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TORONTO MONTREAL

LADY IRIS' MISTAKE; Hero of 'Surata'

CHAPTER XXVII

"Forget John Barton. Take the fruit of the victory out of his hand; let this make no difference to us," he added, boldly gaining courage as he saw the keen pain in her face; "let him see that his plot has ignominiously failed, and that, instead of doing us harm, he has actually done good. You cannot tell his revenge in a better way than that."

"I cannot be false to the training and instincts of my life," she said brokenly. "Do not talk to me yet." She raised her hands with a gesture of passionate pain. "I am even more sorry for you," she added.

Allan put his arm round the trembling figure.

"My darling, I can understand," he said gently; "it must be a terrible blow to you. But it is not so bad as though you had heard something against my honor and loyalty. If ever in your eyes I had any good qualities, I have them still. If you have found me a loyal, honest man, am I the less so now? As for my father, I revere him and am proud of him," he continued warmly. "He was a noble and generous man; his hands were even open to the widow and the fatherless. Almost every man, woman, and child in Elmore loved him. I do not believe that any one ever asked him for help and asked in vain. I have known him by generous timely aid to save whole families from ruin. Even in this moment of humiliation for me," he said sadly, "I am proud of my father, and proud that I am his son."

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She looked at him fearlessly. "Unless I came to you freely," she replied, "you would not care to have me at all."

"No," he said, sadly, "I should not." Suddenly the pain of it all seemed to overcome her.

"Oh, Allan, Allan, why should this be when I love you so dearly?" she cried. "Oh, my darling, I do not love you less! Let me kiss the pain from your dear face."

He had never seen her so moved. Of her own free will she put her arms round his neck, kissing his face and crying out that he was her love, and that her trouble was to hard to bear. All her pride and strength had broken down. She loved him better than her life, and was grieved only for his pain. He never forgot her passionate grief; he tried to soothe her, but it was beyond his power.

"My darling," he said, "let us forget it all. I was afraid—and he shuddered as he spoke—"that it would part us; and that would have been my death-blow. Let us forget it."

But she only clung to him, weeping the more bitterly; and he could not soothe her.

"That it should happen to me," she sobbed—"I who was so happy in my love! I loved you so dearly, Allan!"

"And will love me still," he said, "when all this is forgotten."

"I cannot tell," she replied. "Which ever way it may be, Allan, my heart will be broken. I am the last of the Faynes, and I hold the honor of the race in my hands."

His face darkened.

"Iris," he said, "I acknowledge the inferiority of my birth to yours; but I refuse to acknowledge more. My father was not an earl, but he was a good and honorable man. There are limits that even you must not pass. If you say that in marrying me you would bring dishonor on your race, my beautiful love, you are free. I can meet my fate like a man, Iris. I shall not whine for mercy. The issue lies in your hands; you shall decide."

"How can I decide," she cried,

"You are quite right to be so," she murmured. "I should not respect you were it otherwise."

He caressed the trembling hands that lay so cold and deathlike in his own.

"Darling," he said, "think a little. In the sight of Heaven what are noble birth and all the miserable class distinctions of fashionable society? The best and worthiest life is the upright and useful one, and the poor and the lowly born, Iris, more often lead that kind of life than the rich."

He paused; the cold calmness of Lady Iris' face silenced him.

"This world has its rules," she said. "rules that regulate its well-being; and they cannot be broken."

He heaved a deep sigh; he could have cried aloud in his despair.

"Iris," he said, after a few moments, "if any other woman stood in your place, I should kiss her, bid her God-speed, and leave her. It is because I love you so passionately that I linger in order to combat your prejudices. Let us reverse the position. You are a great lady, the daughter of an earl. Suppose—it is merely supposition—that some secret that reflected upon your birth became known; do you think I should give you up, decline to marry you because of it, even if it were the most disgraceful secret imaginable?"

"No," she replied, slowly, "I do not think you would."

"Think!" he cried. "You know, Iris, that if all the world frowned upon you, all the more lovingly would my arms clasp you, all the more should I love and reverence you. You know it, my darling—you know that, if you stood before me this moment friendless, homeless, penniless, I should but love you the better and cherish you the more; for I love you with an unalterable love."

"I believe it," she answered; but the cold calmness of her face was unbroken by the loving words.

"Then why do you not say the same to me? I am unchanged; and it was I whom you loved. Why should birth make any difference?"

"You do not understand, Allan; you forgot that my training and my instincts are part of my life, that I cannot separate myself from them."

"That is," he said, hastily, "you have been accustomed to look down from your exalted station upon those of inferior birth as belonging to another world—a world you could never enter, and in which you have no place."

"Yes; that is it," she replied. "You may think it foolish, Allan; it is the result of my training. It may be quite as much prejudice as pride, but from a lower sphere I should never have dreamed of taking a companion or a familiar friend."

"Much less a lover!" he said bitterly.

"Much less a lover," she repeated. "You see, Allan, I am as frank as you are."

Again there was silence. Allan broke it by saying softly—

"Iris, it is not long since you gave to me the most solemn promises woman can give to a man. What if I hold you to them? What if I claim you by right of the vows you have made?"

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when my heart is torn with anguish?"

"If you find that your pride is greater than your love, you have but to send me away—you have but to tell me so; but if, as I believe, your love is greater than your pride, you will bid me stay, my darling."

"My heart is torn," she moaned. "May Heaven help me!"

"The decision rests with you, Iris; your will is mine—but think how I love you, think if you resolve to send me away, of the desolate and loveless future that lies before me. Oh, Iris, I never expected to have to plead for myself; but think before you decide! I pray Heaven, that in your heart love may prove stronger than pride."

"I must reflect," she said hurriedly. "Allan, leave me now; and when I have decided, I will send for you and tell you. The greatest kindness you can do me now is to go away and let me think out my own thoughts."

He went away mournfully, with something like despair in his heart. (To be continued.)

WHAT'S THE USE?

I read the books the boys produce, and sadly murmur, "What's the use?" No doubt there are in modern towns a all kinds of sap-heads, bores and clowns who do not know a noble play or painting from a bale of hay. Why drag them from their humble nook and boldly place them in a book, and say, "These tinpots represent our country, to the bow-wows bent; these freaks, as drawn by gifted pen, are portraits of our fellow men; they're all as much alike as peas, and they are all composed of cheese." No doubt there are such twaddlers, poor fish and mental feather-weights; but why in novels turn them loose? Again I query, "What's the use?" The pessimists these days are young, bright lads whose withers are unprung; why should they write such bronchy tomes, despairing plays and sore-head poems? When graybeards take their pens in hand to prove that all things should be canned, that culture's dignified from the earth and all they see black as pitch, they doubtless have the gout or itch. But why should Youth waste priceless ink to show the world is on the blink, that man is but an ape or goose? Hear me to ask you, what's the use?

Beating the Air.

It is disheartening in these times of tremendous moral and spiritual need to listen to the editorial and platform utterances of public men who in the face of a world crisis utter platitudes and beat the air instead of the devil.

The world is at war. Men are still killing one another in wholesale murder, called militarism. Kings are abdicating. Nations are boiling with hate to nations and exaggerated love of country. Capital and Labor fight and the people in between pay the bills. Religious fanaticism excuses massacre and pillage of Christians. Diplomacy plays chess, regardless of treaties, with the pawns of the weaker people. And profiteers over the world advertise their wares without a blush and sell them without a twinge of conscience.

And in the face of all this, the utterances of the press and the platform for the most part are the very essence of pitiful weakness where they are not actually stupid. There is no adequate remedy for the world's woes, no deep and fundamental cure for its sickness.

The one thing alone that will save the world is the faith in Jesus which creates a new life. The revolution which compels a king to abdicate is the only thing that will save the world, repentance for sin and an inner revolution of heart.

This is the only remedy Jesus ever offered a sinning and suffering world. It is the only thing that will save the world, repentance for sin and an inner revolution of heart.

Why do you "beat the air," to no avail, gentlemen of the press and platform and politics?—Ex.

For Gentlemen of good taste—Cub Cigarettes—sept28,11

Jap Lumber for Australia.

TOKYO—Japanese lumber merchants have closed for the first time contracts with Australia and New Zealand for the shipment of Japanese oak, both dressed and undressed, to those markets. Japan has shipped lumber to Hong Kong and Singapore before, but to no other foreign ports. Figures just given out disclose that Japan's total lumber exports in 1921 totalled about \$20,700,000 in value, and that during the first half of the present year they amounted to approximately \$12,000,000. The United States supplying about 90 per cent. Canadian lumber imported was valued at about \$400,000.

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HUMANS WITH CAUDAL APPENDAGES.

YOKOHAMA—Reports that a tribe of people who have tails is living in Indo-China, have brought Capt. E. A. Salisbury, world famous explorer, scientist and author, to the Far East. He will leave Japan shortly for Southern China and then he will explore inland with the intention of finding the newly-reported breed of man which is passing European anthropologists. Capt. Salisbury is the first man to attempt a systematic search and the result of his investigation is being eagerly awaited. Capt. Salisbury will go from Indo-China to Europe by way of the Suez Canal. He will tour Abyssinia on the way and has been invited to be the guest of the King of Abyssinia.

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