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At the Mouth of the Treacherous Pit

STORY OF LOVE, INTRIGUE AND REVENGE

CHAPTER XV.

"He seems to be very fond of your little one. That surprised me; I should hardly have imagined him to be a man fond of children. I suppose it is because Kathleen belongs to you."

"Most likely," was the laughing answer.

Lady Rhysworth's heart was at rest now. What Sir Karl had told her had reassured her. No matter what Lola said or what impression she tried to convey to her, nothing would destroy her faith in Sir Karl again.

"I should not be surprised," she added, "at his riding over this morning. He spoke of it; but I am not sure if he decided to do so or not."

It would have been amusing, had it not been so pitiful, to see how often Lola made some pretext for going to her room, now to fasten an amber rose in her hair, now to put one in the bodice of her morning-dress.

Sir Karl did come; and he looked anything but pleased at seeing Miss De Ferras there. He was not embar-

assed, for he knew of nothing that need embarrass him. He had always acted in a straight-forward manner, and it was not his fault if other people were different.

At last he became annoyed. He said to himself that she must be trying to vex him. He had come over to talk to Dolores, and he could hardly get a word with her. From something Lola had said, he learned that she was to be Lady Rhysworth's guest for a week, and he resolved that he would run up to London and stay there that week. He would find no pleasure in visiting Deeping Hurst while Lola was there. He could not talk to his ease to its mistress, besides which, he could not endure, in the presence of Dolores, the air of confidential intimacy that Lola assumed toward him.

"I am going up to London to-morrow, and shall be absent for a week," he remarked.

The face of one lady darkened, and that of the other brightened. Lola was vexed that her scheme was baff-

led, while Dolores had not felt very comfortable, and did not care to have the interview repeated in Lola's presence. She saw now how matters stood between them. It was Lola who cared for Sir Karl, and not Sir Karl for her. Lady Rhysworth and Sir Karl had no opportunity of exchanging a word.

Lola fired one parting shot at the handsome young baronet.

"You are going to London," she said, "will you write to me from there as you did from Paris?"

He felt rather than saw the sweet, moist eyes of Dolores fixed full upon him; and he answered gently—

"No; I am afraid I shall have no time for writing. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"No. If you will not write, you shall not do anything else. Lady Rhysworth, do you not think it very unkind of him? He wrote to me from France and Italy, yet will not have time to send one line from London."

"Sir Karl could never be unkind to you or any one else," replied Dolores; and her eyes rested in sweetest trust on his face.

"You have a far higher opinion of him than I have," said Lola.

"A week's absence differs from the long absence of years," said Lady Rhysworth. "It may be just possible that in one week he would have nothing to say."

"Can I not see you for one moment, Dolores?" whispered Sir Karl.

"It is not possible," she answered. "I cannot leave my guest."

He muttered something which made Dolores smile; she was afraid that it was a strong expletive. But the expression of his face amused her most. It was just that of an impetuous, impatient schoolboy. Lola looked up quickly.

"Have you any business or secrets to discuss?" she said. "Am I a drop?"

"Certainly not," replied Dolores. "I do not believe Sir Karl could keep a secret, even if he had one. A pleasant journey to London, Sir Karl," she added, "and a safe return!"

Lola went up to him and said, in a low tone—

"Be sure to write to me if you do find time."

"What is it you are saying?" he cried, in utter astonishment. "You are what, Dolores? Say the words again. You are frightened because of Lola? My darling, what nonsense! Even should she take umbrage at my marriage, which she has no right to do, why should she be angry with you? What could she do to you? Dolores, you are a fanciful, nervous woman, I believe! What could she do to you?"

"I cannot tell why I am afraid of her; but I do know that, as I am sitting here quite happy with you, the thought of her frightens me. When I look forward to the time when I shall be with you, the thought of Lola darkens it."

"How strange!" he murmured. "It is not so strange," said Lady Rhysworth in a voice full of emotion. "Do not think me wanting in delicacy if I say that I am quite sure that she loves you." Her sweet face flushed hotly as though she had been confessing some great transgression of her own.

"The more I think of it," she continued, "the more I am sure that I am right. While you were away from home she had many offers of marriage all of the kind that the world calls good, but she would not accept any of them. I remember how people wondered. I am sure now that it was for your sake, Karl. She was quite a different girl when she heard that you were coming home. Whether she had any suspicion that you cared for me, I cannot tell; but she has always spoken of you to me as though you belonged to her."

"You did not believe it?" he said, quickly.

"No, I did not, because you had told me the truth about it; but I am very sorry for her, and I am frightened."

"You need not fear," he replied. "But he could not help owing to himself that the situation was awkward. He ought not to feel angry with any one for showing him great affection, but he wished with all his heart that Lola was married and safely away. He could not bear to see his darling's face clouded even by this shadow."

"You must cheer up, Dolores. All will be well," he said; "there is no cause for fear. As for desiring our wedding for that, it would be utter nonsense. Our marriage will at

Three months which Sir Karl had said he would wait were ended, and he had once more laid his heart at the feet of Dolores. "This time there were no reproaches, no regrets. With her arms round his neck, her flower-like face near his own, she told him the truth—how well she had loved him and him alone—told him the whole story of her engagement and the cause of it, and how her heart through all had been his."

But gall was mingled with her cup of happiness, for in the background Dolores saw in her mind's eye the stately form of Lola de Ferras, looking like an avenging angel, with deadly hate and revenge stamped on her handsome features.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sir Karl wanted Dolores to marry him at Christmas. He told her that her period of mourning had been long enough to satisfy the most scrupulous and exacting. He urged, pleaded; he even brought down little Kathleen and told her to ask "mamma" to be kind to him. At Christmas Lord Rhysworth was coming to take possession of Deeping Hurst. If she would but say "Yes," he would at once commence making the necessary preparations at Scarsdale, and, if she did not care to have their engagement announced, it should be kept a profound secret until two or three weeks before the wedding took place. There was no resisting his pleading, especially when he raised little Kathleen in his arms and told her not to cease kissing "mamma" until she had said "Yes."

"You love me, Kathleen, do you not?" he cried.

The little rosebud face nestled on his breast, as the child answered "Yes."

"Your own little daughter gives you to me, Dolores. You must not be cruel. It is not as though I had only just learned to love you. Remember my years of faithful, hopeless love. Say 'Yes.'"

She was whispering something to him, with her arms round his neck and her beautiful face hidden on his breast.

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"You must cheer up, Dolores. All will be well," he said; "there is no cause for fear. As for desiring our wedding for that, it would be utter nonsense. Our marriage will at

once put an end to all unpleasantness. Say Christmas, like a darling, and forget Lola."

The sweet eyes looked up with trust and confidence into his face.

"Did you ever, when you first became acquainted with her, flirt with her without any thought of love?" she asked.

"(To be continued.)"

If you wish fruit ice cream to be smooth, press the fruit through a potato ricer or strainer.

portunities ought not to be missed by those with cameras. Although each picture taken will be a picture of lightning, no two will be alike, and the larger the collection the more interesting it becomes. Any camera will do for the purpose, and results can be obtained as successfully with a guinea camera as with a fifty guinea one. Photographs of lightning may be taken during the daylight, but the operation is a difficult one. It is much better to make the first attempt at night if such an opportunity should occur. An upper window of the house is a convenient position from which to operate. The camera may be placed on the window-sill or on a stand just inside the room, the window being wide open. When the storm has reached its height and flashes of lightning are fairly frequent, the lens may be opened and the plate or film, as the case may be, exposed. The lens may be left open until a flash has taken place in the direction towards which the camera is pointing. When such a flash has occurred the lens should be closed at once and a fresh plate or film exposed. In such circumstances it is often possible to obtain half a dozen exposures, and two or three of them will probably be successful. If there are trees or buildings opposite the position of the camera, advantage should be taken of them to increase the pictorial interest of the photograph. By arranging the cam-

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Snapshotting a Thunderstorm

RECORDING LIGHTNING FLASHES WITH YOUR CAMERA.

Snapshots of lightning usually occur a good deal of interest. Lightning itself is sufficiently wonderful to stimulate interest, and an actual picture of a flash never fails to attract. In the summer-time many opportunities occur for the amateur to make pictures of lightning, and such opportunities ought not to be missed by those with cameras.

Although each picture taken will be a picture of lightning, no two will be alike, and the larger the collection the more interesting it becomes. Any camera will do for the purpose, and results can be obtained as successfully with a guinea camera as with a fifty guinea one.

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