

HER HUMBLE LOVER

"Never!" said Signa, bitterly. "But I know that it is so!" he retorted, almost fiercely in his despair and jealousy.

"You say he is nothing to you," he said, desperately. "Swear that it is so; tell me that you do not care for him—that you will not marry him—and I—I will be satisfied; yes, I will not torment you any more. Tell me here and now that he is nothing to you, and I will be satisfied."

"You will not? No, I knew you would not; I felt sure of it! Even at this moment perhaps you know where he is—perhaps you came here to meet him."

"Let me pass!" said Signa, white and terrified. "I will not listen to another word; indeed, I think you are mad, in truth. Let me pass!"

With a muttered oath, he flung the gate to and locked it; and thrusting the key into his pocket, he turned on her. "To go to him! No, you shall not! If my love for you can do no more, it can at least guard you against yourself."

And he leant against the gate, and folded his arms with an air of dogged, insane determination. Signa steadied herself against the battlement of the turret with one hand. She had now come to the conclusion that he was mad indeed, and a cold-chill fell upon her, and deprived her of speech for the moment, but she struggled against the deadly numbness and pained courage. If he were indeed mad, she must coax, not exasperate him.

"Sir Frederic," she panted, "what am I to think of such conduct? You cannot intend to keep me here a prisoner. It is—it is too ridiculous!" and she forced a laugh that sounded hollow and fearful in her own ears.

"Give me your promise to have nothing more to do with this fellow," he said, hoarsely, "and I will go down on my knees and implore your pardon."

"I do not wish you to do anything of the kind, Sir Frederic. I wish you to open that gate and allow me to pass."

"I cannot, I dare not!" he said, wiping the perspiration from his face. "I will save you, even against your will, from this man. Tell me that he is nothing to you, that you will not listen to him or have any communication with him and I will be content. It is of you, not myself, that I am now thinking. Signa, Signa, listen to me!"

Signa shrank back—for he had extended his arms impudently—and leaning over the battlement called quickly for help. The cry seemed to madden him.

"It is useless, useless!" he said. "The man is deaf, and if he were not I have sent him home. There is no soul within

does not understand what he is doing. You must not touch him—you must not indeed!" Hector Warren's hand fell to his side. "I will not; leave him to me," he murmured, gently. "Go you and sit down. I will get the key from him."

"Come, give me the key," he said, firmly, but not roughly. "I am not to be trifled with," he added, sternly, under his breath. "I will not," said Sir Frederic, awaking as if from a stupor. "This place is mine; you have no right here; you have no right to interfere between me and this lady. Take your hand from my shoulder!"

"To keep the key! Give him the key!" implored Signa, clasping her hands in her terror. Hector Warren looked round at her with a reassuring smile. "Come, Sir Frederic," he said. "Be reasonable. Let me have the key. This farce—it is nothing more than a farce—has been played long enough. You have alarmed Miss Grenville by your tomfoolery, and should be ashamed of yourself. Give me the key."

"I will not," said Sir Frederic, with the intense stubbornness of a man half insane. "She has but to give me her promise, and I will not only give her the key, but I will implore her pardon."

"Oh, do not ask him!" implored Signa, a burning flush spreading over her face. "Persuade him to let you have the key, and let us go. Every moment is one of intolerable misery to me!" "You hear!" said Hector Warren, ominously. "The key—the key!"

"I will not give it to you," said Sir Frederic, sullenly. "Say what you will, do what you will, she shall not leave here till I have her promise."

"You will not!" said Hector Warren. Then, before Sir Frederic could guess at his intention, he had seized him by his arm, and dragged him in the buttress.

Signa sprang toward them with a cry of alarm. "What does this mean?" he demanded; and his voice, stern, though low and well in command, almost struck terror even to Signa's heart. "Are you mad?" And he went to the gate, and shook it with a force that must have brought it down if it had not been of iron and strongly made. "Give me the key! Do you not understand that you have alarmed the lady—terrified her almost beyond endurance? Give me the key!"

And he advanced to Sir Frederic, standing motionless, with an ominous darkening of the handsome face.

"No, no!" exclaimed Signa, darting between them. "He does not know, he

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tic, and soothing, but he was too wise; he simply stood, the strong hand—the hand that had grasped Sir Frederic with a grasp of iron resting on the gate. Moments that seemed minutes passed thus; then, as with a sigh she raised her head and glanced at him, he came toward her. "Are you rested now?" he asked, and his voice, which when she had heard it a few minutes before was so stern that it struck terror even to her innocent soul, was as soft and gentle as a woman's. The simple question, the gentle voice, brought the tears to Signa's eyes, and she put up her hand hastily to wipe them away. "Yes—yes, quite," she murmured. "That is well," he said, soothingly. "Will you not sit down for a little while?"

"I understand," he said, in a low voice. "And she—she did not know he was here?" "No, no, a thousand times no! I am sure of that!" said Signa, earnestly. "And now—ah! what am I to do? I cannot go back to the house!" and she raised her eyes to his with real alarm. "No, certainly not," he said, calmly. "Do you know the nearest path across the Park to the Rectory?" he asked, as if it were the most natural question in the world. Signa started. "What will they say?" She looked up at the moon, now high in the heavens. "What will they say to your returning so late at night and unexpected, and escorted by me?" he said, with that calm, masterful air which inspires confidence even in the most timid of women. "You must leave that to me. I will explain."

"You will not tell them?" "Does one ever tell one's bad dreams?" he asked, with a grave smile. "No, you shall leave it all to me. Are you sure you are strong enough to walk yet?" Signa sighed, but the sigh was of a different nature to that which had a few minutes before burst from her pale lips. "I am quite sure," she answered, simply. "And it was true. Her heart still beat fast and furiously, but a feeling of quiet serenity and peace was beginning to fall over her like a refreshing dew. The blood crept back slowly to her lips, the terrified expression vanished from her eyes, and a soft, tranquil glow took its place. It was almost as if she had obeyed his command, and had taken the horror of the last few minutes as a dream from which she had now awakened.

Looking down at her in the moonlight, he saw the change that had come over her lovely face, and his own brow lightened, and he drew her arm still more closely to his side. So they walked along the narrow path in silence. Signa tried to speak, to find some words in which to express the heartfelt gratitude toward him that throbbled in every vein of her body, but she could not. A sensation, half of delight, half of pain, was taking possession of her, and she almost fancied, as she looked up at the starlit sky, that this, too, would prove a dream, and that she should wake and find that he had gone. Presently they came to a seat under a tree, and without a word he led her to it. "You must rest a few minutes," he said, gently. "I am not tired, indeed I am not. And—I am afraid it is dreadfully late," and she smiled, but she sat down nevertheless. He stood beside her, and took out his watch. "It is not so late. No, I will not tell you the time," he added, as she opened her lips. "What is the matter?" for she bent forward with a sudden pallor and a low cry. "Your hand!" she murmured. He looked down at his outstretched hand; it was cut and torn, and was streaked with blood. "It is nothing," he said, with a smile. "Really and truly nothing," and he felt for his handkerchief. (To be continued.)

MARKETS OF PARIS. Buyers in the "Halles" May Not Carry Parcels of Any Kind. There are some queer customs and regulations in the "halles," the great Paris central markets. No buyer is allowed to enter or leave the markets carrying a parcel, however small it may be. To carry parcels is the privilege of the porters of these markets. Quantities are they in baggy velveteen trousers, blue striped jerseys and big brimmed, round leather hats. They alone can be employed to convey from the market to the street outside your merchandise, whether it be half a beef or only a good fat hen. Madame has to help in her purchases market women known as the keepers. These women sit at the entrance to the main division of the markets and for a small fee watch over all purchases brought to them. Many of these "salesladies" are wealthy. A portly dame, a small seller, wears a fine pair of diamonds in her ears and a sparkling solitaire on her ring finger. Another character at the markets is the "cutter." When a sheep is brought to him by the buyer for a half a dozen Paris housekeepers he cuts the animal into six portions and divides it among them. The purchasers draw lots for the best pieces and pay according to value received.—Exchange.

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Hot Salmon Canapes. A Salmon Appetizer Which You May Not Have Tried. Cut out six rounds of rather stale bread with a fancy cutter, and out of the centre of each round cut a piece with a smaller cutter so as to make a hollow case. Fry a golden brown in boiling fat, and drain. Take a teaspoonful of chutney, half a teaspoonful of curry powder, and a tablespoonful of brown or white sauce, and add two tablespoonfuls of salmon, salt and pepper. Pound smooth, and make very hot. Fill the croquettes with this, pressing it into a neat pyramid. Powder with sieved pork or beef and serve very hot. It is with flowers as with moral quantities; the bright are sometimes poisonous; but, I believe never the sweet.—Hare.

OPEN LETTER TO THE WOMEN OF CANADA FROM LADY GWENDOLEN GUINNESS

Captain the Hon. Rupert Guinness, A.D.C., C.B., C.M.G., R.N.V.R., Senior Officer of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, and his wife, Lady Gwendolen Guinness sailed a few weeks ago for England after having spoken in almost every town in Canada from Sydney and Halifax on the Atlantic, to Vancouver and Victoria on the Pacific. Their aim was to organize Committees to secure recruits for the Overseas Division of the Royal Naval Canadian Volunteer Reserve, and the work which they launched and which was unreservedly helped along by the Hon. Mr. Hazen for the Canadian Government, has already had splendid results, and hundreds of good recruits have joined the Navy under the auspices of the R. N. C. V. R. Before leaving, the Lady Gwendolen made arrangements to have a specially designed souvenir pendant distributed through the various recruiting centres to the Mothers, or Wives—or Sweethearts whose influence had helped to secure recruits. This pendant is a very pretty one of silver—gilt—and bears the motto "I helped to serve."

The badge is now, we are informed, being distributed by the Committees and will doubtless be worn by many women as a badge of honor, as well as a souvenir of their loved ones. The illustration gives some idea of its general appearance, and the following is the open letter written by her Ladyship: To the Women of Canada: In a journey, throughout the Provinces of Canada, from Atlantic to Pacific, I have had the opportunity of personally witnessing the splendid spirit and untiring work of patriotic women everywhere in the Dominion. I am convinced that here, as in Great Britain, the debt which is owed by the Women of the Empire to our Navy is not forgotten. The iron hand of Naval Dominion alone shields us from the ruthlessness of an enemy who has not scrupled to make war on the helpless and defenceless. The power of the Navy protects our loved ones on their journey to the battlefields, and preserves our homes in safety and prosperity. Recognizing this debt, I am sure that every Canadian woman will do her utmost to secure that support for Naval defence which has been asked for from Canada.

The new menace of unreserved Hun piracy adds further interest to the campaign for Naval Recruits, and the necessity of increasing naval effort, and it is hoped that a still more generous response will be given to the Naval Recruiting Committees Call. In the meantime, we feel we voice the feelings of many of our readers in extending our thanks to the Lady Gwendolen for the happy thought her gift embodies and to Captain Guinness and herself for their tireless exertions on behalf of the Cause.



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Warren seemed deaf even to her. "Once more—ah! you will not! Come, then!" and with a herculean grasp he dragged Sir Frederic to the edge. And at this moment his opponent's courage failed him. With a shuddering look into the darkness below he drew back, and thrusting his hand into his pocket, drew out the key and flung it on the ground without a word. Without a word Hector Warren secured the key, and going calmly and quietly to the gate, unlocked it. Then he opened it wide and motioned to Sir Frederic. "Go," he said, slowly, and with a despairing glance full of anguish and despair, Sir Frederic passed down the broken stairs. They heard him staggering like a drunken man till his footsteps were drowned on the turf. CHAPTER XVIII. Silent and trembling, Signa leant against the stonework of the tower, her hand pressed to her heart, her breath coming in quick, short gasps. The horror of the scene was still upon her, and yet a faint thrill of joy was beginning to flutter in her bosom, for she began to realize that Hector Warren was standing beside her. Quite silent he stood, not looking at her, waiting with the truest, noblest, tenderness, that she might have time to recover. Another man would have pressed his attentions upon her—would have been fussy, and sympathetic.

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