

A BID FOR A BRIDE

By BLANCHE EARDLEY

Author of "Kitty Bell—Actress," "The Lady Killer," Etc.
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"My dear Miss Frant," he began slowly, "I am really amazed at your interest in me, and in what you imagine to be my business, but honestly I don't see the importance of the name of Steinway. When I was a lad in the colonies I naturally knew and met many types of men, some good sorts, some rotters, and this man Steinway was probably one or the other; the name is not uncommon, but certainly I have no enemy of that name. I should remember it if I had," he smiled.

Isobel rose and looked at him. "There's one thing you don't know, perhaps—how should you? But the letter Paul Steinway dropped in the park was picked up by me."

There was a moment's silence, during which they measured each other's strength. Then he said slowly:

"I am afraid I am none the wiser. You see I have not had the pleasure of reading the gentleman's correspondence. May I ask if the letter was addressed to me?"

"Yes—it was a letter relating to a secret you shared with him," she answered. "Perhaps you will say that there is no secret?"

He gave a frank laugh of amusement. "For my word, I'm sure that I have a thousand such mysterious documents being sent to me every year. These needy devils come back to England, accidentally hear of a 'pal' who has 'struck lucky,' as they call it, and because they want more money and can't earn it, they start a systematic form of blackmail. I deal with such letters promptly when they fall into my possession," he went on grimly. "I pass them into the hands of the police."

She bit her lip. "But this may not have been such a case," she said slowly. "I have an idea that Paul Steinway was not the usual type of man who writes begging letters under a threat. He is your enemy—and a bitter one, and you know it, though you choose to laugh at it. I—I warn you against that man," she went on; "he is a man who will succeed."

He smiled. "All this is very interesting, Miss Frant, but still I don't know why you should concern yourself on my behalf. May I inquire whether you have communicated your dangerous suspicions about Mr. Steinway to Stella?"

She flushed suddenly. "Stella lives in a world of her own; she is not affected by the things that affect me or you! She probably would think me mad—as you do—and then go back to her dreaming—dreams in which you and I have no place."

"What do you mean?" he said sharply. "What dream has Stella that her future husband does not have?"

She looked at him with mocking eyes. "Need you ask? You are so clever in some things, surely you are not blinded by Stella's outward resignation to her coming marriage. She is in love, yes—but not with you."

"The veins stood out on Hawke's temples like blue cords, and for a moment wild, unreasonable rage gripped him. He longed to strike the woman who had with an almost superhuman effort, but with an almost superhuman effort, he controlled himself, though his eyes betrayed what his will concealed."

"You are making very daring statements, Miss Frant," he said quietly; "they are of such a nature that the kindest thing I can suppose is that you have quarreled with your cousin, and wish to make mischief between us."

A scornful laugh came from her trembling lips. "You know that I am speaking the truth. In your heart of hearts you know that Stella does not love you—that she is fighting against another love—for whom, you can guess. This afternoon she left me and took a hansom and drove off somewhere; she refused to let me go with her. Oh!" she panted, "do you think I would act like Stella if I were the woman you had chosen for your wife? If she were to read this letter of Paul Steinway's she would believe it at once—she would throw you over, while I—I would cling all the more to the man I loved, and if there were mud on him I would so join my life with his that I would lift some of his crime on to my shoulders!"

She paused, and buried her face in her hands. She had torn the rags of convention from her, and now waited breathlessly to see the result of her mad recklessness. Would she win or lose?

The next moment she heard a sound that made her cold with mortification. Clifford Hawke opened the door and in a cold, conventional voice said, for the benefit of the servant outside:

"I will go and see about a hansom for you while you put on your gloves; I won't be a second."

The door closed behind him, and when she was alone Isobel glanced up with a white face.

"Very well," she whispered viciously, "as you have humbled me today, Clifford Hawke, so shall I humble you another day!"

CHAPTER XL

Jasper Tennant looked round his dismantled studio with moody retrospective eyes. He had packed up his belongings, and sent them to be stored, and had made up his mind to give Chelsea a wide berth for a time. The studio would be on his hands for another eighteen months, but he felt he could not bear the sight of those rooms where he had seen a glimpse of what might have been had the Fates so willed. He had not made up his mind where to go to yet, but it would be somewhere sufficiently near enough to town to enable him to run in and see how Lottie was getting on, and then London would see him no more until after the wedding that would place an irrevocable barrier between him and the woman he had set upon the empty pedestal in his heart.

He turned from his inspection of the empty room and whistled softly. A tiny black Pomeranian lay curled upon a rug in a corner of the studio, and at the sound of the familiar whistle it pricked up its ears and wagged a bushy tail, then rising trotted across the room to him. He bent down and patted its back.

"Well, old girl! so we're off, eh? You'll be glad to find yourself in the country again, won't you? But first we must go and say good-bye to our friend and patron, Lady Mary, and then—well, we'll transact our business and put ourselves on a new footing with life."

The dog gave a series of agitated barks as it saw its master take up his hat and move towards the door, and a few moments later they were both in a hansom, the man carrying the dog in his arms.

Lady Mary's house in Cadogan Gardens was not far from the studio, and a quarter of an hour later he was being ushered into the drawing-room, followed by his faithful companion.

The room was darkened by sun blinds, and at first he saw only Lady Mary's head, and then gradually another figure loomed in the near distance—a tall, graceful one in some soft silvery garment.

"We were just talking about you," Lady Mary said cheerfully; "in fact, I knew for a fact that you had thrown up your ambition and become a gardener."

"It's not quite correct," he smiled. "I am going into the country, but shall engage a gardener."

Anyway, I knew that a gardener had something to do with your plans," she replied airily, then she turned to the silent girl in the gloom. "You have met Jasper, my dear, I know! He used to come to see me alone once, but now he brings his dog as well, I suppose he imagines the yapping little creature will prevent my trying to kiss him!"

Stella smiled. She was glad of Lady Mary's easy flippancy conversation. It helped her to conquer the momentary panic that had seized her at the sound of his voice. And she was full of a guilty gladness to see that he also had been startled at meeting her. It was a fortnight since that meeting at Lottie's, and though she had gone several times to see her, she had never met him again, and she had been ashamed of the depression that had gripped her when she had failed to see him.

"I have called to say 'good-bye' to you at last!" Tennant said, when they had all seated again. "The studio is empty, I seek a temporary home at an hotel."

"For the dog's sake I ought to be glad," Lady Mary said, "but I am sorry you are going to vegetate, Jasper. You are too young to cultivate a 'waist.'"

"I am going to devote myself to everything into which a 'waist' does not enter," he smiled. "I have not given up my art yet, you know."

Stella looked at him with interested eyes. "Your quest?" she said, speaking for the first time.

He met her gaze for a moment. She was tempting the faithless Fifi with a piece of cake, and on her white hand blazed the insolent diamonds of Clifford's ring.

"Yes," he replied, "I am bound by a promise to find the man who married my sister—the lady of the canvas for which Lottie was sitting, you know, and I have always let things come in between me and my quest, but now I am going to work hard and get at the truth."

"If you put it into a good detective's hands it should not take long," Lady Mary said briskly. "You promised to show us the papers and photographs that were sent you from Australia, but you never did!"

"And I am afraid I never shall now," he laughed ruefully; "they have been stolen from me."

"Stolen!" both women exclaimed. He nodded.

"Yes, I found my drawer where I had kept them had been ransacked, and every single proof taken away. It's the most extraordinary thing in the world, as nothing of any value was taken, and I had notes stuffed in another drawer."

"But have you no idea who did it?" Stella said.

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"Not in the least. I did not know anyone but myself knew of their existence," he replied. "The day I discovered it."

He paused suddenly. He remembered the day too well. It had been when she had come to the studio, and he had forgotten everything for one mad second before Clifford Hawke had taken her away. As their eyes met Stella flushed suddenly. Almost by a wondrous telepathy she knew what the unfinished sentence was, and the memory of all it had meant rushed back upon her in a flood of regret and shame.

"The only thing for you to do," Lady Mary broke in, "is to go to Scotland Yard."

Tennant laughed. "I am going on there as soon as I leave here," he said, "but I must find someone to take care of Fifi. Poor little creature, I shall be going abroad after my stay in the country, and she will have to find a new home."

"Let me have her," Stella said quickly. "I should love to have her."

"I have no dog of my own," he answered. "Fifi wouldn't know herself in such grandeur, if you really will have her."

"Perhaps Mr. Hawke may not like you to have a dog just yet, dear," Lady Mary suggested gently.

"I shall not insist on it," she answered with a touch of hauteur. "I will keep Fifi always with me. If Mr. Tennant will trust her with me."

"There is no one else whom I would have chosen had I been asked!" he said quietly; "my only fear is that Fifi will forget me all too quickly."

She looked at him with shining eyes. "I shall not let her do that," she said simply, "and Fifi will be faithful to her first love, I know."

"Fifi will have to be shown among the other wedding presents with one of your cards on the collar round her neck, Jasper," Lady Mary laughed, "she will create a new fashion in wedding presents."

(To be Continued.)

CANADIAN

Pink rot is prevalent in Canadian apples.

London has no scarlet fever or diphtheria.

Hamilton jail this year cost \$6,827.72 to maintain.

Hamilton jail had 710 prisoners this year, 70 more than last.

Scott act detectives seized a truck load of ale at Fredericton.

Customs collections in Montreal for September totalled \$1,051,526.

The free postal delivery system is being installed in St. Thomas.

The League of American Municipalities will meet in Montreal in 1911.

Premier Scott's libel suit against McDonald at Regina has been dismissed.

Capt. Wm. McAvoy, former proprietor of the Queen's, St. Catharines, is dead.

Mrs. Annie F. Sim, widow of the late Rev. A. Sim, is dead at Burk's Falls.

Hon. Arthur Boyer has been asked to oppose F. D. Monk in Jacques Cartier.

Mining men are steadily pouring into the Miller Lake district from Latchford.

Benjamin Sutton, of Hamilton, left home on Monday last and has not been heard of since.

John Curran, of Montreal, was drowned in the canal at the Wellington street bridge.

Rev. Father J. J. O'Reilly has been appointed Roman Catholic chaplain to the troops of Kingston.

J. S. Riddle, of Danville, Que., has been granted 1,444 acres of land in Alberta at \$175 an acre.

The St. Thomas Journal will fight the libel suit brought against it by David Marshall, of East Elgin.

A broken rail on the G. T. R. near Dorchester was discovered just in time to save a passenger train.

Farmers are unable to ship their wheat at Lumsden, Aylesbury and Craven because of lack of cars.

Mayor Stewart for the west and Sam Barker for the east are the Conservative candidates in Hamilton.

Assessors' figures show Peterboro has increased 491 in population and that the city now has 16,491 people.

John Litton, a machinist at the Kingston locomotive works, was whirled around a shaft and had several ribs broken.

George Elgelow's new barn near Grono was destroyed with the season's crops by sparks from a threshing engine.

R. R. Jamieson, general superintendent of the central division of the C. P. R., has resigned to go into business in Calgary.

Montreal's custom collections for 1902 totalled \$17,000,000, and it is estimated this year's collections will total \$13,000,000.

Magistrate Jelfs, of Hamilton, dismissed the charges against liverymen for renting cabs to undertakers without securing cab licenses.

Thirty out of thirty-six petitions to vote on local option in Manitoba municipalities are invalid because they were not filed prior to Oct. 1.

The corner stone of the memorial tower at Halifax to commemorate the first legislative assembly granted to a British colony, was laid the other day.

Vancouver Chinese, convicted of harboring girls, deceived the police by papering over the doorways of a den to make them look like a blank wall.

The two bylaws voted on at Milton were carried by a majority of 232 for the Fibreboard Manufacturing Company and the Willmott Farm Implement Manufacturing Company, not one vote having been polled against them.

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THIS HOBO HAD REAL STAMINA

Gives Ten Ounces of His Blood Although Starving and Walks Away.

New York, Oct. 5.—Handicapped physically by the fact that for days he had been stowed away in a freight car, and had suffered from acute hunger, on a trip from Baltimore, his home, Benjamin F. Hill, in the Presbyterian Hospital yesterday, gave an exhibition of stamina which astounded the surgeons.

"Broke," as he termed it, the young fellow gave for just \$10, approximately eighteen ounces of his blood to be infused into the veins of a dying patient. He was told, optimistically, that perhaps in four days after the vital fluid had been extracted, he would be able to walk and return to his present lodgings in the Mills Hotel.

For a little more than one hour young Hill lay still on his back on the operating table. Then, with an exclamation of disgust at his enforced inactivity, he arose unassisted and, practically giving medical theories a slap in the face and ignoring the protests of the doctors, walked out.

He did not stagger. His eyes were clear. The only evidence that he had asked his life for \$10 to infuse life into the veins of a man whom he did not know—a man who had more money than he—was a bandage wound tightly about his left arm where the incision had been made.

As Hill took his first steps in the little operating room after the tube connecting his artery with an artery in the right arm of the patient had been disconnected, the patient turned and made some incoherent remark. Hill looked at the form on the second table and saw a hand thrust toward him. He grasped it and pressed it warmly though silently.

Then Hill walked to a Madison avenue car at Seventy-first street, and rode down town, where he met a friend. Although the operation occurred at 1 o'clock and Hill lay upon the table until 3:30, he went about visiting with his friend until 11 p.m.

Dr. James A. Horscoden was in charge of the operation. Last night at the hotel he was informed yesterday morning that if he called at the Presbyterian Hospital he could earn \$10 by surrendering a small percentage of his blood.

"There were at least twenty up there in line, all of them willing to do almost anything except commit a crime," he said, "for \$10. I was next in the last line. Some looked husky, like longshoremen and truck drivers. My face was pale, and I was weak. I saw about seventeen of the men turned away by the examining surgeon. When my turn came the doctor for I don't know his name—placed some instrument in my biceps, felt my pulse, asked as to my general health and habits, and then came the little white room and the operation."

Speaking of the patient, Hill said: "The unfortunate man was trundled in on a table. It would not do to describe the condition in which he was in. He was suffering from internal hemorrhage. When he left the hospital he seemed to be very much improved, and I heard the doctors say they thought he might pull through."

Despite the heroic treatment administered and the obvious trembling of Hill's blood, the patient died last night. When surgeons learned of Hill's getting up and walking off, they declared it was one of the most remarkable incidents they had ever heard of.

Competition for the Job.

Hill's home is at No. 3523 Roland avenue, Baltimore. He has been at the Mills Hotel two days. With others at the hotel he was informed yesterday morning that if he called at the Presbyterian Hospital he could earn \$10 by surrendering a small percentage of his blood.

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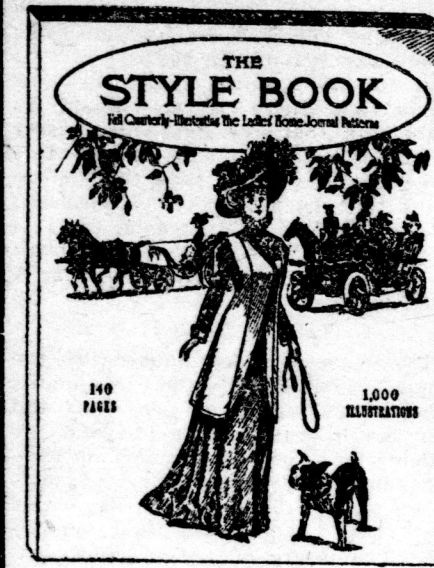
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BRITISH

One man in six in the British navy is a total abstainer.

A dance in the sea recently took place at an English seaside resort.

Sept. 2 was the 242nd anniversary of the great fire of London.

Over a million and a half of men are employed in the navies of the world.

Sterilized toothpicks in sealed envelopes are now supplied at London restaurants.

Oxford is the greatest university in the world. It has twenty-one colleges and five halls.

The shipyards of Great Britain, all working together, could turn out a large steamship daily.

It was a reformed highwayman, Stanley, who first suggested workhouse for the poor (1646).

Britain brews 36,500,000 barrels of beer in a year, and drinks them all but the odd half million.

The population of Middlesex has increased from 792,314 to 1,059,634 since the last census was taken.

"Real Scotch white heather," being extensively sold in London, is said to "come from some moor in Surrey."

The drapery trade has supplied more Lord Mayors of London than any other business, the total being 74.

Mr. George Stubley, J. P., Carlton, Yorks, who died leaving \$1,490,000, began life as a boy in a woolen mill.

The Rev. Dr. Armstrong Black's induction to the pastorate at Silverhill, near St. Leonards, took place on Sept. 3.

Mr. John Causton, who remembered the celebration of the jubilee of George IV., has died at Norwich at the age of 104.

A wedding at Canterbury, for which about 40 people were present, had to be postponed because the clergyman forgot.

Mr. C. B. Bruce, the eminent engineer, one of the last survivors of the makers of the first railways, has died, aged 81.

Mr. Wm. Parrish Hoskins, a well known manufacturer of Birmingham, died in a first-class railway carriage at Willesden.

The Master of Ellbank, M. P., will be the chief guest of the St. Andrew's Society of Manchester at the annual dinner on Nov. 30.

It is asserted on authority that the day of the London bus horse is not yet over. There are still nearly 100,000 in the metropolis.