

**DIARY**

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**CHAPTER XIX. STRIVING AGAINST THE STREAM.**

At last the day arrived when Morgan was expected, and dinner was in coats of removal when a servant announced his presence. Olive turned pale for a moment, then summoned up a smile.

"I will go to him, father, dear," she said quietly, "while you finish your wine and smoke."

Sir Edwin sat down again thankfully, and Olive left the room.

Outside in the hall she paused and pressed her hand against her heart; and could her father have seen the expression of despair upon her face, he would have thrown Bingleigh to the winds and saved her.

Morgan Verner was lounging on a couch in the drawing-room, but he rose to meet her with a smile. He was dressed in the height of fashion; but do what he would, he could not remove the signs of dissipation and innate vice so plainly visible on his weak face. Olive shuddered with an unconquerable aversion as she held out her hand.

"Well, Olive, my dear," he said, with the insolence of conquest. "Here I am at last. Did you think I was never coming? I say, how pale you are—not ill, I hope?"

"No," said Olive, drawing away her hand, which he had kept in his own. "I am quite well. How are you?"

"Oh, first-rate," he replied, his eyes shifting a little beneath her steady regard. "I'm precious glad to come back at last—been looking forward to it for weeks, 'pon my word. I'm a lucky fellow to have you—you—I'm sure we shall be happy. Always loved you, don'tcherknow, since the beginning."

Olive sank into a chair.

"Never thought there was a chance for me," he continued. "Felt a bit out of it, you know—but we're engaged all right now, eh, what?"

"I suppose so," said Olive nervously. "Mr. Verner has been very good," she added irrelevantly.

"Oh, yes," said Morgan, with a sarcastic smile, "the governor's not a bad sort, and if he says a thing, he does it. I suppose he settled all the creditors—he's good at that sort of thing," he added, laughing feebly.

"He has saved Bingleigh for my father," said Olive, "and I am very grateful."

"Oh, that's all right," said Morgan sheepishly. "What's ours is yours, you know, now we're going to be married. We shall be like two turtles doves; and the sooner the better—what do you think? When shall it be?"

Olive's heart seemed to stand still. "Oh, not yet," she cried; "not for some time!"

Morgan frowned. "Oh, but that was part of the bargain—" He stopped, wishing he had held his tongue.

"A bargain—in which I was sold as part of the estate, I suppose! Well, if it was a bargain, it must be kept."

"Oh, you know what I mean," he stammered. "You are so quick to pull a man up; of course, there's no bargain."

"Yes," interrupted Olive. "Your father agreed to save Bingleigh, at a great cost to himself, if I promised to be your wife. There was nothing said about the marriage taking place at once."

"No—I admit that," said Morgan; "but you know I'm awfully anxious. And then look what a time I've loved you! By Jove! Do you remember the fancy-dress ball?"

Would she ever forget it? On that night a noble-hearted man had asked her to be his wife, and she had refused. Refused for the sake of one who, though lowly in position, had, she believed, loved her and been worthy of her love. Now he was gone, a criminal flying from justice, and she was pledged to marry one whom she despised. Had she but accepted Lord Craven den, she could at least have respected him.

"I was very near popping the question," continued Morgan, happily unconscious of what was passing in Olive's mind. "I wonder if you'd have jumped at me then?"

Olive shivered involuntarily.

"I say," said her lover, taking her unwilling hand in his. "You've been fretting, I believe. 'Pon my word! You wait till we're married, and we'll settle down in the respectable old style, eh?"

Olive rose abruptly, drawing her hand away.

"I will tell my father you are here," she said unnecessarily—she felt she could not bear this tete-a-tete much longer.

"Oh, I say," said Morgan, also rising. "Don't run away like that—"

But Olive, fearing he was about to embrace her, crossed quickly to the door and left the room.

An ugly scowl settled on Morgan's face as the door closed.

"Proud minx!" he muttered. "I'll show her I'm master, once we're married. Does she think I'm going to be treated like dirt, after all we've done for them?" He was not aware how his father had won the upper hand of the Seymours, so his indignation was not unnatural. "They'd have been

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beggars," he thought, "but for us. I'll teach her how to receive her future husband—she'll be a bit more civil next time."

At this moment the door opened, and Sir Edwin Seymour entered. It was as much as Morgan Verner could do to replace the scowl with a smile, and, even then, it was one of such condescension that had Sir Edwin retained his early keenness, his eyes would have been opened immediately. As it was, he was nervously pleased to see the young man.

"You must come over to dinner tomorrow," he said. "You have been away a long time; Olive will be glad to have you back."

"She doesn't show her joy much, then," said Morgan sulkily.

"We must keep you, now you are here," said Sir Edwin unheedingly. "Your father has been very good to us; he has acted most generously."

"Oh, don't mention it," said Morgan condescendingly. "We are all of one family now, you know."

"Yes, yes," murmured the poor old man. "You'll take care of her, Morgan. She is a dear girl, and you love her, I know."

"Oh, Olive and I understand one another," said the young man, as he rose to take his leave.

In the carriage all Morgan's spite and anger returned in full force. He felt he could almost hate Olive for coyness and purity; and he longed, with all the hatred of a base nature for a noble one, to humiliate her and to break her spirit.

On the following evening, the two Verners dined at Bingleigh. They were both resplendent in clothes of the newest and most fashionable cut; and Olive, as she rose to receive them, could not help contrasting their manner, as they entered with all the assurance that wealth and patronage could give, with that of her father, who stood so gently by his "benefactors," as he called them.

"Well, Olive," said John Verner, in his harsh voice, "We've got the wanderer back again, you see. You must take care to hold him, now you have got him."

Olive's face flushed, but she made no reply; and just then dinner was announced.

Morgan sat, by her side, and, under the brilliant light, she could see the ravages of dissipation more plainly than upon the preceding day; and her soul revolted at the idea of marrying him. He had a great deal to say—especially when the wine came around—and spoke of Paris as the only place worth living in.

"England's not worth a rap," he said loudly. "Give me Paris!"

"England's the place for a country gentleman," said Sir Edwin mildly.

"Yes, indeed!" said John Verner, with a dark look at his son; he was only too fully aware of the bad impression Morgan was making. "By the way," he added, "have you heard anything more of that young horse trainer or thief?"

"Reuben, do you mean?" said Sir Edwin, sadly.

Olive, who happened to be glancing at Morgan, saw that his face went white as death. Her own had paled, as it always did when she thought of Reuben—but why should his name affect Morgan?

"No," her father was saying, "we heard that some one had died in the workhouse at some seaport, and he thrust her in the same direction; so I did not do any more. It was very sad."

"Very!" sneered Verner. "I always knew he would come to no good. You should have set the police on his track. He'd have got seven years' hard labor—perhaps more—burglary, and suspicious antecedents—why I broke off; for as he raised his eyes, he saw that his son's face was livid as with some sudden fear.

"Are you ill?" asked Sir Edwin.

"No, no," Morgan said hoarsely. "It's nothing—a sudden pain—I had it in Paris two or three times. Give me the brandy," he said to the butler. The man brought it, and Morgan took a glassful, which seemed to restore him. "Funny thing, those attacks—attacks of the heart, eh, Olive?" he added, leering at her.

To her relief, she found it was time to retire to the drawing-room, which she did, thankfully enough; while Morgan recommenced his attacks upon the wine. Even Sir Edwin noticed how freely he drank; but, mindful of the obligation he was under to the young man's father, he forbore to mention it. John Verner, also, was not blind to his son's delinquencies,

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and watched, with steely eyes, the effect of the patent liquor on Morgan's brain and demeanor; indeed, when the men rose to join Olive, he was hardly able to walk steadily.

As he passed him, his father whispered sternly:

"Get into the open air, Morgan; you drink too much!"

Morgan shook himself angrily. "I'm all right," he said; "let me alone."

In the drawing-room, he left his father to talk to Olive, while he sank down into a chair behind a screen, and Olive, crossing the room to the piano, saw him lying there, breathing heavily. At first she was alarmed, believing that he had fainted; then, as she realized the nature of his "illness," a feeling of intense horror and of shame came over her. Speechless, she proceeded to the instrument, and sat down to play.

With the first notes, Morgan awoke, and, sobred by his sleep, went to her; and, with cool assurance, leaned over the piano.

"Bravo!" he exclaimed. "Pon my soul, I had no idea you could play so well! I'm awfully fond of music."

Pale with anger and disgust, Olive rose from the piano, and crossing the room to the window, stepped out on the terrace. There, wrapped in her own misery, she leaned against the balustrade. Her thoughts turned to Reuben. Dead! Dead in a workhouse, while she lived a life worse than death, tied to the degraded son of John Verner. Her heart seemed breaking, and, with a sob, she covered her face with her hands.

A step sounded behind her, and she looked up hurriedly, to find Morgan, who had followed her.

"Stargazing, Olive?" he said; "it is beautiful, isn't it? I could stay here forever—with you," he added, in would-be tender tones, while at the same time he drew her arm close within his own.

With a shudder, Olive tried to disengage herself; but he was sober now and strong.

"Don't be shy, darling," he said huskily. "Aren't we engaged? Why, I'll swear you haven't given me a single kiss yet. Come, this is a good opportunity—lovers in the moonlight, eh? Just one, Olive," and he drew her close to him until his hot, wine-laden breath swept her face.

But, with an inarticulate cry, Olive thrust her hand against him and bore him back with all her strength.

"Keep back," she said, her voice vibrating with passion, her eyes blazing. "Keep back! How dare you insult me by your touch? I am to be your wife, but I am not your slave. Dare to insult me again, and I will break the compact, though it kills my father and myself!"

Bewildered and alarmed, Morgan Verner shrank back, and Olive, shaking her arm as if to free it from the pollution of his touch, swept by him with a look of scorn, and, gliding down the terrace, disappeared in the darkness.

(To be Continued.)

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**EARLY**

**PRESIDENT WILSON'S PROGRAM**

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8.

President Wilson to-day addressed Congress delivered a restatement of his aims in agreement with the recent declaration by the British Premier. The President presented a definite programme for a world peace containing fourteen specific considerations. The programme follows: Open covenants of peace without private international understanding. Absolute freedom of the seas in peace or war, except as they may be closed by international action. Removal of all economic barriers and establishment of equality of trade conditions among nations consenting to peace and associating themselves for its maintenance. Guarantees for reduction of national armaments to lowest points consistent with domestic safety. Impartial adjustment of all Colonial claims based upon the principle that the peoples concerned have equal weight with the interest of the government. Evacuation of Russian territories and opportunity for Russia's political development. Evacuation of Belgium without an attempt to limit her sovereignty. Readjustment of Italy's frontiers along clearly recognizable lines of nationality. Fresh opportunity for autonomous development of the people's of Austria-Hungary. Evacuation of Roumania, Serbia and Montenegro, with access to the sea for Serbia and international guarantees of economic and political independence, and territorial integrity of the Balkan States. Secure sovereignty for Turkish portions of Ottoman Empire, but with other nationalities under Turkish rule assured security of life and opportunity for autonomous development, with the Dardanelles opened to all nations. Establishment of an independent Polish state, including territories inhabited by indisputably Polish population, with free access to the sea and political and economic independence and territorial integrity guaranteed by international covenant. General association of nations under specific covenant. General association of nations under specific covenant for mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to large and small states alike. For such arrangements and covenants, said the President in conclusion, we are willing to fight and continue to fight until they are achieved, but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace. Such a programme, he said, removed the chief provocation for a war.

**GERMANY'S POLITICAL TURMOIL.**

LONDON, Jan. 8.

If the German papers correctly mirror the situation there the test which the Bolsheviks have met, Germany's attitude toward the proposal of no annexations has thrown Germany into political turmoil. Advice from the capitals of neutral countries bordering on Germany show that the opinion prevalent there is that one of the most severe national crises in the history of Germany is developing as a result of the difference of views between the militarist and non-militarist leaders regarding the Government's attitude toward Russia. It is reported generally that General Von Ludendorff, as leader of the former group, actually has gone as far as to threaten the resignation of himself and Field Marshal Von Hindenburg if further countenance is given to such views as those advanced by men of the type of Dr. Von Cuno and Count Czernin, the German and Austrian Foreign Ministers. At the same time the view of von Kuehlemann and Czernin fail to satisfy the German Socialists who regard their middle of the road policy as tricky and who are determined that the spirit of the Reichstag resolution be followed sincerely and without qualification or reserve. Neutral observers declare that the gap between the German parties suddenly has become a chasm so wide that there is little chance of bridging it and that the development of an internal crisis of serious proportions seems inevitable. On the other hand it is pointed out that the various parties in the belligerent countries never appeared so completely united as in their support of the war aims formulated by President Lloyd George.

**HUGHES' MINISTRY RESIGNS.**

LONDON, Jan. 8.

(Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—A despatch to Reuter's from Melbourne states that the Hughes cabinet has resigned, and Tudor, the leader of the Opposition, has been summoned to form a Government. An earlier despatch from Melbourne stated that Hughes had proposed to resign unconditionally, and that Tudor would probably ask for dissolution.

**GERMAN VIEW OF WAR AIMS.**

AMSTERDAM, Jan. 8.

Discussing the statement of war aims made on Saturday by Premier Lloyd George, the Rheinische Westliche Zeitung, of Essen, says when Lloyd George and British Labor demand Alsace for France and the German colonies, Arabia, Syria and Pal-