

# SIR WILLIAM'S WILL

Jack took Clytie's hand and held it tightly in his, and smiled across at Mollie.

"I can't very well throw you out of the cab, Mollie," he said.

"I might have taken a hansom by myself," she remarked, remorsefully.

They had arranged that Jack should travel to Weybridge in a different compartment to that of the girls; and when he was alone he tried to realize that Clytie was his wife. His wife! Let him say it over and over again for fifty times; he tried it; but it proved ineffectual; he could not realize it. It was only a short distance from the station to the cottage, and the girls walked, Jack following them at a discreet distance.

When he reached the cottage, Mollie met him under the verandah.

"She has gone upstairs to take off her things. I have persuaded her to lie down for a few minutes. You won't mind, Jack; you know that she has not been very well lately? And though she was so calm and behaved so beautifully, of course it has been very trying—what word is the best to use, I wonder?—business for her? Clytie is not like most girls; she is so—how shall I put it?—so delicate in her mind. So modest and sensitive; not like me. If I'd married you in this way, I should have regarded the whole affair as a bene—I beg your pardon!"

Jack laughed, in Mollie's presence, under her bright influence, he was almost able to realize his happiness.

"Don't you worry, Mollie, dear," he said. "I know what you mean; and 'bene' is a very good word; of course it means a bean-feast, an outing. Yes; you'd have been all right."

"Rather!" she said in her sweet girlish voice. "I'd have gone to a restaurant with you and had champagne—oh, but don't you be anxious, I've got some champagne for you—for us. And don't be nervous about Clytie. She's all right; it's only that delicate way of hers, as I say. She is like a beautiful orchid, something rare and fine, and you have to treat her as such."

"Do you think I don't understand, Mollie?" he said, with a smile. "What I am asking myself is, how such a rare and beautiful thing as Clytie could stoop to such as me. It's like a star stooping to the puddle in which it shines."

Mollie glanced at him curiously, and nodded brightly as she touched the flowers on the table with a girl's sensitive, sympathetic touch.

"Almost a bridal table, isn't it?" she said. "I went as far as I could; you see, I did not want to make the maids suspicious. I'll run up and see if Clytie is rested. Of course you want her. Oh, don't I know—at least," demurely, "I can guess."

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with faltering accents. "What do you see? Jack—Wilfred—Oh! I don't know what to call you! You are not going to make a fuss, you are not going to be cruel!"

"No," he said, sternly. "Not cruel—but just. You tell me that Clytie knew who I was as long ago as that. You have, both of you concealed the fact, you have both of you deceived me. Why? But I know. My eyes are opened. I know why she has married me. She wanted me to have Bramley and the money, as arranged by this accursed will. She has never cared for me—don't speak! I won't listen. I've been a fool; yes, a fool—and in a dream; but I'm awake now. I know. I've loved her with all my heart and soul. No man could have loved her better, more truly, more devotedly. And she has fooled me—for the sake of some foolish sentiment of self-sacrifice. She has never cared for me."

Mollie sprang to him and caught his arm.

"Jack, you're wrong!" she cried. "Clytie loves you!"

He flung her from him. "That's a lie! She does not care for me. She shrinks every time I touch her—she has not said a word of love—she has not let me kiss her. Oh, I see it all now! Just to gratify this idea of hers, this idea of sacrifice, she has sacrificed herself. Sacrificed! I think I shall go mad. To be married to a girl who shrinks from your very touch!"

"Jack! I swear to you you are wrong!" cried Mollie, clutching him

SINCE 1870

**SHILOH**

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again. "Let me go to her, let me bring her down."

He caught her and almost flung her into a chair.

"No," he said. "You shall not bring her. Stay there. And listen to me. You're a sensible girl, and must know what I feel, what I want to say. I refuse to be made a dupe. Tell her that I decline her—her sacrifice. That I decline to be the husband of a woman who doesn't love me, who has married me to satisfy some quixotic fancy. I understand now her reason for asking me to marry her. For all this accursed secrecy and underhand business. Do you think that I am such a cur as to accept her sacrifice? No! She bargained that I was to leave her, to go somewhere—to the devil, for all she cared, I suppose—after this mockery of a ceremony. Well, I am going."

"Jack, Jack! She loves you—let me bring her down!" wailed Mollie, wringing her hands.

"Stay where you are," he said, sternly. "I've been in a dream; but I'm awake now. Bring her down when I'm gone. Tell her that I've gone forever. That I'm not such a fool and cur as to claim for a wife the woman who has married me for an idea. Love! You must think me a fool! I tell you that not by word or sign or look has she shown any love for me." He laughed bitterly. "Quite the contrary. Oh, quite the contrary. Stay where you are."

**Picking Out a HOTEL**

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He sprang to the writing-table, caught up a pen, and wrote something on a sheet of paper. "There! Give her that." He tossed the paper savagely on the table. "I resign all claim to Bramley and the money. I didn't want them. I wanted the woman I love."

Mollie ran to him and clung to him, weeping bitterly and white with fright. He put her from him; then held her at arm's length and looked at her a little less fiercely.

"You're a good sort, Mollie," he said, grimly. "But you are only a girl, and you don't understand. Give Clytie that paper when she wakes, and tell her she has nothing to fear from me. I shall never claim her. I hope to Heaven I shall never see her again!"

He put Mollie away from him and went through the open French window.

Almost distraught, Mollie ran after him, calling to him; but he strode across the lawn, without turning his head, and was quickly hidden from her by the trees.

**CHAPTER XXV.**

There was rejoicing at Parraluna; Jack Douglas had come back. The Jarrows had received no notice of his return, for Jack had declared his intention of accompanying Choze only an hour or so before the sailing of the White Witch.

Of course, Choze had seen that something was the matter, for Jack had looked as if he had been through a bad time; but Choze had asked no questions, and, as he told the Jarrows, had been only too glad to get Jack on any terms, especially when he had been informed of Jack's identity.

**How to Purify the Blood**

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Mr. and Mrs. Jarrow received Jack as if he were their own son, and proceeded to kill the fatted calf forthwith; Teddy, the boy, expressed his joy in a shrill yell of delight, and so hovered about his hero during the first few days that Jack had a great difficulty in avoiding falling over him; the hands, too, were very pleased to welcome a man who, though evidently their superior in education and position, never traded on the fact to shirk his work or put on airs, and was an all-round good mate.

The only person at Parraluna who evinced no enthusiasm at his sudden and unexpected return was Mary Seaton. Indeed, she did not come forward with the rest to greet him, and after some of the excitement had subsided, Jack, bethinking himself of her, went in search of her. She was washing in the little paddock behind the farm, and as Jack strode up she turned her head swiftly at the sound of his footsteps, and her face rather pale, nodded and scanned him for a moment or two with a keenness and something that looked to Jack like disappointment.

"Well, Mary, I've come back, like the bad penny. Aren't you going to shake hands?" and he held out his.

"Mine's wet," she said.

"Dry it, then," said Jack. "Or I'll take it as it is."

She dried her hands, and as he took it he said:

"You're looking well, Mary, and I'm glad to see you again. By the way, you might say that you're glad to see me."

"I am glad," she said, in her low voice, but with a certain doubt and reluctance in her voice and her reticent eyes which faintly puzzled him. "Have you been well? You are thinner, much thinner."

"Oh, I'm all right!" said Jack as cheerily as he could. "We had a roughish voyage, and—Oh, yes, I'm all right; and am glad to find every one here, including yourself, so fit."

She glanced at him sideways from under her lowered eyelids, nodded, and turned to her washing again; and Jack, after a few more words, left her.

There was a tremendous supper at the farm that night, to which all hands were invited; and Jarrow drank Jack's health so often, likewise Mrs. Jarrow's, Choze's, the hands', and 'Absent Friends' that he needed a little assistance when at last the party broke up, and he retired for the short remainder of the night.

Now, Jack had volunteered no information about his trip to England, or the cause of his return, and the Jarrows, respecting his reticence, asked no questions; like Choze, they were only too pleased to get him back, whatever the reason might be.

In a few days it seemed to them, and almost Jack himself, that he had never left Parraluna, as if those momentous months in England, with all their doubts, and hopes, and final disappointment and misery were but the insubstantial web and woof of a dream.

He had had plenty of time during the voyage to ponder and brood over the events which had reached their climax in his strange marriage to Clytie; and he had seen no reason for any change in the conviction which had

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struck him on the afternoon of the marriage, when Mollie had let the cat out of the bag. Clytie had not married him because she loved him, but because she wished him to become possessed of Bramley and Sir William's fortune. She had been impelled by a mistaken sense of justice to sacrifice herself, and had entrapped and deceived him. There was the case in a nutshell; and there was an end of it, so far as he was concerned. He would never take advantage of her quixotic generosity, never claim her. Providence, while it had struck him so heavy a blow with one hand, with the other had offered him sorrow's great panacea—work.

And there was enough of it, in all conscience. A great deal of time had been lost already, and Choze was anxious to get to work. The machinery had to be brought up from the port, huts erected at Silver Ridge, and a number of other indispensable preliminaries into the execution of which Jack threw himself with all his characteristic ardor and energy. And there was only time to snatch hasty meals; certainly no time for brooding; and at night physical exhaustion generally drove him to sleep, though sometimes he was fain to lie awake and chew the bitter cud of his misfortune.

**Worth Knowing.**

A good cold dessert is made by adding to a pint of grated pineapple pulp half a pint of water and half a pound of sugar previously boiled to syrup with a half a cupful of water. Press through a fine sieve, and when cool add the whipped white of an egg. Beat vigorously for a few minutes and set on ice until just before serving. High sherry glasses may be used for this dessert.

To cure sore throat take a lump of resin as large as a walnut, put it in an old teapot, pour boiling water on it, put the lid on, put the spout to your mouth, and the steam will cure the inflammation.

A writer on cookery for invalids very wisely remarks that too great emphasis cannot be laid on the necessity of making the invalid's tray attractive and of serving food very hot. Neglect in these two particulars is often the reason for a lack of appetite on the part of a patient.

It is always a good plan to buy soap in a large quantity, so that it will have a chance to become thoroughly dry before it is used. Dry soap lasts much longer than fresh. Free each bar of soap first of its paper wrappings, as these prevent it from drying properly.

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