few minutes alone."

His face lighted up with fierce joy that she was started.

"Did she really say that? Did she think of me? Did she think of what I should like? Oh, Marie, Heaven bless her!"

"My dear John, it was but ordinary civility," answered Marie, wonderingly. "We are brother and sister, and she thought you would have some message from home perhaps."

"Do not try and rob me of an unexpected pleasure," he said, hastily. "She thought of me, I tell you, and thought of what I should like. If you can give me no other comfort, do not deprive me of what I have!"

"My dearest John," she replied, gently. "I would not deprive you of a moment's hope, or comfort; but I see no hope. She is beautiful—as beautiful as the fairest May morning—but she is as proud as she is lovely. Can I say more than that? She is kind to us; but I feel that she tolerates and does not really like us. The very tone of her voice changes when she speaks to me and to you. John, think twice before you waste your love on her."

"I can take a great deal from you," he said, "for I believe you mean well; but do not try me too far. Lady Iris takes an interest in me—she told me so—and I swear that I will win her! I wish she were homeless, friendless, penniless, that I might clasp her to my heart, to show the world that it is her noble, queenly self I love, and that I do not care for her rank or her money. Forgive me, Marie," he added, when he saw his sister's startled face; "my roughness frightened you. I almost go mad when you utter such things!"

He would have said more but at that moment the door opened and Lady Iris entered the room.

"I thought you would like a few minutes chat with your sister, Mr. Bardon," she remarked sweetly.

"How musical her voice is!" said John Bardon to himself. But Marie thought that, notwithstanding its sweetness, there was in it a tone quite different from her usual tone; and she was right.

Some warm expressions of admiration with regard to Chandos which fell from the lips of John Bardon induced the earl to invite him to prolong his stay.

"You will enjoy being here while your sister is with us, Mr. Bardon," he said. "Send over to Hyne Court for all that you require, and stay with us for a little time. One of the groom's can ride over to-night." And John Bardon, delighted with the earl's hospitality, was only too pleased to accept the offer.

With perfect indifference Lady Iris heard the invitation given and accepted, but John Bardon was greatly elated. The earl had asked him to stay, and he drew many wrong and foolish conclusions from the fact. His love

for her was so patent to himself and filled his life so completely that he had an idea it was equally patent to everybody else. He argued that the earl must have seen it, and, as he had pressed him to remain, approved of and sanctioned it.

John Bardon's stay at Chandos brought matters to a climax. His love had been hard enough for him to bear when he was away from her and saw her only occasionally; but now that he was under the same roof with Lady Iris, seeing her almost every hour, his passion proved too much for him.

He saw also many things that astonished him. He found out that this beautiful spoiled girl visited and comforted the poor. More than once he had met her driving to King's Forest in a pretty little basket carriage loaded with jelly, wine, and tea, with books, flowers and game—for she showed discrimination in her charities, and took especial interest in the poor who were compelled to keep up appearances. Once or twice he had ventured to stop her and inquire how her proteges were. One day, when she was unusually gracious, he had said—

"I wish I could do something to help you with your poor, Lady Iris. I should be so pleased."

She looked at him with gray thoughtful eyes.

"You must have many poor on your own estate, Mr. Bardon," she returned.

"No, I think not. My father is a most liberal man, he pays good wages, and he has built schools and almshouses until poverty is but a word amongst us. Is there nothing I can do for any one in whom you are interested? Do you know any men out of work, or old people who want a home?"

"You forget," she answered gently, "that I have my father to apply to in such cases."

"You do not know how happy you would make me," he urged, "how delighted I should be if you would let me serve you. Perhaps there is no one I could assist just now, but, if any help should be needed, will you think of me? Will you make me happy promising that?"

Touched by his kindness, she promised; but it so happened that she never had an opportunity of keeping her word. He learned much more of the beautiful young heiress during those few days spent at Chandos than he had learned before, or could learn again. He was much struck with the kind manner in which she addressed her inferiors. He saw that she was adored by the whole household, and that, although she never uttered a harsh word, she was obeyed to the very letter. How different it was in his own house? When he and his father wished to reprove a servant, their invariable practice was to shout very loudly, and with the men to use rather emphatic words.

"She would rule a kingdom," he said to himself, "just as she rules this household."

Day by day he became more engrossed in his love. He spent long hours in dreaming of what he and she could do when they were married, and how much good it would be in their power to accomplish.

(to be continued.)

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(to be continued.)

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JAMES HARRIS,
Deputy Minister.
Dept. of Public Works,
September 26th, 1922.
sept27.51

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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.

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4098. Fashion portrays here latest features in this model. The long-sleeved, high-collared dress is a good style for ladies, and also for the new crop waists. Mohair and velvet are also appropriate. The sleeve may be in wrist, or shorter length.

The Pattern is cut in 7 Sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. A 38 inch size requires 7 1/2 yards of 32 inch material. The width of the skirt at the foot, without over-lapping portion is 2 1/2 yards.

Pattern mailed to any address on receipt of 10c. in silver or stamps.

A PLEASING APRON STYLE.



4098. This could be of unbleached muslin with bands of red and black gingham, or of black satin with self bands, and cross-stitching for a finish.

The Pattern is cut in 3 Sizes: Small, Medium, and Large. A Medium size requires 2 1/2 yards of 36 inch material.

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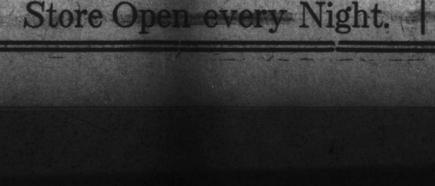
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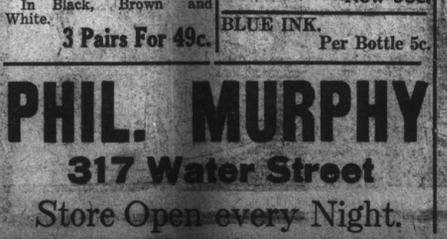
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