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Her Reward OR Love's Recompense

CHAPTER III.
Cupid's Conquest.

Mr. Waldemar smiled, for he needed no expert to tell that Audrey's heart had already been won; and feeling that he could offer no reasonable objection to the lover's plea, he gave his hearty consent, and sent him rejoicing, yet trembling, to put his fate to the test.

Pair Audrey Waldemar was too pure and true to practice coquetry; and when Arthur Halstead told her with passionate earnestness how he loved her, and begged her to give herself to him to brighten and beautify his life, she simply and trustfully laid her two small hands in his, though her golden lashes dropped until they swept her blushing cheeks and she trembled with the great joy that had thus come to her.

"We will brighten and beautify each other's life," she murmured softly; "and you know that I love you, Arthur."

It was almost as if she had said, with Browning:

"Behold me! I am worthy.
Of thy loving, for I love thee."

And they both believed they held the chief of all love's joys, only in knowing that they loved each other.

Mr. Waldemar smiled indulgently when informed of the result of this interview, although the tears would start unbidden at the thought that his sweet daughter could never be wholly his any more, for she had passed the point "where the brook and the river meet," and henceforth he must be content to hold the second place in her affections.

He would not consent to a formal engagement just yet.

"Wait," he said, "until Audrey is eighteen and you have attained your majority, which, you tell me, will be in about six months; then, if you are of the same mind, I will put no obstacle in your way."

If they were of the same mind!

The blissful lovers exchanged glances of devotion at that, as if to say that six months; six years, or six hundred years even, were all the same to them—there was nothing in the universe that could conspire to change their minds.

But they submitted to the probationary decree with a very good grace, happy in the present, hopeful for the future.

They were not to meet under six months, but were to be allowed to write as often as they chose, and when the stated time had passed, Arthur was to join the family wherever they might be, and their engagement could then be formally announced.

"Six months will seem like an age if I am to be separated from you all that time," the young lover sighed, on the evening before the Waldemars were to depart.

"It will soon pass," Audrey said, cheerfully, "only, I suppose, we must not mope over it, but improve the time as best we can; so let us be patient, for I know that papa thinks he is acting for the best in insisting upon this delay."

So the young man was obliged to acquiesce, though his fond, impatient heart rebelled at this last decree of separation.

Yet his admiration increased tenfold for the beautiful girl, who so honored her parents' wishes and submitted so sweetly to their will, even when he knew that the separation would be painful and irksome to her as well as to him.

So they parted, fondly, trustfully, hopefully.

CHAPTER IV.

"Am I Misleading Her?"

When Arthur Halstead arrived at his home he found visitors there—a whole household of friends, who had come to spend a few weeks before the family returned to Albany, where they usually spent their winters.

It was the last of October—they always remained in the country until the cold fairly drove them back to the city—and everything in nature was clothed in its most gorgeous attire; the weather was delightful, everybody in the gayest possible mood, and Arthur received the most enthusiastic welcome from his family and friends.

The visitors consisted of Mrs. Halstead's sister, with her three daughters and young son, and a former intimate friend of Mr. Halstead, Sr., with his wife, two sons, and a lovely daughter.

Augustine Montrose and Richard Halstead had grown up side by side. They had gone to school together, played together year after year, and finally entered and passed through college together. They had always loved each other like brothers, though of late years, business taking Mr. Montrose to a distant portion of the country, they had met very rarely.

Now, however, he had come at a special invitation from his early friend to make a "good, old-fashioned visit."

Ida Montrose, his daughter, was a lovely, dark-haired, creamy-complexioned girl of nineteen. She had great, lustrous, almond-shaped eyes, the features of a Greek-goddess, a mouth that was a scarlet line of beauty, its dreamy smile haunting one with its wondrous sweetness. Every motion of her perfect form was one of grace and elegance, while there was a quiet repose of manner about her which impressed one with a feeling of superiority and culture.

She was the idol of the family—the goddess before whose shrine they worshipped—the sun and centre of their lives.

When she was presented to Arthur there were two in the room who watched with eager eyes to see how they would meet—Mr. Richard Halstead and Augustine Montrose.

"She is beautiful," Arthur said to himself, though adding, with lover-like enthusiasm, "but she will not compare with Audrey."

What Miss Montrose thought of him it was hard at that moment to determine.

She bent one lingering look upon him, gave him her hand with languid grace, and then turned to speak to her mother, who was sitting near.

Several weeks of gaiety and pleasure followed, and Arthur found that much was expected of him, as the son of the host, in the matter of entertaining the company and acting as escort upon all occasions; while he was not long in discovering that it seemed to be tacitly understood that Miss Montrose was to be his special care and companion upon every excursion.

He longer to have a private talk with his father, and confide to him the fact of his having formed an attachment for Audrey Waldemar, and that it was his intention to marry her at no distant day; but it seemed he could find no opportunity to do so, though two or three times he was almost upon the point of confession, for he felt that he must occupy no false position in the eyes of their guests, but something occurred to prevent him, and the story of his love and wooing remained untold.

So day after day went by, and he was the almost constant companion of beautiful Ida Montrose; and soon he began to notice the significant glances which were exchanged by different members of that gay household when they were together, while he was particularly annoyed by the sly winks and smiles which passed

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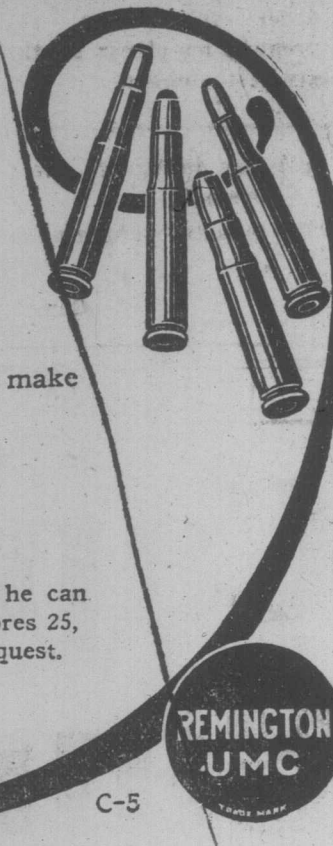
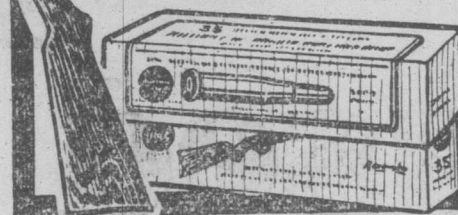
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between his father and Mr. Montrose.

Can it be possible that they all think that I have fallen in love with the fair girl? he asked himself, with a startled heart. "Do my attentions to her savor of that appearance, and am I misleading her in the same way?"

He began to be very much afraid of it as he marked the sly dropping of her lids whenever he addressed her, and the delicate flush which came and went in her creamy cheeks when her eyes chanced to meet his.

It would never do to let this go on, he told himself, and he felt exceedingly uncomfortable over it. Audrey, his beautiful love, held entire possession of his heart, and no one could ever win him from his allegiance to her.

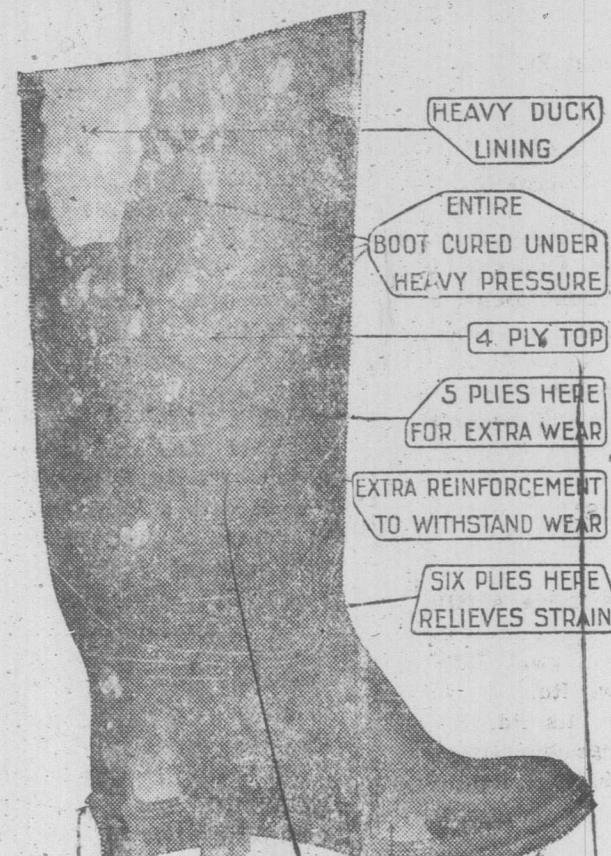
He attempted to transfer his at-

tention from Ira to one of his cousins; but he was balked in this endeavor by the sons of Mr. Montrose, who appeared to be more than satisfied with the way matters had arranged themselves, and promptly manifested their disapproval of any encroachment upon their privileges; while the young ladies themselves did not encourage his purpose. So he was forced to drift with the current, for there was no other escort for Miss Montrose, and he could not reasonably refuse to act as such; courtesy seemed to demand it of him, and so he resigned himself to the inevitable.

He was thrown into a perfect fever of excitement by overhearing one day, a conversation between a couple of men who were working about the place.

(To be continued)

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Heath Hints.

Here is a splendid stomach tonic that Nurse gave to me. It acts as a tonic and is soothing as well. Mix together two ounces of glycerine, one ounce of powdered rhubarb, one ounce of common baking soda and a teaspoon of peppermint. Now pour over all a pint of boiling hot water. Take a teaspoon after each meal. It is best to shake it well before taking. The best time to eat fruit is just before a meal, that is about an hour before the meal. Always wash all kinds of fruit and eat them raw when ever you can. Vegetables are good to use and at least two kinds of vegetables should be each each day. Raw chopped cabbage is easy to digest.

Apples, oranges, bananas, melons, pears and raisins are all good to eat and have food value as well. Fruit is better to eat in the morning or early in the afternoon. It is not always best to eat fruit at night but if it is eaten it should be eaten with more care than at any other time.

Two women were arguing about thrift. "Dye see that purse?" demanded one, with a triumphant air. "It's the one I bought when I was first married, twenty years ago."

"That's nothing!" sneered her friend. "You know my husband, John?"

"Of course I do. What about him?"

"Well, he's my first husband, and you've had three. Don't you preach thrift to me!"

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