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**Mentholatum**  
A HEALING CREAM

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**LADY LAURA'S RELEASE**

**THE STORY OF A SPOILED BEAUTY.**

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Mamma," said Angel, "you are ill and feverish; your face is flushed again, and your eyes are too bright. Never mind them; do not look at them. Let me go home with you."

"Then do not let him know, Angel; the carriage can come back for him," said the unhappy woman.

They left the ball-room together; and, when they were in the carriage, Lady Laura wept as though her heart would break.

"Mother," Angela said, lovingly, "the matter is not worth all those tears; it is not indeed."

No daughter could have been more loving, more devoted than Angela. She sent Doris the maid away, saying she would wait upon her mother herself, for she did not care that the servant should witness her ladyship's bitter weeping. She laid the golden head on the white pillow, and sat by her mother's side until she had fallen asleep. Who could tell the love and pain in her heart as she did so? She heard her mother speaking in her sleep, and, bending over her, she caught the words, so full of pathos:

"Oh, Charlie, Charlie, I have had such a terrible dream!"

She drew back again, for she knew that in her dreams her mother's spirit had gone back to the kindly husband who had loved her so well, and who had never caused her one tear.

CHAPTER XXIV.

It was when the reality of her position forced itself upon her that Lady Laura turned to her daughter for love and sympathy. It was when she found her mother's happiness so completely wrecked that Angela devoted her whole time to her.

When Lady Laura came to town, and while she still retained her implicit faith in her husband's love, she looked quite ten years younger than she really was, being bright, blooming, and happy. Now she looked her age—and to a fashionable beauty that meant much. Quite suddenly the exquisite bloom faded, the light seemed to die from the blue eyes, and even the golden sheen of the hair was less bright. There was little wonder that it should be so, for she wept incessantly.

Her life was a martyrdom, and the captain had grown quite callous, quite regardless of all the pain his wife suffered. When she saw him going out in the morning, looking bright and handsome, full of health,

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strength, and vigor, she would hasten to him. She had a pretty evening's fashion of clasping her hands together and laying them on her husband's breast. At first he had professed to like the graceful action, and would kiss the white hands; now he barely endured it.

"Vance, where are you going?" she would ask; and he could read the anxiety in her pale anguished face.

His answers varied. At one time he would say that he was going to his club, at another that he had an engagement; but she suspected always that he was going to see Gladys Rane.

In like manner, when he returned, she would go to him in the same wistful, anxious tender fashion, and inquire:

"Where have you been, Vance?"

And he would tell her that he had been to his club or keeping an engagement. But, when he came home with a sweet, subtle odor of violets about him, and a flower more choice than usual in his button-hole, she knew that he had been to see Gladys Rane.

One morning she was in the drawing-room when he returned home after an absence of two hours. He looked so bright, so gallant, and handsome, that her very heart leaped with joy. She forgot for the moment all her jealousy and unhappiness and went up to him eagerly, love shining in her eyes and in her face.

"How well you look this morning, Vance!" she said, with a smile.

Then she detected the subtle odor of violets, and saw that he wore an exquisite moss-rosebud, so beautiful as to be a rarity, and she knew at once that he had been with Gladys Rane. Swiftness, with flashing anger, Lady Laura tore the flower from his breast and flung it away.

"You had that from Gladys Rane!" she cried. "You shall not come home to me wearing her flowers!"

The captain caught her wrist in an iron grasp.

"Never dare to do that again!" he shouted in angry tones.

A low cry of pain came from her white lips, and, recollecting himself the captain loosened his hold.

"I beg your pardon, Laura," he said in a quieter tone. "I did not mean to hurt you; but you—you annoyed me."

"It does not matter," she returned, the face that had flushed with anger now paling with pain. "But you shall not come straight from that woman's presence to mine."

"I am afraid I have hurt your wrist," he said awkwardly, for on the fair, white skin he saw a livid bruise, the mark of the strong, cruel hand that had shown little mercy in its grasp.

He tried to examine it; but she shrank back from him, pale and scared.

"I believe," she gasped, "that you would kill me for the sake of Gladys Rane."

And in his evil heart he knew the words were true; but he merely said:

"I am sorry if I have hurt you, Laura."

Her laugh was not pleasant to hear.

"It does not matter," she repeated. Then she held up the shapely white wrist, with its disfiguring mark. "Look!" she cried. "It was a cruel grasp, hard as iron; but it is as nothing to the hard grasp in which you hold the heart that loves you."

But her words failed to touch him. His dislike to her was increased from her having betrayed him into a cowardly, unmanly action.

"I wish, Laura, that you would be more reasonable," he said. "These scenes are unendurable."

"Put an end to them," she retorted, promptly, "by ceasing to visit Gladys Rane."

"I should not do that, my dear, if they were twice as bad," he declared. "You talk of jealousy as a pain."

Laura; I call it madness."

"Yes," she answered, with a dreamy look in her face. "It is madness, Vance." Then, after a pause, she asked suddenly, "Could I make you jealous of me?"

"I think not," he answered—"nay I am quite sure."

"I wish I could," she continued. "I should like you to feel the pain, the fever, the despair, just once; you would never be so cruel to me again. But you could not be jealous of me, for one must love deeply to be jealous. Still I must ask you one question—Do you not think it needless cruelty to come straight into my presence from hers wearing the very flower that she has given you? Let me place a flower in your coat, Vance."

"What nonsense!" he cried. "I have no patience left. Of all intolerable things upon earth, a jealous woman is the worst!" And the captain strode from the room, banging the door behind him with no gentle hand.

"I would rather never enter the house again than have to submit to such scenes!" he said to himself, as he walked towards his club; and he muttered something between his teeth as he thought of the black bruise on the white, rounded wrist.

Lady Laura stood looking at it long after he had gone. If she retained any faint hope that her husband loved her, or even cared for her, it vanished when she glanced at that cruel mark.

"He would have broken my arm," she said, "to have saved Gladys Rane's flower."

On the carpet, where she had flung it, lay the moss-rosebud. It seemed to her like a living thing—a snake, the venomous fangs of which had already inflicted a wound. Gentle as was Lady Laura by nature, she went to the innocent cause of her present grief and crushed it with her heel.

"She has crushed my heart in the same fashion!" she said, bitterly, as she looked with fierce anger on the trampled flower.

It was seldom that the family sat down to luncheon alone; but on this day no visitors were present, and the first thing that struck Angela was the broad black ribbon bound round her mother's wrist. Never suspecting what it meant, she asked, suddenly, before the servants who were waiting at the table:

"Mamma, what have you done to your wrist?"

There was a moment's awkward silence. The captain's handsome face flushed, and Lady Laura grew pale.

"I hurt it badly this morning, Angel," she answered, at last. "I struck it and bruised it."

"Why did you not send for me?" asked Angela, reproachfully.

"I did not think much of it at the time, dear, and my maid bound it nicely for me."

But that evening, when it was time to dress for Mrs. Hardcastle's reception, Lady Laura found her arm so swollen and painful as to render it impossible for her to go out, and Angela became curious about the injury. When she spoke of it to Doris, the maid, the girl could tell her nothing, although she had her own opinion. She was not in the least deceived by her mistress' story, for the mark of those cruel fingers were plainly visible, and she guessed pretty accurately as to the cause; but she said nothing to Miss Rooden.

(To be continued.)



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**Fashion Plates**

The Home Dressmaker should have a Catalogue Scrap Book of our best Fashion Plates. These will be found useful to refer to from time to time.



A PRETTY HOUSE OR PARTY DRESS

4270. Checked gingham in blue and white is here illustrated. Trimmed with white pique. Pique voile or percale will also be good in this model. Taffeta or tulle would be very pleasing, with stitching or embroidery for trimming.  
The Pattern is cut in 6 Sizes: 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, and 46 inches bust measure. A 38 inch size requires 3 1/2 yards of 32 inch material, 4 1/2 yards of the skirt at the foot 1/2 yard. To trim as illustrated requires 3/4 yard of 36 inch material. Pattern mailed to any address on receipt of 10c in silver or stamps.

A SLEEVELESS COVER APRON



4699. Unbleached muslin cross stitching in red or blue will be nice for this serviceable model. One may use gingham, percale, or drill. Satens or chintz is also desirable.  
The Pattern is cut in 4 Sizes: Small, 34-36; Medium, 38-40; Large, 42-44; Extra Large, 46-48 bust measure. A Medium size requires 3 1/2 yards of 32 inch material. Pattern mailed to any address on receipt of 10c in silver or stamps.

Household Notes.  
Nut loaf is nice served hot with lemon sauce.  
The handiest kind of broom opens up one side.  
Lint can be removed from clothing with a dry sponge.  
Baked bananas make a nice garnish for roast beef.  
Boiled chestnuts and dried apples make a delicious salad.  
To clean porcelain rub stains with crushed paper and kerosene.  
If cornstarch is used in a sauce, should be served immediately.  
Only the crumbs of the loaf should be used in making plum pudding.  
Cubes of stale bread can be used in well-seasoned stewed tomatoes.  
Fish omelet should be served on border of hot, dried, bifured toast.  
Mints are delicious if dipped first in butterscotch and then in chocolate.

**Sydney**

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