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Love a Conqueror

OR
WEDDED AT LAST.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

He fell back in his chair, covering his face with his hands once more, and gradually his great exhaustion conquered thought; his eyes closed, his aching limbs stretched themselves out to rest, and a heavy sleep—the sleep of intense fatigue—fell upon him.

The night wore on; the dawn came, and the sun rose high in the heavens, but the sleep—heavy, dreamless sleep, like that obtained by a narcotic—still held him in its stupor. When he awoke, his eyes, opening slowly and blindly, fell on Oswald's anxious face, as he stood beside him holding a letter.

"Sturt how is it with you?" he said, bending over him; and bewildered still, Guy held out his hand for the letter.

"Is it for me?" he asked slowly, for his eyelids seemed weighted with lead, and the words were difficult to utter.

"Yes; but, Guy, old fellow, dear old fellow, how can I tell you?" Oswald said, in a tone of intense distress.

"Tell me what, Shirley?"

The words came brokenly, hoarsely; he had started up from his chair but he could hardly stand in his weakness and giddiness.

"This note is from her," Oswald said unsteadily. "Guy, try to bear it, old fellow; it was perhaps for the best."

"The note. Give it to me."

He opened it with unsteady, trembling hands, and looked at it with eager, sightless eyes.

"Read it to me," he said to Oswald in a hoarse, strained voice; and Oswald's own eyes were dim as he read the few words Shirley had traced before she left the friends whom she loved and trusted and went out into the world alone.

"I am going away, Guy, because I love you, and because it is best for us both. Some day, perhaps, Heaven will be merciful and let us meet again; but, if you can, forget me, and forgive me all the misery I have brought into your life. Do not seek me, dear; it will be useless. I could not bring shame into your life. If this pains you, my darling, remember that I did it in love. Heaven forever bless you, Guy!"

A moment's dead silence followed the perusal of the letter; then Guy put out his burning, trembling hand. "I do not understand," he said, in a strained, broken voice. "Is she gone?"

"Yes; she went in the night—"

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Dear Mrs. Currah—I am enjoying better health than I have for eight years, and I think I am entirely cured. I have none of the old symptoms. I am very grateful for my present health, and think Orange Lily is the greatest treatment for women the world knows. The use of my case caused 12 tumors to be removed. Some were as large as a hen's egg, and others smaller, down to the size of a walnut. You may use my case in your advertisement, for it is the solid truth, and you cannot describe all the good it has done for me. Mrs. Louise A. Bole, St. Louis, Mo.

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alone. Old fellow, dear old fellow, what are you going to do?"

"I am going"—Guy was staggering toward the door as he spoke—there was a pause between each slow word—"going—to—my—darling—Oswald—do—you—think—she—has—gone away alone? I—saw—"

His voice died away, a great darkness fell upon his sight; he stretched out his hands with a blind groping movement terrible to see, and stood swaying for a moment to and fro; then, before Oswald could interpose, he fell forward senseless at his feet.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A dingy little room on the first floor of a dingy house in a dingy part of London—a house standing in a faded street with two irregular rows of tall dark-looking houses, which even the summer sunshine, a sickly sunshine here, could not cheer or brighten.

Judging from the appearance and size of the houses, a passerby would have considered that they had been at one time tenanted by persons in a different and better position in life than that of their present occupants; but that, in their falling fortunes, they had been let out in offices and floors to different lodgers, for most of the doors were several plates and bell-handles, with names of the various tenants.

It was not a disreputable street by any means; on the contrary, it was respectable and steady, and in the immediate neighborhood of some superior squares and terraces; but it was also in the vicinity of some inferior ones; and it was plain that the inhabitants of these latter were more frequently in the dingy debatable ground than the inhabitants of the former, for the people to be met there were mostly shabby business people.

It is never wise to judge by appearances, and perhaps in London especially; dinginess and dirty windows and grimy, carpetless stairs are sometimes better vouchers for respectability, than brand-new offices and plate-glass and mirrors. At any rate, the governess agency, whose office was in a dingy room of the dingy house at the corner of the street, was a respectable and trustworthy place enough—more respectable perhaps than many of such establishments.

It was reached though a dirty carpetless passage and up a bare, grimy staircase, and it was itself a dingy, floor-clothed room containing a high desk table in the centre, and two or three chairs, while a door on the left opened into another room, rather less comfortable, where clients could interview ladies whom they had any thought of engaging.

Dingy as the rooms were, the summer sunshine found its way even

here; it streamed through the dirty panes of glass, falling in a bright stream of light on the faded and soiled coverings of the floor, on the piles of letters and papers scattered on the desk-table, on the grave but unkindly-looking woman who sat before it and received the applicants and on two of the latter—one a quiet lady-like girl, neatly dressed, the other a showy, handsome damsel who stood on this hot July day waiting for her audience, while the former was having hers with the grave-faced woman, who, letter in hand was giving her the address of some situation likely to suit her.

"I have already answered several," the girl was saying rather wearily; "and people are always either suited or want more accomplishments than I am possessed of."

"Yes," said the kindly voice from the other side of the desk, "people are unreasonable in asking for so many accomplishments from one person; but your great drawback, Miss Johnson, is your not being a proficient musician."

"I know," the girl replied sadly; "but I have no chance of becoming that, Miss Milton."

"Well, they do not want music," said Miss Milton, smiling, "so hope you will be successful. Let me know at once, if you please."

"I will, certainly. Thank you very much."

The girl tripped away, looking much brighter, and with a light step went down the grimy staircase. Halfway she met another applicant coming up, a slender girl in black, who sat rather heavily on the balustrade, and who had pushed away her sassy crape veil from her white, thin face, out of which her eyes seemed to shine with a feverish lustre. They passed each other in silence, and while the one went out into the sunshine, the other went on and knocked timidly at the door on which "Governess Agency—Miss Milton" was painted in white letters on a dark brown ground.

"Come in," Miss Milton said from within; and a slight shadow fell over her face as she saw the slender drooping figure that entered the room with a deprecating look in the sweet sad eyes which went to Miss Milton's heart, familiar as she was with pain and disappointment and sorrow in the poor ladies who sought her aid.

The smartly-dressed young lady was expressing her opinions and requirements in a decided and peremptory tone. There was no need for her to "go out," she said; but she wanted to see something of the world and would like to accompany a family travelling abroad. Her list of requirements was a long one, and varied, for her "pa" had given her the very best education to be had for money. Miss Milton thought that it was a pity she could not have also acquired some refinement, and a manner which would have made her a suitable companion for girls who would be women and honest men's wives, perhaps, some day.

"I have nothing, I think, likely to suit you to-day," said Miss Milton quietly. "If you will leave me your address, I will write to you; and meanwhile, if you are in this neighborhood, you might call again."

"Oh, very well; there is no immediate hurry!" responded the young lady, sweeping away in her pink gingham dress and lace-trimmed hat, and then the slender girl in black

came forward and stood by the desk. The pitying glance deepened in Miss Milton's eyes as she looked up at the little eager, pale face with the pitiful, tremulous smile flickering on the white lips.

"You have not been successful?" Miss Milton said, kindly.

"No."
"Did you see the lady—Mrs. Spears was it not?"

"Yes, but—"
"You did not suit her?"
"It was not that," the sweet unsteady voice answered, "but—"
"You are tired. You have walked all this way in the sun," said Miss Milton gently. "Sit down and rest a little, and you will tell me then."

"I am not tired," the girl answered, conquering the agitation which was so visible in her shaking hands and quivering lips. "But she asked me so many questions—and then she would not engage me." Her head sank forward upon her breast, and a burning flush of shame rose in her pale face, coloring it from chin to brow with a crimson glow.

"Why not?"
"Because I could not give her any references."
"Ah, I thought so!" Miss Milton said with a sigh. "But what is to be done, Mrs. Grant? You yourself, in her place, would have done the same thing. It is impossible, you know, to take a person into one's house, especially for such an important post without knowing something of their antecedents."

"But I told her," Mrs. Grant answered simply, "that there were reasons why I could not refer her to my friends, and that she might trust me; and—she only laughed."
There was a minute's pause then; the hot red glow was fading out of the sweet, pale face, and she leaned wearily against the desk, looking at Miss Milton with very wistful eyes.

"I am afraid," the latter said, with a little reluctance, "that, unless you can give a reference, you will find it very difficult to obtain a situation."
"Mrs. Grant—in fact, I may say, it will be impossible. And it is not to be wondered at. Ladies cannot be too particular," she added a little tiffily, "in their choice of a governess."

"But I told her as I told the other lady whose address you gave me, that I would try so hard to please her," was the earnest answer. "I am sure the would not have regretted taking me. I would have been so kind to the children, and so persevering, and—oh, she might have trusted me!"
"I do not see how you could have expected her to do so. It is such a suspicious circumstance, your having no references, Mrs. Grant. You must excuse my speaking so frankly; it is for your own sake. Is it quite impossible for you to write to any of your friends?"

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9788.—A NEAT FROCK FOR THE "LITTLE MISS."



Girls' Dress.

Blue serge was used for this design, with trimming of black soutache braid on tan colored serge to form a contrast for chemisette, collar, cuffs and belt. The closing is in front—a practical feature. The model is good for cashmere, checked or plaid cottons and woolsens, for velvet, galatea, gingham, or percale. The pattern is cut in 4 sizes: 6, 8, 10 and 12 years. It requires 3 1/2 yards of 44 inch material for a 10 year size.
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