



For Her Sake; The Murder in Furness Wood.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"Now tell me, Diana, if you are pleased with your new home," he said. She tried her best to look contented and happy as she answered "Yes."

Then, when she had been over the house, he ordered the little pony-carriage, and in his most amiable manner insisted upon driving her round the park. The one thing that pleased her most was the river, with its ever-varying charms, which ran through the estate. It bore white water-lilies on its broad bosom, was spanned in several places by rustic bridges, and ran at times between grassy banks fringed with forget-me-nots. At one point it widened into a reach, at another it broke into a miniature cascade, leaping from rock to rock in its fantastic course. That river, with its lovely home scenery, afforded some comfort to Diana's heart.

"Now you are installed, Diana," Lord Clanronald said to her when they returned. "You are mistress of Ronald's Court, with power supreme." A few minutes afterward he added, "Diana, what shall we do all alone here for a whole month? We had better invite some friends. It will be dreadfully dull."

"We cannot invite people," she answered, "without proclaiming the fact that we find our society a bore."

"We need not mind that," he said, laughing lightly, "though it is perfectly true. One of my great puzzles in the matrimonial line has always been to guess what two people who were married talked about—how they could always find fresh matter for conversation."

"You have not solved the problem yet," she remarked, "although you have been—how many hours with me?"

"We have not stood still yet," he said; "besides, Diana, you are far above other girls in that respect. No one could be dull with you."

"Yet you are so afraid of our being alone that you want to fill the house with visitors."

"One likes a little variety," he answered, still laughing good-naturedly. "Diana, I see no sense in honeymoons, except so far as they test the temper of the husband and the patience of the wife."

"That is a novel idea," she said, scornfully.

"It is of no use looking like a tragedy queen, Diana. Answer me truly—do you not think the custom of honeymoons stupid and old-fashioned—altogether played out, indeed?"

"I shall be able to tell you better when I have had one," she replied. "There are circumstances in which I can imagine a honeymoon almost like a Paradise in its happiness, but there are also circumstances which would make it just the reverse."

"There is an insinuation of some kind hidden away in that little speech, Diana; but I cannot tell just what it is. If we are to spend the time pleasantly, you must amuse me. Suppose you begin now."

"I will tell you what I should like to do," said Diana, her eyes dilating with scorn. "I should like to rouse you, to stir your dormant faculties, and make you for once feel the energy, the activity, the ambition of a man."

"My beautiful Diana," he returned, carelessly, "you must admit one thing; I had the energy to win you, which is more than any other man in England could have achieved. You ought to reward me with one of your sweetest smiles for that."

"Do you ever read?" she asked, suddenly.

"Not if I can persuade any one else to read to me—always excepting the journals of my country, which occupy me for a couple of hours every morning."

"But," she persisted, "do you never read a book?"

"Very seldom; when I do, it is a French novel."

There was a short lull in the conversation, and then his lordship broke the silence.

"There is a capital billiard-room in the eastern wing," he said. "Do you play at all, Diana?"

"Sir Royal taught me," she replied; "I have often played with him."

The name almost choked her as it passed her lips, and her face paled. Oh, the contrast, the bitter, black contrast, between the past and the horrible life which lay before her.

Lord Clanronald began to whistle the air of a favorite song, his hands thrust deeply into his pockets, his manner one of stolid indifference. She turned to him almost in desperation.

"Have you no occupation, no interest, no aim in life?" she asked.

"Yes; just at present my occupation is admiring you. You must not be too exacting, Diana," he added, seriously. "I am not intellectual or clever. I enjoy life; that is all."

"Quite, my dear. My chief aim is to find out new enjoyments and new pleasures when I tire of the old."

"Have you never thought of anything higher, better, nobler—of the poor, the sick, and the sorrowful—of those dependent on you?"

"My agent manages all that for me," he replied, airily.

"But your agent cannot keep your conscience!" she cried.

"The office would not be a sinecure. But look, Diana; there are limits to all things. I did not bargain for catching as a portion of the pleasures of our honeymoon. Now make a proper honeymoon of it, Diana; throw your arms round my neck, and put your beautiful lips to some better purpose than lecturing me."

But she was still looking at him with thoughtful eyes.

"Ronald," she said, earnestly, "every man should live up to his highest ideal of true manhood, should he not?"

"I suppose so," was the careless reply.

"Is what you told me your highest?"

His face suddenly darkened.

"I have had enough, Diana," he said abruptly; "I want no more. I see no sense in talking about standards and ideals. Let a man go on his way straightforwardly; he need do no more."

With this exposition of the duties of man, he walked away, leaving her almost transfixed with wonder.

She could not understand that there should be a man whose only aim in life was to find new amusements. "Am I a new amusement?" she thought. "Diana," said Lord Clanronald, as they sat together at dinner, "I am really in love with you."

"I have never doubted it," she returned, with a quiet, queenly fashion that somewhat disconcerted him.

"I married you," he said, "because I was deeply in love with you and I thought you, as I believe you to be, one of the handsomest girls in England; but," he added, anxiously, "I hope you are not going to develop into a strong-minded woman, or a woman with ideas about rights and missions and all that kind of nonsense. I may as well tell you that it would be a horrible disappointment to me—in fact, I could not endure it."

"I cannot be anything but what I am," answered Diana. "No one has ever accused me of being strong-minded," and her thoughts went back to the happy years in which she had been so loved, so praised.

"I may say frankly that I hate preaching woman," said the lord of the household. "If we are to live peace-

fully and enjoy the happiness that is supposed to belong to the matrimonial state, you must check all that. I tell you candidly that I am quite satisfied with myself, and that I have no desire to change—not the least in the world."

"You are certainly quite a new specimen of manhood to me," retorted her ladyship, the disgust she felt very plainly revealed in her words.

"You knew what I was when you married me. If I was good enough for you then, I ought to be good enough now; and I may as well tell you at once that I have no intention of altering my habits of life to please you or anybody else."

There was one moral feat, however, that he did accomplish that evening—he kept sober. He resisted the attractions of "brandy and soda." When the butler brought it, he sent it away, and then felt as though he were the very embodiment of all the virtues.

"I will go into the drawing-room with you to-night," he said. "It must be rather dull for you to be alone."

"I am never dull when I have the society of a book," rejoined Diana quickly.

"Another shot at me! You will get tired of firing in time; I am positively armor-proof against such moral bullets. Now be amiable, Diana, and sing to me."

"That you may sleep!" she thought to herself bitterly.

Lord Clanronald accompanied his wife to the drawing-room, and, stretching himself upon a luxurious couch, waited patiently for Diana to charm him with music and song.

Her fingers wandered over the keys, and the first words that came to her were these:

"Once in the days of golden weather,
Days that were always fair,
Love was the world we walked to—
Oh, what a love was there—
Fresh as a fawn when rains are falling,
Pure as a child that prays—
Once in the days beyond recalling,
Once in the golden days!"

"Ah, but the days brought changes after,
Clouds in happier skies,
Care on the lips that curled with laughter,
Tears in the radiant eyes!
Parted sunder, worn with grieving,
Wearily each one prays,
Oh, what a love was there—
Fresh as a fawn when rains are falling,
Pure as a child that prays—
Once in the days beyond recalling,
Once in the golden days!"

CHAPTER XLIV.

Diana had been married a week, and she owned to herself frankly that life had no illusions left. She went into her dressing-room one morning when Susanna was arranging her wardrobe. Among other things, she saw the wedding-wreath she had worn on her marriage morn lying on the table ready to be packed away. She could hardly account for the impulse, and she was heartily ashamed of it afterward; but she took it in her hands and destroyed it, trampling the fragments under her feet. She then laughed the most bitter laugh that had ever passed her beautiful lips.

"I wish," she cried to herself, "that I could fling the ring from my finger as easily as I have destroyed that!"

She was wandering listlessly about the house, trying to get interested in it, trying to become acquainted with the various rooms and their uses. She endeavoured to feel some interest in what Towner, the butler, told her about the plate, and what the housekeeper said about the china and linen closets; but in her heart she could not. In vain the housekeeper threw open door after door; Diana scarcely glanced at the contents of the various closets that she was expected to admire.

"I should not think, my lady, that there is a finer collection of antique china in England than this," said the housekeeper. "Many of the lady visitors who come here admire it immensely."

"It is very nice," allowed Lady Clanronald, absently. To herself she said, "I wonder, if I had married a man whom I loved, whether I should have been interested in his china and glass?"

Presently she said she was tired, and would resume the task of inspection on the morrow.

(To be continued.)

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LANDED AT NEW YORK.
NEW YORK, Nov. 13.

Six members of the crew of the waterlogged British schooner Gigantic, abandoned 150 miles east of Cape Race November 9th arrived here today on the American steamer Craigmere. The Gigantic encountered a severe storm and her sails and rigging had been carried away when she was sighted by the steamer. The schooner crew were rescued with difficulty in a heavy sea. The Gigantic was bound from Lisbon to Harbor Buffett, Newfoundland. She registered 124 tons.

KOLCHAK RETREATS.

HONOLULU, Nov. 13.
The evacuation of Omsk by the anti-Bolshevik forces of Admiral Kolchak had been ordered, it was reported here today in cable advices received by the Nipponji, a Japanese daily newspaper. The cable added that Admiral Kolchak would establish his new seat of Government at Irkutsk.

TO CONSIDER RUSSIAN PROBLEM.

LONDON, Nov. 13.
Premier Lloyd George declared in the House of Commons that no person at any time on his behalf or with his knowledge had interviewed Bolshevik representatives in order to learn whether negotiations for peace might be opened and upon what terms. The Premier said it was proposed to call at an early date an International Conference at which Ministers of Allied and Associated Powers might consider various problems which the Peace Conference had found itself unable to settle, among which was the problem of Russia.

NEEDED AT HOME.

MONTREAL, Nov. 13.
To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Bank of Montreal a special bonus of 2 per cent. has been declared by the Royal Bank of Canada and will be paid on December 20th to shareholders of record at the close of business on Nov. 28. This will make a total distribution for the current year of fourteen per cent. Nov. 20th is the end of the Royal Bank year and it is understood the annual statement will be published next month which will show satisfactory results.

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