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The Sound of Wedding Bells

— OR —
Won After Great Perseverance!

CHAPTER II.

"If you will wait here, I will go back and try and recover it," he says, quietly.

Poor Dulcie also has glanced at the crowd, and she puts her hand on her arm with a little shudder.

"Oh, no, no—I didn't mean that! Not for worlds!"

"Oh, but I will," he says, in exactly the same tone.

"No," she says, decisively; "it doesn't matter." Then her gratitude reawakens. "And I am very much obliged to you indeed for the trouble you have taken. I hope you are not hurt?"

"Hurt?" he says; then he smiles. "No, thanks; and you? Have you lost anything besides your shoe—your purse?"

She shakes her head.

"I hadn't one—at least I don't think so. I don't remember. What a fearful crowd it is. I had no idea—"

"Or you would not have faced it alone?" he says, interrogatively, and with a curious look at her face—that much of it which is to be seen under the absurd little mask.

"Alone!" and she stares at him with wonder that is almost indignant. "But I wasn't alone, sir—a gentleman was kind enough to bring me; I am afraid against his will—a smile, grim and significant, hovers about so much of his lips as the heavy mus-

tache will permit to be seen—"he said we should get into trouble, and so we have; at least so I have. I wonder what has become of him?"

He looks around in that vague fashion which one assumes when looking for something unknown, and shakes his head.

"Probably back at the hotel, or wherever you started from," he says.

"Then I cannot do better than follow him," Dulcie says, and she gathers her domino round her and looks about. "I wonder where it is?"

"What is the name of the hotel?" he asks.

Dulcie hesitates a moment, and she notices her hesitation, and smiles again the same grim smile.

"The Hotel de Vincel," she says, looking at him, no defiantly, but with something like bravado.

"Oh!" he says. "Yes, I know it. If you will permit me I will see you safely there."

There is something in his tone which rouses Dulcie's spirit, always lofty and on the alert.

"Thanks. If you will tell me where it is, I dare say I can find it. You have had trouble enough."

He does not deny it, but he looks at her curiously.

"I am afraid you will not find it so easily," he says. "You had better let me take you there. Your brother will be anxious."

"He is not my brother," said Dulcie.

"I beg your pardon, your father."

"Nor my father," she says, with a strong inclination to laugh.

"Pardon again; your husband," he says, with cool politeness.

At this Dulcie laughs outright.

"Nor my husband," she says. "To dispense with further questions and conjectures, he is nothing belonging to me."

"Oh!" he says, and the "oh!" is significant.

Dulcie colors, and her lips twitch.

Who is this stranger that he should presume to feel shocked?

"He is a very amiable and agreeable gentleman," she says, "and he kindly offered—er—well, consented to take me and see the Square and the illuminations."

"And kindly left you in the lurch!" he says, grimly.

A hot flush stains her face, and her eyes flash.

"Indeed he did not! Some carriages passed, and the crowd made a rush, and—and—it was no fault of his!"

"I beg his pardon," he says; "if you will take my arm I will restore you to his care."

But this Dulcie will not do; instead she draws herself to her full height, and walks beside him, her left hand holding her mask, her right clutching her domino.

So they walked along. He does not repeat his request, he keeps a solemn silence, and Dulcie, wounded in her tenderest part, her pride, stalks, or limps rather, by his side. Up to the present she had scarcely seen him, they have been standing almost in the dark, in a dusk made dark by contrast with the light in the Square, but she has quite made up her mind that he is an old fogey, stuck-up and disagreeable, and too intensely shocked by her impropriety to be even polite.

With this estimate fully formed, she does not trouble to glance at him for some time, but suddenly they come into the blaze of light proceeding from a gay and illuminated café, and she turns her head. As she does so a swift transition passes over her. He is not old; he is not by any means a fogey. He is young, he is handsome. More, far more than that, he is distinguished, noble-looking.

It is a surprise, so sudden, so complete, that she stops short.

Instantly his glance, which had been absent and preoccupied, falls upon her; and the same question which he had put to her in the Square forms on his lips.

"What is the matter?"

She falters.

"I have hurt my foot, I'm afraid," she says, woman-like, quick at subterfuge.

He offers his arm instantly.

"Lean on me," he says.

"No, thanks," she says; but with a quiet air of command he takes her hand gently enough, but still irresistibly, and draws it through his arm, and, wonderful to relate, Dulcie does not snatch it away.

Then they walk on in silence; they cannot walk quickly, for the crowd still possesses the street, but he steers her so deftly that she feels no inconvenience.

Presently they come to the hotel, and Dulcie stops.

"Thank Heaven!" she exclaims. "And now for Aunt!"

He looks at her questioningly, and she laughs.

"My troubles are not yet over, but I am afraid you cannot assist me any further."

"I am sorry," he says, calmly.

"Thanks," she says, in her musical voice, "you have been very kind, very," and she emphasizes the last word. "But for you I should not have got home at all, I am afraid."

"Oh, yes," he says, in the conventional tone; "the Roman crowd is not like an English one—it is particularly polite."

"But it treads on your toes all the same," she says, with a laugh. By this time they have entered the hall

of the hotel. Waiters are bustling to and fro, the crowd at the door has dispersed, whereby Dulcie knows the table d'hôte has begun.

"But, as you say, I am lucky to have escaped with the loss of only a shoe. Thanks, very much," and as she speaks, all unthinkingly, all unconsciously, she slips the mask from her face.

He has been looking at her coolly, coldly enough, hat in hand, but as she slips off the mask and flashes her bright, youthful beauty upon him, he starts—absolutely starts, and stares. All unconscious, she puts up her hand and smooths her hair.

"I don't think I was ever so hot in my life," she says, smiling down at him from the stair on which she has stopped. "I wanted some excitement. I have had it. Good-night, and thank you, once more;" and she holds out her hand.

He takes it, his eyes fixed on her face—the face which he has not seen for more than a minute, the face which has stricken him dumb and motionless.

"Good-night," he says, at last. "But—perhaps we shall meet again."

"Perhaps," she says, lightly; "who knows?" and with a smile that lights up her face, she turns and runs up the stairs.


He watches her until the thin, slight figure disappears, then, with a shake of the broad shoulders, he walks out into the street; but he stands a moment meditating, then comes back and re-enters the hall, and accosting the hotel clerk, enquired in the mahogany den at the bottom of the stairs, hands him a card.

"You have a room for me?"

"Quite right, sir," says the clerk, taking the card; "Number 49."

And Dulcie's preserver follows her up-stairs.

(To be Continued.)



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Very often the mother, bent on training her child in the very best way, overlooks what is right before her eyes in straining to see into the future. She looks away ahead, forgetting that in the present she is laying the foundation of her child for that future.

For instance, when her baby is still in her arms, in the earliest days of its infancy, the mother should begin to teach it good habits, for it is at this stage of life, before any counter-influences can get in their work, even those of personality, that things are learned with the greatest possible ease.

It is not fair to dangle and play with a baby continuously while it is small and light and easy to manage, and then suddenly expect it to manage itself without any attention. Just so in everything. Try not to form habits in your child which are apt to be broken quickly or, rather, always avoid sudden changes for your baby.

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Evening Telegram Fashion Plates

The Home Dressmaker should keep a Catalogue Scrap Book of our Fashion Cuts. These will be found very useful to refer to from time to time.

A POPULAR STYLE.



2165—Juniors' Dress, with Sleeve in Either of Two Lengths.

Linen in white, natural or other shades is nice for this model. Khaki cloth, drill, gingham, chambray, percale, serge, gabardine, poplin and corduroy are also desirable. The Pattern is cut in 3 sizes: 12, 14 and 16 years. It requires 4 1/2 yards of 44-inch material for a 14-year size.

A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 10 cents in silver or stamps.

A SIMPLE DRESS FOR SCHOOL OR PLAY.



2174—For the gumpe, one could use crepe, batiste, lawn or dimity. The dress could be of the same material, or of gingham, chambray, challie, poplin, voile, repp, linen or pique.

The Pattern is cut in 4 sizes: 2, 4, 6 and 8 years. It requires 2 1/2 yards of 27-inch material for the dress and 1 1/2 yard for the gumpe, for a 4-year size.

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War News

Messages Received Previous to

HEAVY FIGHTING STILL GOING ON.

NEW YORK. The heavy fighting for the town of Monte San Gabriele, an important position near Gorizia is still in progress, but the Italians are pressing home the desperate struggle despite suffering heavy losses. The Austrians are battling for the heights and positions. Cadorna's latest report says the Italians' pressure has increased the number of prisoners fighting here. On the east of Gorizia the Austrians have stopped their unsuccessfull attacks, but the artillery is making the whole region a German counter-attacks purpose of straightening out lines is being carried out. In the present operations, the Austrians have already taken 300 prisoners, and the total losses are estimated at 1500. The Austrians charged with an effort to keep the Italian advance farther toward Gorizia, but the region of Hermeda has been engaged with the rearwards 40 miles eastward. Apparently the German guard has been slackened. Friedrichstadt, about 50 miles east of Riga, on the Dvina, retiring Russians set fire to villages. There has been activity on a large scale on the front. North of Pskov, Ypres region, the British compelled to withdraw from positions occupied on Thursday. Lens the Canadians have held in a hard fight with the German counter-attacks. On a part of the sector the German counter-attacks gained, but on the southern sector the Canadians held their positions. The front held now is a serious to the German positions.

BU

A-MEN!!

