

The Mystery of Rutledge Hall

OR

"The Cloud With a Silver Lining"

CHAPTER II.

And very soon Sidney discovered that people were wondering whom Miss Neil would marry of her many admirers, among whom was Stephen Daunt.

From the very day of her return to Ashford a dull numb pain had been aching at Sidney's heart, a vague sense of suffering and discomfort which she could not get rid of, but which she would scarcely acknowledge to herself; but now the pain had increased to an agony which she could not ignore, although even now she would not recognise its cause.

A knock at the door made her start and turn away from her contemplation of the grave dark face which had grown so dear to her.

"What is it?" she asked hastily; and a servant's voice from without answered that Mr. Frank Greville was down-stairs and would like to see her.

"I will come down directly," Sidney answered quickly, the color coming hotly into her face; and, when the sound of the footsteps outside had died away, she hastily smoothed her ruffled hair and dashed cold water on her aching eyes, and then went swiftly down-stairs.

"Mr. Greville is in the study, Miss Sidney," said the old servant who met her in the hall; and with a word of thanks she went on and entered the study.

A slight fair young man was its only occupant; he was standing before the mantle-piece, looking up intently at the beautiful pictured face, so like Sidney's, which hung above it. At the sound of the closing of the door he turned, disclosing the face of the young man who had driven by so hastily and unheedingly that morning; and, without a word of greeting, Sidney went forward and put her hands in his.

CHAPTER III.

"Mr. Stephen Daunt," announced Dr. Arnold's gray-haired old manservant, opening the drawing-room door; and the announcement was immediately followed by the entrance of Stephen Daunt, tall and grave and languid in his gray tweed clothes, the rose in his button-hole showing redly against the dark gray ground.

Three hours had elapsed since Frank Greville had left the Gray House, af-

ter a very prolonged visit; and Sidney was alone in the drawing-room, sitting in a low chair near the open window, a volume of her favorite poet open on her knee and her brown eyes fixed upon the page; but she was not reading, for she had been sitting there for two long hours, and she had not turned over the page.

As the servant's grave voice broke upon the stillness, she started and turned her head, a gleam of impatient annoyance flashing into her brown eyes; then she rose and went forward slowly, not holding out her hand, for both her hands clasped the book she held, which was large and heavy.

"I was to meet Dolly here," Stephen said, after the first greetings were over. "She had come shopping to do in the town, and said she would meet me here and drive me home. May I take your book, Sidney?"

They were still standing in the centre of the room, where they had met, and there was just a shade of anxiety in Stephen Daunt's dark gray eyes as they rested on Sidney's face for a moment, and he took the Shakespeare from her and put it upon the table.

Sidney's face had flushed suddenly and vividly on his entrance; but now the color had faded, leaving her terribly white—even her lips were colorless; still, although she herself knew that she had grown so pale, she resolutely suppressed all other signs of agitation, and her voice was quite calm as she answered him.

"Dolly has not been here; but I dare say she will not be long now," she said quietly. "Will you not sit down?"

"I hope I am not disturbing you," he answered, gently. "Are you quite well this afternoon, Sidney?" he added, following her to the window as she moved slowly across the room. "You look so pale."

Sidney's pretty eyebrows were lifted a little.

"One would think that I was usually of the color of a peony!" she said, lightly. "I am quite well, even if I have less color than usual, although I used to think I was always pale."

"You generally grow white roses," he remarked, smiling, "but not quite so colorless as yours of to-day. The doctor has gone to Stroud, I understand?"

"Yes, Mr. Lanthony is very ill," she



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answered. "Papa is very anxious about him."

"He has long since passed the limit of three-score years and ten," Stephen remarked.

"That fact will not make his loss less felt," rejoined Sidney, with a sudden anger which brought a smile to his lips.

"Did I say that it would?" he asked, looking down at her smiling. "It only prepares us for what is to be expected. How pleasant it is here!" he added, leaning against the open French window, and looking away over the old-fashioned garden and fields to the hills beyond.

It was very pleasant in the old-fashioned garden, pleasant and still and quiet. The room was at the back of the house, and opened on to the lawn with long French windows, and it had such a fine view of the country that it was difficult to believe that one was in the centre of a bustling little town. Dolly Daunt was wont to say that there was no room at Lambwood so charming as Sidney's drawing-room, with its curious antique furniture and rare old china and its faded harmonious coloring.

For a few minutes there was silence. Stephen's gray eyes rested dreamily on the hills which the sunlight was touching tenderly; then they came back slowly and lingered on the fair pale face of the girl who stood, a slender, graceful figure, by his side.

Sidney had gone to her room after Frank Greville's departure, and changed the soft brown dress for one of dark blue velvet with yellowish ruffles at her throat and wrist, and a broad silver collar clasping her white throat tightly. She was looking very lovely with the fevered light in her eyes and the strange excitement on her face.

"Have you been out to-day?" he asked presently.

"No."

"You are getting a sad stay-at-home," he remarked, smiling down at her. "You never go for any long walks now. Did you get lazy in town, Sidney?"

"Perhaps," she answered, carelessly. "I think I will ring for some tea; Dolly will be here shortly, I dare say."

"I was to meet her at five o'clock," said Stephen, crossing the room to ring the bell. "It is almost that now."

"Yes; it wants only a few minutes to five."

"What have you been doing with yourself all day?" Stephen resumed, going back to the window; and at the sudden question the color leaped into Sidney's face, and her eyes met his for a moment in sudden fear, then almost directly the white lids sunk and the color faded again.

"I do not know," she faltered; and Stephen looked at her wonderingly; but, before he could ask her any other question, the servant appeared with the tea-equipage, and Sidney hastened away from the window with a little sigh of relief.

But, as she prepared to make the tea, measuring it into the tea-pot with her little fingers very unsteady, the question he had asked her seemed to flash before her eyes in letters of fire.

(To be continued.)

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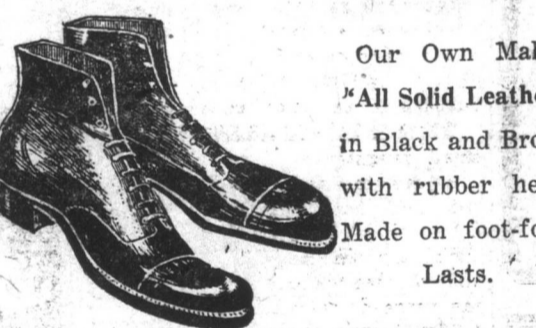
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Prince Discovers Source of Beef

CONDUCTED AROUND PORT OF BUENOS AIRES, Aug. 15—(U.N.)—The Prince of Wales discovered the source of the roast beef of Old England Tuesday during a tour of the Buenos Aires port which disclosed

the presence of 34 British cargo ships, many of which carry meat and bread to Britain.

The Prince was conducted around the port in a launch by President Alvarez, and the predominance of British merchantment among the vessels at berth was explained by the fact that much of England's food, especially meat, considerable wool and other prime necessities, pass through the

Buenos Aires harbor.

The round of visits, receptions and operas continues to engross the Royal visitor. Buenos Aires is enthusiastic with welcome.

Every important newspaper issued a special edition of from 20 to 140 pages in the Prince's honor, and magazines are devoted to the story of Anglo-Argentine relations.

"The occasion attains really extra-

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