



A Great Intrigue,

Mistress of Darracourt.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"I am glad," she said, simply; "for now it is time for me to say 'good-by!'"

"Good-by!" he repeated, dully. "Why?"

"I am going," she said, with downcast eyes. "There is no occasion for me to stay any longer. You are not nearly well, but—but you can get on without me, I think!"

He was silent a moment.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"I am going to look for another situation," she said. "I am going to be a governess, I hope."

He stretched out his hand.

"Wherever you go, you will take my heartfelt gratitude with you," he said, in a low voice. "You have proved yourself a pearl among women, Miss Verner. Words are poor things when one has to offer them in payment for such services as you have lavished upon me. I think that it would have been better to let me die, if I meant dying, but I know that I owe you my life!"

"Do not say anything more," she said, faintly. "Good-by."

"You will send me your address?"

He said, "I should like to know that you were well and happy, to get an opportunity of thanking you more fully than I can do now—"

"Yes, I will let you know," she said. "Good-by." Then she stopped and drew the coverlet over his chest; and as she did so it seemed as if her strength and resolution forsook her, for, trembling violently, she fell on her knees, and burying her face in the clothes, broke into low, choking sobs.

Harry turned pale, and put his hand on her arm.

"Miss Verner—for Heaven's sake!" he murmured, brokenly.

"Oh, forgive me!" she sobbed; "forgive me! It is wicked and foolish; but I am tired and—upset, I think!"

Then she raised her face, and clasping her hands, looked at him imploringly.

"Oh, Harry, don't send me away. Don't let me leave you yet. You are not well enough. Tell me to stay. I cannot bear another should take my place; here where I have sat and watched your dear face hour after hour. Harry, don't scorn me, I cannot help it; I must tell you the truth. I love you, Harry! I love you! Have pity on me!"

He looked at her, and his face worked. Then he put his hand on hers and drew it toward his lips with that touch of chivalry which marks the patrician.

"My poor girl," he murmured. "Scorn you! Have pity on you! What

do you take me for? Am I a monster of ingratitude and insensibility? Miss Verner—Marie—if I could believe that this was something more than pity for a man whose life you have saved—"

"Pity! Ah!" she breathed—"oh, the shame of it will kill me, but—Harry, it is true—I love you!"

"Not another word," he said, hastily. "It is I who should speak now. Miss Verner—Marie—will you be my wife?"

She seemed to be too overwhelmed with shame to speak, and he went on: "Will you be my wife? I will try to be worthy of your love. You know how much I have suffered—how battered and bruised a heart it is that I offer you; but I will forget the past. Stay—for her fingers had closed on his hand tremulously. "I am a poor man; worse, I have no legal name to give you"—his voice faltered and his face flushed—"there is a shadow on my life—"

She rose and bent over him. "Now it is for me to speak," she murmured. "There can be no shadow, let it be what it may, that can darken my love for you. Your wife! Ah, Harry, if you knew what music those words awaken in my heart—"

And, stooping still lower, she kissed him, and stole out.

Scarcely had the door closed between them, than she threw the mask aside.

A wild look of triumph glittered in her eyes, and her face flushed.

"I have won!" broke from her lips. "I shall be the Marchioness of Merle!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

The next day Harry got up. He was still weak, but he was able to crawl to the yard, and there received such a welcome as only rough men accord to a fellow man whom they have grown to admire and respect.

"By George, it seems like old times again!" exclaimed Mr. Doyle, upon whose arm Harry leaned. "I swear the yard hasn't seemed the same since you've been cooped upstairs there. And as to the business—phew! That comes of depending upon another man so much. You see, I've got so used to consulting you in everything that turned up, that, by George, I was quite lost when I couldn't go and say, 'Look here, Harry, how's this to be?'"

"I hope I shall soon be of some use again," said Harry.

"Use! Rather! Why, the look of you is a credit to the establishment! I tell you, sir, that there have been so many inquiries after you as if you had been a duke! Why, even the dogs seemed to miss you, and I had to give two or three of 'em a lickin' for howling round the window!"

There were several round Harry at this moment, and he stopped and patted them.

"Where is Miss Verner?" he asked presently. "She has not been here to-day?"

"Oh, yes, she has," said Mr. Doyle, with a wink. "She saw the doctor and heard how you were, and then went back to her room. I say, I hope I didn't offend you yesterday in what I said?"

"No," said Harry, his pale face flushing. "No. You were quite right. Miss Verner and I have become engaged."

Mr. Doyle stopped short, and emitted a triumphant whistle.

"No! By George, I'm as pleased as if I'd sold a screw for a hundred guineas, and got the money—"

"Which would make you heartily miserable," put in Harry, smiling.

"Going to be married!" went on Mr. Doyle. "Well, I never was more delighted—"

then he stopped abruptly, and his face fell. "But I suppose I shall lose you, eh, lad? That's rather rough on me! I didn't think of that," and he looked so rueful that Harry's heart was touched.

"Why should you lose me?" he said, gently. "You shall not unless you like. If I am of any use—"

"Look here!" exclaimed the good fellow, enthusiastically. "Why should we part, you and me? We understand each other, don't we? I should think so. There is many a father and son that don't get on better—ay, half as well. Look here, Harry, if the place is good enough for you, why not live at the cottage? It's big enough for us all—and if it ain't I'll turn out. I dare say you won't mind my dropping in occasionally; you'll let me smoke

she's gone," he said; "after all, no house can be called completely furnished without a woman, can it? What's the use of her being in lodgings by herself, and you and me existing like a couple of crusty bachelors. Make a match of it, Harry, and let's settle down."

Harry received this request coolly and indifferently. If he were to marry Marie Verner, it was just as well, perhaps, that he should marry her at once. So he asked her.

She affected a little surprise, and lowered her long lashes, and he did not guess how her heart leaped at his words.

"Isn't it—very soon?" she said, timidly.

"Is it?" he responded, simply. "You shall do as you like, Marie."

She crept a little closer to him, and looked up into his face as only an accomplished actress can look; as she had looked up at Mr. Sinclair's.

"Very well," she said; "but it shall be as you like."

A day was fixed within a fortnight. It was to be a quiet wedding, as a matter of course—no bridesmaids, no festivities. Mr. Doyle was to give away the bride, and the happy pair was to take a week on the Continent. Then they were to settle down in the cottage.

Mr. Doyle insisted that it was too shabby a place for so handsome a couple, and one day gave Harry a check for a hundred pounds.

"Just to get a few things to liven it up a bit, lad!" he said, coaxingly. "Now, don't look grave; it's my house, you know, and I can spend what I like on it. Look here! if you don't go and buy the things—you and Miss Marie—I'll start off to an upholsterer and buy 'em myself, and a pretty mess I shall make of it!"

When Harry told Marie of the good fellow's generosity and showed her the check, she stared, and then laughed—laughed so long, and with such a strange look, that Harry was puzzled. "It is a tremendous sum of money," she said, checking herself suddenly. "Wouldn't you like to pay it back some day, Harry?"

"I should, indeed!" he said, "and we will; though a hundred pounds isn't so easily saved."

The check lay upon the table, and she flicked it with her finger, a bright, unnatural light gleaming in her eyes. "If we should ever be rich, I mean very rich, this will amuse us to look back upon, won't it?"

Something in her tone jarred upon him.

"Amuse is scarcely the word," he said, gravely.

"No," she said, then her lips curved. "Never mind, we've made up our minds to be poor, haven't we? And now let us go and spend it," and she dragged him off to Oxford Street.

This was not the first time since their engagement that her manner had puzzled and startled him. There was a restlessness, an impatience, which seemed to indicate that she was waiting for something. Once they were walking in the park, and a tall, over-dressed man passed them so close that he pushed against Harry so that he turned to remonstrate, but the man was looking the other way, and before Harry could speak he felt Marie Verner clutch his arm.

(To be continued.)

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a pipe in the chimney corner, eh?"

"We will live at the cottage, my wife and I, on one condition," said Harry, "and that is that you make it your home and join with us in our attempt at housekeeping."

Mr. Doyle was delighted.

"Now," he said, fervently, "I have not a word to say against the match, and I wish you every happiness."

"Thank you," said Harry, in his grave way. "I know I have a friend in you; the only friend I have in the world," he said, quietly.

"Excepting the young lady you're going to marry; don't forget her, you know!"

"I don't forget her," said Harry. Then Mr. Doyle insisted upon his going into the office and sitting down, and while he was sitting there Marie Verner came in.

She started a little at sight of him, but she seemed rejoiced that he should be down again, and they sat and talked for a little while, and he told her the arrangement that he and Mr. Doyle had come to.

"You know," he said, in his quiet way, "that I am a very poor man, Marie," and he smiled.

She pressed his hand and glanced at him.

"Does it matter?" she murmured. "Poor or rich, so you will love me, I am content."

"Well, I am very poor," he said, lightly.

She was silent a moment.

"Should you like to be rich?" she said, presently.

He was looking through a window at a horse exercising in the yard, and had forgotten that she was there, and it was with a start that he turned to her.

"Should I like to be rich?" he said. "I don't know. Why do you ask?"

"Oh, only to make conversation, as the French say," she answered, lightly; "and now you must go upstairs. You look tired, Harry, and if we are not careful we shall have you laid up again."

The days passed, and with each day Harry's strength increased, and drawing upon that grand reserve of health which he had stored up, all unconscious that he should ever need it, he regained his old robust health, and, seeing this, Mr. Doyle was for hastening on the wedding.

"It seems a bit lonely, Harry, now

she's gone," he said; "after all, no house can be called completely furnished without a woman, can it? What's the use of her being in lodgings by herself, and you and me existing like a couple of crusty bachelors. Make a match of it, Harry, and let's settle down."

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Under the provisions of "The Stamp Acts, 1898-1914," the following Rules and Regulations respecting Stamp Duties, in substitution for those of date September 15th, 1914, have been approved by His Excellency the Governor in Council.

JOHN E. BENNETT,
Colonial Secretary,
Department of the Colonial Secretary,
October 6th, 1914.

1. Every instrument shall be stamped on its face, when possible.
 2. Cancellation of stamps shall be made by the person cancelling, writing, printing or perforating his name or initials with date across stamp.
 3. Bills of Exchange, Cheques, Promissory Notes, Bills of Lading, Shipping Receipts, and Charter Parties shall be stamped and the stamps thereon cancelled as follows:—
 - (a) Bills of Exchange, Cheques and Promissory Notes drawn or made in the Colony by the person signing the same; provided that in the case of a cheque on a Banker, the Banker to whom it is presented may, if it is unstamped, stamp the same and cancel the stamp.
 - (b) Bills of Exchange, Cheques and Promissory Notes drawn or made outside the Colony by the person in the Colony into whose hands any such bill, cheque or note shall come unstamped before he in any manner negotiates or pays the same.
 - (c) Bills of Lading executed outside the Colony by the Consignee in the Colony into whose hand any such Bill of Lading may come before he in any manner negotiates the same.
 - (d) Bills of Lading executed in the Colony by the shipper. Provided that if any Bill of Lading is presented to any person or Company for signature unstamped, such person or Company may stamp the same and cancel the stamp.
 - (e) Shipping Receipts by the shipper. Provided that if any Shipping Receipt is presented to any person or Company for signature unstamped, such person or Company may stamp the same and cancel the stamp.
 - (f) Charter Parties by the person in the Colony last executing the same.
 - (g) Charter Parties executed wholly outside the Colony by the person in the Colony into whose hands any such Charter Party comes unstamped before he in any manner uses or takes any action upon such Charter Party.
 4. The person upon whom the obligation to stamp and cancel any instrument is imposed by these Rules shall be deemed to be a person issuing an instrument, and, if he fails to stamp such instrument with its proper stamp, or to cancel such stamp, he shall be liable to the penalties imposed by Section 22 of the Act 61 Victoria, Cap. 14, entitled "An Act respecting the Payment of Certain Fees and Charges by Stamps."
 5. Any Rules and Regulations which may have been heretofore made under the provisions of "The Stamp Acts, 1898-1914," are hereby rescinded.
- NOTE.—Copies of "The Stamp Act" and of the foregoing Rules and Regulations may be obtained from the Banks, Stipendiary Magistrates, the Departments of Justice, Finance and Customs, or the Colonial Secretary. oct8.41

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