

Ruled BY Destiny!

CHAPTER II. LADY PENDLETON'S COMPANION.

MRS. CARLISLE uttered an exclamation of dismay, and began to wring her hands.

The lawyer stared and blinked with his small eyes at the tall, slim figure and proud, beautiful face, as if he were on the verge of a fit.

"Good gracious!" he gasped, at last. "Do you mean to say that—really, Mrs. Carlisle, I appeal to you," and he held out the sheet of newspaper almost dramatically.

"My mother agrees with me, sir, that this offer of Lord Norman's must be declined. We have no claim upon his generosity. We are not his relations—we are not even his friends. We have been the foes of his family for years. This suit, which has impoverished and ruined us, has cost him thousands of pounds. He has won it, he has proved to be in the right and we in the wrong, so that for all these years the Carlisles have done him great and lasting injury. And in return he offers us—five thousand pounds!"

Her face was crimson now, the gray eyes flashing, the red lips apart with wounded pride and resentment.

"What right has he to humiliate us?" and her hand closed tightly on the back of her mother's chair.

The lawyer, poor fellow, quite unable to understand the fine feeling which prompted the refusal from the proud and haughty nature of the girl, stared and gasped, and exclaimed, "Good gracious!" again, helplessly.

"Then—then this is your answer," Mrs. Carlisle?" he said.

"Yes, Floris, my daughter, knows what is best. Lord Norman is very kind, he meant kindly, and—and I thought for the moment that we—"

"For Heaven's sake, ma'am," interjected the lawyer, abruptly, almost pleadingly, "don't throw away five thousand pounds for the sake of a little pride! Put it in your pocket, Mrs. Carlisle—your pride, I mean, and save the money!"

Mrs. Carlisle hesitated, and looked up at Floris, then stighed, for the girl's face was inflexible.

"No other answer is possible than that I have given you," said Floris, quietly.

He got his hat, and looked from one to the other.

"See here, ma'am," he said, "I shall take the liberty of retaining Miss Carlisle's note for twenty-four hours, in case—"

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case—I say in case—you should change your minds, which I hope to goodness you will. If I don't hear from you by this time to-morrow I will hand your answer to Lord Norman. But I trust that I shall hear. Good-night, Mrs. Carlisle; good-night, Miss Carlisle."

There was a silence for a moment after the door had closed upon him, then Mrs. Carlisle, who had been shedding a weak tear or two, shook her head dolefully and wailed:

"What is to be done, Floris? We must go into London lodgings, and—live on cold mutton and bad sherry."

Floris laughed softly, if a little sadly.

"The mutton need not be always cold, mamma, and as to the sherry, you never drink it, and I hate it. And I don't think we need go into lodgings in London, dear. I think we can stay here still—that is, you can," she added, softly. "This afternoon I was sitting on the lawn with Lady Burton, when she suddenly began to talk of her sister, Lady Pendleton. She had had a letter from her this morning, asking her if she knew of a young lady who would be likely to suit her as a companion. I have thought—of a young lady who might, perhaps, serve in place of the angel Lady Pendleton is looking for. It is a young lady of the name of Floris Carlisle."

Mrs. Carlisle stared down at her with feeble astonishment.

"You, Floris!"

"Yes, I. Why not, mamma? Think of it! Ninety pounds a year and—and a home—!" Her voice broke, and Mrs. Carlisle began to cry instantly. "No, no, mamma, we will not cry, either of us."

She rose as she spoke and went to the table.

"I don't know what made me do it, but I asked for Lady Pendleton's address, and copied it in my memorandum book. Fifty-nine Grosvenor place. That sounds very grand, mamma!"

She stopped the thin stream of bewailing and bemoaning which Mrs. Carlisle began to pour out, with a kiss, and then went back to the table and wrote a short note.

"There, mamma! I have told Lady

Pendleton that I am musical, cheerful, that I love reading the newspapers better than anything else on earth, and as for my looks," she laughed carelessly, "though not beautiful, children do not, as a rule, fly at my approach, and that I have not a positive cast in my eye! Beyond that, she must judge for herself."

She came back with the note in her hand, and threw her arms around the weak-natured mother and kissed her, and as there was no glass, Mrs. Carlisle did not see the unshed tears that filled the glorious gray eyes of the girl who was too proud to accept five thousand pounds but not too proud to go out and work as a servant!

A week later, when the newspapers had about grown tired of referring to the great Norman versus Carlisle case, Floris stood in the hall of fifty-nine Grosvenor place.

"Lady Pendleton? Yes, miss," said the huge footman, with the deepest respect, after a glance at the beautiful face, with the obvious air of good breeding. "Yes, miss, her ladyship's at home."

Floris took out her cardcase, but suddenly remembering that lady companions should not carry visiting cards, said:

"Please say that Miss Carlisle has come."

The footman looked rather surprised, but his respect, for a marvel, did not vanish, and he showed Floris into an immense drawing-room, quite civilly.

Floris was trying to form conjecture as to the kind of woman the mistress might be, when the footman returned.

"Her ladyship will be obliged if you will go up to her room, miss," he said.

Floris followed him up a flight of broad stairs, along a short corridor, and entered Lady Pendleton's boudoir.

As she did so, a little woman, beautifully dressed, rose from a chair surrounded by a batch of dress materials, and came toward her.

"Is that you, Miss Carlisle? How do you do?" she exclaimed in a quiet, alert, but musical voice, very much what a blunet's would be if it could speak in the human tongue. "How kind of you to come so soon."

By this time she had reached Floris, who stood with her face to the window, and stopped short, with a stare of open-eyed wonder and delight that would have been amusing if it had not been rather startling.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "Why, they never told me—"

Then she stopped again, and peered up at Floris, with her little head on one side, and laughed chirpingly.

"My dear, how ridiculously, how absurdly beautiful you are!"

Floris strove hard not to blush at this sudden and knock-down compliment, but the crimson flooded her sweet face.

"Oh! I beg your pardon! That's just me! Offend you the moment you come into the house. But you mustn't mind me, dear; it's my way. Have you had any lunch?" she broke off, her head on one side, her bright, birdlike eyes fixed on Floris' rather bewildered face.

"Yes, thank you, Lady Pendleton," she said.

"You shall have a glass of wine. I'll ring for it! No! Then come and take your things off!"

"But," Floris said, "are you sure that I shall suit? I mean—"

"Oh, don't say that you won't stay!" Lady Pendleton exclaimed, pathetically. "Of course, you'll suit! I knew that the moment I saw you. I didn't catch your name. What was it, anyhow, my dear?"

"My name? Carlisle—Floris Carlisle."

"Floris! What a pretty name! I wish they had given me a name like that instead of Elizabeth Carlisle! There was a Devonshire Carlisle I used to know—a very great man. Any relation?"

"Yes," said Floris, gently. "We are Devonshire people."

"Really! How charming! Quite a coincidence, as Bruce would say. I hope you'll like Bruce, my dear. Most people do. Poor Bruce. They say the old gentleman himself is not half so bad as he's painted, and I am sure Bruce is not. He's Sir Edward's cousin, you know."

your things off. You look tired. It is my chatter. Sir Edward says I could talk the hind leg of a horse off; but that's his rudeness. I'm sure he talks enough in the house. Come along, my dear, I'll show you your rooms. I hope you won't be dull! I'm glad we've got a dinner party to-night. It will be more cheerful for you; and I'm glad Bruce is coming. But mind—holding up a tiny forefinger—"no falling in love with Lord Bruce!"

Floris laughed softly.

"Very well, Lady Pendleton, I will not fall in love with Lord Bruce!"

Fateful words!

CHAPTER III. AN EXTRAORDINARY STORY.

FLORIS found herself in a small but luxuriously-furnished room, which had evidently been prepared for her use, there being a writing table and bookcase, and a comfortable sofa in addition to the usual furniture of a bedroom. In fact, the apartment was half a sitting-room.

Lady Pendleton followed her in and looked round questioningly.

"I do hope you will be comfortable!" she said, earnestly. "I know you ought to have a sitting-room of your own, but the house is so small—I mean for suites of rooms."

"Oh, indeed, this is very nice and comfortable," said Floris.

"Well, my dear," said Lady Pendleton, looking over her shoulder. "You will want to rest, I dare say. You'll hear the dressing-bell."

"Lady Pendleton," said Floris, with a sudden flush, "I think you said that you have a dinner-party. Had I not better—I mean—shall I not be in the way?"

Her ladyship raised her finely-drawn eyebrows.

"Bless me, no, dear! Besides, it is only a small one. Oh, come down if you can. If you would really rather not—why—"

But Floris inclined her head as humbly as she could.

"Oh, no! Of course I will come down if you wish it."

"That's all right," said her ladyship, cheerfully. "Come down by all means. It will freshen you up; not that you look as if you wanted freshening, my dear, and with a very pleasant nod and a little smile went out.

Floris sank on the sofa in a state bordering on bewilderment.

It was all so different to what she had expected. Instead of being received with haughty politeness and freezing condescension, she had been welcomed rather as a friend than a servant.

"Who was Lord Bruce?" Floris wondered; "and why should her ladyship take such pains to inform her of his wickedness, and warn her against falling in love with him?"

It was of him she was thinking when the second bell rang and a servant knocked at the door.

"Her ladyship didn't know whether you would be able to find your way down to the drawing-room, miss," she said, and Floris, with her sweet voice thanking her, followed the girl through the corridor and down to the hall.

The big drawing-room was brilliant with innumerable wax candles, and Floris felt too confused by the light, and the hum of conversation, to distinguish any one for a moment, but Lady Pendleton came out toward her from a little group of ladies and nodded pleasantly.

"So glad you have made up your mind to join us," she said, and then with her head on one side she turned to one of the young ladies.

"My new companion, Miss Carlisle; Lady Glenloona."

The lady whose name Floris remembered as that of one of the fashionable personages of the day—put up her eyeglasses and nodded, with a languid smile, and Floris, to avoid any further introductions, drew a little apart and sat down.

Lady Pendleton flitted away to two or three gentlemen, and Floris was wondering which was Sir Edward, when the door opened and a little man, with a worried, tired look came in, and made for Floris with outstretched hand.

"Sorry I'm late," he said, in a quiet yet bored voice. "Been kept at the committee meeting. Hope you are not tired of waiting."

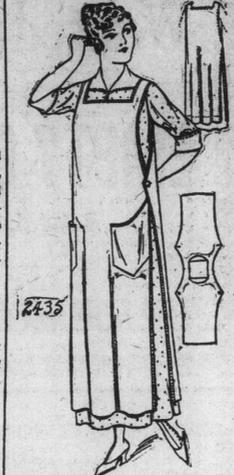
Floris flushed and stood up, but at the moment Lady Pendleton flitted up to them and took her husband, for it was Sir Edward, by the arm.

(To be Continued.)

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

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EARLY M

BATTLE CONTINUES WITH THE GREATEST VIOLENCE.

PARIS, June 4.

Between the Oise and the Germans were prevented from making any progress, says to-day's official statement. The battle continued with the greatest violence between the Alsace and the Oise, the Germans capturing Porman. Further south the French lost a little ground. The Germans have made a further advance in the Ourcq Valley, capturing the town of Sully LaPorterie. On the Marne front German troops which had forced a passage of the River were driven back again by the French and American troops.

HOLDING AND COUNTER ATTACKING.

FRENCH ARMY HEADQUARTERS June 3. (Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—This afternoon the battle seems to have taken a general turn in our favor. Our line is holding, the troops not only resisting, but counter attacking vigorously and successfully. Further situations are still probable, as the front is not yet continuous. There are places where the Boche methods may yet secure local advances, but as the line stiffens hour after hour, the points where the enemy can hope to pass without severe fighting are becoming rare. During the last thirty-six hours the enemy has made no real progress on any part of his new front, south of the Aisne. There are signs that the Germans are about to make another big attack on the plateaux between the Aisne and Villers Cottetres forest, in order to straighten the depression in their line between the Aisne and Vierzy. Their front in this sector is only a little in advance of

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