



"Flowers of the Valley,"

MABEL HOWARD,
OF THE LYRIC.

CHAPTER III.
"No," said the squirrel, still eyeing her nervously. "He came to speak about you, Irish."

"About me?" she said, with her pen-sive smile. "Really? What could he have to say about me?"

"Iris, he wants you to be his wife," he said, after a pause.

Her cheeks flushed slightly, then her brows contracted, with a faint copy of his own frown. "And what did you say, father?"

"What should I have said, Iris?" he replied.

She looked at him for a moment, then went to the window, and looking out, dropped one word from her lips. "No!"

Godfrey Knighton drew a breath of relief.

"Are you sure?" he said.

"I sure!" she echoed, still with her face turned from him. "Yes, I am quite sure!"

"Think!" he said. "He is a peer; of good birth on his mother's side; he is rich, honest, young!"

"Please!" she murmured. "He is all you say, father, and more, and I like him very much; but I do not want to marry him. I do not want to marry any one," she added, quickly.

The squirrel's face cleared, and grew as cheerful as it was possible for it to grow.

"You are right," he said. "It was what I told Montacute! You are young—too young! There is plenty of time, is there not?"

"Ages! Centuries!" she murmured. "He rose, and, going to her, put his arms round her and kissed her brow, still with the same air of relief.

"You are a good girl, Iris," he said, slowly and gravely. "You have said just what I wished. Lord Montacute is a capital fellow, every way desirable, and if I wanted a husband for you I couldn't choose a better, but," he added, quickly, the frown returning. "I do not. I said to him, wait."

"Why should you have said that, father? It would be of no use his waiting, no use!"

He looked at her with a swift anxiety.

"Why do you speak so certainly? There is no one else, Irish?"

As he spoke there rose all unbidden the vision of the young man kneeling beside the stream—albeit unbidden and all unwelcome. With a flush of annoyance that she should think of him at that moment, she answered quickly: "No; no one else! Whom should there be father?"

He sighed and nodded.

"Whom, indeed?" he said. "Then that is all right. You have removed a weight from my mind, Irish; a weight

that has been crushing it—" he stopped suddenly, as if regretting what he had said, and moved to the table. "Go now, dear, I have some letters to write."

She went and touched his forehead with her lips as he had touched hers, and left the room.

Her own apartments were in the south wing and consisted of boudoir, dressing-room and bedroom. Godfrey Knighton's habits and wants were as simple as the late Duke of Wellington's, and his own rooms almost as bare as those of the Iron Warrior's; but for Iris nothing could be too good. The walls were lined with fluted satin of a dark maroon, upon which the few pictures, gems of water colors, rested like gems indeed. A semi-grand Broadway stood in an angle of the wall, and some choice exotics upon one of the tables. There was a Chippendale bookcase with some standard works in fine bindings, and an easel upon which stood a half-finished head.

Beside a small table sat a woman of middle age, and of that peculiar swarthy which proclaims the peasant of the south. This was Iris's maid. Her name was Felice, and she had come over from Italy with Mr. Knighton and his daughter.

She was a strange woman, and, unlike most of her countrywomen, remarkably quiet and reserved. On Iris she bestowed a devotion and passionate love of which it is said only an Italian peasant is capable. She had been a member of the household so long, and in such an intimate connection with the young mistress of the house, that she was considered as something superior to the other servants, and spent most of her time in Iris's room, to which her own bedroom adjoined.

She looked up quickly as Iris entered, and her dark eyes seemed to run all over her like a flash of lightning, then hid themselves behind lashes almost as long and quite as dark as Iris's own.

"Well, Felice," she said, dropping into a chair, "still at work? Why don't you go out this lovely day?"

The woman shrugged her shoulders. "I am happy enough indoors, signorina," she said, in the musical Tuscan tone. "I am never so happy as when I am at work for the signorina. Are you tired?" she asked suddenly, fixing her eyes on Iris's face.

Iris started, and laughed softly. "Not in the least. I was only thinking, Felice," she said. "I'll take off my habit now, please," and she stood up.

Felice, with skillful hands, that seemed scarcely to touch her, deftly they worked, slipped off the habit. As she did so she touched the rent with her finger.

"The signorina has torn her finger," "Yes," said Iris, looking at the slit in the skirt pensively.

"Been jumping again?" said Felice, in an accent almost of reproach.

Iris laughed.

"No, I have not, Felice. Didn't I promise my father and you that I wouldn't jump when I was alone, and do you think I don't keep my promises?"

"How did you do it, then?" asked the woman, fingering the rent with the tips of her fingers, and glancing from it to the beautiful girl. "No stood looking out of the window abstractedly. It was not caught a gate? No! There is no mud—signorina has not fallen, so! How come?"

"You would never say if you tried for a month, Felice," said Iris, a soft smile creeping over her lips, "and as I don't mean to tell you, you need not ask any more questions."

The woman did not express the slightest sign of impatience either by word or deed, but calmly laid the habit aside, and went on with her mistress's toilet as if the incident had not occurred.

In a noiseless fashion that was not without peculiar grace, she brushed the long, dark hair and bound it up in a coil, and wrapped her mistress in a long tea-gown of rose silk and lace. Iris sat back in her chair, her eyes downcast, a pensive look in her face, softened by a half smile.

She was going over every word that had passed between her and the young fellow of the "bull fight"; recalling, almost unconsciously, his every look and attitude. How she had deceived him about Miss Knighton—about herself.

Would he make inquiries and find out his mistake? she wondered, and, if so, what would be his opinion of her? Suddenly she looked up, and saw the dark eyes of Felice fixed upon her in the glass. "They were lowered instantly; but the look drew Iris's thoughts from the young man to herself.

"Felice?" she said.

"Miss Iris," said Felice, addressing her in the English fashion, as she always did when she remembered to do so.

"How long have you been with us?—a long while, isn't it?"

The woman's face suddenly grew as immobile as one of the statues in her own home.

"A long while?—yes."

"Ever since I was a baby?" said Iris, thoughtfully.

"Ever since the signorina was a baby," answered Felice, as calmly as a statue might have spoken.

"I was born in Italy, wasn't I?"

"Of a certainty, yes."

"Do you remember—my mother?" said Iris, her voice growing low and sad.



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There was an instant's pause—it was scarcely hesitation—before the woman replied.

"No Miss Iris; the signorina lived before I came as Miss Iris's nurse."

Iris drew a long sigh.

"How I wish I could remember her!" she said, more to herself than to the woman. "It is so strange, so sad, not to have known her, even ever so little! Felice, you saw her? You knew her?"

"Yes," replied the woman. "I saw the signorina once."

"What was she like? Tell me!" said Iris, quickly, eagerly.

"She was beautiful as— If the signorina will look in the glass, she will see how beautiful!" said Felice.

Iris sighed. The compliment had not raised a blush, for she was used to Felice's outspoken admiration.

"And that is all you know of her?" she said. "I ask you, Felice, because my father—she paused—"my father has never told me, and I do not like to ask him, or to speak of her to him."

"That is wise," said Felice, quietly but promptly. "Mr. Knighton does not like to recall what he has lost! It would only wound him to speak of the dead signorina. The signorina is quite right not to speak her name to him."

"And I am half Italian?" said Iris, musingly. "How strange! And I feel so thoroughly English! Am I not quite English, Felice? Can Italian women ride, and drive, and swim, and row as I do? Am I not quite different in every way? Tell me!"

"Miss Iris is quite different—all most!" came the answer.

(To be continued.)

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fishing grounds they take aboard about twelve tons of ice and eighty tons of coal.

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After towing the trawl for four hours the skipper gives orders to haul. This is done by means of a winch until the top of the net appears by the gunwale of the vessel.

Cleaning the Fish.
The crew of nine men then take hold and proceed to haul it in by hand until the cod-end appears within reach. The cod-end is that part of the trawl into which all the fish are drawn when the trawl is hauled.

This cod-end is then lifted aboard by means of an arrangement called the "Jilson," which is fastened to the foremast. The fish having been emptied out on the foredeck of the trawler, the gear is again shot away. And all hands turn to the task of gutting and icing down.

Standing in the fish pound forward, the fisherman grasps a fish in his hand, and, holding it by the head, gives it a sudden stab in the throat. He next rips it up, at the same time giving his knife a slight twist sideways, and cutting away all the entrails. The fish, after being well washed, are then handed down into the fish room, and there laid in layers of ice.

Sold by the Heap.
Upon reaching port at the end of the trip the fish are immediately landed, the start sometimes being made at about 4 a.m.

For sale the fish are either placed in scores or in levels. A score, curiously enough, being anything from twenty to one hundred fish. A level is, roughly, five stone in weight.

The smaller variety of fish, such as haddock, plaice, soles, dabs, and mackerel are made up into levels. The larger, such as cod, hake, ling, and conger eels are made up into scores.

Turbots and halibuts are sold singly, being computed by weight. Fish for which there is no great demand is sold by the heap.

The sale of the fish starts at 8 a.m. and on that sale depends the wages of the crew. Each trawler is supposedly divided into fourteen shares, of which the owner takes eleven shares, the skipper, one and three-eighths, and the mate one and one-eighth shares. The owner pays the wages of the crew, but the skipper and mate share in all other expenses in proportion to their shares.

The crew, with the exception of the skipper and mate, each receive a wage of one pound to every one hundred pounds gross that a trawler makes.—Tit-Bits.

Chinese Breach of Promise.

It takes China to produce a breach of promise case which begins with the man asking to be released from his engagement on the ground that the lady kidnapped him into it. Such a case has opened at Shanghai in the Mixed Court. The couple are of the modern Young China order, who insist on arranging their own marriages without the interference of the old style marriage broker.

The young man, Seng Cheng Koh, is a mining engineer. The lady, Miss Dun Jui Chi, is a schoolmistress, who, having graduated in China, went to Scotland, and thence to the London School of Economics, where she studied international law and political science. She is aged 24, and is a small, but apparently of determined character.

Seng came before the Court asking for the cancellation of his marriage contract and other documents, which he alleges to have been obtained from him under duress. He says that while he was working at Nanjing two brothers, hired by Miss Dun, kidnapped him to Shanghai where he was kept a prisoner until he consented to sign the following document: "Seng Cheng Koh and Dun Jui Chi have offered their hands to each other in cultured wedlock, and will not be enslaved by the harmful customs of the old society. They will in perpetuity preserve their exclusive and undivided affection towards the other, and under no pretext will the married life of the contracting parties be affected by the admission of a concubine."

Miss Dun avers that in the strength of Seng's promise of marriage she advanced him £400, and herself spent £600 in furnishing a house in Shanghai. Furthermore, that she refused a lucrative school appointment at Java. Her total claim, therefore, is for £5,500, loans and expenses incurred, and £1,000 damages for breach of promise.

A Town Where Honesty Prevails.

Diamantina, a mining town in Brazil, is believed to be the most honest spot in the world. If ever a native of the town has stolen a diamond, even as a boy, he is black-balled in the community all the rest of his life. It is a long way to anywhere else, even since the advent of the railroad, so that the thieving of the town's chief product is extremely rare.

Men from far off up-country often come in with thousands of dollars' worth of diamonds or black carbons on a pack mule, which legs far behind with its negro driver, and though everyone along the way knows what it carries, for decades no negro has run

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away, nor has any one "framed" a hold-up.

Gold and precious stones are handled in the town with a casual carelessness equaled only by the Bankers of England. A local jewellery shop, famous in the trade the world over, looks like a miserable little tinkers' den, where a dozen men and boys, all with more or less African blood, work at dirty, worn benches. About them is a wilderness of junk, where cigarette butts, gold nuggets, iron tools, gold wire, and worthless odds and ends lie jumbled together with diamonds of all sizes, cut and uncut.

Old tin tobacco boxes, with fortunes in diamonds, lie loose among them, and precious stones wrapped in dirty bits of paper can scarcely be distinguished from the dusty rubbish on the tables. A tiny show window, recently put in as a concession to modern ideas, has a 6-carat diamond stuck against the glass, with several smaller ones about it, day and night; a tin can that originally held soap, but is now full of emeralds, amethysts, topazes and the half dozen other precious stones found in the region, was lying about the floor.

Yet, there was no sign of lock or key except those used to fasten the

outer door at night; the owner came only off and on during the day; and amid this disordered jumble of wealth his dozen workmen and boys toiled from 7 in the morning until sometimes 8 at night at ludicrous wages without a loss ever having been reported.

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