

For Love of a Woman; OR, New Romeo and Juliet.

CHAPTER XVIII.
FASHIONING THE WEB.

"I will do everything you wish, my dear young lady," he murmured. "I fear I have wearied you. Leave it all to me."

And with a softly-murmured "Heaven bless you!" he left her.

Two days later, Mrs. Jelf brought Doris a letter. The envelope bore an elaborate crest, stamped in crimson and gold, and as she opened it a faint perfume emanated from it.

It was from Lady Despard, who wrote in the delightfully illegible hand, all points and angles, known as "the Italian"—that her dear friend, the well-known philanthropist, Mr. Spenser Churchill, had recommended Miss Marlowe to Lady Despard, and, placing the greatest reliance upon Mr. Churchill, her ladyship would be very pleased if Miss Marlowe would come to her at No. 12 Chester Gardens, as soon as Miss Marlowe could find it convenient. Lady Despard added that she was certain, from all Mr. Churchill had said, she and Miss Marlowe would get on together, and that she intended starting for Italy as soon as possible.

Doris read and re-read the elegant epistle, vainly striving, as we all do, to form some idea of the character of the unknown writer; then she sat down and wrote an answer, saying that she would come to Chester Gardens the following day.

Now that she had recovered from the lethargy which had closely followed her great trouble, she was filled with a restless desire to get away from home and its painful association. She at once set to work at the preparations for her journey, and it was not until she had packed up her things that it occurred to her that she could not go until she had bidden farewell to Mr. Spenser Churchill.

Doris's feeling towards that gentleman was a peculiar one. He had befriended her when she had been most in need of a friend; had shown an amount of consideration and delicacy to her, a stranger, which, when she pondered over it, amazed her; and she was grateful. But she had not forgotten the dead man's warning, and it still haunted her, although Spenser Churchill had so cleverly managed to allay her suspicions by his frank confession that, in the quarrel between him and Jeffrey, he had been in the wrong. And yet, though her suspicions were allayed, she was conscious of a strange feeling of disquietude while in his presence; a feeling that was neither quite dread nor doubt, but partook of both sentiments.

Still, he had been most kind, and her gratitude would not allow her to go without seeing him again.

After a good deal of reflection, she wrote a couple of lines to him telling him that she had arranged to start on the morrow, and asking him to call and see her; and she sent it by a lad in the Towers.

An hour or two later Mr. Spenser Churchill arrived.

MOTHERS TO BE

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Mrs. PEARL MONAHAN, Mitchell, Ind.

Good health during maternity is a most important factor to both mother and child, and many letters have been received by the Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass., telling of health restored during the trying period by the use of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"I am glad, very glad, my dear young lady," he said, pressing the hand which she gave him, "that you have resolved to seek change of scene so promptly. You will find dear Lady Despard a most charming and amiable lady, who will prove a—er—valuable friend; and I hope—I may say I am sure—that you will be happy. You must let me have the pleasure of seeing you off by the train to-morrow."

Doris shook her head gently but firmly.

"I could not let you take so much trouble," she said. "I am leaving quite early in the morning, and—"

He nodded.

"Well, well, I understand. That shall be as you wish. And is there anything I can do now? Your luggage—"

"It is all ready," said Doris. "I am quite prepared."

"Then nothing remains for me to do but to hand over to you the money I hold for you," he said, and he took out and counted some bank-notes.

Doris coloured.

"I have been thinking," she said, "that I would ask to be so good as to take charge of some of it for me. It seems so large a sum—I have never been used to having large sums of money," her eyes filled as she spoke. "I am ashamed to cause you any further trouble, but if you will take charge of some of it for me, if you will give me twenty pounds, and keep the rest in case I should want it, I shall be very grateful. You will be adding to all my past kindness to me."

"Yes, yes, I see. I shall be very happy," he said, benevolently. "Twenty pounds; that will leave eighty. And when you want it you can write to me. Perhaps when you come to know Lady Despard you will like her to act as your banker. By the way, I don't think we said anything about the remuneration?"

"No," said Doris. "I did not think of it."

"You left it all to me. Quite right. Well, I hope you will think I have done the best I could. Lady Despard

and I have agreed upon a hundred pounds a year."

"That is a great deal, I suppose," said Doris, simply. "It is more than enough, and once more I thank you."

"It is not more than enough, not half enough in return for so sweet and charming a companion; but, my dear young lady, we must be content," he said. "And now, is there anything else?"

Doris replied in the negative; then suddenly her face crimsoned.

"There is one thing more," she said, in a low voice. "Can you tell me Lord Neville's address in Ireland?"

Her voice faltered, but her clear, pure eyes met his steadily. He showed not the faintest surprise, but seemed to think for a moment or two.

"I am sorry to say I cannot," he said. "Did you want to write to him?"

"Yes," she said. "I wish I could tell you—"

Her voice broke.

He raised his hand with a soft, deprecating smile.

"My dear young lady, tell me nothing more than you wish. I am—he laid his hand upon his heart—"I beg you to believe—I am not curious. Why should you not write to Lord Neville, if you choose, or to any other person? I presume you know him?"

"Yes, I know him," she said, turning her head aside.

"Just so," she said, turning her head aside.

"Just so," he assented, smoothly. "And you wish to tell him where you are going? Is it not so?"

"No!" said Doris, suddenly, and turning pale. "I do not wish him to know—ah! I cannot tell you—you would not understand."

"You shall tell me nothing," he said, waving his hand. "I am sorry I can't give you his address. But I will tell you what we can do," he added, as if an idea had occurred to him. "You can write to him and entrust the letter to me; I will see that it is forwarded—indeed, I will get the address from the Marquis and forwarded it to-night."

"Thank you," said Doris, in a low voice, and she went to the table.

Mr. Spenser Churchill, with true delicacy, slipped out, and had a few minutes' chat with Mrs. Jelf, who was reduced to tears at the prospect of losing her young charge.

When he came back, Doris was standing with a note in her hand.

"There it is," she said. "I—she paused for a second, then went on firmly—"if Lord Neville should ask you where I am gone, will you promise not to tell him, please? No one knows but yourself, and I do not wish him to be told."

He inclined his head as he took the note, and with a great show of carefulness, put it in his pocket-book.

"My lips are sealed, my dear young lady. Whatever your reasons may be—and please understand that I do not seek to know them—your request shall be considered sacred by me. Lord Neville shall never learn your whereabouts from me!"

And it is only fair to say that, for once, Mr. Spenser Churchill spoke the truth!

A subdued and placid smile beamed on his benevolent countenance when, having taken leave of Doris, he made his way across the meadows to the Towers; and the smile grew more placid and self-complacent when, having reached his own rooms, he took the note from his pocket, and rang for a jug of hot water.

"Let it be quite hot, if you please," he said to the chamber-maid, and the girl brought it almost boiling.

Then he locked the door, and, holding the envelope over the steam until it had become unglued, he drew out the note and read it.

"I was right and you were wrong. It would have been better if we had never met, and I hope that we may never meet again. If we should do so it must be as strangers. No one shall ever learn from me that we have ever been anything else."

DORIS MARLOWE.

He pondered over these few lines, word by word, for some minutes, then, with a satisfied nod, re-enclosed the note in its envelope, and neatly re-fastened it.

"I don't think anyone, however sharp and critical his sight, would detect that her little note had been opened," he murmured. "The gum had scarcely dried. Yes, that will do very well. Admirably. In fact, there is no need for me to add a word. But; all the same, my dear young lady, we will not send it to Cecil Neville just yet. No, No; it would be so sudden a

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shock. No, really, in common charity, we must give him some slight preparation."

Then he took from his pocket four letters, and, with a soft smile of enjoyment, read them over.

They were in Lord Cecil's anything but elegant handwriting and were addressed to Miss Marlowe at the lodgings, and had kindly been taken charge of by Mr. Spenser Churchill!

"Youth, rash youth! How frantically he writes! Dear me, I am very glad Providence permitted me to keep them from the dear young thing's sight; they would have unsettled her so sadly. Quite elegant they are! I had no idea Master Cecil had such a ready pen. I am afraid you are spending anything but a pleasant time over there waiting for the answer to these epistles, the answer which will rather surprise you when you get it. What will you do when you find the bird has flown, I wonder? Be as mad as a March hare for a few days, and then—"

He shrugged his shoulders, and with a laugh struck a match and made a bonfire of the intercepted letters, and watched them until all that remained of their imploring eloquence was a little heap of ashes in the empty grate.

In such excellent spirits was Mr. Spenser Churchill, so full of the peace which flows from the possession of a good conscience, that, as he entered the drawing-room a few minutes before dinner that evening, he hummed a few bars from the "Lost Chord," that cheerful melody being the nearest approach to profane music which he permitted himself; and, going up to the sofa upon which Lady Grace was reclining, raised her white hand to his lips and kissed it with playfully solemn gallantry.

(To be Continued.)

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