

'Here! Tell Mr. Halstead—you'll find him in the carriage accident outside—that I'll wire to him, care of book-stall, from the first stoppage.'

He threw the man a sovereign in his excitement, thinking quickly, as he did so, that it was a good thing he had filled his pockets that morning, with the idea that Lal would want some loose cash.

'But what does it mean?' asked Helen, astonished and bewildered, as she almost fell back on to a seat. He turned and looked at her, and for a moment was speechless at his own audacity.

'It's all right,' he said, recovering himself, 'the man's a good deal hurt. Lal wants to see him picked up, and will follow by the next train.' He put his head against the side of the carriage and laughed out with sheer implish mischief. 'Oh, to think that I have come—that I have been sent off with the bride, it's too droll, Nell.'

She stood up again in the middle of the carriage and looked at him, still with a bewildered expression on her face, wondering if he were mad, and what he meant.

'It's all right,' he said soothingly, 'he'll come on; don't be unhappy. You see he had to go with the man, and he didn't want to keep you dangling on the platform, so he thought I had better take you on and wait for him at the other end. He'll be there in a couple of hours, and I'll take care of you.'

She swallowed down her disappointment as best she could. It was no use making a fuss, she thought; it was very kind of Lal to see after the man who was hurt, and it was horrid of her to mind. She wished he had let her wait, even on the platform: she had thought that it would be so lovely to have the quiet railway journey with him after the excitement of the wedding, that it would rest her, and that he would hold her hands and look down at her face and say just the little short things he always said, while now and again they looked out together at the green country side. It was such a strange thing to start on her honeymoon with somebody else. Frank subsided a little, he grew thoughtful, and stared keenly out of the window, but evidently he did not see an inch of the ground they passed. He looked pale and eager. He had been very good all these past weeks, she thought, and perhaps she ought to be grateful to him, not only for all the trouble he had taken then, but for taking care of her now. Of course, since Lal had thought it better that she should go on she would try not to be disappointed, she almost felt as if she ought to say something; but she was too much surprised yet to put any words together.

The train was slackening to get into Herne Hill. Merreday jumped out almost before it stopped, made enquiries of the porter, and, rushing to the telegraph office, asked for a couple of forms. 'Oh, what madness,' he thought; 'Oh, ye gods, that I should have thought of it.' He stopped a minute to pull himself together, then filled up a form for Halstead:—

'Safe at Herne Hill, look for us in hotel beyond the station, thought it better to come on.'

'It'll take him a considerable time to pitch on the hotel, especially the way he does things, he won't be able anyhow now to get on to Dover till 9.30, that will be 7.15 from here; and as we shall be there half an hour before he starts he shall have another wire to cheer him up.'

He wrote another telegram, gave it in and rushed back to the railway carriage. 'It's much better to do a thing tremendously than to half do it,' he thought, 'it's the tremendously that carries one through.' He burst into a torrent of merry talk about the wedding, as the train moved off again, he laughed and told her a dozen little incidents that she naturally had not noticed. He broke out into the refrain of a song once, from sheer brimming over of spirit. She could not help being amused; besides, she could not well sit in a corner and cry for her bridegroom. The journey was not dull in spite of the disappointment. Frank was so ridiculous, it was impossible to help laughing, and so she managed to talk to him a little, and tried to forget the disappointment in her heart and the strangeness of her company.

As they went into the Lord Warden Hotel, Merreday asked if there were any letters or telegrams for Halstead. One was handed to Nell, she looked at her own new name with a smile, while a curious expression came into Merreday's eyes. She gave a little cry as she read it. It said:—

'Go on to Paris by night boat with Merreday; will follow in the morning. Have a good time.'

'I don't want to go on,' she flashed.

'That's awkward.' I think we had better.'

'I won't.'

'Well, of course, you'll do as you like, but I believe you were married this morning; it's rather too soon to begin fighting your husband.'

'Why can't I wait here?' she asked indignantly.

'I expect Lal thinks we might be spotted, and it would look rather odd. He is a chap who doesn't like to be laughed at, you know.'

She considered for a moment.

'Very well,' she said in a low voice, 'I'll go.'

'Sensible woman!' To be called a woman made her feel quite married. 'We'll have a comfortable little dinner, a walk after it, and then enjoy the voyage across—if we can. Go into the dining-room and take possession of a table at once.'

There was an authoritative air about Merreday, when he chose. She found some comfort in it, and obeyed helplessly.

HOW TO GET A "SUNLIGHT" PICTURE.

Send 25 "Sunlight" Soap wrappers (wrapper bearing the words "Why Does a Woman Look Old Sooner Than a Man") to Lever Bros., Ltd., 43 Scott St., Toronto, and you will receive by post a pretty picture, free from advertising, and well worth framing. This is an easy way to decorate your home. The soap is the best in the market and it will only cost 1c postage to send in the wrappers, if you leave the ends open. Write your address carefully.

Merreday went into the hall and wrote a telegram to Halstead, who, of course, was kicking his heels at Herne Hill:—

'Thought it better to bring Nell on; enjoying it immensely. Ordered on excellent dinner.'

'I think that is calculated to astonish him considerably. By the time he overtakes us, he will have some notions about looking after his own. I must be mad—a stark, staring lunatic. Never mind, it's the most brilliant entertainment I ever had in my life,' and he entered the dining-room where Nell was waiting. He prided himself on being able to order an appropriate meal for any occasion, and he determined that, considering the means at his disposal, he would do himself justice.

She looked better after her glass of iced Heidsieck. By the time she was peeling a peach she was almost in good spirits. After all, she was young and unsophisticated, and the excitement of travel was round her, and it felt still more married-womanlike to be dining with Frank without a chaperon. She half liked the feeling of importance it gave her.

'Nell,' he said, 'this is the first *tele-a-tote* meal we have ever had together. It is strictly proper, you know, and highly orthodox. You are a married woman, and we are relations now—cousins; rather cut-and-dried, of course, but excellent, considering the proprieties. Wouldn't matter if we went to the North Pole together; though I trust, if we go so far, that it will be in another direction, and to a warmer climate.' He thought—'I should say it will be very warm indeed, as far as I am concerned—'

He got up from the table quickly, for his quick eye had seen a telegram in the hand of the waiter, who was bringing two cups of coffee. He opened it without Nell seeing what he was about.

'You meant well, but I wish you had left it alone. Bring Nell to meet me at the station,' ran Halstead's telegram. He scrunched it up in his hand, went into the hall and wrote a note:—

'Dear Lal—I have taken Nell for a little expedition. If you don't find us when we arrive have a smoke till we come.'

He addressed it, and gave directions that it should be given to Mr. Halstead on his arrival at half-past nine. He thought, 'If you have a smoke till we come it will be a good long one. This game is very exhilarating, but I wish I knew how it was going to end. It strikes me that the only thing to do now is to flee before the wrath to come.'

He went back to the table and finished his coffee.

'It's a lovely night,' he said. 'Let's go for a stroll. We needn't come back here again, we will go straight on board.' The luggage of course had been registered through.

(To be Continued.)

A Gentleman

Who formerly resided in Connecticut, but who now resides in Honolulu, writes: "For



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