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The Sound of Wedding Bells

— OR —
Won After Great Perseverance!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Have I, who have sinned against you so deeply, any right to be angry?" he says, with self-reproach.

"Then Hugh, give me a week, one little week to consider," she says.

He frowns, his old grim frown.

"See, Hugh," she says, putting her hand on his arm, "it is for your sake, not mine. Give me a week; come to me then—do not come to me before—and repeat your offer and I will give you an answer. Will that satisfy you? Is it too much to ask? Think, Hugh, it is so important for both of us. Only a week; it is not long, and if, at the end of that time, you still wish me to be your wife—"

She stops and looks up at him.

Hugh stands, with the frown upon his face.

"Very well, Lucy. You have the right to ask that much of me. I will come again in a week."

"In a week, dear Hugh," she murmurs. "May I go now?"

"No," he says, with his usual chivalry. "I will go," and he takes her hand.

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famed; to hold a position in society second only to royalty itself; to take precedence of old Lady Falconer, who had patronized her for so many years, and to be able to look down from a giddy height on Maud and Edle.

It is very tempting! On the other hand, would it not be better to take Sir Hugh, the famous soldier, young and handsome, and—well, whom she loved? Yes, she assured herself with a little smile, as she sat in her own room after Hugh had gone, sat looking at the duke's rose in her hand, she had loved him, and did love him, as well as it was in her nature to love any one except herself.

Such natures as Lucy Fairfax's are incapable of pure, disinterested love, but as far as was given to her to love at all, she loved Hugh; and as she sits, rose in hand, and ponders, with the little sympathetic smile on her face, these two pictures rise before her.

The one that of an old man with grizzled hair, and with a gait that was on the verge of tottering, the other, the tall, manly form of Hugh, with the grave, handsome face.

But the grizzled hair belongs to a duke, and Sir Hugh is only a baronet. It is difficult to decide, and at length she rises with a little soft sigh.

"After all," she murmurs, as she places her little red rose in water, "the duke has not spoken and Hugh has; a bird in hand is worth two in the bush. If I were quite sure the duke would speak—well, then," with a sigh, "poor Hugh would have to go. Dukes are not so plentiful that one can snap one's finger at them."

As she speaks, the door opens and Maud comes in, her thin form clad in the lightest of riding habits.

"Are you alone, dear Lucy?" she says.

Lucy Fairfax turns and looks at her, and quickly drops a piece of lace over the rose.

"Yes, dear; come in. Have you been for your ride?"

Then she looks at her curiously, for there is a bright flush on Maud's cheeks, and an unwonted light in her eyes, and as she drops into a chair she puts her hand up to take off her hat, and keeps her hand shading her face.

Lucy Fairfax watches her keenly, but with the sympathetic smile all ready if it should be needed.

"Enjoyed it, dear?" she says, encouragingly. "You look particularly happy. Whom did you see?"

Maud simpers bashfully.

"Oh, lots of people, dear. We could scarcely get away. The duke said we had quite a reception."

"Oh," said Lucy, with a fine smile. "So you had the duke with you dear?"

"Yes," says Maud; then she blushes and simpers again, inviting questions.

"You seem to have the duke a great deal with you, dear," says Lucy. "He is very attentive, I think."

"That's what mamma says," responds Maud, eagerly. "But—but I tell her it is all nonsense."

Lucy Fairfax goes behind her chair, and leans over to pat her cheek.

"What a simple, unsuspecting child it is," she murmurs. "Quite unconscious and innocent! Yes, Maud, your mamma is right; the duke is very, very attentive. Oh, Maud, Maud!"

Maud flushes and attempts to look around at the sympathetic face, but Lucy Fairfax keeps well behind her.

"Do you really think there's—there's anything in it, Lucy?" she asks, with poorly-concealed anxiety.

"He—he was always kind and polite, you know."

"But not so much as lately, my dear, was he?" suggests Lucy, gently.

"No, Maud, Lady Falconer is quite right. The duke has spent a great deal of his valuable time on us—no, on one of us, young ladies, Maud. You know which of us is answerable for it."

Maud laughs softly and consciously.

"Do you know, Lucy," she replies, "I thought at one time—that that you were the attraction?"

The false laugh comes rippling from behind the chair.

"I, my dear Maud? How absurd! I! And she gently pats the flushed cheek chidingly. "I am the last person the great duke would be attracted by, dear—little, insignificant body, with red hair and a plain face! No, no, Maud."

You wonder why H.P. Sauce is so delicious.

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"Well, I did think so," says Maud, with a sigh of relief. "At first I thought it was you, because he used to talk to you so much."

"You silly child! Don't you know that men never talk so much to the woman they are in love with?"

"But after a time," goes on the simple Maud, "I—I didn't think so. And then, you know, of course we all knew that Hugh was your beau, Lucy, dear."

"Dear Hugh!" murmurs the soft voice, purringly.

"We do hope that it will come all right between you and Hugh," goes on Maud, "now that it is all over with that horrid girl."

"Yes, it is all over with Miss Dornimore," assents Lucy, smiling not very pleasantly. "And so, Maud, you're to be the great Duchess of Gretnam?"

"Oh, Lucy!" exclaims Maud, "how fast you go. Why—why, he has not spoken—he has not said a word—"

"But looks and gentle pressures of the hand go for more than words, dear," breaks in the sympathetic voice. "The duke is not the man to waste his attention or to ride in the park beside a young lady unless he means something definite. Well, Maud, at least you will have one who wishes you every happiness, and who will not cry you."

"Dear Lucy!" purrs Maud.

"And you must not forget your poor little friend when you have become a great lady in the land," goes on "the poor little friend" from behind the hair, with an unusual light in the green eyes. "You must ask her down to Gretnam now and then—"

"You foolish Lucy—of course you will always be welcome."

"And sometimes give her a day or two in Queen's Gate! It will be well to know a duchess so intimately. But perhaps the duke will not care—"

and she sighs softly.

(To be Continued.)

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Got His Hwn Back.

I heard General Sir Francis Lloyd tell an amusing story recently. It concerned a tall, very small drill sergeant and a tall, burly recruit from Yorkshire.

Though diminutive as to stature, the sergeant's temper was fierce, and he possessed a ready and a rasping tongue.

"Now then, you, Private Knaggs," he bawled to the tall Yorkshireman, "old yer 'ead up. There ain't no threepenny bits lyin' about in this parade ground."

"Shall I always have to look oop, sergeant?" asked the country lad.

"Always!" was the fierce reply.

"Then," answered Private Knaggs, as he lifted his face to the skies, "Good-bye, sergeant, for I shan't never see thee no more."—Pearsons.

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Ladies' Corsets
Ladies' Camisoles
Ladies' Coloured Und
Ladies' Underwear

Blankets, S
and W
Also a lot o
SORD
Also a few

The C
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