

The Gipsy's Prophecy.

BY R. F. HILLIARD. Concluded. "Well," said he, "if that was Miss Marlow, I have never seen a young lady who so commended herself. I have been perplexed with wonder ever since I saw her how one so beautiful could have dropped down upon a scene like this."

"And your perplexity drove away the fish, I suppose?" "Can't say, nor can I remember to have tried to catch any."

"All must take their risk," she said, as she had before. Abel turned the subject gaily, and plunged into a romp with the children; but "curiosity" had taken a decided hold upon him, to which, however, he gave no outward sign, and the subject of the late conversation was not alluded to.

One day, sitting beneath a tree arranging some fish, he was startled at hearing, a short distance from where he sat, the sweet notes of a joyous song in a female voice, which lent a charm to the solitude.

"Good morning, Miss Marlow," said he, "I believe I am right in thus naming you." "You certainly are, sir," said she, "and I respond to your salutation: Good-morning. We abide under the same roof, I think," she continued.

"Yes, happily," he replied; and Abel Dorne, which means the individual before you, is rendered more happy by becoming personally acquainted with his charming acquaintance.

"You are very polite to say so. It requires very little to make me happy." "But when opportunity is denied, happiness may be painfully deferred."

Notwithstanding the acquaintance had been so happily begun, the interdiction was not lifted, and Abel found himself still shut out from the intercommunication. After a few trials to remove the barrier, his pride revolted, and, feigning a call back to town, he left his friends with a promise to join them a week or so before their return.

"I'll wager," said George, "that you have thought twenty times to-day of that ridiculous prophecy." "Well," he replied, "since you have alluded to it, I have, but without reference to anything in particular. It often obtrudes itself."

"Had it no reference," said Mrs. George, "to that thread which is being spun somewhere and waiting for you to find it?"

"Well, if it had," he replied, "you surely would not urge me to endanger it by the peril I am to inflict." "All must take their risk," she said, as she had before.

"What does this mean?" His eyes, suffused with tears, beamed on her with infinite tenderness, and, impelled by a sense of chivalry which always appears in the old romances, he dropped on his knees before her.

"It means, my blessed one," said he, "the removal of all obstacles to my happiness, and yours, I trust. It means that I have found a thread of existence to twine with my own, years ago pressed, without fear of threatened calamity. It means a future of unselfish love and devotion to the wife of my choice. To you, the only woman I have ever loved, whom twice I have been near destroying, I offer an honest and faithful affection."

Then he led her to the apartments of the Cafe, where no announcement of his happiness was necessary, as his face revealed it, and a rapturous welcome was extended by his friends, who hailed the event as most delightful close to the summer's enjoyment.

"Oh, of an early adventure of my own, in papa's prosperous days, when we went to the beaches; and at one time I came near losing my life by a big stone which was recklessly rolled down from the top of a hill, but leaped over my head and fell into the sea. I sat one of my shoes, and I kept this ever since as a memento. I have forgotten the name of the beach."

"Will you please excuse me for a few moments?" he said, and, without waiting to hear her consent, he darted from the room, greatly to her surprise. He rushed madly into the apartments of his friends, tore up to his chamber, dashed upon a trunk with the force of a baggage smasher, seized a small shoe from the nook where it lay for years had rested, and ran back in a very short space of time. He threw himself into the chair he had left, and placed on the table, beside the "memento"—its mate.

The young lady, startled by his agitation and strange conduct, and seeing the shoe, could only say, "What does this mean?" His face was lit with joy. His eyes, suffused with tears, beamed on her with infinite tenderness, and, impelled by a sense of chivalry which always appears in the old romances, he dropped on his knees before her.

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