

"SALADA"

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BLACK, MIXED or NATURAL GREEN

THROUGH THE DARK SHADOWS

Or The Sunlight of Love

CHAPTER XIX.—(Cont'd.)

"Oh!" said Jasper quietly, inwardly irritated that his dupe should be absent, even for a day, without telling him of his intention and plans. "Oh! Where has he gone? He did mention it last night, but I have forgotten." He put his hand to his forehead as if trying to recall it to his mind.

But Norgate was too sharp to be caught by this time-honored manoeuvre. He knew very well that the whole outing had been too hurriedly decided upon for Jasper to have been told on the preceding night; and he had no intention of allowing his master to whom he was sincerely attached, to be worried by Mr. Vermont.

"I don't know, sir," he replied stolidly. "He did not leave word."

As the letter had been brought round quite openly by one of the Merivale servants, needless to say, he could have given Jasper a very fair idea of where he had gone; but he preferred to keep his own counsel.

"Oh, very well. I'll just go up and write a few letters, Norgate," said Jasper, making a pretence of indifference; and he passed into the study, Norgate returning to his own quarters.

Mr. Vermont waited until his retreating footsteps had died away, then with a quick hand and a keen eye he turned over the letters which lay where Adrien had carelessly thrown them. Amongst them was one which had been evidently overlooked, for it was unopened. It bore the Barmister postmark, and Jasper's eyes shone. Could he but learn its contents? He picked it up, turning it over and over in his hand. To his intense delight it was but lightly sealed, and by dint of a little care the letter was safely opened, unharmed and unsoiled.

It was from Lady Constance, stating that she and Miss Penelope were to spend the day shopping in London, and would be at Barmister House at eleven o'clock.

It was quite a short note, and Jasper, smiling wickedly, sealed it up. He knew there was no fear of discovery, for there was not a more unsuspecting man living than Leroy. His mind was working rapidly, seeking to mature a plan by which he could separate Leroy and Lady Constance still further.

First of all, he continued to search through the letters, seeking those which were obviously bills. He looked at the last one with a sigh.

"Not here," he mused. "I should know her handwriting in a moment. Yet I am positive he has gone with her. She must have let him know by letter this morning. Can he have taken it with him?"

His eye caught a scrap of torn paper in the fireplace. Like a bird of prey, he pounced on it, and untwisting it, his small eyes glittered as he read.

"Ah!" he muttered. "Lit his cigar with it, and burned all save one corner. Hampton. Yes, that's it; under cover of Lady Rose they've betaken themselves to the river. Now what shall I do? Follow them, or see Lady Constance, or do both?"

Placing the scrap of paper carefully in his pocket-book he left the flat, and made his way to Barmister House. He had called presumably in order to see after some slight alterations then being made, and his surprise on finding

Miss Penelope and Lady Constance established there, was beautiful to witness.

On his entry into the drawing-room, Lady Constance sprang up eagerly, regarding him as the forerunner of the man she loved; and Jasper smiled as he greeted them respectfully.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Lady Constance," he exclaimed. "I had no idea you were coming up to town."

"It's only for the day, Mr. Vermont," she returned as calmly as possible. "But I wrote to Adrien, for auntie, telling him all about it."

"Dear, dear!" ejaculated Mr. Vermont sympathetically. "I have just come from his chambers. I learned that he had gone out for the day."

"For the day," said Miss Penelope, "after reading our letter!"

"Perhaps he didn't get it in time," suggested Lady Constance.

"Poor Adrien," said Jasper with apparent reluctance, "I'm afraid I cannot even allow him that excuse; he had evidently taken away all his correspondence this morning."

"Oh, it's of no consequence," said the girl lightly, though her face was pale, and her eyes shone, as if through a mist of tears. "We are only going shopping for the ball, and that is dull work for a man."

"Can I be of any assistance, Miss Penelope," inquired Mr. Vermont. "Do let me help, I love shopping!" But this neither of the ladies would allow; and with a parting shot on the subject of Adrien's whereabouts, Vermont took his leave.

His next move was to Waterloo Station, where he took a train to Hampton; and a little after noon, Jasper Vermont was strolling along the side of the river, smoking his cigar. Very amiable he looked, and exceedingly interested in the boats, and therefore it was not surprising that the man who let them out on hire readily answered his questions as to the best season of the year, the approximate number of customers, etc., had a boat with a lady and gentleman all leading up to the main question, gone out that day?

"No," the man said. "Curiously enough, sir, no boat has gone out today with a lady and a gentleman in it, like what you describe."

"Oh," said Mr. Vermont. "I was my mistake. I thought I saw a gentleman rowing very well, too, in a light skiff."

"Ah!" said the man, puffing a cloud of smoke from his rough clay pipe. "I know who you mean, now; a gentleman—regular swell, and a lady in blue. Lor' bless yer, that ain't one of mine, that's a private boat that's kept up at the Court. I think. Oh, yes, he's all right; gone upstream, they have, and a nice day they've got."

This was what Jasper needed; and after strolling about among the boats for a few minutes more he started off along the bank, keeping at such a distance from the stream that, though he could see all who passed in the boats, no one on the river could see him.

The beauty of the day, the shimmer and sparkle of the river, with the soft lap of its waters, the singing of the birds over his head, all had no effect on him. His dark, beady eyes noted nothing but the boats that passed, none of which, as yet—though the afternoon was waning fast—contained Adrien and Lady Merivale.

Yet he knew that he had not missed them, for he had taken his lunch on the balcony of an inn commanding a view of the river, which he had kept under survey from the time he had reached Hampton earlier in the day.

Steadily, with the persistence of a bloodhound tracking its prey, he walked on and on, until he came to a village, or rather a collection of homesteads. Very small it was, consisting only of an inn, a house, half cottage and half shop, and a few red-tiled cottages wherein the bargemen lived, when they were at home, which was seldom. In the bright sunlight, the blue sky overhead and the shining river in the foreground, it formed a pretty enough picture.

In the little shop parlor now, sat a woman and her husband, at their five o'clock tea.

"John Ashford, Grocer," was the inscription over the shop door; and these were John Ashford and his wife, Lucy. They had two children, now playing by the river side; and were, as the bargemen's wives expressed it, "doing comfortable."

The man's face was a good-humored one, round, honest in expression, and common-place. His wife was not so ordinary; a fair-haired, small-framed little woman, she showed traces of having been a village "beauty" in her young days, of the pink and white, shallow type. But in her eyes, and along the corners of her somewhat weak-looking mouth, there were signs of an ever-present fear.

Even now, as she sat pouring out her husband's tea, her habitual nervousness showed itself in the restless movements of her unoccupied hand, and the sudden start with which she would greet the slightest unexpected sound, or the knocking of a customer on the little counter. From where she sat she could see her children, and once or twice she smiled gently as she waved her hand to them, where they were playing with an elder girl who was in charge of them.

"I say, Lucy," said John, as he drank his tea noisily, "how's the girl going on? Getting over her shyness a bit, ain't she?"

"His wife started; but he was evidently too accustomed to this to notice her."

"Yes," she said, reaching out for his cup. "Poor girl, she's seen some trouble, I'll be bound; and for one so young, too, and innocent. The world's a hard place!"

"Yes, indeed," agreed John Ashford, with a glance through the window where the little group of three were playing. "Let me see, she's been here a matter of four weeks, hasn't she—since I went over to Walton. Rum thing me finding her at all. If I hadn't come across the moor instead of along the road, she'd have been in that furze bush still!"

Mr. Ashford shuddered at the suggestion of his words.

"She hasn't given us no account of herself now," he continued in his heavy, good-tempered voice. "Not even her name, 'cept—what d'ye call it?"

"Jessica," put in his wife. "I call her Jessie, sounds more home-like."

"And hasn't she told you anything more as to why she tramped out of London?"

"No, nothing more," said his wife, "except that she couldn't bear the crowds. I haven't asked her either, John. She's a good girl, you can see that; and penniless as well as homeless. I should hate to send her to the workhouse, or perhaps worse," she half-whispered. "If she's got a secret in her heart, we'll let her keep it, dear. Perhaps we all have a little corner in our hearts marked 'Private,'" she added in a low voice.

"Excepting you and me, my dear!" said John, wiping his mouth as he rose from the table, and coming round to kiss her.

She started again and paled a little. "Of course, dear," she said; "I wasn't thinking of us."

"We've no secrets," said the good-natured grocer, as he took down his hat and coat from behind the door. "Our hearts are open like them clocks, with all the works outside, eh, Lucy, my dear?" Laughing at his own simile, he kissed her again.

"If you'll take care of the shop," he went on, as he opened the door, "I'll just run over to Richmond for those jams and things. Old Tucker's cart is going over, and he'll lend me a hand."

"Get along, then," replied his wife,

"and don't forget we want some more spices."

"Right you are," said the husband, and with a wave of his hand to her he went down the path, the two children running to meet him.

Lucy Ashford stood at the door and looked after him wistfully.

"Poor John," she murmured, as she went back to clear away the tea-things. "What would he do to me, if he knew?"

Her thoughts went back to the great secret of her life. It was that which caused her strange nervousness. She had repented of the past truly enough, and no better wife could have been found throughout the kingdom; but the secret had eaten into her life. She strove now to put it away from her; for she knew she was in reality safe enough. Only her father and Mr. Vermont knew—and the latter she had not seen for years.

Now, therefore, she put away her cups and saucers and called gaily to the children, as they came running back. The girl who had been playing with them came too; and as she approached the cottage she raised her head and smiled. Lucy Ashford stooped to kiss the children, then said kindly to Jessica—for it was indeed she:

"I expect you are tired with them now, my dear. Come and sit down with me for a little while."

Jessica raised her dark eyes gratefully.

"No, ma'am, thank you. I'm not tired. I love the children; they are so good to me."

(To be continued.)

The Farm

When Selecting a Heifer.

There are several points which should be taken into consideration when purchasing a heifer or when picking out the heifers in the herd to keep for breeding purposes. The very build of some calves stamps them as undesirable for dairy purposes. They should conform to breed type and conformation. A thicker shoulder is permissible in a heifer than in the mature cow. As the development advances and milk is secreted the shoulder of the dairy-bred animal usually takes on more of the wedge shape. There should also be a wedge form from shoulder to hook bones. Large capacity and strong constitution are desirable. These are denoted by depth and thickness of body. A shallow-ribbed heifer tucked up at the fore flank seldom turns out to be a heavy producer. There must be room for the vital organs to operate properly, and for a storage of large quantities of feed. The heavy, consistent milker is usually a hearty feeder. A heifer lacking in constitution seldom develops into a strong, rugged cow.

It is essential that they have a feminine appearance; heaviness and coarseness are objectionable. The eye indicates a good deal. It should be full, mild but bright, and more or less active. A dullness about the eye denotes a sluggish disposition, which has a tendency to lay on flesh rather than produce a large flow of milk. Large nostrils which permit easy entrance of air to the lungs are usually associated with depth of chest and lung capacity. There should be a correlation of parts, which give symmetry to the body. One part cannot be overdeveloped without detracting somewhat from another. While it is desirable that a cow should have a mild disposition, she should also be alert, sensitive, and active. These qualities should be noticeable in the heifer. The skin and hair denote the quality to a large degree.

Even with the calf the mammary system is an indication of what those organs will develop into in the mature animal, and should receive consideration. Examine the udder carefully and note whether the teats are well placed or not, and that there are indications of the udder being well attached. The milk veins should extend toward the forward if they are tortuous, branched, and end in deep milk wells so much the better. The points mentioned can be seen with the eye, but there are other things which must be taken into consideration. The quality of blood which flows in the veins is important. The pedigrees and records of the ancestors should be studied, as the characteristics of both sire and dam are inherited by the offspring. It is not enough that the immediate ancestors possess the desired qualities; they should extend back several generations. Some breeders lay a good deal of stress on the outward appearance of an animal, while others claim the quality of blood to be all important. However, both individuality and pedigree should be considered. No matter how good the pedigree may seem, if the calf is deficient in form it is of little value. On the other hand, a calf which appears almost perfect to the eye may turn out to be a very poor producer of milk and butter-fat.—Farmer's Advocate.

The Difficulty With Margarine.

The claim of dairymen in Canada that the waiving of the strictures on the margarine trade would result in misrepresentation, by which an organized effort would be made to get oleo on the market under the guise of butter, receives strong supporting evidence from the United States. Re-



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garding the continued difficulty of keeping oleo manufacturers in their place, The Farmer, published in Minnesota, has this to say:

"The keeping of oleomargarine in its proper place is a question of vital importance to Northwestern dairymen. The oleomargarine manufacturers are ever on the alert to take advantage of every situation that appeals to popular prejudice, and the oleo manufacturers, belonging to organized business, whereas dairymen are countless in numbers but unorganized, are best equipped to promote their interests. The mere mention of oleomargarine should be sufficient to put every dairyman in a fighting spirit."

"The oleo manufacturers will never be content until they are permitted to color their product in imitation of butter. They will thus avoid the cost of the Federal tax and save costly fines. Uncolored oleo, it should be remembered, bears only a slight tax of one-fourth of a cent per pound, and is within the reach of the pocket-book of the poor city man. 'Bogus butter,' or colored oleo, bears a tax of ten cents per pound. The oleo manufacturer wants the colored product because it comes into direct competition with butter, and can be manufactured at a fraction of the cost of butter."

"Last spring the oleo manufacturers made a dastardly attempt to discredit the dairy industry through a Congressional resolution. A more subtle but equally disreputable attack on the industry was made only last week by enlisting the support of one of the Twin City daily papers. An organization known as the Women's Welfare League has evidently been inspired to fight the battles of the oleo manufacturer. As an example of the underground methods of the oleo manufacturer, and the ignorance of the general public regarding the relative merits of oleo and butter, this article is typical. In addition to upholding oleo, it evidently wishes to discredit Mr. J. J. Farrel, Minnesota's Dairy and Food Commissioner, who has a national reputation as a most efficient official and, incidentally, friend of the dairy industry."

Appearances Deceptive. The aunt of a little boy was amazed at the appetite exhibited by him during a recent stay in her household.

"Mercy!" she exclaimed one day. "But you certainly eat a terrible lot, Willie, for such a little fellow!"

Willie, however, was not at all upset by this.

"I expect," he rejoined, "that I ain't so little as I look from the outside."

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Can you guess it?

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