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# Ruled Destiny!

CHAPTER XXVII.  
A BLOW THAT STUNNED.

FLORIS lay awake that night thinking of this which had befallen her. The passionate words, the pleading voice, rang in her ears so that she could not sleep, could not think. She went about the house the next day like a wan ghost, so pale and quiet, and yet so lovely in her pallor and quietude, that even Mrs. Sinclair smiled through her spectacles admiringly.

"You were right to call yourself Lillian, my dear," she said. "You are like a lily broken down by rain, this morning; but I don't like to see you so pale. You must not do any work to-day."

The day wore on, the bells filled the soft spring air with their melody, and as the sun began to slip behind the hills, she stole out to keep her appointment.

As she reached the square, glowing bravely in its budding foliage and sweet with the scent of almond blossoms, she saw him pacing to and fro, his arms folded on his breast, the sun shining on the close-cut, iron-gray hair.

He turned and saw her, and came toward her with that peculiar suppressed eagerness which belongs to a lover who is still in the agonies of suspense, and raised his hat. Floris gave him her hand, and he walked beside her to the seat.

"It was good of you to come," he said at last. "I scarcely dared to hope that you would grant my request; it seemed a bold and presumptuous one while I made it, but after I left you it grew in my mind to be audacious. And yet I could not say all I wished to say last night before your friend. Ah, yes, it was good of you to come."

Floris looked straight before her; his voice seemed to sound as if from a distance and mingled with the strains of the brass band on the quay. "I had promised," she said, in a low voice; "but I am sorry—"

"Ah, do not say that," he broke in. "If you knew how I have looked forward to this meeting how I have counted the hours—"

He stopped, and his white, thin hand went to his lips, as if to repress the eagerness and passion with which he had begun to speak, for Floris had shrunk slightly.

"I—forgive me—I am too impetuous," he pleaded; "but the depth of my love for you must be my excuse. Miss Wood, I have asked you to meet me here that I may have a precious opportunity of telling you how de—"

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hopeless. My past has shocked and alarmed you. How could it be otherwise. How could I hope that you would trust yourself to one whose past, on his own confession, has been as black as mine, for your life has been like that of an innocent child playing amid the flowers that lined its path; you have known nothing of man's baseness—and I come to you with my life all scarred and stained. Of course, there can be only one answer for me! You will tell me to go, to live honestly if I can, and to forget you! But that is not possible. I cannot forget. But I will remember you as one who, like an angel indeed, shone in my path for one brief moment to show me that there was still hope for even such as I!"

His voice trembled and grew almost inaudible.

Floris' eyes filled with tears.

It was as if a soul on the brink of the precipice were holding out its hand to her, and crying, in a very piteous voice, "Save me!"

She turned her eyes upon him; he saw the tears, and a wild hope sprang up within him.

He drew a sharp breath, and his white hand stole very gently and fearfully to her arm.

She put up her hand, and set it as a barrier between them.

"Wait," she said, with a little pant. "You have not heard, I have not told you—"

"What have you to tell me?" he asked, fearfully. "Speak to me—give me an answer, for Heaven's sake. See I am patient, and—and ready to hear anything, to obey you in everything."

She struggled against the tremor that had seized her, then she raised her eyes, full of trouble and uncertainty, to his.

"I am a stranger almost to you—you know nothing about me—"

He waved his hand passionately. "I know that I love you, all else—"

She shook her head gently. "And is all the confidence to be on one side?" she murmured. "You have laid bare your life to me, and I cannot let you think, even though we are to part now—"

"Do not speak of parting," he pleaded, with feverish eagerness.

"Even though we are to part, I cannot let you think that my past has had no history, that—I cannot go on," she broke off piteously.

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"Do not," he said, quickly; "you shall tell me some other time. Oh, it is the present and the future for which I am begging. Trust yourself to me, say 'I will be your wife,' and all will be well; I know it, I feel it. I will make the remainder of your life so happy that the past, sad though it may have been, shall seem like a dream from which my love has awakened you!"

She hung her head.

"I—I do not ask you to love me, not now at once," he went on. "In time—"

She raised her eyes and looked at him, and the look made his heart grow cold for a moment.

"No," she said, in a low voice. "You have not asked me to love you. Had you done so, I would have answered you before this, at once, I cannot love you."

His face went from the faint flush which hope had implanted there to a very wan pallor.

"I cannot love you," she said, bravely and firmly. "I have no power of loving left! My heart is like a stone."

She pressed her hand to her left side with a piteous little gesture which wrung his heart.

"It is as if it were dead," she went on, still in the low, quivering voice. "There can be no such thing as love for me. Is it not right that I should tell you then, who have been so frank with me?" and she turned her large eyes on him piteously.

He bit his lip and was silent.

(To be Continued.)

**Published by Authority**

On recommendation of the Military Service Board and under the provisions of the War Measures Act, 1914-16, and the Military Service Act, 1918, the following further Regulations have been approved by His Excellency the Governor in Council.

W. W. HALFYARD,  
Colonial Secretary,  
Department of Colonial Secretary,  
June 25th, 1918.

14.—After any class or sub-class has been called out, and after the expiration of the time limited by the calling out proclamation for reporting for service or making applications for exemption, any man, who may reasonably be supposed to be a member of the class or sub-class called out, many, at any reasonable time, be accosted by any Magistrate or Justice of the Peace, or by any commissioned or non-commissioned military officer, or by any police officer or constable, and questioned as to all or any of the following matters, to wit:—His name, occupation, place of employment, abode, date and place of birth, and any other matters relevant to show whether or not he is within such class or sub-class, or whether or not he has reported for, or is exempted or exempted from military service; and the man shall, if required, produce his certificate or such evidence as may be in his possession, if he has any, showing that he has reported, or is not at the time to report; and it shall be the duty of any such man so questioned to answer truthfully, and to the best of his information, knowledge and belief, all questions so put to him.

15.—If any man so accosted and questioned do not answer, or does not truthfully answer, all questions put to him touching the matters aforesaid, or, if the officer questioning him has reasonable grounds to believe that the answers are untruthful or evasive, he may detain the man and take him before a Justice of the Peace to be dealt with according to law; provided that nothing in this regulation shall affect the application of Section 12 of the Military Service Act, 1918.

16.—It shall be the duty of every person to answer any questions which may be asked of or submitted to him orally or in writing by the registrar or by any military or police officer relating to the age, occupation, abode, address or domestic position of any man who may reasonably be supposed or be a member of any class or sub-class called out or to any facts which may be or are in determining whether such a man is entitled to exemption or enabling him to be found or identified, and any person who fails to answer any such questions shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a penalty not exceeding one hundred dollars nor less than twenty-five dollars.

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