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CHAPTER XXIII.

laughed feverishly at the thought. friends, Philip. I mean to be very finally turned a deaf ear to his en-

She felt herself to be just an on looker, watching with wide eyes of across to the one which she had amazement, listening with astonished ears to this other girl who was Mrs. curtains were drawn, but a ray of Philip Winterdick, this other girl who September sunlight filtered through was striving desperately to make and lay like a bar of gold on the car-Dome sort of a thing of life out of the pet. It was complete now, down to Juins of her dreams.

Philip did not answer, but his eyes for its mistress. turned involuntarily to his father's empty chair, and Eva flushed crimson. tle, little different," she thought, wild-

had spoken so flippantly. thought, in despair. "What will be- hind her a man pushed it wide and

She broke into the silence desperately. "There's the carpet for your smoking-room, Philip. Hadn't you better choose it yourself instead of leaving it to me! A man's taste is so different to a woman's."

He roused himself with an effort. Oh, choose anything-can't the man silence, then Calligan took a quick at the shop tell you the right sort of step towards her.

thing?" "Oh, yes, I dare say he can," she said indifferently. "I only wondered

yourself." "I shan't notice if there's a carpet or not." Philip said hardily. She remembered his words the next

smoking-room at the flat, Most of the other rooms were decorated and furnished-she had so "What is it? What is it?"

hoped that Philip would take a little interest in this one at least. She looked round her with heavy

seemed to be miles and miles away. Eva clasped her hands together "And all my life will be like this

With every day she and Philip only not settled in yet?"

prevent it. She wondered why he had alluded say how glad I was to see you."

to the night of that dinner-party before their marriage.

Her cheeks burned as she remembered how on that homeward drive she had put her arms round his neck said in an odd jerky voice. denly she felt the tears on her fingers. after you left." had been like a beautiful flower slow- be natural. "I'm glad you're coming

No rubbing in

is necessary

ather the softens

the beard

wit

with the fingers

ly unfolding its petals before her: and now . . she looked round the rooms-empty, as her whole future must be!

Looking back to the first night of their marriage, she wondered that No doubt he would be horribly em- Philip had ever troubled to pretend barrassed. No doubt he would ring that he cared for her. She rememberfor the maid or something . . . She ed how nearly she had been tempted to believe in him; how for a moment "We must have some more dinner at least she had trembled on the parties when we are settled in town," brink—she felt that she could never she said. "I hope you have lots of be thankful enough that she had

> treaties. She left the empty room and went chosen for her own. The dainty silk the smallest detail, and only waiting

"If only things had been just a lit She knew what his thought must be, ly. She turned away, her heart burstand she hated her new, other self who ing with bitterness and sorrow, and as she crossed the hall to the front "I'm getting horrid-horrid!" she door, which she had left half open be-

> stepped into the hall. "Jove, what luck! I thought I should and Eva looked up through her tears into Tom Calligan's face.

CHAPTER XXIV. There was a moment of tense

"Philip," he said insistently, "is he

-isn't he here?" She shook her head. She could not if you wouldn't prefer to choose it trust herself to speak. She was brushing the tears away childishly with her knuckles. She turned away, fighting

Calligan hesitated; then he followafternoon when she was in the empty ed her. He put out his hand as if to touch her, but drew it away again. "Oh, my dear," he said agitatedly.

"N-nothing - really n-nothing

hard for her composure.

please!" He drew in his breath hard. He eyes; the empty place-depressed her walked away to the open door and for the rumble of the distant traffic a moment stood looking into the gotten him during the last few min street outside.

Presently he spoke, rather mechanically. "I heard you'd taken this flat-a always," she thought in sudden man Philip knows at the club told me house. I tell Philip that I mean to be

grew farther apart; she knew that "No." She had mastered herself, Philip was changing even as she her- though her voice was a little shaky tion in her heart striking her with bitself was; he was more cynical, less still. "It's nearly finished, though." contented, and she was powerless to She choked back a lump in her throat. "I'm afraid I'm very rude-I didn't

"I've thought of you-often," he

She had been so happy then-life "Was it?" He found it impossible to she asked definantly.

PRESENTA

He had kept his eyes downbent, but now he raised them, and for a moment they met Eva's. It was only a moment, but long en ough for him to read the whole tragedy in her bravely smiling face. She would die rather than tell him, he

ick feeling of helplessness.

(To be continued.) Coats for afternoon wear show full

The Highway House won't be too eerful this winter." "No-and Mrs. Winterdick has gone

way now, you know." "Has she and and Philip?" "Oh, Philip's very busy; he has had is father's affairs to see to.'

There was an awkward silence. There was a puzzled pucker on the girl's forehead. She was vaguely conscious of the constraint between herself and this man, but could not un derstand or account for it.

She had spoken the truth when she said she was glad to see him. She was only ashamed that he should have seen her tears and distress. "I'm a bad hostess," she said with an effort. "I ought to ask you in-but

was just going, and so . . ." "I'll come with you," he interposed hurriedly. He did not want to see the flat, and he was afraid to trust himself alone with her. He had known when he left the Highway House that Eva had been the great attraction for him there, he had not guessed till today how strong his love for her had grown.

"We'll go and get some tea, shall we?" he said again. "I've nothing to do. Are you going back to Apsley to-

"Oh, yes-I've had to come up a great deal lately to see to furniture and things."

They were outside now, and Calligan had shut the door of the flat behind them with a little slam.

They set off together down the road. There was nothing much in Caligan. He had no especial good looks to recommend him: he was just an ordinary cheerful, kind-hearted young man. But before he and Eva had reached the teashop he had made her feel happier than she had done since he said good-bye to her down at

When they were facing one another across the round table. Eva said frankly:-"I don't know what it is about you, but you always make me feel very

pleased with myself, Mr. Calligan "Do I!" He coloured to the roots of his hair. "It's kind of you to say so . . . Jove! what rum looking

The cakes were quite ordinary, but Calligan felt that he must change the subject at any cost. He did not want to talk about himself or about Eva. Deep down in his heart he knew that he was beginning to hate Philip . Winterdick, but for the moment he wanted to put the knowledge aside.

"What have you been doing since I saw you?" Eva asked him. "It seems so long ago .

He laughed, not very naturally. "I haven't done anything worth talking about. I've been to the club most evenings—once or twice to a

theatre. I'm a lazy beggar, you know.' find you here," he said, delightedly, be, too, because I don't seem to have done anything either. I can't even interfere with the household arrangements as I used to at home. I just wander about—go for walks—"

> She shook her head. "I've never played since I was married." There was a note of won-

derment in her voice. "You'll find the time pass more quickly when you're up in town," he told her. "We shall have to do some

theatres. Do you like theatres?" "Oh, yes . . "Good! Well, I'll take you. I---" He broke off. He had not intended to say this

"Philip will have to take you to all the show," he added, lamely. Philip! Her husband's name gave Eva a faint shock. She had almost for-

"I hope you'll come and see us of ten," she said, with a touch of anxiety in her voice, "I mean to keep open so I came along. I suppose you're so gay so gay . . ." She stopped, the contrast between the words she was uttering and the black devastater force.

His eyes met hers gravely across "I shall be delighted," he said

"You won't find Philip has altered in the least," she rushed on. "He isn't a bit the stay-at-home, settle-down sort of married man. We're quite a and kissed him-she covered her face "I've thought about you, too," Eva sensible couple-he goes his way and with her trembling hands, and sud- said, trying to smile. "It was horrid I go mine. It's such an excellent way to arrange things, don't you think?" "Excellent," said Calligan with an

knew, that her marriage with Philip Winterdick had been a mistake-a errible mistake, without remedy. He looked away from her with a

"I'm quite ready, if you are," she as saying compos "How many cakes have we had? hree each! Oh, how greedy."

c by pleats on either side of th



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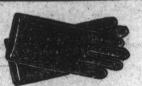
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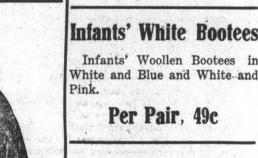
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