

# DIAMONDS FOR THE BRIDE

Or, a Proposal by Proxy

## Chapter IX. (Cont.)

She was in his arms again, a farewell embrace before that meeting of the morrow which would be before the altar. Who of that lovers' kiss could have dared to foretell it would be the last ever given and taken between these two, no other coming after? He released her, and hardly had the door closed upon him when she turned back to her jewels.

But it was not sufficient joy to look at them alone; she must have a witness to admire, if not to envy, her good fortune; and, gathering up the precious cases, she fled first to Margaret. She chose her witness well, though here there was no leaven of envy. Margaret gave a full meed of admiration, delighting in the baubles because they were Dulcie's, and would set off the little sister's beauty. Margaret's fingers clasped the diamonds round the girl's white throat, and twisted up her golden hair into a form which would support the jewelled wreath. And then, like a child who has played at dressing up, Dulcie must needs go down again to show herself in her glittering array—to Mrs. Swayne in the drawing-room, alone there, and crouching over the fire like one stricken old; to her father and his guests, Uncle Swinton and the old bachelor churchman; lastly, to the servants, who must also be dazzled with the display.

The old uncle duly admired his niece's splendor, but he looked on at her excitement with a twinkle in his eye, more amused than sympathetic. Did it occur to him that a girl on the eve of marriage should be thinking less of her gauds and more of her lover? "And only that high with it all," he said, laughing at her. "Really, Dulcie, with so much finery on, and going to be married, you ought to be grown up. Couldn't we put some heels to your shoes? You are a whole head shorter than Margaret."

Dulcie drew up her slight figure; she was a little thing, it is true, but exquisitely in proportion. "George doesn't like tall women," she said with dignity. "I never wanted to be a maypole." The uncle chuckled. "Margaret isn't a maypole. The last time I saw her she was a very fine young woman indeed. I hear she has come home to-day, and I am glad of it. I told your father so; and I hope she and Mrs. Swayne will hit it off together. And what does she say to all this, eh? Diamonds and settlements for Mrs. Gower of Grenon, and her younger sister marrying off before her, the sister left eating bread and butter in the schoolroom. How does she like it, eh?"

A flood of recollection swept over Dulcie. It was different indeed for Margaret, and a greater division lay between their two lots than Lord Swinton knew, though he put those teasing questions. She had won worldly advantage and love with it; Margaret had lost her all, and yet Margaret was not envious. At the moment she would have given a glittering drop from her neck-string, a spray from her wreath, to buy for this sister happiness and better fortune. That their lots might be nearer approached she did wish with all her heart; but she did not want them quite level. She liked that there should be a difference, a step up and a step down, and for the highest stage to be her own.

"How can you ask, Uncle Swinton, when you know Margaret?" she said indignantly. "She hasn't changed a bit in the three years. Why, of course—of course, Margaret is glad!"

## CHAPTER X

Dulcie's display of diamonds served a useful purpose. Late as it was, it supplied Mrs. Hartopp with a pretext for approaching Colonel Swayne. She knew his habits, and that after lighting of flat candlesticks on the part of the guests, he would turn back to book or paper in the solitude of his study, and therein be immersed for another hour, perhaps even longer. And the book was rather apt to be a novel, though severer literature could occupy him earlier in the day. He was in the midst of his cigar, and had just turned the page upon a critical situation, when a knock came to the door.

He put down the book with some allowable irritation. "Come in," he said.

Mrs. Hartopp entered under the fire of those keen black eyes, with a certain quiver and failing of the courage which in anticipation had been strong. The Colonel did not offer assert himself, but, without express assertion, he had a way of making himself feared. Absent, the housekeeper would have scouted the idea of being afraid of Mr. Otho,

whom she had known from his childhood, when herself little more than a child; but now, in his presence, she experienced a weakness about the knees, and fluency of speech deserted her. How was she to tell out to this man, her master, a scandalous suspicion of his wife? But the speech she had arranged for her opening and pretext ran more easily off her tongue.

"If you please, sir—I must ask your pardon for disturbing you." The Colonel closed his book, with a finger on the page which promised interest, and gave himself up to the inevitable.

"What is it, Hartopp? Anything of importance?" "Well, yes, sir, I may say it is. I don't feel that easy in my mind about Miss Dulcie's wedding presents. There's a lot of things in the library, and a lot of value, to say nothing of the jewellery Mr. Mr. Gower brought here to-night. A couple of hundred pounds in the library, and them trinkets very like a couple of hundred more."

The Colonel's mouth twisted into a slight smile under his moustache. Mrs. Hartopp's estimate did not ere on the side of excess.

"And I thought I would make bold to ask you whether it wouldn't be better to get in a policeman and put him in charge. Gentlefolks do, you know, sir; and there'll be a lot of coming and going about the place to-morrow."

Colonel Swayne sat up and knocked the ash off his cigar. "No," he said, after a pause; "I won't do that. I don't like the thought of it."

"Gentlefolks do, sir," Mrs. Hartopp was getting over her nervousness, and disposed to stand her ground. "No, I'll not have it. I should think it an insult put upon my guests. You can tell the men to keep a look-out while we are across at the church. It will not be for long."

"Very well, sir; as you think best. But I'm not easy in my mind—more than about the value in the house. Things are not as they ought to be—"

"You mean that you have suspicions in the household? You had better speak to Mrs. Swayne."

"No, sir; the servants have their faults, but they are honest, all of them. It isn't that I am troubled over the servants—I shaking her head.

"Well—with growing impatience—'what is it? But it would be better for you to speak to your mistress.'"

"Sir, I don't like to say. But I couldn't go to the mistress, not for such a thing as this."

Colonel Swayne would have made short work with anyone but Hartopp. A woman who will not come to the point runs masculine patience hard. "If it is nobody in the house—"

"Begging your pardon, sir, I didn't say it was no one in the house."

"You had better speak out, Hartopp, instead of hinting. I cannot think what you are driving at, unless it is the absurd prejudice against Mr. May. That has been an annoyance to me, a serious annoyance. Is that what you mean?"

"Well, sir, I'll own it has to do with Mr. May."

"Then I will tell you at once it is absolutely ridiculous and unfounded. Mr. May is a gentleman, and has had a University education. If you intend to insinuate dishonesty—"

his pain. She had not told out her tale; had but hinted that there was a tale for the telling. The arrow from her quiver had failed to strike home as she purposed to send it, at full stretch of bow; but perhaps a scratch would be enough when the point was poisoned. And she might have thought it sufficient could she have looked behind her, through the panels of that shut door.

The book was thrown aside; what was the sham crisis in the tale, match with this real agony and peril? He had rightly and immediately refused to listen to the telebearing of a servant, but the accusation left formless was more terrible to him than if he had fully heard. Now imagination might run riot, as with the insinuations of a very Iago. It was shameful he should thus believe at the half-word, should thus condemn; and he had manhood enough to know it to be shameful. But alas! there was that in his past history which pre-disposed him to believe.

Once more he found himself unable to keep a woman's love; his first wife had betrayed him. He had been too old, he told himself then, to match with her high spirit, her wilful temper; and if too old likely now. But Annabel had been so different from that earlier Madeleine; gentle, biddable, subservient. No man on the downward slope of age could have had complete comfort or a softer pillow; but what if that pillow spread soft for his ease had covered a hidden treason? Alas, why had not the treason remained hidden! He might still have been ignorant and happy, provided the world was deceived as well as he. But now, if this woman who warned him knew, the world would discover; the finger of scorn would be pointed, and for the second time!

He stood up on the hearth which had been warm to him, and felt the comfort of it annihilated by this monstrous suspicion. He had loved Annabel truly; and though he thought first of himself, of peace destroyed the honor tarnished, he did also think of her. Had he exacted too much and given too little? There was such a sober dignity about her, that youth and its follies and temptations appeared to have been left behind; but, as a matter of fact, she had not completed her forty-first year. Age and youth are after all comparative, and forty seemed still young to the veteran of sixty-three. He might save her yet, snatch her, as it were, with scorched garments from the burning; might escape disgrace, though the singe would be in his nostrils for ever.

Those words of Mrs. Hartopp's were repeated again and again in his memory, and with strict questioning, not only of the most, but of the least that they could mean. And then he began to weigh one course of action against the other. May should go, and yet he must not go in such haste and in such a manner as would betray suspicion, hotly from the door. Some pretext must be made to get rid of the secretary before the term of his engagement was completed, though already it was drawing to a close. Next month he would probably receive the interpreter's appointment for which he had completed his course of study; but he could not be suffered to remain until next month at Fortune's Court.

The pretext must be that Colonel Swayne was so far his own man again that he could conduct his correspondence unaided. He must endeavor to do so, he told himself; and then he drew his right arm out if the sling and attempted to move the stiff fingers, persuading himself they had grown supple. There had been a fall in the hunting-field in February which had badly crushed his arm, and the nervous injury had resulted in loss of power—the wrist had stiffened, the fingers were half dead. Some electrical treatment was in use; Annabel applied it for him in the intervals of the doctor's visits; and he had been recommended to abstain from employment of the hand in writing. But he thought he could use it if he tried, and he would make the effort.

He drew a sheet of paper before him, and with his left hand dipped a pen, and put in between the fingers of his right. Yes, he could move it, though slowly and feebly; the scrawled signature on the page was legible, though it looked unlike his own. Correspondence would be difficult, but it was not impossible; if necessary he must train the other hand to serve him with pen or pencil. The excuse would pass with May for premature despatch; but the question remained in all its difficulty, what should be said to Annabel?

That she favored the secretary he was aware; there was some blood-relationship between them, though he had been given to understand it was remote. She would oppose May's dismissal, oppose any contravention of the doctor's orders. To her it could hardly stand as solely his whim and pleasure. He must give a reason, and the reason was an insult.

Perhaps it would be the better way to tell her plainly—tell her

comments had been made, without divulging who had spoken. It would be the honest course; but here, too, there must be a needful, dangerous delay.

(To Be Continued.)

## WHERE IS TZE HSI'S GOLD?

A Story to Account for the Treasure of Empress Dowager.

A legend as persistent as those clustered around the whereabouts of Oom Paul's gold is growing up in the Far East. It concerns the mystery surrounding the disposition made of the great treasure of the late Empress Dowager of China, Tze Hsi.

That the remarkable old woman of China died with a tremendous fortune is perhaps the only accurate part of the story. Besides being very much of a diplomat she was thrifty, and the gold and jewels that poured into her coffers she kept. Only a few trusted servants that had stood closest in her confidence knew the amount of her private fortune and what disposition she made of it during her lifetime.

Hardly had the blue and white streamers of mourning gone up over the lintel of every doorway in China at her death when whispers about the Dowager Empress's hidden treasure began to buzz. It was said in Pekin that she had left directions that her gold and jewels should never be disturbed in their hiding place, and that three men alone knew where that hiding place was.

Then came the rumor that one of these three eunuchs of the palace had murdered the two other possessors of the secret and had fled the country with part of the treasure in his possession. So persistent was this report that a year ago, when a Chinaman was murdered in Patani in the Malay States and among his effects were found some jades of remarkable beauty and value, it was instantly decided that the plunderer of the imperial cache had met his end.

Now a new tale comes out of the East, less romantic to be sure, but a bit more probable. This version has it that all of Tze Hsi's wealth, aside from the gems she used as personal adornment, had been assembled in the shape of bullion while the Dowager Empress was still alive and that it had remained under guard in a room of the palace in Pekin after her death. Some time ago representations were made to the councillors of the Prince Regent of the danger of allowing so great a treasure to remain in Pekin and the folly of not banking it so that interest might accrue.

The Prince Regent gave permission to remove the gold bars to a Brussels bank. Various insurance agents were sought to give rates for the protection of the gold on its long journey, but finally the imperial councillors decided to send the bullion to London and thence to Brussels at the Government's own risk. It was forwarded piecemeal, so that no word of the rich shipment might escape. The last of it, so it is reported in the North China Daily News, went to England on the Chinese cruiser Haichi, which went to represent the empire at the coronation.

## CHILDREN'S SCHOOL LUNCHESES.

Prefer Raisins to Soup—Teaching Kitchen Work.

"Children do not like cereal foods but prefer fruits, ginger cookies and graham crackers," said Miss Madeline E. Torrey, teacher of cooking at the Winthrop School, Boston, in discussing the subject of penny lunches for the school children.

"I have given them carrot soup, potato chowder and every sort of cereal, but they will skip them every time and jump for the sandwiches made with chopped raisins or the crackers upon which peanut butter has been spread. I find also that many children will prefer to buy the things which they can eat out of doors during the recess. For this purpose I have sandwiches wrapped in white paper."

She then told in detail of the menus which she arranged for each day in the week, giving the children one regular luncheon and then having side combinations from which they might choose, such as gingerbread, oranges or peanuts.

"I am a thorough advocate of lunches for children during the forenoon," said Miss Torrey, "and find that in the children under my observation there has been a marked increase in their healthful appearance."

"As the lunch room is practically self-supporting all of the children are given tasks to do, such as cutting bread, preparing sandwiches and washing the dishes, and I find that they love to work, and what is most encouraging, will in time urge their mothers at home to adopt better methods in the kitchen. For one cent I give them a glass of skimmed milk with a sandwich or a cup of cocoa with three or four graham crackers, or if they tire of these a few dates, almonds or some fruit."

## LETTERS OF A SON IN THE MAKING TO HIS DAD.

—By REX McEVROY

No. 2  
Winnipeg, Aug. 20th, 1911.

My Dear Dad—

I am a long way from home now, but I didn't remember it when I got off the train here, and almost the first person I ran into was Bill Dodson, who used to keep store over at the corners. He's been out here now for three years now, and he has a fine house on one of the best streets in town and drives an automobile. He took me in it up to his house to dinner and asked about all the folks round home. He may be east next winter. He has done pretty well contracting.

My last letter was from Heron Bay, after our first glimpse of Lake Superior. That same night, before it got dark, we stopped at Jackfish to take on coal. The C. P. R. has an immense coaling place here perched by the side of the line on the steep slope of a hill. While we were waiting there we could see a large steamer lying at the wharf below us. The coal was hauled up out of its hold in great buckets, which were hoisted by cables far above our heads to where dump cars were standing on a track on a lofty trestle. As soon as the cars were full they were run off down the track to a pocket or hopper, where they were automatically emptied. These pockets have chutes over a siding on which coal cars are put to be loaded. These cars are sent east to supply the engines of the C. P. R. on the long run through places where coal is not obtainable.

That night I waked about one o'clock and found that the train was standing still. I raised the blind at my window—that is one advantage of having a lower berth—and looked out of the window. Two giant buildings of a grey color towered up right outside my window, and I recognized them at once from pictures—as the grain elevators of Fort William. They are tremendous buildings and they reminded me from the outlines that I could see dimly against the night sky, of the pictures of Notre Dame cathedral in Montreal. Our barn wouldn't be knee high to a grasshopper beside one of these elevators. They are enormous. They were the first thing to remind me that we were getting pretty near the West and its great wheat fields, and you may be sure I was pretty interested. I just gazed at them till we started off again, which was not long, and the last I saw of Fort William was a great black rugged hill standing out against the sky with electric lights twinkling in the town beneath it. I am told that this mountain was thought by the Indians to be a sleeping giant. Well, he will surely be a surprised giant if he ever wakes up and sees Fort William and Fort Arthur at his feet, for they must be pretty busy places from what I could see from the window, and they say that their development has practically all been in the last ten years.

I woke up at Dryden, where the Ontario Government has an experimental farm, so you can judge that there must be some quantity of good agricultural land in this end of the Province. It is in a good lumbering district, too, and the large piles of lumber in a wood yard near the station are the most prominent things to be seen from the train. There is a brick yard here, too, that seems to turn out quite a lot of bricks for the country round.

I was up and ready for breakfast by eight o'clock by my watch. I thought I would have breakfast in the dining car for a change, but I found that I was an hour too early, as at Fort William the watches of westbound travellers must all be put back an hour. It is the nearest thing to living your life over again that can be imagined. I would rather not live it over again just before meals, and I decided not to wait, so got my own breakfast out of the

grub mother put up in the tea-room value for me.

We stopped at Kenora, which used to be called Kat Portage, in the morning. It's quite a town, with substantial brick buildings. It has a large brick Railway Y. M. C. A. building, close to the station. The place is right close to Keewatin, and both are on the Lake of the Woods. There are lots of islands in the lake, and there are pretty houses on them, half hidden by the trees. A school teacher who was in our car says that twenty-one Frenchmen were massacred by the Indians on this lake by the Sioux Indians in 1736. An exploring party discovered the bones of the victims in 1907. You don't think of Indians and scalping when you look at the pretty, quiet lake to-day.

I saw the shops the Government is building for the transcontinental railway at Transcona, just six miles out of Winnipeg. They are tremendous shops—everything seems to be on a big scale out here—and quite a town has grown up round them. We got to Winnipeg not long after noon. The teacher said that the first European to put foot on the present site of Winnipeg was a Frenchman named La Verendrye, who came here 150 years ago. They say that there are 170,000 people here now, and the place looks to be going ahead at a great rate. Building is going on in every direction, and some great buildings are being added to those which already line Portage and Main streets. The Bank of Montreal certainly thinks that the West is going to have lots of money, for they are putting up a fine building that I saw, right in the heart of the town, and it is to have a vault about a hundred feet square, the floor of which will be eighty feet below the street. That will hold a considerable amount of money and valuables.

You meet all sorts of people on the streets of Winnipeg. You can tell what a mixed population there is when the word "Office" at the Emigration bureau, has to be written in eight languages. I took a copy of it. Here it is:

OFFICE.  
SEREFSTOFA  
BUREAU  
URIAH  
KONTOR  
KANZELEI  
KONTOOR  
IRODA

Everybody seems to get along with English, however, so I guess the foreigners must mostly be sent out to the prairies. Good-bye for the present. Loving son, JIM.

## WHITEWASH BRUSH IN SPAIN.

Great Leveler of Distinctions Between the Rich and Poor.

In Spain, where the ruins of Moorish towers are seen upon the crests of many hills as the "express" train crawls along at the rate of 15 or 20 miles an hour, the evidences of surviving Moorish influence upon the people and customs of Andalusia make an interesting study. In the city of Ronda it is plain that the ideas of home building which the Arabs brought into the Iberian peninsula remain vital to-day.

The whitewash brush is the great leveller of distinctions between the rich and the poor in Spain. The exteriors of homes, great manor houses upon the haciendas, huts of mountaineers clinging to the sides of the almost perpendicular hills, the handsome homes of rich merchants in the cities and humble tenements are nearly all of plaster.

A few of them are kalsomined in blue or brown or pink, but the majority are pure white. Ronda is a white city with a few patches of blue and pink and looks as if the whitewash brush had just been applied.

## PITHY SAYINGS.

About the only time a man objects to being overrated is when he pays his taxes.

The great trouble with the men who get to the front is that they feel so big we can't see over their heads. Clothes may not make the man, but they sometimes make a dangerous imitation.

The only proof against disappointment is to expect the unexpected.

The fellow who was born with a silver spoon in his mouth generally marries a girl who makes him fork over.

The friend who takes your part sometimes forgets to return it. Some people have such taking ways that they leave little to be desired.

If lots of us made it a rule to pay as we go we wouldn't get very far.

## THE BEST PRESERVES

DURING THE PRESERVING SEASON

**Redpath** Extra Granulated Sugar

IS DAILY WINNING FRESH LAURELS.

Its uniform high quality commends itself to all good housekeepers.

"BEST FRUIT, BEST SUGAR, BEST PRESERVES."

Ask your Grocer for Redpath Extra Granulated Sugar

The Canada Sugar Refining Co., Limited, Montreal  
Established in 1854 by John Redpath.