

the eyrie on the cliff. Would Wilson Polgleaze carry out the threats which to the elder woman were still vague and more or less unreal, though to Hilda so terribly magnified by that morning's message from the old ship-owner's grave? Would Lance reach home that night? Or would something hinder him? The two poor souls tried to talk, as they so often had before, after seeing "The Lodestar" go by, about the duties that might keep their boy from them till the morrow. But each knew what was in the mind of the other, or thought she did. And at any rate Hilda knew.

The afternoon was a nightmare of suspense for both of them. Mrs. Pengarvan had only one calculation to make—how soon would Lance arrive at St. Runan's Tower if nothing occurred at Falmouth to stop him. Hilda had a more complex sum to do and it was concerned rather with the arrival of Wilson Polgleaze with the incriminating letter than with the exact time at which Lance would reach them. Would her persecutor have received her telegram in time to draw him off before the steamer was signalled? And if so, what was the earliest moment when the hated screech of his motor car could be heard in the drive?

WITH a man of his erratic habits it was impossible to form any correct estimate of time or distance. He might have been out when her telegram was delivered, foregathering with his cronies in one of his haunts; or he might have had early news of the approach of the steamer and put his threat into operation before the receipt of her summons. But, supposing there was no untoward hitch, she could not see how he could reach The Tower till four o'clock in the afternoon at the soonest.

But that hour passed, and there was no sign of the visitor, whom Hilda, while loathing him so bitterly, so greatly desired to see. And four more hours had dragged by, each one adding to her dread that the worst had happened, and that her telegram had either been disregarded or had miscarried, when far off the hum of a motor sounded on the still evening air. It had been dark for some time, and Hilda and Mrs. Pengarvan were sitting in the hall, where Marigold Craze had been invited to join them. Pale as a ghost, Hilda went to the front door, the other two following her movements anxiously.

"Surely it isn't that wretch from Falmouth," said Mrs. Pengarvan, who knew nothing of Hilda's invitation to Wilson Polgleaze.

"Listen, dear!" breathed the girl at the door, and a hush fell on the raftered chamber, broken only by the rapidly nearing throb of the petrol-driven engine. With straining ears the three women heard it breast the shoulder of the hill, and turn in at the entrance gates.

"It isn't a car at all; I think it's a motor-cycle," said Hilda with a startled sob. "Oh, what can it mean—a messenger to say that Lance has been arrested?"

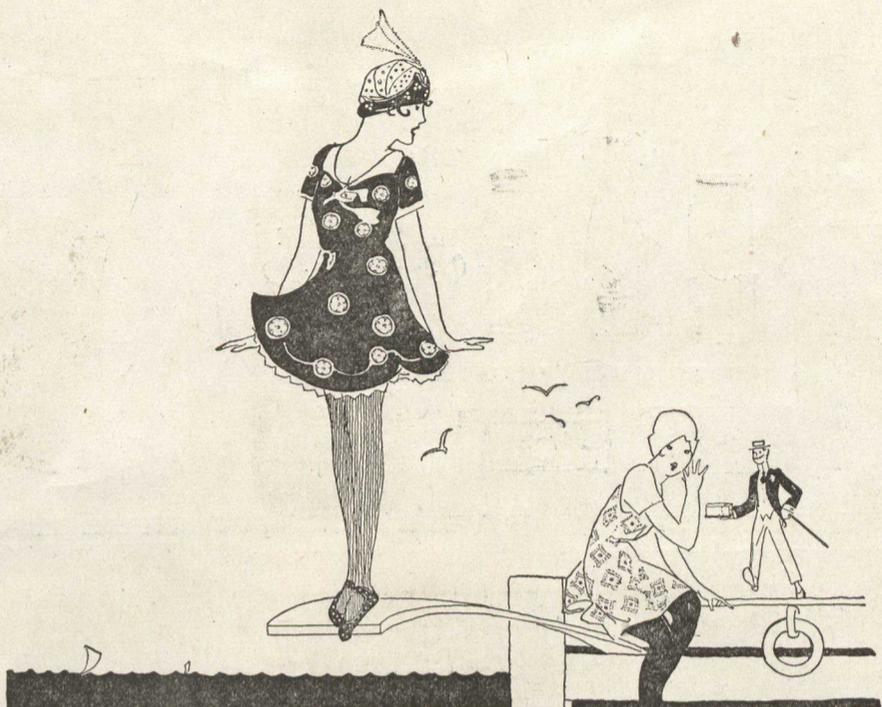
But it was Lance himself who, fifty seconds later, dismounted at the door and took his mother and sweetheart by turns to his arms. Though it was the first time he had ever kissed her openly Hilda yielded to his embrace as a matter of course. For a while the two women hung round him lovingly, making much of him with incoherent laughter and tears. Then he shook himself free.

"I suppose you know there's trouble," he said, and stopped short, seeing Marigold standing shyly in the background.

"Yes, my son, we know, and Marigold is sharing it with us," Mrs. Pengarvan reassured him. "You can speak before her, and we will tell you our part afterwards. Did anything happen when you reached port?"

(To be continued.)

Wrong.—Some moralizing writer remarks that the women of the present day are taking up the vices that the men have discarded. That cannot be swallowed in its entirety. We fail to note any vices discarded by the men.



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