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Style 340

"KYRA,"

OR,
The Ward of the Earl of Vering.

CHAPTER IV.

With an inward surprise he drew aside a little, pulled up his horse, and, quick as thought, slid to the ground, then as the maddened beast made a great lunge he caught her bridle, and, extending one arm, was just in time to catch the limp form of her rider as she fell prone from the saddle.

With an indignant smack on the face, Percy turned the mare over to the groom who dashed up at the moment, and then drew the unconscious woman out of the tan on to the path.

The movement brought her to, and almost instantly she opened her eyes. As they slowly took in the sense of the scene, and met the dark, earnest one's above her; as she felt the beating of the strong man's heart against her own, a thrill, which assuredly had never before moved her, passed through her frame.

With a tremulous sigh—that seemed to take her will—herself—with it, she returned his ardent gaze with a dreamy, upward resignation, then, as if awaking, drew herself away from him and stood pale and startled.

One arm still remained in his protecting, upholding grasp, but she did not attempt to withdraw it until he had taken her hand as well as pressed it lightly.

"Are you better? Quite right!—I am so glad. Some water?" and he looked about him.

"No, no!" she said, hurriedly, and with an anxious glance in the direction of the gate at which some people were just entering. "I will go home—no, not on the mare!" she added, quickly, in answer to the look of remonstrance "I can walk across the park."

"Are you sure?" he murmured, gently. "Do not overtax your strength."

"No, no," she responded, with a smile; "I never do that. I can walk; it is no distance across the grass."

Without a word he handed her her whip; and then, ready to help her if she needed it, strode on by her side in silence.

Suddenly she looked up, still pale, but smiling.

"I have lost my character as a horsewoman," she said—"with you, at least."

He looked down at her.
"You can lose nothing of all that is good and brave, and lovable with me," he said, in his low, deep voice.

She drooped her head.
"If you had not been there," she murmured, "I should have been under the foolish creature's heels."

"Heaven forbid!" he said gravely. She sighed.

"And this was such a happy time" she murmured, with sweet regretfulness, "and I have spoiled it by my awkwardness."

"You have rendered it ten times more happier for me," he said, looking down at her lovely face. "I would give all the days of my life for the last hour."

"Hush!" she said, quickly, as, with a sudden flush she quickened her pace. "Some one is near us, close behind; they are listening. Go—do not speak; do not look behind—do not, please!"

"Do not fear," he said, quietly.

"I—I am awfully foolish and—nervous," she murmured. "Here we are; I am so glad, and yet sorry, for I have said not a word of thanks, and she opened the gate with a trembling hand."

"Not one word was needed," he said. Then as she held out her hand, he took it; he thought he understood why she did not ask him in. "Good-bye! I may call and ask how you are?" he added, with an eager flush.

"Yes—no!" she added, hastily, and with a charming smile.

"No, you must not, for I feel that I ought not to be encouraged in my cowardice. Good-bye."

And his strong hand tightened on her small one, she returned the pressure, and then drew her fingers from his grasp with a suddenness that made him look up to see the cause.

His quick eyes just caught the last of two retreating figures as they turned the west corner into Mount street, and he fancied, with a persistency that clung to him afterward, that they belonged to Count Hudspeil and Captain Warner; when he looked round again, Lillian Devigne had disappeared and he was alone. With a quick, yet trembling step, she had slipped away from him and hurried through the open window into the drawing room.

Then she dropped into a chair, and leaned back with frowning brows and tightened lips.

So she sat for the space of five minutes, then as her face grew more composed, she rose, glanced at herself

in the glass, and passed upstairs into her mother's room.

Lady Devigne was in the act of sipping her morning cup of chocolate in bed, and started over the rim at her daughter's unusual pallor.

"What has happened, Lillian?" she demanded; "you look like a ghost. What has happened?"

"Just what I expected," replied Lillian Devigne, with tightened lips and musing eyes. "I never button on my habit without thinking that I am putting on my shroud. If there is anything on the face of the earth I hate, it is a horse! That beast, I knew we did not get her so cheap for nothing; that beast has nearly killed me!" with a vicious clench of the teeth that would have outdone the mare. "I knew I should be thrown the moment she started, and I never felt easy for a moment. Oh, how I hate a horse! I wish, they were all in one stable and I could burn it over their heads. Fancy! sitting there having to act the Amazon—ah, and no mean acting to deceive him."

"But—but—he did not see—"

"Oh, no, I did perceive him up to the last nearly—quite to the last as you or I were concerned, for the vile beast bolted and threw me—"

"Threw you!" echoed Lady Devigne, in dismay, her eyes, running over the uninjured habit. "Where—in the road?"

"No; into his arms," retorted Lillian Devigne; and as she bowed her head aside to put her hat and gloves on the table, a slight dash of color came into her face.

"Into his arms!" exclaimed Lady Devigne.

"Yes, I said so, mamma," returned Lillian, with a tone of irritation. "It is not a pleasant thing to do into one's ears. Yes, he caught me, or I should have spoiled my habit;" and she smiled scornfully.

"Did he?" murmured Lady Devigne, still lost in speculative astonishment; "and—surely that's not all!" she suggested, with her wisdom of experience.

"Yes; there might have been more," returned the daughter, with pursed lips; "there would have been more, but for that clog and bane of our lives. He came upon us and foiled us."

Lady Devigne turned pale and groaned.

"Always he!"

"Yes; he never fails us!" retorted the daughter, bitterly. "He saw us in the park, and cut across, I suppose. He was mean enough to hear every word, and, and—and, oh, how sick I am of it all! how sick and weary!" and she laid her hand on the door.

"But—but—Percy Chester? You have quite decided. You think he is taken?"

The girl looked down, and a smile of self-scorn curled her lip.

"Yes; he thinks me all that is good and pure and truthful. How should he, who is all that is truthful and honorable, think otherwise?"

Lady Devigne paid no heed to the sneer whatever.

"And you think," she murmured, "you think it would answer—that he is worth while, good enough—"

"I think that he—a gentleman nobly born, the heir to an earldom—would marry me, a heartless, designing adventuress—"

"My dear Lillian!" broke in Lady Devigne, with crimson cheeks and an angry stare, "you forget yourself!"

"Forget myself!" echoed the girl, turning her lovely face, full of scorn and bitterness, toward the bed; "forget myself! What would I give to be able to do so for one short hour!" and with a laugh of self-contempt she left the room.

CHAPTER V.
"The course of true love never did run smoothly," says the old adage, and if it be true, then Percy Chester's love was anything but deep and veritable, for there were no obstacles at present in his progress toward the good graces of Lady Devigne and her lovely daughter.

The two ladies were rarely seen now without the tall, broad-shouldered Percy in attendance, and the men of his set were beginning to nod and smile at each other, and lament over the billiard table and the rails of the Row that Chester was hooked, quite



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War News

Messages Received Previous to 9

THE QUESTION—A
NEXT HOPED FOR.

LONDON, May 25.

A large expectant crowd of members and of the general public assembled in the House of Commons this afternoon when Premier Asquith rose to make his statement of affairs. Although it was understood that the Prime Minister would not go into any details which were taking place in the members of the government, Irish enough to be made public, started by expressing the hope that the disappearance of martial law would be speedy and complete, referring to the sacrifices Irishmen made on behalf of the British during the present war, Asquith "could we who represent Ireland could those who represent England tolerate the prospect when it was over, when we had by our efforts and sacrifices, as we had believed we should, reached our end, that here at home should be arrayed against one of the most tragic and most of all conflicts, internecine strife. The Premier said that the duty of the government was to store order and prevent a repetition of the disturbances, at the same time there was cause for rejoicing, overwhelming evidence that the bulk of the Irish nation had sympathy with the rebellion. Much was being continued as a primary measure. Asquith hoped appearance would shortly be complete. For the time being the position of the Irish executive provisional, Asquith said, Ireland to get a first hand view situation, the Premier went on and talked freely with the number of those who have rested. There were two main infant impressions left on the first, the breakdown of the machinery of the Irish government, second the strength and depth of universal feeling in Ireland, have now a unique opportunity a new departure for a settlement of the problem. I saw with my own heart rendering desolation, unhappily misguided men had over a large area near Dublin, a full discussion with representatives and exponents of all schools of opinion. Referring to the Rule Bill, Premier Asquith one so far as known has even contemplated its application one set of Irishmen against another. What is now in this great emergency of paramount importance is that if it be possible, and is possible, an agreement



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