

Dick arrived on the dot of time, and found Miss Fisher at the mirror.

"Ah, caught in the act," he said, rushing over to her and taking both of her hands in his.

"You are quite mistaken," she replied, coloring slightly, "I was simply washing my face."

Miss Fisher had been making certain about the ink stains before the arrival of Dick.

"But I smell powder," exclaimed the young man in triumph.

"And what of it? Can I not do as I please?" protested the girl.

"Oh, certainly, but I don't think you can improve on nature."

"Well, don't for a moment think I am trying to," the girl defended.

But Dick's joy knew no bounds. The road to victory seemed to have been cleared of all obstacles. Miss Fisher had hastened to prepare to accompany HIM.

In this happy mood he nearly put his foot into it before he was safely out of the woods. Seeing Gray's Anatomy still lying on the table, he said.

"Oh, Edna, what's 'momentum maximum'? Look it up. I want to know so that I can discuss a certain thing intelligently."

"Dick, don't be silly. There's no such thing," she replied, smiling at the young man's simplicity.

"But there is. It's Latin for something," he persisted.

"Not in anatomy."

"No?"

"No."

The delicacy of the ground rendered Dick extremely cautious. He laughed, changed the subject and assisted the girl with her wraps.

As they hurried along the avenue in order to catch a tram going down Granville, Miss Fisher was quite amiable, and they both laughed heartily when they sat down in the car after a final effort to get one that nearly escaped. Dick's mercury of hope rose higher in the gage than it had ever done before. Away from the dead weight of stagnating text-books and the maze of unpronounceable technical terms, she seemed to buoy up lightly far above the surface. She accompanied him as airily and as beautifully plumed as any bird of paradise.

Dick began to imagine a glorious future not far distant. Edna would yet listen to reason. She had simply been laboring under a false mental illusion. She would yet be saved for herself and for him. Patience with him would be a priceless virtue, for the prize he might win would be of inestimable value.

The show began, and in due course it came to an end. Dick laughed when others laughed; clapped his hands when they did; but, for the life of him he did not know what it was all about. He saw the actors in their various stunts. There were handsome men and beautiful girls—strong, masculine men, beautiful fragile girls. But he never discovered the plot of the play because he was all eyes and ears for the girl by his side, the dearest, sweetest and most beautifully fragile of them all.

At the gate leading to Miss Fisher's rooming home, they lingered long and lovingly, even Doctor-Fisher-to-be reluctantly observing the passage of time. They chatted at first on commonplace things, then their words betrayed feeling and finally emotion. In time words failed them entirely while moments went by on their swift, relentless wings.

Dick recognized the value of the opportunity. Miss Fisher was in the desired mood. His policy was to strike while the iron was hot. He had no fear that a promise wrung out of duance might not be binding.

He gripped the hand that was invitingly near his own, raised it to his lips, and kissed the soft fingers appealingly. The familiarity was not resented as he had feared it might. Miss Fisher was melting in that crucible which has the shaping of all feminine destinies.

"Edna," he said, still holding her hand. "I am not going home until you have promised to marry me." And he pressed the fingers as though to infuse more of that infection which was necessary to make the capitulation complete.

Miss Fisher gave a slight start, which, however, was destitute of rebellion; and she did not remove her hand.

"Dick," she whispered. She had been prepared for a great deal, perhaps, but not for this. But she did not move away from him. It was as though some natural weakness had rendered her powerless in the enchantment of the young man's presence.

Dick was twenty-five, she was approaching twenty. The time was ripe for both.

Miss Fisher saw a vision of her books, and her degrees, and her career flying away from her on little thieving wings. But oh the joy of those few moments with Dick! Could she not love and study at the same time. Physically she seemed helpless, and whether she made efforts in her mind to escape or not Dick could not tell, and he did not care.

She was certainly not angry with him, and there was no attempt at resistance when he pulled her towards him, for she permitted herself to fall into the strong arms that opened to receive her.

"Edna, you are mine!" cried Dick. And he kissed her in the wild enthusiasm of the new joy.

For a few moments neither of them spoke. Then, Miss Fisher, being the first to revive to practical things, said:

"But Dick, I must finish this year's college at least."

"Certainly; take all the years you like," he granted liberally. He would have given her eternity had it been his to give.

Doctor-Fisher-to-be found herself full of strange joy when she left Dick at the gate a few moments later.

During the summer holidays they were married one day on the quiet at the coast, and they visited some of the eastern cities in a long and delightful honeymoon.

When that came to an end and they found themselves at home, the bride reminded her husband of his promise. The thirst for learning had not been quenched. Even marriage could not destroy it. She must continue her studies that the desired goal might be reached.

Dick was somewhat disappointed, but he could not treat his promise like a scrap of paper. They could live in an apartment house, she told him. He could work in his office and she could study at college, she schemed, and they would board out somewhere. Dick was quite able to finance the undertaking until such time as they were both revenue producing.

"Think of it when we are both coining money!" she enthused.

Dick wilted like a leaf that had been frozen and then suddenly exposed to heat. And Mrs. Bamfield entered college for another term.

But she had not planned against all eventualities. In a few months' time her ambition became an impossible one. She continued to study in private, but even that grew more difficult as domestic responsibilities became more complicated. Dick harbored a rebellious joy.

Mrs. Bamfield recognized the truth with agony. But one day Dick held her in his arms and kissed away tears that were welling from her eyes. After that she seemed more cheerful, and Dick imagined she had swallowed her medicine like a philosopher.

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