



An Indispensible Favorite OR Wealth and Beauty at Stake!

CHAPTER XXV.
"There is no use now in blaming me for what my trustees did, Lady Nora," her daughter-in-law responds, with the cold dignity that is so impressive in the young and gentle. "I thought Captain Glynn was satisfied. He never said a word to the contrary. But then, of course, I was not in his confidence. How have I treated him cruelly?"

"How?" Lady Nora repeats, in a high sharp tone, but feeling by no means sure of her ground. "My dear, how can you ask me? The first duty of a woman is to live peacefully with her husband—is it not well, what have you done? Of course you were jealous—we will grant that, my dear. Do you think all women aren't jealous, or haven't cause to be, more or less, of their husbands? Such folly to give way to one's feelings and let everybody see them! You got no pity from any one—only blame and suspicion. A woman who leaves her husband is always counted in fault."

"I did not leave my husband," Yolande rejoins, thinking not of her hurried, passionate deed, but of the yearnings of her heart, too fond and faithful toward him who cares not for it. "You did not leave your husband at Featherth Place, against his wishes and without his knowledge, because you were jealous of his friendship with Joyce Murray?" Lady Nora demands, with judicial severity and haughtiness.

"I don't think it was against his wishes," Yolande answers, coldly. "My presence prevented Captain Glynn from continuing to devote all his time to Miss Murray, whom he loved, and obliged him to pay some attention to a wife whom he disliked."

"How can you talk such nonsense, my dear?" Lady Nora says, reprovingly.



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ly. "Dallas did not dislike you. I think he was really fond of you" with a patronizing little smile. "And as for Joyce Murray," Lady Nora says, alightingly, "you have really made such a lot out of nothing! Dallas would never compromise Joyce, who was always like a sister to him, by any marked flirtation—never! They were little sweethearts when they were children together—we used to laugh at them—and I suppose they saw no reason, even when Dallas was married, for discontinuing such an innocent friendship. And Joyce—why, are you aware that it things had gone well, Joyce would have been Lady Dunavon long ago? Poor Dunavon's sad death of course blighted all Joyce's dearest hopes." Lady Nora finishes, with a deep sigh.

"Yes; and it was so unfortunate he was not killed a week earlier!" Yolande remarks, her dark eyes gleaming. "Poor Miss Murray could then have given his engagement ring to Captain Glynn with some better prospects for the future than they have now!"

"What ring, Yolande?" Lady Nora demands, eagerly. "Did she give Dallas that splendid ring? And disgustingly slabby and selfish of him it was to allow me to pledge my diamond stars for him, when he had such a valuable ring in his possession!" Lady Nora thinks, in a spasm of displeasure. "The least he might have done would have been to raise money on that, when he knew how dreadfully hard up we were."

"Yes," Yolande replies, with a bitter smile and a burning flush of shame and misery, "they exchanged rings—her diamond and sapphire for his red cameo, pledges of brighter days in store for them, when they can reward each other's constancy!"

No sooner has she uttered this speech than Yolande repents of having spoken it. "To expose her husband's faithlessness, to blame and ridicule him, is surely vengeance. Swiftly as the mischief has been done, the seed is sown which is to bring forth a bitter harvest. Yolande is to regret those words with many a vain regret, and they cost Joyce Murray a coronet and blast her ambitious career forever."

"You don't say so!" Lady Nora says, looking excited, amused, bright-eyed at the prospect of scandal; and every moment Yolande feels more and more ashamed of herself. "When did this happen? When you were at Pentreath? Too bad of Joyce, I must say! Really hardly proper, you know, carrying a flirtation so far, and with a bridegroom, too! It is foolish of an unmarried woman to attempt that fast style; it only spoils her chances," Lady Nora observes, sagely; "and, though Joyce is a favorite with men, she is rather hanging on, you know. I shouldn't wonder a bit if she married wretchedly, after all! But as for Dallas, I Lady Nora adds lightly, "I should advise you not to trouble yourself in the least, dearest, about a piece of sentimental folly like that; men do get absurdly sentimental sometimes when one least expects it. I dare say he has almost forgotten his nonsense by this time, except when he thinks of his dear little wife, whom he has vexed, poor fellow!"

And Lady Nora's daughter-in-law acknowledges this pretty, half-bantering speech with a proud, cold glance. "You will stay and dine with us, I hope, Lady Nora," she says, rising, with a courteous smile. "Allow me to show you to your room; and your maid shall bring you up some tea."

"Thank, dearest," Lady Nora responds, graciously. "I shall be glad of some of your delicious tea."

So Yolande takes her upstairs to the largest and best of their spare rooms, which is, of course, in admirable order and swathed in clean balneo dust-covers, which, being removed, disclose everything—spotless, shining, and in perfect readiness, with the exception of the chamber linen and fresh water to be supplied.

She wheels forward an easy-chair for her, brings her her own freshest and prettiest tea-gown of pale blue cashmere and creamy lace, and then sends her up a dainty tray of tea and pound-cake; and Lady Nora, whose worldly heart is just now a little sore and sensitive from the chaffing of debts and worries, glances over the girl's attention in sweetest words of gratitude.

"Oh, you darling, thoughtful girl!" she exclaims. "How I wish I could have you always with me!"

And in this speech are the pith and marrow of Lady Nora's purpose in visiting his son's wife. She has come, feeling very uncertain about her reception, but determined to risk the chance of coldness and rebuffs; the opinion or the displeasure of insignificant people like the Dormers is not of the least account with Lady Nora, except so far as they affect herself materially. And she has come, not so much to break the news of Dallas's departure to Yolande and console with her, as to borrow money from her. For poor little Lady Nora is, as she herself has plaintively said, "dreadfully hard up" indeed. Creditors have begun to grow malevolent, dunning letters omnipresent, debts to be represented only by a sign expressing an unknown quantity; and, though Lady Nora still possesses wardrobe trunks full of exquisite dresses, and enough jewelry to make her pretty hands and ears sparkle, though she still owns a waiting-woman, and a fine fox terrier, of coin of the realm she really possesses but a very inadequate sum—some four or five sovereigns and a handful of loose silver—wherewith to support herself, her maid, and her dog in fashionable apartments for an indefinite length of time. Things are about as bad with Lady Nora as they can well be; and it is quite possible that, if Yolande had been inclined to be hard and imperious with Lady Nora, she would have found her surprisingly meek and yielding. But, as it is, her ladyship thinks she sees her path smooth before her.

"A pretty little place, Moodie," she remarks to her maid, as she signs her tea, "but rather lonely for my poor little daughter-in-law now that Captain Glynn has gone abroad. I must try to persuade her to run down to Eastbourne, or better still, across to Trouville or Biarritz with me for a little change."

"Yes, my lady," the young woman, who is Moodie by name and disposition, agrees with spiky deference. "But—beggin' your pardon, my lady I must keep to what I said last evening. It isn't so much that I'm in need of anything; but I really can't do without some wages."

"I think you're very unreasonable!" Lady Nora says, sharply. "I gave you two pounds for pocket-money some little time since, and you have heaps of clothes. I am obliged to do without a thousand things until my income is due."

For Lady Nora has a small income, the source of which nobody knows—not even her son—and the existence of which she affirms or denies as it best suits her at the time. This income she regularly overdraws, and spends the check that she receives to the last shilling within a week.

"However, I will see what I can do for you when Mrs. Glynn and I make our arrangements this evening," Lady Nora adds, conciliatingly. "I should be very sorry to part with you, Moodie."

And, when her ladyship comes upstairs to bed the same night, Moodie feels sure the "arrangements" have been eminently satisfactory. Her mistress is in the best possible spirits, and, opening her desk to write some letters, she hands Moodie a crisp ten-pound note.

(To be continued.)

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How Great Liners Race.

THE BRITISH COMPANIES SET THEIR FACES AGAINST THE PRACTICE.
Anxious to prove that the Leviathan is the fastest as well as the biggest ship in the world, certain Americans are trying to arrange a race right across the Atlantic against the White Star liner Majestic.

Whether this event will come off or not is another matter. For one thing, it is the Mauretania and not the Majestic which holds the Atlantic record, and even if the Leviathan succeeded in beating the latter it would not settle the dispute. Another very great factor is that although the British companies are all anxious to hold the record, they are inclined to set their faces against actual neck-and-neck racing.

The public has always a sneaking suspicion that ship-racing cannot take place without danger, and although the seaman knows this to be incorrect, popular favor is not worth while risking.

As a matter of fact there is really no danger in a race between steamers when there is plenty of sea-room, although on a river or in confined waters it is, of course, a very different matter. The previous Majestic of the White Star Line race—and won—a wonderful series of races with the American New York, and no harm was done to anybody.

On the other hand, racing between steamers was stopped on the American rivers some years ago on account of the appalling number of accidents. Many of these were due to boiler explosions, but it must be remembered that in those days the safety valve was easily accessible to anyone wishing to meddle with it. Every now and again the passengers would jamper with it, while it was quite a regular thing to raise more steam by keeping the safety valve down. A sack of coal or passenger's luggage would often do the trick quite well.

Under such conditions it is not surprising the boilers blew up. Nowadays, however, boilers are thoroughly tested, and blow off steam at about half the pressure that they can safely stand, while nobody can get at the safety valve to alter its adjustment.

Collisions are also likely to occur in narrow waters.

The most extraordinary incident of this sort occurred on the Ohio River, when two steamers were racing down for the championship of the route. In rounding a bend one just touched the other, not doing the slightest damage to the boat, but enraging the skipper so much that he put his helm hard up and rammed his rival amid-

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Not long ago there was unearthed some Chinese manuscripts which had lain for centuries in a receptacle that was virtually a vacuum. When the manuscripts were warmed, millions of "dead" microbes stirred and came to life.

Some forty years back the island of Krakatoa, off the west coast of Sumatra, was almost blown to pieces by the greatest volcano eruption in

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eruptions by Time-Table

Do periods of volcanic activity to fit in with definite time-tables? The records show that at any particular place earthquakes have a maximum once every four years, and it is now contended that the same holds good of eruptions.

There seems to be a certain amount of evidence supporting this theory. For instance, 1923, 1911 and 1907, which were years of Etna eruptions, would fit a four-year cycle.

An eruption of 1849, when persons lost their lives as the result of an "explosion" of lava, also fits within the cycle.

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