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ALL FOR LOVE.

CHAPTER XIX.
THE SECRET WILL.

"Well, I always knew that my father highly disapproved of Miss Crawford's will, and when I found this document yesterday, it occurred to me that, fearing that one or both of us might refuse to carry out Aunt Eliza's plans, he determined to settle some money on you to make up for what you would lose. Of course, this is all guesswork on my part; but I've heard him fume many a time over the wrong to you and your family, and it would be like him to try to fix it right," Philip explained. "Now open

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the mysterious document, and let us see if I have guessed rightly."

Beth broke the seal and brought forth a letter addressed to Miss Elizabeth Russell, and another paper also. She eagerly unfolded the letter, and together the young couple read the following:—

"My Dear Child: Your Aunt Eliza's will, the import of which she confided to me when she asked me to witness it, and made me one of its executors, was a heavy burden on my conscience for years. I begged her on several occasions to revoke it, and leave her money to her own kindred, to whom it rightly belonged, without imposing upon them any humiliating conditions. But she had set her heart upon marrying you to Philip, being determined to unite the houses of Russell and Walton, and turned a deaf ear to my appeals and arguments.

"During her last illness, however, she sent for me to come to her, and confessed that my opposition and displeasure had so harassed and unsettled her that she was at last ready to do as I wished, and right the wrong she had done, by making another will, and giving her whole fortune to you, provided I would keep the matter a profound secret until the question of a marriage between you and Philip, on or before your twenty-second birthday, was definitely settled; or in the event that either married another before that date, then this later will, which I inclose with this for you, should take effect.

"I was only too glad to make almost any promise to gain this point. Should you and my dear boy prove congenial, in later years, and voluntarily choose to marry each other, nothing would please me better, for your father and I have always been like brothers, while, from her babyhood up, I loved My Lady Beth as a dear daughter. But, whatever may occur on or before your twenty-second birthday, my heart is at rest in knowing that with this document in your possession you will be amply provided for. God bless you, dear, and give you only happiness in the years to come, either as the wife of my son or of some other good man.

"Affectionately yours,

"ARCHIBALD WALTON."

As they finished reading this letter, Beth lifted tear-filled eyes to her husband.

"This is his wedding gift to us, and his benediction as well, Philip," she said softly. "What a splendid man he was."

"That is true. He was generous, noble, and absolutely just in all his

relations with others," Philip gravely assented, then smilingly continued: "And let us give Aunt Eliza her due also. She proved at last that blood is thicker than water by bequeathing her money to you, where it rightly belonged."

"Oh, but it was your father who made her do it, and now—with a fond smile and glance—"you must have your share of it just as she first intended; for, even though we were a trifle late about it, we have really carried out her wishes."

Philip shot a look full of mischief at his wife. "Allow me to disagree with you, Mrs. Walton," he began in a mock-udicial tone, "for that first will was made absolutely null and void because of your obstinate refusal to become my wife at the proper time."

"Thus you have deliberately cheated me out of my share of that fortune."

But Beth flashed back at him with a quick retort: "You had your to manifest such disrespect to your bride on her wedding day! But I have certainly proved that we did not marry each other for the love of money. The deed is done, however; you have burdened yourself with a fortune as well as a wife. It is all yours for—I, with all I have, am yours."

"Bless you, my dearest," said Philip fondly; "but I should have been more than satisfied with things just as they were before we knew of the later will. The one possession I most desired, the precious legacy I most craved, was—My Lady Beth."

THE END.

Scene: Far out at sea; state-room on board a huge transatlantic liner, which is being tossed about like a cork in a tremendous sea.

The Bootlace King, a famous Yankee multi-millionaire (clinging despairingly to the sides of his bunk): "Steward! Steward!" "Yes, sir." "I understand this ship has water-tight compartments?" "Yes, sir." "Then tell the captain I must have one immediately. I don't care what it costs!"

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CHAPTER I.
BY OLD DEVICES.

"Oh, I say!" gasped Loys. "And what did he say when you went down the garden?" I ask, with my usual blunt straightforward way of getting at the truth. Was he waiting for you?"

"Of course. He had got over the wall, and was calmly leaning against the lime tree, just as if the whole place belonged to him; and when I came down the walk under the trees, he took off his hat and asked if I was angry with him for presuming to come here."

"And what did you say?" we ask, eagerly, determined to spare Theo nothing. All the same, she is very willing to tell everything, to the most minute details, so innocent and heart-whole is she.

"Say? Oh, I said I thought it was awfully bold and wicked, and might get him into great trouble. But he said that I had made him bold, and that, if it was wicked to come and see me, he liked wickedness."

Evidently, Mr. Arthur St. Clair knows the ways of love-making, and knows them well.

"And he told me," Theo's fresh, young voice goes on, "that he has known me ever so long, and watched us all playing at croquet. He knew my name, too, and all about me, and he said—oh, well, I can't tell you what he said; but—but he says he will love me as long as he lives!" Theo's voice dies away to a soft whisper, and she sits, as is her wont, gazing straight into the heart of the red, glowing fire.

Loys breaks the silence. "Then," she begins, hesitatingly, "did he—kiss you?" "I'm a year younger than Loys, and I laugh at the start Theo gives. "He kissed my hand," says she, softly; then holds it out in the fire-light, and looks at it lovingly.

Loys and I are speechless. This love-making is becoming absolutely thrilling.

"There is the bell," said Loys, regretfully. "Do brush your hair, and try to look excited, Theo. Your face is like a red moon."

As Theo rises from the floor, I see her press the hand Arthur St. Clair has kissed to her lips, but I don't tell Loys about it. Theo plunges her face into a basin of cold water, which has the effect of making it more rosy than before; and, when she has tidied her hair, we all scamper off to tea.

"How flushed you look, Theo!" says Miss Burleigh. "Have you been sitting too near the fire?"

"I don't think so," says Theo, flushing more hotly than ever, and putting up one hand to shield her face.

"You must keep quiet after tea," Miss Burleigh continues, "there is nothing more dangerous than a rush of blood to the head."

At this I began laughing, and Loys gives me an admonishing kick, which has the effect of making me worse.

All night Theo can think and talk of nothing else but her wonderful lover; and she continues in the same excited state until the free hour on the following day, when, once again she goes down the garden walk to meet him. The weeks glide by, and the story ends—as all such stories do end—in a little persuasion from the man, a promise from the girl, and a plan of flight. One night Theo comes in, and tells that matters have come to a climax, and that she has promised to elope with him.

If Loys and I were older, we should see the utter folly and madness and wickedness of the plan. There is no necessity for it. Our father was never an ogre that we, his children, need fear to tell him our dearest hopes and wishes. True, as Theo's lover urges, she is very young, and most probably he will insist on a year's delay—perhaps twice that period of

time; and, as he forcibly puts it, he loves her so dearly that he cannot live without her all that time. I say, if we were older, we should see the folly of our sister's determination; but, being as we are, mere children, we envy Theo immensely, and think an elopement a fine thing, and infinitely more romantic than a formal wedding, with half a dozen bridesmaids and good wishes from everybody, so we encourage her, and give her all the help we can in packing the small bag she intends to take with her; and, when all the preparations are made, we huddle together on the rug for a last long "talk" before she leaves us.

"Don't you feel very queer," says Loys at last, "as if it couldn't be true?"

"No," answers Theo, with a smile, "only very happy."

"Fancy, by this time next week you will be Mrs. Arthur St. Clair—a married woman!" say I.

"Ah—with a soft sigh—"I wish it was all over, safely over! To-morrow Arthur is going to tell me a secret, one that will surprise me very much, but happily, he says."

"Why didn't he tell you to-day?" I ask.

"Because he wants to tell me to-morrow, just before—we are married!"—with the slightest hesitation in her voice.

"How funny!" says Loys, thoughtfully. "Where are you going for your honeymoon?"

Theo starts guiltily. "I never once thought of it," she says, laughing brightly. "We never mentioned it, either of us."

"I would go to Paris, if I were you," remarks Loys.

"You always wanted me to go to Italy," I remind her.

"I shall go just where my husband chooses to take me," says Theo, with wifely dignity, mingled with submissive obedience, whereat Loys gives me a nudge expressive of intense enjoyment.

We have another long chat after we are in bed, and, just as I am falling asleep, I hear Loys' inquisitive tongue asking a final question:

"Theo, are you quite sure—perfectly certain, that is—that you care for him?"

I listen eagerly for the reply, and for a moment there is silence; then it comes through the darkness, soft as the break of day.

"I would die for him!" says Theo; "and I shall cease to love him when I die!"

Thoughtless, inquisitive children as we are, the answer silences us, and not another word is spoken, so that presently, I fall asleep.

(To Be Continued.)

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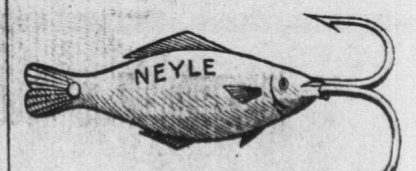
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