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WINNIPEG TORONTO, ONT. MONTREAL

**'Margaret,'**  
The GIRL ARTIST,  
OR,  
The Countess of Ferrers Court.

CHAPTER V.

"Have you thought over the words that passed between us this afternoon, Blair?" he asked.

"Well—I'm afraid I haven't," he admitted, frankly.

The earl frowned.

"And yet they were important ones—especially those which referred to your future, Blair. We have not seen much of each other—perhaps wisely."

"I dare say," said Lord Blair, cheerfully. "People who can't agree are better apart, sir."

"But," continued the earl grimly, and not relishing the interruption, "but I would wish you to believe that I have your best interests at heart."

"Thank you, sir. I will take another glass of port."

"And in no surer way can these interests be promoted than by your marriage with Violet Graham."

Lord Blair frowned slightly, then he smiled.

"Pon my word, sir, I'm sorry to refuse you anything, especially after all your liberality; but it isn't to be done."

"Why not?" demanded the earl coldly.

Lord Blair hesitated, then he laughed grimly.

"Well, I suppose we can't hit it off; we don't care for each other."

The earl frowned.

"I have reason to believe that Violet would be willing—"

"Oh, it's all a mistake, sir!" broke in Lord Blair quickly. "Nothing of the kind! Violet doesn't care a straw for me! As to breaking her heart, as you said this afternoon, why—she laughed—she's the last girl in the world for that sort of thing! No, we thought we could manage it, but we found pretty soon that it wouldn't work, and so—and so—well, we just broke it off!"

"I can understand!" said the earl, grimly. "You wearied her with your dissipation, and stung her by your neglect."

Lord Blair flushed.

"Put it so, if you like, sir," he said, thinking what a good thing it was that they did not see much of each other.

"And so lost the chance of restoring your ruined fortunes," said the earl. "Violet's fortune is a large one. I am one of the trustees, and can speak with authority. It is large enough to repair all the mischief your wild, spendthrift course has produced. And you have lost, not only the means of your salvation, but one of the best girls in England. Great Heaven!"—he spoke quite quietly—"how can a man be so great a fool, and so blind!"

At another time the young man might have retorted, but he had had a good dinner and two glasses of the wonderful port, and so he only laughed.

"I suppose I am a fool, sir," he said good-temperedly. "Perhaps it's part of my constitution. But don't let us quarrel. It isn't worth while."

"You are right. It isn't worth while," said the earl, sinking back in his chair. "After all, I ought to be thankful that Violet has escaped; but blood is thicker than—water and I have thought of you more than of her. But let it pass. You are bent on following the road you have set out upon, and not even she nor I can stay you. As to Ketton, you refuse to accept my offer—"

"Yes, sir," said Lord Blair, gently but firmly. "I shall mortgage Ketton. I can't take any more money from you. If we were—well, better friends, it would be different, but—it's a pity you can't touch this port! The best wine I ever tasted!"

The earl sat in silence for a few minutes, then he rose.

"Coffee will be served in the drawing-room," he said. "You will excuse me?"

"Oh, certainly," said Lord Blair, jumping up. "I don't care about the coffee, I will go out and get a cigar on the terrace. Perhaps I sha'n't see you again, sir, I started early in the morning. If I should not, I'll say good-bye," and he held out his hand.

The earl touched it with his thin white fingers.

"Good-bye," he said, and with a sigh he passed down the corridor to his own apartments.

Lord Blair took out his cigar-case and stepped through the open window on to the terrace.

"Yes, I'm on the road to ruin, as my uncle says," he mused, "and going along at a rattling good pace, too! Sha'n't be long before I reach the terminus, I expect. Hartwell gone, Parkfield gone, and now Ketton. I'm sorry about Ketton! But I'd rather pawn everything that's left than take any more money from him! Heigho! I wonder whether any of the fellows who are so thick now will cut me when I can't come up on setting day and my name's on the black list! And I could put it all right by marrying Violet Graham. Just by marrying Violet. But I can't do that. I suppose I am a fool, as the old gentleman politely remarked. It's wonderful that I'm the only man he is ever rude to. They say he is the pink of courtesy and politeness to the rest of the world. 'Courtly Ferrers,' they used to call him. Ah, well, what does it matter? All the same in a hundred years. I've had my fling, or nearly had it, and after me—"

Before he could conclude with "the deluge," a girl's voice rose softly and sweetly in the distance, and seemed to float in and harmonize with the

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rather melancholy strain of his musings; and yet the voice was blithe and joyous enough, too.

Lord Blair leaned over the stone rail of the balustrade and listened.

A spell fell upon the wild young man, and for a few minutes a strange feeling—was it of remorse for his wasted life?—possessed him. Then there rose the desire to see the singer, and as such desires were far stronger in Lord Blair's breast than remorse, he moved quickly along the terrace in the direction of the voice. It did not occur to him that it might be Margaret Hale, and he experienced a sudden thrill of gratification as he saw the dove-colored dress shining, a soft patch of light against the shrubbery of the small garden.

At the same moment Margaret saw his shadowy cast upon the smooth lawn, and the song died on her lips.

He stopped short, and stood on top of the steps leading to the little garden, looking down at her.

"May I come?" he said quietly.

Margaret inclined her head gravely and rose. It was quite unnecessary to tell the Viscount Leyton that he was at liberty to step into a part of the garden that would belong to him some day.

"I'm awful unlucky, Miss Hale," he said, flinging his cigar away and coming up to the seat where she had been sitting. "This is the second time today I have disturbed you; and yesterday—oh, yesterday won't bear thinking of! You were singing, weren't you?"

"Yes, my lord," said Margaret gravely, for her grandmother's words had suddenly occurred to her, and she moved away.

"Are you going?" he said. "Now, I have driven you away! Please, don't go. I'll take myself off at once."

"I was going, my lord," said Margaret.

"Oh, come," he retorted pleadingly; "it's almost as wicked to tell stories as it is to fight; and you know you were sitting here comfortably enough until I intruded upon you."

His voice, his manner were irresistible, and produced a smile on Margaret's face.

"It is getting late," she said, "and Mrs. Hale may want me."

"I don't think she will. It isn't late," he looked at his watch—"I can't see. Your eyes are better than mine, I'll be bound. I've spilt them sitting up studying at night. Will you look? But upon this condition," he added, covering the face of the watch with his hand, "that if it isn't ten o'clock, you will stay a little while longer; of course I'll go—if you want me to!"

His eagerness was so palpable, almost so boyish, that Margaret could not repress a soft laugh. Rather gingerly she came back a step, and he held out his watch.

"It is half-past nine," she said.

"There you are, you see; it isn't late at all! Now, you stop out till ten, and I'll take myself off"—and with a nod he walked toward the steps, with Margaret's anticamassaw shawl in his hand.

"My lord!" she said, in a tone of annoyance, for it seemed as if he had done it on purpose.

"Yes," he responded, turning back very promptly.

"Will you give me my anti-may shawl, please?"

"Er? Oh, of course, I beg your pardon," he said. "I took it up intending to ask you to put it on—nights are chilly sometimes. Here you are. Let me put it on for you."

"No, no, thank you," said Margaret, taking it from him.

"Well, it is warm," he said, looking up at the sky, and then quickly returning his gaze to her face. "It's a pity you can't paint this; but you artists get rather handicapped on these night scenes, don't you? Want a big moon and a waterfall, and all that kind of thing?"

Margaret smiled. Certainly, in matters pertaining to art he was a perfect savage.

"To-night could be painted, my lord," she said, just stopping to say it, then moving away again.

"You think so?" he said, displaying, with boyish ingenuousness, his desire to engage her in conversation. "Well I don't know much about it; rather out of my line, you know. But I like seeing pictures, and I think you must be awfully clever—"

"Thanks, my lord!" said Margaret, with admirable gravity. "But your avowed ignorance rather detracts from the value of your expressed approval, does it not?"

He looked at her.

"That's rather hot and peppery, isn't it?" he said, ruefully. "Look here, you know, if I'm not up in painting, I know a little of other things. There are three things you might put me through a regular exam. in, and I shouldn't come out badly."

"For instance, my lord?" said Margaret, dangerously interested—and slowly stopping.

"For instance. Well, I know a horse when I see it."

"Very few people take it for a cow," retorted Margaret.

He laughed.

"Oh, you know what I mean. Many flats take a screw for a horse, though. Well, I know what a horse is worth pretty well, and I know a good dog when I see him, and I can tell you the proper kind of fly for most of the rivers in England and Scotland; and I know the quickest and surest way of stalking a stag; and—I can play a decent hand at cards—that is, if it's not too late in the evening; and—and—" he paused and looked rather at a loss.

"Is that all, my lord?"

"That's—that's all. It seemed rather a long list, too, while I was running it over," he responded.

"And what use is your knowledge to you, my lord, unless you intend turning horse-dealer or gamekeeper—but perhaps you do."

He laughed.

"By George, you're hard upon me! Won't you sit down?" Insensibly, Margaret sank into the seat, and he dropped carelessly on to the arm.

"Well, I might do worse."

(To be Continued.)

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We have arranged for the benefit of our customers goods on tables at the one price, so that customers can select themselves. To-day we feature 20c. Goods, but many will be worth double the price we ask. We are very emphatic regarding the rare economizing opportunities to be had in this Sale. Here is a list taken at random:

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Ladies' Mufflers	30c.	20c.	Toweling, 3 yards for	30c.	20c.
Ladies' Camisoles	30c.	20c.	Centre Pieces	25c.	20c.
Ladies' Aprons	30c.	20c.	Embroidery, 3 yards for	30c.	20c.
Ladies' Suspenders	30c.	20c.	Veiling	30c.	20c.
Ladies' Collars	25c.	20c.	Cushion Top	30c.	20c.
Children's Hose	30c.	20c.	Pillow Slips	30c.	20c.
Children's Stocking Caps	25c.	20c.	Needle Cases, 2 for	30c.	20c.
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Captain Charles Cross who took the s.s. Bellaville, returned home by the latter. Stephano last night. On arrival Capt. Cross advised the Telegram with of his trip, consisting of a national and exciting Bellaville, it will be sold to the Bellaville. A price of approximately a quarter of a million was used for ice-breaking on board the two Bellaville. There also loaded again on Dec. 8th and to passage through the Straits and along the coast to the Norwegian coast.

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On Dec. 13th it was time for all on board, a hurricane was encountered. Considerable damage was done and aft, smashing and away everything about the hurricane lasted about a hour during that time the ship was buried by the waves.

**Fireman Died on**  
After the storm moderate ship began to make again, a death occurred, victim being a fireman, Connelly. He had been for several days of an the and that he was suffering from pneumonia. There was a board, but the best treatment was given him, under the circumstances. His condition grew critical and some supposed to be a growing side, and the poor fellow after a while succumbed. He was prepared for burial in the deep of the sea. Deceased was well liked and his sudden demise was regretted. He was 30 years resident of St. John's. He married only a few weeks joined the ship. His widow he is survived by his mother, brother and seven children.

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