

IN THE TOILS; But Happiness Comes at Last.

CHAPTER XLII HAPPINESS AT LAST.

THE three men looked toward the doorway, against the darkness of which stood Katrine Haldine. She was as pale as a ghost, and stood almost like a specter, looking after one quick glance at Olive, at Stephen Rawdon. Hastley Derrick looked at him, too. A sudden change had come over the miserable creature. At the sound of that quiet, constrained voice, he had started as if he had been struck, and now stood, bent and shivering, as if the blow had utterly cowed and broken him down.

"Katrine Haldine!" said Hastley Derrick, with a twitch of the thin lips. "You here, too! What have you to do in this affair?"

He paused suddenly, and shot a sharp, suspicious glance at Stephen Rawdon, who stood with his head bent and his face white and working.

She raised her hand and pointed to the shrieking, cringing figure.

"Ask him," she said, in the same constrained voice.

Then she looked at Hastley Derrick with a smile that was both bitter and contemptuous.

"Mr. Derrick, you are not the first person who has been fooled by a fool."

Hastley Derrick came forward, biting his lips.

"Is this a piece of dramatic art, Miss Haldine?" he said sarcastically. "May I ask on what right you base your interference in Mr. Rawdon's affairs?"

She looked at him with quiet scorn.

"By the right which belongs to every wife, Mr. Derrick. This man is my husband!"

Hastley Derrick stood for a moment transfixed, then he stared at Stephen Rawdon with a piercing glance.

"Your husband!" he said, almost inaudibly.

"My husband!" repeated Katrine, turning away from him to Lord Heatherdene. "My lord, this is the secret of my life. There stands the shame of it!" and she pointed to Stephen Rawdon. "I married that man seven years ago. You will need little proof. But as for you, Mr. Derrick, there is another certificate to place beside yours," and she took a small packet from her pocket and dropped it with a contemptuous smile, upon the table.

"If you need any further present corroboration, he can supply it."

She turned as she spoke to where Stephen Rawdon leaned against the table, with his arms folded, and his haggard face hard and defiant.

Hastley Derrick went up to him and caught him by the shoulder with brutal violence. Stephen Rawdon

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turned upon him with the ferocity of a wolf at bay.

"Hands off," he burst out. "I have had enough of it! She is right. I am her husband, and you have lost your game. Is it any fault of mine? Did I know that she was going to turn up here? Another hour and we should have won. Is it any fault of mine? Yes," with a sullen scowl at Katrine; "she is my wife—and was mine when I married Olive Estcourt!"

With a sigh Olive turned her head and looked eagerly, then she sprang to her feet and threw up her arms with a wild cry.

Lord Heatherdene and Katrine caught her between them.

"Take her away, my lord!" Katrine murmured; "take her away from here—she has fainted!"

Lord Heatherdene raised the unconscious form in his arms. With a spring like a tiger, Hastley Derrick, moved by some mad impulse, got in front of him. With a quick movement, Lord Heatherdene shifted his precious burden to his left arm and struck the white face in front of him.

Hastley Derrick was dashed aside like a feather, and stumbling against a chair, went down with a crash. When he rose to his feet he was alone. One of the windows was swinging open, and he staggered to it in time to see Stephen Rawdon drop to the pavement below.

A few minutes afterward, his valet running in, pale and frightened, found him lying across the chair, his face livid and discolored, his hands clenched upon the certificate of Stephen Rawdon's first marriage; and the man knew that his master was in a fit.

A few hours later, Lord Heatherdene stood in the breakfast room of Heatherdene House. He was very pale and anxious-looking, for the fearful ordeal which he had gone through had told upon him. As he stood there, the dreadful scene of the preceding night rose before his eyes and made him shudder. He scarcely remembered how he and Katrine had brought the crushed and helpless Olive home, but he was conscious, with a feeling of relief, that she was home.

Katrine had remained the night beside her adopted sister, and from the few words which had passed between them, Charlie knew that, in the coming trial, Adrienne, as she would always be to him, would have at least one constant, unswerving friendship to sustain her.

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The door opened, and Katrine entered. She was pale, but as calm, if sadder than usual.

Charlie went up to her and took her hand, pressing it gratefully.

For a few minutes no words passed between them, then he said, with a break in his voice:

"Well, how is she?"

"Better," said Katrine. "Thank God!" he said.

"She has been very ill," Katrine said; "delirious nearly all night. I thought it best not to send for a doctor, as there was nothing more serious that I could cope with. She is conscious, and altogether better this morning."

"My poor darling!" he said; then he looked up, with a slight color.

"Katrine, I have no thanks for you; my appreciation of your nobleness is too deep for expression in words. I will, never would say, that Adrienne had injured you—unconsciously—"

"Do not speak of that," said Katrine, with a spasm of pain. "I love her all the more deeply; we are sisters indeed now; sisters in misfortune. Oh, my lord, if I had but stayed with you that night, in Hawthorpe churchyard, we should have saved her!"

Charlie started and turned pale.

(To be Continued.)

A Terrible Disclosure;

OR, What Fools Men Are!

CHAPTER I WEALTH FOR LOVE.

He turned and bowed, with his opera hat under his arm, but she held out her hand, with a smile, and, perhaps not estimating this graciousness at its true estimate, he shook hands with her; there was not a man in the room who had done so excepting himself.

"I did not expect to see you here, Lord Fane," she said, moving her fan to and fro, and looking into his eyes with the smile which the prince, five minutes ago, had pronounced irresistible.

"No? Well, I didn't expect to be here," he said, in his blunt fashion. "My cousin, Clifford Revel, brought me."

She inclined her head. She saw, at a glance, the change in him, the haggard and anxious expression on his handsome face.

"Mr. Revel is a social benefactor," she said, with a smile. "It is a grand ball, is it not?"

"Yes—I suppose so," said Lord Edgar, trying to speak cheerfully. "There seems to be a terrible number of people present; if that makes a grand ball, it is grand, indeed."

She smiled.

"That is ironical, Lord Fane. If you are ironical I shall be afraid of you."

He inclined his head humbly.

"I shall be very pleased and proud to be of the slightest service to you," he said.

"I felt that you would say that!" she responded, in a low tone. "Ah here comes my partner. I am sorry you will not dance."

What could he do but ask to see her card.

She shook her head, with a faint smile, as she extended the dainty programme to him.

"It is quite full," she said.

"It is just what I deserve," he remarked. "I ought to have asked earlier."

She smiled.

"It was filled directly. And—the faintest pause—"I did not know you were coming."

It would have sounded forward and inviting from most women, but from her it came with a sweet graciousness that would have brought him to his feet—if his whole heart had not been given to Lela.

As it was, he turned pale and looked hard at his boots. He tried to think of something to say, to acknowledge her, graciousness, but could find nothing.

(To be Continued.)

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"I didn't mean it," he said, with his usual simplicity.

"You are quite right," she said. "There are a great number of people here. But have you not been dancing?"

"No," he said, sadly. "I haven't danced to-night."

She looked at him with a smile that died away gradually.

"All this bores you?" she said, inquiringly.

"No," he answered; "I am not bored; but I don't feel inclined for dancing."

She sighed, and the fan, an exquisite example of Louis Quatorze, fell listlessly from her hand.

"How fortunate you gentlemen are. If you are not inclined to dance, you can remain motionless. We poor women must dance, whether we like it or not."

There was a tinge of melancholy in her voice that appealed to him; it was as if it were in sympathy with his own mood. He looked at her wistfully; he felt fearfully alone and solitary in the great crowd into which Clifford Revel had brought him; and there was a subtle flattery in this lovely creature's manner that touched him. He would have felt still more flattered if he had understood how great an honor she had paid him in standing talking to him while numbers of others were watching and waiting to approach her; but Lord Edgar, for all his prospective wealth and rank, knew little of the extreme upper ten, and didn't understand that men, and women, too, were looking at them with politely veiled glances of wonder and curiosity.

"You do not ask after the horse?" she said, opening her fan.

Lord Edgar started and flushed with self-reproach. He had forgotten all about it.

"I beg your pardon!" he said, penitently. "Of course, I ought to have asked."

"Why not?" she said, with that smile which won men's hearts; it was so gracious, so gentle, compared with her queenly loveliness. "I dare say you have forgotten all about him—and me—"

And she laughed.

"No, no!" he said, feeling rude and foolish. "That would be impossible! And the horse?"

"Can you ask? I ride him. Do you not remember you told me to do so?"

It was the subtlest flattery. "You told me to do so!" As if her obedience were unquestionable!

He flushed to the temples.

"I am very glad," he said. "It would not have been safe for you to have ridden her. Have you got a second yet?"

"Not yet," she replied. "It is so short a time."

"Ah, yes," he said, unconsciously. It seemed ages to him since that pleasant little luncheon in Elton Square.

"Besides," she said—then she hesitated.

"Well!"

"Well, I was going to presume on your good nature, and ask you to advise me. In fact, I have been summing up courage to ask you to get one for me."

He inclined his head humbly.

"I shall be very pleased and proud to be of the slightest service to you," he said.

"I felt that you would say that!" she responded, in a low tone. "Ah here comes my partner. I am sorry you will not dance."

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ANOTHER OFFENSIVE.
LONDON, April 9. (Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.) Telegraphing from the British headquarters in France this evening Reuter's correspondent says the enemy has been shelling us around south of Arrmentieres for several days, employing gas shells very largely. Following a similar outburst this morning, the Germans at 8 o'clock were seen advancing under cover of a dense mist, which limited the visibility to a few hundred yards. Our patrol and sentries immediately opened fire and the fire steps of our trenches were manned with the utmost promptitude. The bombardment had extended from LaBassee to Fleurba taking in the part of the line held by the Portuguese. The extent of the infantry attack is not yet certain owing to the mist, and communication with the front line being interrupted by gunfire. Our airmen several days ago reported abnormal activity of the enemy behind his lines on this front. Bodies of enemy troops were seen marching, and also many mechanized transports and wagon trains were spotted. Germans in their shirt sleeves were seen carrying ammunition to the communication trenches and consequently our gunners maintained an incessant fire on all roads and railways. News of the fighting is at present fragmentary, but the fighting is still progressing between Givenchy and the LaBassee Road. On the southern flank of the attack the enemy apparently has occupied some of our forward positions, principally east of the village of Leplanin, but on the left flank north of Givenchy it is reported that the line is holding well. A fierce hand-to-hand struggle is developing between Leplanin and Fleurba, the Portuguese front being heavily attacked east of the hamlet of Pettillon, where the enemy has apparently gained a footing. The weather has cleared, and the air is heavily shelling towns and villages near the fighting, especially Bethune and Esaires. The Germans are not having it all their own way. At one point we arrested the assailants and took eighty prisoners. The country in this sector is unfavorable for an offensive, our defense forming a pretty deep network.

LOYD GEORGE SPEAKS.
LONDON, April 9. Premier Lloyd George announced in the House of Commons this afternoon that the Irish Convention Report had been laid on the table. Premier Lloyd George told the House of Commons to-day that when the battle on the Somme commenced the total combatant strength of the German army on the west front was approximately equal to the total of the Entente Allies. Lloyd George said his anti-power proposals would involve extreme sacrifice by a part of the population of Great Britain. The Central bank, he said, was a very small event when compared to the recent battle and until the strain had relaxed it would be difficult to find out exactly what had happened. In the course of his speech the British Premier said, "We have now entered the most critical period of the war. There is a lull in the storm, but the hurricane is not yet over. The fate of the Empire, of Europe, and of liberty may depend upon the success with which the last German attack is repulsed and countered." The Premier said the Cabinet had taken every step to hurry reinforcements. The number of guns and prisoners taken had been exaggerated greatly.

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