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D & A CORSETS

The Die is Cast
For Better or For Worse.

CHAPTER XXXI.
The Crisis.

"You have been ill, dearest," she murmured. "Lie still!" Her arm went across his chest with a gentle, loving pressure. "You've been very ill, Harry."

"Lil!" He frowned at her perplexedly, silent for a moment; then he gripped the slowly returning memory and uttered a faint cry, which made her arm tighten round him. "I remember! I was—shot!" His eyes flashed, his hand closed on her arm. "Shot! In my own woods. I remember—peachers. Have they got the poor devil? I hope not. Let him go, Eva. He didn't mean to kill me—and I'm not dead—yet."

He was silent, as if he were fighting for a complete memory, searching amongst the shadows for something; and presently she saw by his face that he had found it.

"Eva! You have been away from me—separated! It's all coming back! The other woman—the other Eva—the woman I mistook for you! Is it all a dream, am I still off my head? Are you not really there, but only a shadow, a vision? Tell me, quickly! Don't keep me in suspense—I can bear anything but that. I tell you I can't bear—"

His voice had risen, his hand was gripping her arm feverishly, fiercely. She knew the danger, the relapse that might follow if she could not soothe him, quiet the whirling brain. She half-sat, half-kneel on the bed and, drawing his head to her heaving bosom, whispered, as steadily as she could:

"Harry, Harry! I am here! Your wife, Ah, you know it! See, dearest, my arms are around you, your head is on my bosom. I have been away; we—we have been parted, but I have come back, never to leave you again, never, never—unless you send me," she added almost inaudibly. "I will tell you everything, yes, everything, but not now. You could not bear it, nor are you not strong enough—nor I, nor I! You must sleep first. Ah, Harry, you must sleep. When you wake, I will tell you. I will confess—"

His eyes opened on her and he

"And you did all this for love of me! My love, my wife!"

The relief, the gratitude, the unspeakable joy, almost overwhelmed her. The tears rose to her eyes, she had to clutch the coverlet to save herself from falling; but, half-blinded by her tears, she saw him stretch out his arms toward her, and the next moment, half-swooning, she lay on his breast, his lips on hers, his arms holding her, as if fearful that she might leave him again.

The rapidity with which Lashmore regained his strength astonished the doctor and every one else, excepting Kittle and Lashmore himself; for these two knew that it was not so much Herdale's shot that had laid Lashmore low as the terrible strain and anxiety which he had undergone before Herdale's attempt at murder. Very soon he was out on the terrace, of course leaning on Kittle's arm and friends surrounded them with unfeigned congratulations and satisfaction at his recovery, for Lashmore had the knack of winning their hearts—and keeping them, which is quite another thing. But he was happiest when Kittle and he were in a solitude of two. And how much she had to say and how intently, with what emotion, he listened! He wanted all the details of her early life, got to know all the boys by name and not a little of the Bohemian himself revelled in the scenes in which they appeared.

"I must know them, all of them, Kittle," he said. "We must have a big dinner; they must come down here and stay. Bickers must bring his mother—good chap, that Bickers! And the dear old lady must be a brick. Oh, yes, we will have them all!"

They often spoke of Eva Lyndhurst and several times Lashmore dwelt upon the extraordinary resemblance between the two girls, and expressed his amazement. But, on this point, Kittle was silent and cast down her eyes or averted her face, every expression of which Lashmore's love made him quick to interpret. She could have thrown some light on this strange resemblance, but she would not speak; she was leaving it to others.

One day Osborne came down and was received with an eager welcome. "Takes a lot of killing, Lady Herdale, doesn't he?" he said, as he gripped Lashmore's hand. "But, you see, he has a great deal to live for." He glanced at the house and round about him, but his eyes came back to Kittle's face and rested there significantly.

"Have you—have you brought any news?" said Lashmore in a low voice. Osborne's face became clouded. "No," he said. "Nothing has been heard of Herdale. We inquired at his club, everywhere; but no one seems to have seen him or to have any idea where to look for him. It is a complete disappearance. May I speak openly? Of course, my dear Lashmore, I, and Levison, know why he has gone."

Lashmore nodded and frowned. He knew now; for Kittle, when he had got strong enough to be told, had described how she had come upon him lying unconscious in the wood, the would-be murderer bending over him, and the villain's start of horror and cry of "Eva!" as he saw her. Lashmore sent Kittle in, and told Osborne. Osborne nodded.

"He thought it was Miss Lyndhurst who had discovered him," he said. "He concluded that the game was up, that the marriage was impossible; he saw the gallows before him. He will not come back—unless you fetch him back at the end of a rope, Lashmore."

Lashmore shuddered. "Let him go," he said grimly. "I was partly to blame; I was a fool to trust him. There was murder that night in his eye, behind his smile, if I had been in a condition to read the signs. Yes, let him go. After all, I have won; I have got the title and estate, and, better than all else—my wife! I'll tell you her story some day, Osborne. It is a story of a girl, a mere girl, who risked all for love. And I reaped the reward. But Miss Lyndhurst!"

"She has been ill, is still ill," said Osborne gravely. "And Sir Talbot is like a man distraught. There is some money-trouble—with which I have a strong suspicion, Herdale is concerned; indeed, he is, I think, the

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I have not been able to see her—and I want to—badly. I think Levison knows something; but you know what he is, close as an oyster, and he won't speak or move until he chooses to do so."

"If it is money," said Lashmore shyly.

Osborne pressed his shoulder. "Thanks, dear fellow! But that's not worrying me. I'm rather flush myself, just now. A speculation out there has turned up trumps, and I'm perfectly comfortable. But it's no use; Sir Talbot would not take it, would not accept any help from a mere acquaintance."

"You won't be only that long," said Lashmore.

Osborne shook his head gloomily. "I don't know. You'll see, she still considers herself bound to that scoundrel. She doesn't know what we know. I'm just waiting on Providence; and waiting is a poor game, as you know. Who's this coming up the drive?"

Lashmore looked at the approaching fly, then sprang to his feet.

"It's Coke! Kittle!" He was half-way down the steps as the fly drove up, and he almost dragged Coke out. "Why you dear old chap! Is it really you? To think of your coming over! But of course you would! It's just what you'd do! Kittle—my wife—Eva," he colored at the slip, "is just inside. She will be half-crazy with joy to see you. Osborne, here is one of the best friends a man ever had. Coke, this is another; Owen Osborne, the great Owen Osborne. Kittle! Kittle!"

She came running out all anxiety and fearful at his excited tones; and her face went pale as she saw Coke; but Mr. Coke, who had been diligently reading the newspapers, and had been preparing himself for the meeting, showed no embarrassment, but took both her hands and with a "May I, Lashmore?" kissed her paternally on the forehead.

(To be Continued.)

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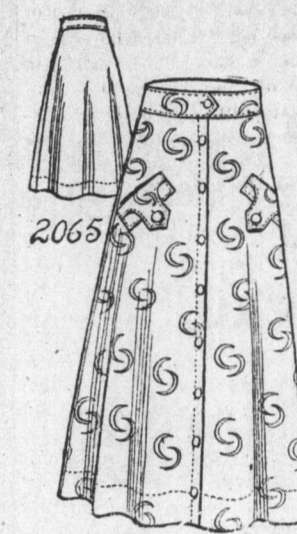
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THE IMPERIAL

ST. JOHN'S

War News.

Messages Received Previous to 9 a.m.

PRaise for the Allies.

LONDON, May 24.—That the second phase of the Italian offensive, begun yesterday, was made possible by the thorough and... work of the Anglo-French troops during the past few weeks. It had not been keeping the Germans busy the Italians would not only have found an offensive impossible, but would actually have been faced by a great Austro-German attack. General Maurice also had high praise for the work of the French during the past week, which, he said, was more important strategically than any map indicates. The British have not for the past week, he said, but in the midst of one of those lulls which are necessary development of long continued modern battles. The present lull is exactly like the lulls during the battle of the Somme. The enemy's communications during the past few days are interesting, as indicating a loss of morale and jumpiness of his troops who repeatedly report developments. British offensives at spots where they never made the slightest movement beyond the usual artillery bombardment. Discussing the battle of Arras as a whole, General Maurice said: "The best comparison is still with the battle of the Somme. Our losses for the year continue 50 per cent. smaller, although larger forces are engaged. We already have gained four times as much ground as during the whole of the Somme battle and have taken many times more prisoners and guns. The British captured 21,000 Germans at the battle of Arras, while losing only 3,000 captured themselves. General Maurice attaches great significance to the continuance of the capture of the Germans by the Entente forces in the Franco-Belgian front. The German army, he commented, has everything to impress the men that must not surrender. Von Hindenburg recently issued an order to every

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