

## Her Hidden Destiny

CHAPTER XXIV.

Early in the afternoon snow began to fall, and then daylight faded. When Barbara left Lady Rose's room at four o'clock the darkness without was as night, and for two hours the lamps had been burning in "my lady's corridor." For almost as long a time Lord Keith had been waiting there for his fiancée, and now, as she came slowly toward him, he rose from his chair and went forward with both hands outstretched. The girl put hers into them in silence. "At last!" he exclaimed, in a glad tone of relief. "I thought I was not going to see you again, my darling!" His voice expressing extreme concern and solicitude—"how ill you look!" This had been terrible for him. I wish I had taken you away. You look worn out."

He put his arm round her fondly, holding her close to him for a moment, then he led her towards one of the fashioned seats in the window. But he drew back.

"Not there!" she said, trembling in every limb. "Not in this, Everard!"

A look of surprise passed over his face.

"As you will, my darling," he said, gently. "Shall we go down to the morning room? There is no one there, Barbara, how you tremble, my poor girl."

"Don't," she murmured, shrinking a little. "Don't, Everard, or you will make me cry, and I dare not—"

The morning room, a large low-ceilinged room hung in faded green brocade, and with an old world air of grace in its walls, was bright with fire and candle light. A Lord Keith put Barbara in a chair near the fire and rang for some tea.

"You are cold and weary, dear," he said. "We have neglected you, I fear."

Barbara smiled faintly, but she said nothing, and there was silence until the tea was brought in. During the silence he looked at her keenly, with troubled eyes. She was wan and pale and haggard, her hair was loosened and in disorder, and one long heavy crease had fallen over her shoulder. Lord Keith wondered for a moment at the change in her, but, attributing it chiefly to her anxiety about Lady Rose, he did not suspect that Walter Bryant's death was a deeper trouble to her than was to the other terrified hysterical women who had left the house a few days before.

Barbara leaned back listlessly in the ottoman, the pallor of her face intensified by the deep blue velvet of the cushions, against which it rested. She was utterly exhausted both in mind and body, she was past the power of thought, she was scarcely conscious of suffering; it seemed as if life were over for her.

And yet Walter Bryant's death, terrible as it was, had relieved her of a cruel and unscrupulous enemy, and through all her exhaustion that thought forced itself upon her. There was no one now to betray the truth of her birth—if she herself kept silence.

She roused herself from her dull lethargy, when Lord Keith brought a cup of tea to her side; he had poured out himself, and the girl forced herself to smile as he took the cup from her hand, draining it eagerly at one draught.

"You will have some more, dear?" he asked.

"Oh, yes! That was so refreshing," she answered quickly. "I was almost parched."

The slight refreshment had revived her a little; she raised herself from the cushions and assumed a more upright attitude. When Lord Keith approached her with the second cup of tea, she thanked him, put the cup on a table by her side, and looked up at him with a faint smile.

"You are not going away, are you?" she said. "You are not wanted. No one can want you so much as I do, I am sure."

"No one wants me at all, love; and if they did, whose claims upon my time and attention are so great as yours? Do you know that I was waiting for you in 'my lady's corridor' for nearly two hours—sinking down on a stool at her feet and taking her hands, such ice-cold hands—fondly into his. 'Were you? I am so sorry! I did not know. Yet, if I had known, Everard, I could not have left poor Lady Rose.' 'Poor little woman! It must have been very trying for you,' he said, tenderly."

"For her," she rejoined hurriedly. "I am afraid she will be seriously ill unless she can be taken from here. She seems to have lost all power of control; she has been terribly shocked and terrified. She appeared to be recovering a little, when—when, something distressed her again. She fainted again, and for half an hour lay like a dead woman in my arms! I could not revive her without the doctor's assistance. Dr. Talbot is with her now. Everard, is Mr. Sinclair here?" she asked abruptly.

"Yes, darling, of course. Do you wish me to see him? Have you anything to say to him?"

"Only that I should be glad if he will telegraph to Uncle Lord Elmdale," she said, fidgeting a little and saying that I am returning to the castle this evening with Lady Rose."

"He has already communicated with the earl, my darling, and it is his earnest wish that Lady Rose and yourself should leave Darley. Will she be able to undertake the journey?"

## Treatment for Coughs and Colds.

It is not a question of whether you will need a treatment for coughs, colds and croup in your home, but the question is, will you select the most effective medicine, or simply be satisfied to take whatever your druggist happens to hand out to you?

Time and experience have proven that you can depend on Dr. Chase's Syrup of Linseed and Turpentine at such times.

It is only necessary to remember this when the critical time comes, and to insist on getting what you ask for.

Should you have children, who are subject to croup, you had better keep a bottle of Dr. Chase's Syrup of Linseed and Turpentine in the house, for when the choking spasm comes on there is little time to send for doctor or medicine.

Being pleasant to the taste, it is readily taken by children. Because it brings quick relief to the sufferer from asthma, bronchitis, whooping cough and all the most serious diseases of the throat and lungs. It is invaluable in a household medicine; 25 cents a bottle, at all dealers, or Edmondson & Co., Toronto.

"No, my dearest. I was too bewildered for a time to think about anything. Sinclair has behaved splendidly; he seems to be the only man in the house who has a head on his shoulders this morning; he is calm and self-possessed."

"Is he?" Barbara said languidly, her hands lying passive in Lord Keith's strong, tender clasp.

A brief pause followed. The young man's eyes were fixed upon her face in tender, questioning anxiety. His gaze seemed ready to disturb her. She frowned slightly and bit her lip, then, with a strong effort of self-control, she touched upon the subject which she had not dared to touch on hitherto.

"Everard," she said, toying with the great diamond ring on her finger.

"Yes, my darling."

"Has anything been—?" The words died away on her lips, but he understood how she would have finished her sentence.

"Nothing has been discovered, love," he replied. "The whole affair is wrapped in mystery."

"He was—quite dead?"

"Quite dead, dear. Talbot says that death was instantaneous and painless."

"And—and—self-inflicted?" she queried faintly.

Lord Keith's grave face grew yet more grave.

"No," he answered. "We all thought so at first, unlikely thought it seemed that a man so strong and well and apparently so free from care should attempt his own life; but that theory soon evaporated."

"There was no weapon found near him, dear."

"Ah! And it—"

"It was quite impossible that he could have cast it away from him even to the distance of a few feet, for, as I told you, death was instantaneous."

"And he was lying in the little clearing in the shrubbery?"

"Yes, who told you that, darling? I thought I heard it somewhere."

"I suppose I heard it somewhere," the girl stammered, pushing the hair from her forehead with an unsteady hand.

"Where is he?"

"He was carried to the nearest gardener's lodge; the doctors are making their examination there. The coroner has been communicated with. What is it, Barbara? Are you faint?"

"No—oh, no. But it is so horrible!"

She had half risen from her chair, then sunk heavily down again, her eyes dark with horror. "Where will it take place?" she asked after a moment.

"What, my darling?"

"The—the inquest."

"Where will it be held, do you mean?"

"Here, I should think."

Barbara started, and her great wild eyes went swiftly round the room.

"Not here, love, of course. At the hall, I mean—not in this room."

"What is the inquest for?" she queried, after a few moments' silence. "Is it necessary?"

"Most necessary, Barbara. It is an inquest in the manner in which the deceased came by his death. It is absolutely necessary to find out, or an innocent person might suffer for a guilty one."

Her lips parted, but no words came; she took up the cup of tea near her, and drank of it eagerly, as if her throat were dry and parched.

"Is anyone suspected?" she asked next, as she put the cup aside.

"My dear child, no, not yet. There is absolutely no clue to anything, and no one here knows anything about the unfortunate man's antecedents. He may have some deadly enemy whom it will be difficult to discover."

"Once again," she murmured, her dry lips before she spoke.

"Has nothing been discovered?" she asked then.

"Scarcely anything. The household is in a state of intense excitement and entirely demoralized; the men are standing about in groups making all manner of absurd suggestions, the women are in various stages of hysterics. I believe, and the housekeeper is beside herself with anger at their conduct. Even the men outside are affected by the general excitement," he added with a touch of contempt. "The gardeners are full of importance because one of their number made the awful discovery; the stablemen are dazed. As for old Webster, Bab, he seems to be out of his mind."

"Webster! My groom?" she said, with a sudden start.

"Yes, you ought to have a younger man to go out with you, dear. The old fellow is crazed, and goes about muttering in the strangest manner, saying he has seen a ghost and that the dead have come back."

"Webster is an old and valued servant," Barbara urged in his behalf. "My uncle has every confidence in him."

"I have not sufficient confidence in him to confide my most precious treasure to his care, darling," said Lord Keith.

"Is my pretty roan mare your most precious treasure?" Barbara queried, with an attempt at playfulness.

"He rides out with you, love."

"I don't think I shall ride much in the future," she said carelessly.

"You will with me, I hope," he responded. "We will dispense with Webster's assistance then."

He had repossessed himself of her hands and held them fondly, touching them softly now and again with his lips. Barbara looked down at him, with a terrible despair in her dark eyes.

"What does Webster say?" she inquired.

"I really cannot tell you, my darling," he answered carelessly. "He has some story about a figure in white—about his seeing the apparition of someone long since dead. I should say the old fellow had been partaking too freely of the hospitality of the servants' hall."

"But he never—"

"Of course, not, pet—except sometimes; and last night it was excusable, was it not?"

"Does he say whom he saw?" she asked after a moment's pause.

"Yes," he replied reluctantly. "Poor Newell Hatton. He was his favorite groom, you know, and most devoted to him."

"And he thinks he appeared to him last night?"

"Yes. You will agree with me, my darling, that the beer in the servants' hall was potent. And, after he had conjured up poor Newell, he might easily imagine he had seen a white figure."

ly imagine he had seen a white figure."

Barbara shivered.

"You are cold and tired, darling," he said, looking at her anxiously, as she sank backward against the cushions.

"I think, if you feel equal to it, the sooner you leave here the better. Sinclair and the servants shall go with you. I wish I could accompany you, dear, but I do not like to leave Cheveley tonight. The detective—forget me, Barbara. I ought to have remembered that you were not equal to any further excitement or worry."

"The detectives are here?"

"Yes, dear. It was necessary, of course. My darling, how pale you are! I only hope this horrible business will not make you ill."

"You need not fear," she responded, slowly, as she rose from the armchair and stood for a moment by the fire, leaning against him, and looking up into his face with a long sad look which had in it all the anguish of an eternal farewell.

"I shall not be ill, Everard," she disengaged herself slowly from his arms. "Did you tell me when we could go?" she asked, in a low voice.

"There is a train at five past six, my child. Sinclair said he would make all arrangements for you. Do you think Lady Rose can go then?"

"I will see her now."

As she turned toward the door, Lord Cheveley entered, looking pale and anxious. At sight of Barbara he started, then came forward eagerly and took her hands.

"My dear child," he said earnestly. "How can I thank you? You have been indeed a tower of strength to my poor Rose."

A faint gleam of pleasure brightened her sorrowful eyes.

"I am going to take her away with me now, if you will let me," she said, gently. "She will be better away from here," she added with an effort.

"Yes," he responded, "and you also. My poor child, I wish I could have spared you this trial."

She smiled at him with dim eyes, and pale lips, as she moved to the door, which Lord Keith held open for her, and, without looking back, left them, and slowly ascended the broad staircase, a sinking as she passed down my lady's corridor as if she feared some intangible horror were concealed there.

She found Lady Rose calmer, but the girliness was partly stupor and led by the soothing draught Dr. Talbot had administered. She was so much weakened that she could not stand without assistance, and lay huddled up in a great arm-chair. The tea which her maid had brought her standing unheeded by her side.

Barbara lingered with her for a few minutes, coaxing her to partake of the tea, while the maid hastened her packing; then she went swiftly to her room, where a pile of faded garments occupied every available chair. A white velvet gown elaborately embroidered with pearls lay on the sofa, while Barbara's maid and one of the housemaids were busy employed in packing.

Barbara glanced around in dismay; she had forgotten for the moment that the rooms would be so occupied, and she felt wild with longing for a few moments of privacy. She passed the women without a word, and went into her dressing-room, which was empty. She unlocked the window and leaned out, letting the cool air upon her burning brow and disordered hair.

"Pardon, mademoiselle," her maid's voice said at her elbow. "This embroidered shawl—does it belong to mademoiselle? I do not remember it."

The girl turned languidly. Hortense stood holding the white shawl which Lord Keith had brought Barbara on the previous night. She looked at it vacantly.

"I do not recollect it among mademoiselle's things. It is a beautiful shawl, but it has been stained—quite damaged."

There was a greenish-brown patch on the delicate shawl, marking its purity; it looked as if it had been thrown on damp earth. An expression of terror dawned in Barbara's eyes.

"It is not up with my things, and I will return it to the owner."

"Yes, mademoiselle. And this—am I to pack this also? Mademoiselle will see that she will not be able to wear it again."

"What is it?" Barbara asked, leaning against the window, vaguely conscious that only the cold air kept her from swooning.

"The dress mademoiselle wore in the comedy last night. It looks as if the skirt had been wet and muddy. How could it have happened?"

"I walked on the terrace last night," Barbara explained. "Yes, put it in Hortense. I will keep it as a souvenir of a pleasant evening."

"A pleasant evening, ma foi!" the woman muttered, as she went into the other room; and for a few brief moments Barbara lost all consciousness of her surroundings in her overpowering terror.

When knowledge of outward things returned to her, she was still standing by the window, leaning against the heavy oaken frame, her hair and face on her gown wet with the falling snow. Crossing the room with tottering steps, she poured out some water and bathed her face, and bound up her disordered hair. As she completed her task the many clocks in Darley Hall struck the half hour after five, and the sound of wheels on the drive beneath her windows told her that the carriage was coming round to take them to the station. A long sigh of relief came to her lips; she would be happier if she were free of the ill-fated house where she had suffered so much. She threw her furs around her and went out.

To be Continued.

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## ACTED AS IF IN A TRANCE

San Francisco Refugee Tells of Thrilling Experience.

PEOPLE STUPEFIED BY CALAMITY

Most Extraordinary Deeds Appeared To Be Quite the Natural Thing to All.

Los Angeles, Cal., April 22.—A thrilling story of adventures in stricken San Francisco is that of a party of four, two women and two men, who arrived here yesterday, after having spent a night and the greater portion of two days on the hills about Golden Gate Park. This party was composed of Mrs. Francis Winter, Miss Bessie Marley, Dr. Ernest W. Fleming and Oliver W. Posey, all of this city. They were guests at the Palace Hotel on Tuesday night.

The women hastened to a local hotel where they remained all the afternoon and evening, prostrated from the shock and exposure. Posey went directly home, but Dr. Fleming, unknown and disheveled, went to the Chamber of Commerce to give suggestions for succoring the stricken ones who had been so fortunate enough to flee from the city of desolation. It was on his advice that the relief committee made purchases of linen and bandages to send north. He said that the number of killed had been greatly exaggerated, but that hundreds of thousands are suffering from burns and hundreds of thousands from hunger and exposure.

The party of which he was a member was formed in the streets of San Francisco on Wednesday morning when the second shock had made the Palace Hotel untenable. They were strangers until then.

A harrowing experience.

"I was sleeping in a room on the third floor of the hotel," said Dr. Fleming, "when the first shock occurred. I awoke to the groaning of timbers, the grinding, creaking sound; then came the roaring street. Plastering and wall decorations fell. The sensation was as though the buildings were stretching and writhing like a snake. The darkness was intense. Shrieks of women, higher, shriller than that of the creaking timbers rent the air. I tumbled from the bed and crawled to the door. The air was oppressive. I wrenched the lock and the door swung back against my shoulder. Just then the building seemed to right itself. But I feel now that I was in a falling wall. I could not believe it could endure another such shock."

"The next I remember I was standing in the street laughing at the appearance of half a hundred men clad in pajamas and flannel. The men were in their night robes, and they made a better appearance than the men. The street was a rainbow of colors in the early morning light. There was rain, and the men were intended to be seen outside the boudoir."

"I looked at a man by my side; he was laughing at me. Then for the first time I became aware of the fact that I was in my pajamas. I turned and fled back to my room. There I dressed, packed my grip and hastened back to the street. All the big buildings on Market street toward the ferry were standing, but I marked four separate fires. The fronts of the small buildings had fallen into the streets, and at some places the debris had broken through the sidewalk into cellars."

"I noticed two women near me. They were apparently without escort. One said to the other: 'What wouldn't I give to be back in Los Angeles again.' That awakened a kindred feeling and I proffered assistance. I put my overcoat on the stone steps of a building and told them to sit there."

"In less than two minutes those steps appeared to pitch forward and to be flying at me. The groaning and writhing started afresh."

"But I was just stunned. I stood there in the street with debris falling about me. It seemed the natural thing for the tops of buildings to career over and fall out. I do not even recall that the women screamed."

"The street gave a convulsive shudder and the buildings somehow righted themselves again. The two women arose and started to walk and I followed in an aimless sort of way. The street was filled with moving things again. The rainbow raiment had disappeared and they were clad in street clothes."

"Everyone was walking, but there was no confusion. We did not even seem in a hurry. We walked without luggage to the Saint Francis."

"Soon I became aware that squads of soldiers were patrolling the streets. It appeared perfectly natural. I do not think I wondered why they were there."

"Men and women were all about us. We looked at each other and talked, even tried lamely to joke. But every few minutes a convulsive quiver swept through the city. The others seemed to be shivering."

"I noticed that the eyes of the men and women were rolling restlessly. Their tones were pitched high. It seemed to grate on my nerves. Then I fell to wondering whether I was talking shrilly, too."

Walked as in a Trance.

"I went to a grocery without a front and bought a few supplies, things that would make a cold lunch. The grocery treatment should at once be started with Mi-o-na. This is a scientific remedy adapted specifically to one purpose, the cure of stomach troubles. Mi-o-na is not a patent or secret remedy, but is a combination of the purest and most reliable or remedies for strengthening the digestive organs and building up the whole system. It costs but 60c a box. Use it for a few days and there is no reason why you should not be able to eat any food you like at any time without fear of distress."

If you cannot obtain Mi-o-na of your druggist, it will be sent by mail, post paid, on receipt of price. Write us for advice on your case from a leading stomach specialist which will be sent free. The R. T. Booth Company, Ithaca, N. Y.

"Once we loitered until the soldiers came up. A rough fellow, who had been standing by my side, tried to

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Pretty Gray Tweeds—This week we are showing some specials in this particular material. Come and see these genuine bargains at, a yard . . . . . 45c, 50c, 59c, 65c and 75c

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If you cannot obtain Mi-o-na of your druggist, it will be sent by mail, post paid, on receipt of price. Write us for advice on your case from a leading stomach specialist which will be sent free. The R. T. Booth Company, Ithaca, N. Y.

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