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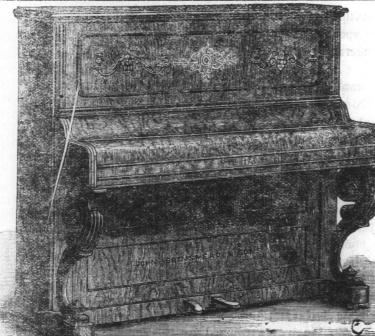
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By the Author of Dora Thorne

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

(Continued.)

It found me with the shadow of a hope—it eaves me with none; it found me happy after patient, hopeful fashion-it leaves me unhappy and hopeless; it found me with my fortunes uncertain-it leaves me wrecked in hope and in love, but one of the wealthiest heiresses even in this wealthy land. My future is all settled now-there will be no more uncertainty

'But your hero,' said Margarita, impatienty-' what of him?'

'He has gone back into shadowland, where may love him still, I suppose. I have lost him, Margarita. He was never near me; but now he has drifted afar off, and I shall never see him as my hero again.'

'You are unhappy, then?' interrogated Margarita.

' Not quite unhappy, dear. I think it is almost better to know at once that one's hope is dead than to watch it die.'

'But are your conclusions sound?' asked Margarita. 'I cannot understand any one not loving you.'

'I anderstand it,' she returned; 'and think, Margarita, that he must love some one else. Do not mistake me. I do not say that am irresistible; I am not vain enough to think every one must love me. But I am as fair as the ordinary run of women are; and I have average talent and wealth. If he cannot love me, it must be that he cares for some one else, I think.'

'Yes,' said Margarita, thoughtfully, 'I think so, too. What will you do?'

'What can I do? I shall not part with my shadow; this shadowy love will always be the best part of my life to me. I shall do the best I can-life my life, be as happy as I can, and make every one else the same; but, ah me, if Heaven had but given me my love!'

Adelaide's pride and courage seemed to desert her. She bent her head until it rested on Margarita's shoulder.

' You will not think me childish,' she said; but these tears have been blinding my eyes for long days past. Oh, if Heaven had but given me my love!'

If, as she prayed and wept, she had known who the man was for whose lost love she mourned-if she had known on whose shoulder her head rested-proud Adelaide would have died of shame with the knowledge.

Presently she looked up, smiling like a child through the midst of tears.

'There,' she said-'that has taken my pain away. Do you know what I used to do when I was a child and felt unhappy?'

'No,' replied Margarita, smiling. 'You must have been such a strange child that I cannot even guess.'

' I always cured myself by a simple method. If I felt unhappy, I went directly to some one else in sorrow, and in curing them I always

'Then you must do the same now,' said

'I will, Heaven helping me. Ah, Margarita, pride is very heroic, especially the pride of silence and self-control; but I am so much better for having spoken of my sorrow to you.

And the two who in reality were at warwho had given the love of a life-time to the same man-cared more for each other that morning than they had ever cared before.

But Margarita was not always to be in ignorance as to the identity of the man whom Adelaide Cameron loved. The heiress wanted one day a particular paper from her escritoire, and she asked Margarita to get it. In the course of the search, and quite unconsciously, Lady Rylestone opened a secret drawer of which she had been in profound ignorance. There she saw a spray of mignonette, whithered and faded, a bundle of letters, and a small painting, a copy of the portrait of Lord Rylestone. Underneath it was written, 'In life and in death.' Gazing upon these things, the knowledge came to Lady Rylestone that Adelaide Cameron, the beautiful heiress, loyed her

'Oh, the evils of a secret marriage!' she cried. 'I would have given the world to pre- will would be at an end-

She stood for a few minutes overwhelmed by the discovery. This was the love that the young heiress had alluded to. It was Allan Rylestone, her husband, whom Adelaide Cameron called a shadow-love. Pity, hate, jealousy, and sorrow, stirred her heart. What should she do? Should she go at once and

'You must destroy these letters-you must think no more of him; he is mine, and never can be yours?'

That was her first impulse-prudence restrained it. Could she say anything that would put Miss Cameron on her guard-that would show her that Lord Rylestone was not to be won? No, she could not say one word without betraying herself.

She would not read the letters. She was too loyal to her husband for that. She took them in her hands and then replaced them.

'She may love him in life and in death,' she thought; 'but he is mine-all mine!'

Bitter, angry thoughts came to her. She wished that she had never been near the escritoire, and then she would not have had the CLIFT, WOOD & Co. pain of this secret added to her own. Pre sently she roused herself. What would Miss Cameron think of her long absence? She must go back to her, or she might suspect.

Miss Cameron looked up with a smile as Margarita re-entered the room.

'My dear Margarita,' she said, 'where is

Lady Rylestone had forgotten all about it in the agitation and excitement of her discovery. She had not even remembered for what she had gone. Adelaide looked in wonder at the

'Have you seen a ghost?' she asked, with a smile. 'You look frightend and hurt. Has anything happened to vex you?'

'No,' replied Margarita; 'but 1 am sorry | HEAVY that I forgot the paper. I will go back again

not. I am sure something that you will not tell me has put you out. See—your hands are trembling! Sit down; I will go for the paper

And trembling in every limb, Margarita obeyed her. When she was alone she asked herself if the mystery she was seeking to unveil was worth all the trouble, suspense, misery, and regret that it had brought upon her.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Or all the pangs of jealousy that Lady Rylestone ever had experienced none could equal the anguish that she endured after her unhappy discovery at Walton Court. She said to herself by day and night-

'Adelaide Cameron loves my husband! She does not know he is mine; she has made him her hero, and she loves him!'

When she looked at the fair, high-bred loveliness of her rival's face, every detail of the daily life she led was a torture to her. The sweet, low voice, the grace of manner, the calm repose-all the charms that made Adelaide one of the fairest of women, were as so many tortures to Margarita.

She was always trying to remember what Adelaide had said of her love. The words were never out of her mind, yet she knew there was no real cause for jealousy. She knew that her husband had been as loyal to her as it that her husband had been as loyal to her as it was possible for man to be. The girl who loved him said that he had never uttered a word or given her a look that in the least degree told of love. The faint hope that had died such a sudden death was caused only by

Margarita knew that her jealousy was absurd, because there was nothing to cause it. She knew that Lord Rylestone was as true to her as the needle to the pole, yet she dreaded the fair loveliness of her rival's face and the sweetness of her voice.

It was not Lord Rylestone's fault if Adelaide had made a hero of him; still, Margarita could not bear to think that any one else loved him who was all the world to her. It had come upon her like a terrible shock. It was in vain she tried to reason with herself, to keep calm and cool—the passionate heart was all | dec22 aflame, the spark of Spanish fire was fanned into a blaze. Sometimes she would watch the calm face of Adelaide Cameron, with the tender light in her eyes and the sweet sad smiles playing round her lips, knowing well that the girl was thinking of her shadowy love—the love that had no foundation, no reality; and then the impulse would be strong within her to tell her the truth-to tell her that she was married to Lord Rylestone, and that no thought of another's must be given to himan impulse so strong that it was hardly possi-A low cry of pain and anguish broke from | ble to resist it. The only thing that prevented her speaking was the idea that, if Miss Cameron once knew who she was, all chance, all hepe of her ever finding out the secret of the will would be at an end.

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