

"A Sorrow's Crown of Sorrows."

CHAPTER VII.—Continued. Bruce was an exceptionally gifted man in many ways, but he was not the peerless creature Lola imagined him to be...

Lola happy, it will be my duty to withhold my consent to your proposal. The colour rose in Bruce's pale face, and a hardness showed itself in the lines of his mouth.

"Quite understood," he said coolly. "that you wish to know whether I am in a position to keep your daughter in a suitable manner. I am not good at figures, but if you like I can tell you the sums I have so far received for my writings, and the terms for the next two novels. I am not a rich man by any means, but I can only be writing for three years, and as I was lucky enough to make a hit by my second story, my terms go up every year, and within a measurable time I hope to make—say about the tenth of what my publisher does."

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He was far too proud to make any attempt to renew his offer, however, and made some compensation in his own mind to Lola for the disappointment his sudden departure would cause her by placing an idealized version of her as the central figure in his new novel.

Dr. Marsden was extremely glad to be rid of him, and did not think it to speak of the interview to Lola. It would be only disturbing her mind, he decided, and he wished to be wholly occupied with Aubrey de Vaux, whom he liked better every day.

The doctor was dogmatic, Aubrey was gentle and deferential; the doctor was a great talker, Aubrey an excellent listener; and it was, moreover, patent to the keenest observer that Aubrey worshipped the very ground that Lola trod upon.

Her marked preference for Bruce, however, filled the young man with despair, and during the last week he had studiously avoided the doctor's house.

If Lola guessed the feeling she excited in Aubrey's heart it troubled her very little. Madame de Vaux had taken care to impress upon the girl that her son was of an exceedingly impressionable nature, and that he was in fact always in love with the last pretty face he saw.

Now, however, her brain was in a ferment, her heart in a flutter. Bruce's manner, when he parted with her at the door of the tower, had been more than friendly. A warm blush suffused her from head to foot, as it seemed, when she remembered the long look of interest, hovering in its intensity, he had given her as he had held her hand between both his, and told her she should be his next heroine.

Already in the five weeks of their acquaintance she had read four of his novels and many of his shorter stories. Their brilliant cleverness dazzled her; their picturesque charm and sensuous glow of color moved and excited her as far higher literary work had failed to do.

The doctor was mostly a good deal like him, and this doubled their inclination to her. She felt that her hand was being held by the touch of his lips, and again and again pressed hers to the exact spot glorified by the kiss of genius.

All this was of course infinitely silly, but under the haze of ignorant sentiment her woman's heart was for the first time beginning to stir, to throb, and to suffer.

The suffering came with the thought that she had betrayed her love for Bruce, and perhaps made him despise her. She was not old enough to know that her own love would never be returned, and she was not old enough to know that her own love would never be returned.

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but he said nothing. His interview with Bruce had left him in the strongest state of disapproval with regard to that young gentleman's temper, manners and morals. Lola had guessed that he did not like her hero long ago from remarks the doctor had let fall concerning him, and she was too shy and too proud to speak of him. Calling at the "King's Arms" to enquire whether he was ill was equally out of the question. Besides, had not Bruce told her he was never ill in spite of his pallor?

She must learn to wait—most difficult of tasks when young blood burns and a young heart beats at the sound of a knock at the door or of a hurrying footstep over the stone-paved streets.

The fourth day Lola could bear it no longer. She had played with her breakfast after a sleepless night, and like most extremely healthy people she was really alarmed at the listlessness and want of appetite that were gaining hold of her and convinced that the suspense would kill her.

She was resolved now to take counsel of her friend Madame de Vaux, and to implore her to find out why Bruce was avoiding her.

"She told me she was sure he loved me," the girl thought to herself, "and she is so much older and wiser than I that she would surely know."

It was a terribly humiliating thing to confess that she feared he was keeping away because he knew of her love and did not desire it, but Lola felt sure that her old friend would contest this notion that she resolved to brave the pain of the admission.

A dazzling rain was falling as she started on her walk, and it continued during the whole three miles of her journey. But Lola, whose hair waved naturally, whose countenance so fresh that in anything less than a deluge, and hurried on in thick boots and rainproof gaiter until the great iron gates of Montague Lodge were passed and the long, low white building came in sight.

The front door was unobscured as usual, and Lola, who was almost as much at home in the house as its inmates, passed through the mosaic-paved hall and into the long drawing room at the back in search of Madame de Vaux. It was an apartment furnished in the French style, with long windows opening on to a terrace with light-painted walls and a polished floor strewn with rugs and tiger and lion skins.

By the tiled fireplace, in which glowing logs were burning a group of dogs, including a collie, a bear hound and a King Charles spaniel, lay about the feet of a young man who was seated in a deep armchair, his head upon his hand. The collie with the diamond-shaped reflection of his light, tried persistently to attract his master's notice by flinging his nose into the hand that lay upon his knee, but Aubrey was in too sad a mood to return the caress of his favourite.

Even Lola, absorbed in her own anxiety, and interrupted by the dejection of his attitude.

"But he is not clever," she said to herself, "and has no resources."

She uttered his name, and he started to his feet and faced her with surprise and intense gladness in his eyes.

"I have come to see your mother," she said rather shyly.

"My mother is in Paris," said Aubrey, "she started last night, and will be there some days."

"I hope she will be there," she said, "I have heard she is very well."

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THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC LOTTERY.

Table with columns for prizes and their values. Includes '3134 PRIZES WORTH \$52,740.00' and 'CAPITAL PRIZE WORTH \$15,000.00'. Lists ticket prices and prize amounts.



THE ROSARY OF VOLNEY.

A striking incident in the American life of the French intellect. Volney, the distinguished French philosopher and traveler, who died in the early part of the present century, was one of the most noted scholars of the modern school of false philosophy.

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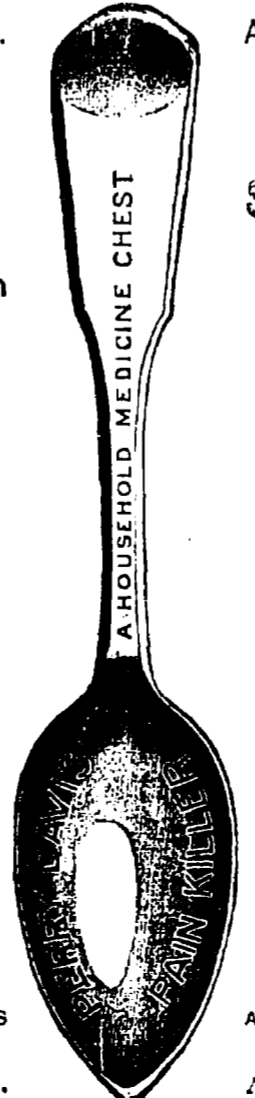
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