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# A True Diamond

CHAPTER XX.

Late for Luncheon.

(Continued.)

Miss Honoria accompanied Lewis and Toney.

"You must come here oftener," she said kindly.

"No," said Toney, "the Miss Hamiltons wouldn't like it. They think I am a dreadful. I can see it in their faces."

It was so much the truth that Miss Honoria, being of a very truthful disposition, did not know what to say, and Lewis filled up the gap.

"They have never seen any one like you, that's all."

Toney looked herself well over.

"But what is there about me to surprise them? I've got two arms and two legs, and I speak like other people."

Miss Honoria laughed heartily.

"Well, not quite! You are rather more straightforward than most people, you say what you think."

"But what else should one say?" said Toney. "I couldn't think one thing and say another."

"That's what we generally do in society," said Lewis.

Toney shook her head sadly.

"I see, well, I'm not fit for English life. I'm all wrong. Good-bye, I must run."

Toney meant this literally and much to Miss Honoria's surprise, the little figure flashed off, looking like a bit of blue cloud chased by an invisible wind. Lewis turned back with his aunt.

"Well, Aunt Honoria isn't she a delightful specimen of unspoiled nature? But her physical development is splendid. She does everything so easily, and you should see her on horse-back!"

"She is a very simple girl, yes."

## Psoriasis Was Cured

Psoriasis is another name for chronic eczema. It is the worst form of this dreadful itching skin disease. Once eczema has reached this stage it is usually considered incurable.

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tea, Miss Crump, sit down and write to him to say that I shall not dream of allowing such a thing! You must be out of your senses! I believe it is Antonia's folly that has got into you."

"It was all her doing," said Miss Crump, looking up, and instead of trembling, a smile parted her lips.

"Indeed! Anyhow, I shall not allow it. Utter foolishness. Antonia has filled up the measure of her iniquity. She must go. Some more tea, if you please, Miss Crump."

CHAPTER XXI.

A Sudden Decision.

Why had Toney basely deserted Miss Crump? She had certainly never meant to leave her stranded at Winchley, but on her way there something happened, which altered her plans.

As she was hurrying through the village she passed Mr. Thomas' cottage. At that moment Mary Thomas rushed out.

"Oh, miss, won't you just come in and see Minnie? She's so fretful, and she's calling out for you, and father's in the public house, because he's come in early, and I'm so put about."

"Why didn't you get little Mrs. Ross to come in?" asked Toney, who already knew all about Minnie's neighbours. "She's kind and motherly."

"Oh, but father says he won't have the neighbours in. They do talk so, and oh, miss—" and then, having nearly reached the cottage door, Mary threw her apron over her head and sobbed.

"Why didn't you call me in this morning? I thought Minnie had gone on early, so I did not stop."

Toney ran into the cottage without another thought but that of comforting Minnie, knowing she could only stop a very few minutes because Miss Crump was expecting her.

In a corner of the living room little Minnie sat curled up in a big chair, moaning out, "Miss Toney, my Miss Toney."

Toney immediately gathered the child up in her arms and sat down to comfort her, as she said:

"Draw the blind up, Mary. Gracious stars! how hot she is. I say I don't believe she knows me! Why d'— She's ill. Go and fetch the doctor, or wait, there's a boy outside, tell him to fetch Dr. Latham, but don't go out yourself, Mary."

Toney was a Colonial, and a doctor's child. She knew at once what to do.

The two smaller children had not come back from school, but were expected in every minute.

"When the others come, Mary," continued Toney, "tell them to run to the Vicarage and stop there till they hear more. They can tell Mrs. Hales I sent them. Don't you go near them unless it's something catching."

Mary, uncovering her face, did as she was bid, and now she began to take courage. She had been all day long alone with the fretful child, and she was very tired.

Toney examined Minnie again, holding the small, burning hands very tenderly.

"She ought to be in bed, but I suppose the bed is cold. Get a bottle and put some boiling water in it, and then put a brick in the oven."

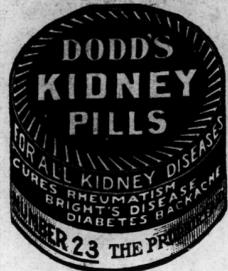
Toney gave directions as if she were in her own humpy, then she waited, patiently rocking the moaning child, wondering what Crumpet was doing, and when the doctor would come.

In half an hour he made his appearance, and his surprise was great at seeing a young lady nursing Minnie; but Toney soon explained matters to him, having first sent Mary upstairs to see that Minnie's bed was warm.

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"I say, Dr. Latham, I'm sure Minnie's very ill. I'm used to illness, as I know; as I was here, you see, I thought I had better stay, because it may be infectious."

The doctor took the child in his arms.

"Ah!—yes—well—I see. The child is very ill. I fear that it is a most malignant form of scarlet fever. I ought to have been called this morning."

"There's no mother here," said Toney, "and Mr. Thomas is going to the dogs. He wants a wife. I did tell Uncle Dove so, but he's very easy going."

The doctor smiled for a moment then he added seriously:

"Miss Whitburn, what is to be done. You must go and change your things and— The fear of infection is great especially as you have held the child so long. If you do not catch it you may give it to others."

"Well, I'm infected, I fancy! I must stay here. Pups was a doctor, and he was very particular about such things. Will you let me do what's right?"

"You must leave at once, of course, and be isolated for a time."

"But who can come here? There's no village nurse, I think, and I'm such a good nurse! No, I had better stay, only some one must explain it all to Aunt Dove. Pups said that this dangerous sort of scarlet fever ought to be stamped out at once by isolation. If I must be isolated, I may as well stay here and be useful."

(To be continued.)

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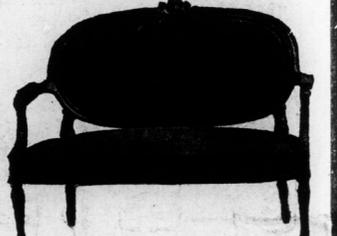
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