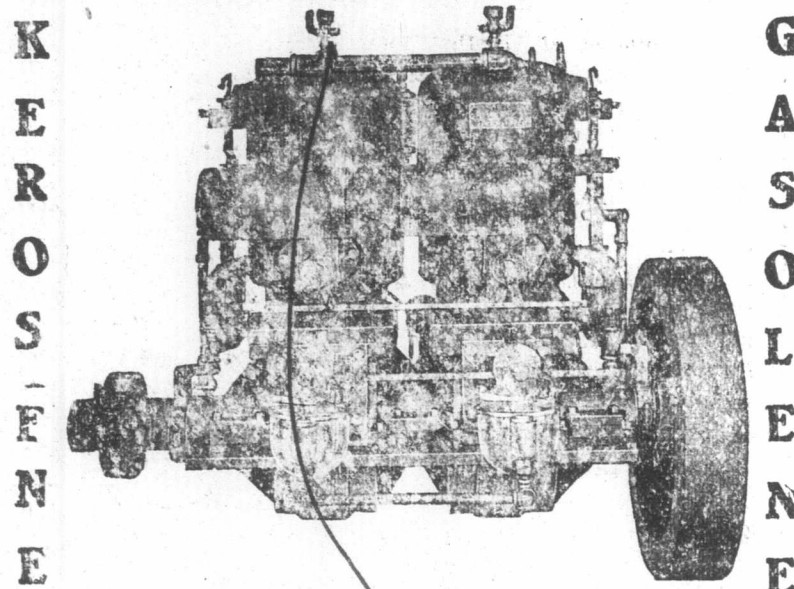


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The Mills of the Gods Or A Heart's Deception

CHAPTER X.

Yorke in Love.

"Besides," he mutters, "even if—that other woman weren't in the question," and he sets his teeth, "how could I ask her to marry me? Even if she'd have me—and why should I dare to think that I could win her love? I'm a pauper and worse. And she thinks me a duke! That's another thing! I forgot that idiotic business! Oh, I've tied myself up in every way, and haven't a chance! And yet I love her—I love her! Leslie!" he repeats the name, as Romeo might have repeated Juliet's, finding a torturing joy in his music. "No, there's no hope! Yorke, my boy, you are badly hit. You've laughed at this kind of thing often enough, but your turn has come. And as there is no hope for you, you have got to bear it. The best thing you can do is to clear out in the morning, and blot Portmaris out of the map of England. I mustn't see her again—never again!"

All his nature protests against his resolve, and his heart aches badly, very badly; but he squares his shoulders and sets his teeth hard.

"Yes, that's the only thing to do; to cut and run. There's one comfort, she won't mind. She won't miss me. God knows what I said when I felt her face against my breast; but whatever it was, I've offended her past forgiveness. She wouldn't see me again, I dare say, if I stayed, and so—"

He heaves a sigh, which is very much like a groan, and turns homeward.

He finds Grey alone in the room when he enters; the dinner things are still on the table, and Grey looks at him with a rather grave and startled expression.

"I've saved some dinner, your grace," he says.

"Your grace? he da-hanged!" says Yorke, almost fiercely.

"Yes, my lord," murmurs Grey.

"The duke waited for over an hour, and he had gone to bed; I was afraid of a chill, my lord. And your lordship is wet, very wet, still—"

"All right," says Yorke, as politely as he can. "Never mind. Go and see after the duke, and dinner—oh,

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yes. Thanks, you need not wait."

He tries to eat, but for once his faithful appetite fails him, and he pushes his plate away and gets his pipe, that great comfort of all times of trouble; and this is the worst trouble Yorke Auchester has ever had.

It is well on the small hours when weary, but oppressed by a ghastly wakefulness, he goes to bed, and there he lies, open-eyed and thoughtful, until the sun floods are room.

He gets up, and as he looks in the glass after his bath, he smiles grimly.

"Only one night of it!" he says.

"And a great many similar ones lie before me before I get over this! I wonder whether she has been thinking of me? Why should she? And if she should have been they wouldn't be peasant thoughts."

He pulls the blinds aside and looks at the house opposite, wondering which is her window; and as he does so the lover's heart-hunger for a sight of his loved one assails him.

It has still strong possession of him when he goes down the stairs and into the street; but he fights against it. The best thing he can do is not to see Leslie Lisle, but to drive Vinson's horses back to Northcliffe, and take the train from there to London, and—stop there; stop there till in a round of the folly which has suddenly grown so senseless and worthless in his eyes, he has dulled the pain of this, his first real love.

It is early, but Portmaris is alive and very much in evidence. The fishermen are out on the beach the women are bustling about, the children are playing in the road-way. Some with a huge slice of bread and butter or treacle in their fists; breakfast is evidently a very movable feast with the entire population.

Yorke stands a moment and looks round with a pang of regret.

"I shall think of this place," he says. "Think of it too often to be comfortable. Why couldn't I have come here—and to her—a year ago? What's that song about 'the night have been'? That's how I feel this morning. Oh, lord!"

He strides on with his head drooping, in an attitude very unlike that of Yorke Auchester's usual one; and without the last night's opera song on his lips as is ordinarily the case; and he is near the station, when he hears the laugh of children ahead of him, and looking up, sees a group that make his heart leap, and the blood rush to his face.

Under a great oak in the pretty lane stands no other than Leslie herself, with a child upheld in her arms, and two others clinging to the skirts of her pretty, simple morning dress. The child borne aloft has pulled off her hat, and the sunlight as it comes through the trees, falls in flecks of light and shadow on her hair and upturned face. She is laughing the soft, sweet laugh, which, though he should live to be as old as the old man walking along the other side of the road, Yorke will never forget, and—she does not see him.

Shall he turn and go back, go back and leave her forever? Better! But

he cannot, simply cannot. So' he goes on slowly, and it is not until he is close behind her that she hears him.

She turns, the child still held, crowing and struggling in her arms, and a startled look comes into her eyes, and the color flies to her face, and then leaves it pale.

Yorke lifts his hat.

"Good-morning," he says.

He lifts his head, and her head bends over the child now lying in her arms, and staring with blue eyes up at the big man who dares to address "Miss Lethlie." Leslie's lips move; no doubt she says "good-morning," in response, though he cannot hear her.

"You are early this morning," he says, and he knows that his voice falters and sounds unnatural, as surely as he knows that his heart is beating like a steam-hammer, and that the longing to cry to her, "Leslie I love you!" is almost irresistible.

"Yes," he says. "It is so beautiful after the rain—"

She stops, for the word has recalled to her the homeward drive, the storm, his words—all that she has been thinking of through the long night.

"Yes," he says, vaguely, stupidly. Then he says, suddenly, "That child is too heavy for you—"

"Oh, no; I often carry it," she falters, bending still lower over the pretty face enshrined in the yellow curls.

"But it is," he says. "Let me take it, if it must be carried."

"She would not let you," she says.

"We'll see," he rejoins, scarcely knowing what he is saying; and he holds out his arms.

The mite starts at him, turns and clutches Leslie for a moment, then, with the flickleness of its sex, swings round and holds it up above his head.

"Now what shall I do with you?" he says, hurriedly. "Take you to London with me. No?" for the child struggles. "For that is where I am going." He puts the child down, and it toddles off with the other two.

"Yes, I am going to London, Miss Lisle," he goes on, trying to speak lightly, carelessly.

"Yes?" she says, with downcast eyes, and as she stoops to pick up her hat. At she does so, he stoops too; they get hold of it together, and their hands meet.

But for that sudden meeting; that touch of her hand, he could have gone, and the history of Leslie Lisle would have been a very different one; but it is the link which the Fates have been wanting to make their claim complete.

"Leslie!" he cries, scarcely above his breath. "Leslie!" And he takes both her hands and holds them fast, and looks into her eyes, the dark, gray eyes which she lifts to him with a swift fear—or is it a swift joy? mirrored in their clear depths.

"Let-me-go," she falters, with trembling lips.

"No!" he says, desperately. "Not



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till I have told you that I love you!"

CHAPTER XI.

An Impetuous Avowal.

"I love you!"

Leslie draws her hands from his grasp, and stands with averted face, her bosom heaving, her breath coming with difficulty.

It is so sudden, so swift, this declaration, that she is overwhelmed, the heart of a pure-minded, innocent girl is not unlike a fortress. It with-stands many an attack, and is able to repulse the besiegers until the one comes who cries, "Surrender!"

And at the sound of his voice, before some nameless magic in his presence, her strength goes, the gate is thrown wide open, and the conqueror marches in.

Leslie had been calm and self-possessed enough when Ralph Duncombe was pleading his passionate love, and was able to withdraw his urgent prayer, but to Yorke she can

find nothing to say; she can only stand with downcast eyes, her heart beating fast, and the gates beginning to open!

He takes her hand, but again she withdraws it from him, and sinking on to the trunk of a fallen tree, keeps her face, her eyes, from him.

(To be continued.)

Education for Every Child In Sweden

STOCKHOLM, June 1.—Sweden's educational system today faces the organization of the purpose of which is to place full educational advantages within close reach of every child in the land irrespective of the child's social standing in the community.

Under the new plan all of Sweden's public schools, from the elementary grades to the universities, will be co-educational. At present only the elementary schools and the universities receive both sexes. The Swedish School Commission purpose to open the "realskola" and the "gymnasium" to girls as well as boys. An important change will be the elimination of several subjects as compulsory and the concentration of individual students on a smaller group of subjects logically related to the occupation or profession which most interests them. Students will be permitted to start specializing much earlier than at present.

It is now proposed that virtually the whole educational work of the country, with the exception of a few private schools, be taken over by the state. Tuition fees will be practically eliminated, and students will not be encumbered by the study of non-essential subjects. The estimated cost of the new system will be about \$1,000,000 a year more than at present.

It is proposed also to establish a school, new to the Swedish system of education, to be known as "Lycen," which in seven years will take a pupil directly from the elementary school to matriculation for the universities.

Among the languages offered under the new plan will be Latin and Greek and three modern languages in addition to Swedish, namely English, French and German.

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