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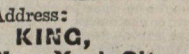
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Six Easy Ways To Earn Money



HER SUPREME SACRIFICE

(Continued from page 9)

her to stay and even offered to raise her salary, but in answer to his plea she told him she was forced to go, partly against her own wishes, and for a reason she could not divulge.

She spent most of her time during the following three weeks in making trips to her lawyer, and at the end of that time she obtained the divorce, which literally meant nothing to her. On her way home after receiving her divorce, she purchased an afternoon paper and received a shock on reading an account of the death of Gordon's father, and the filing of the latter's will, which had cut Gordon off with one dollar.

"And my efforts are all for nothing!" she exclaimed. "Poor Gordon! But maybe he doesn't care any more."

Her lawyer had sent word to Gordon that a divorce had been granted, and this having been done, Ora felt that she was through, and would have to begin life anew without her husband or baby.

In the morning the longing to see Donnie was more than she could bear, and she decided to journey back to see him once more; then she would go away for ever. Two hours later she reached the house where she found an open door and a clear passage to Donnie's room, the nurse being absent on an errand. A wave of emotion flooded her heart as she stepped into his room and gazed on the familiar objects and her sleeping child. Bending down she kissed him fervently.

"My darling boy," she murmured, the tears streaming down her cheeks.

The noise of a door closing downstairs startled her and she quickly turned to the door. On the stairway she met Gordon. He stood and gazed at her as if she were a wraith.

"I had to see Donnie again!" she cried, putting her hand to her throbbing heart. "I felt I would die if I didn't."

A grim smile played about the corners of Gordon's tightly closed lips.

"And you have nothing to say to me?" he asked.

She shook her head in the negative as she passed him. He turned and looked after her, but made no effort to detain her. As she reached the door she thought she heard him call. She longed to turn and rush into his arms, but knew she must be firm for his sake.

Out into the street she stumbled, not knowing or caring where she went. Her aimless wanderings brought her to the park where she had met Gordon's employer. Tired and weary she dropped to a seat on a bench. She had been there about ten minutes with her head resting on her arms when she heard some one addressing her. Raising her head, she looked into the eyes of Mr. Hale.

"You appear to be in trouble again," he said in a low tone. "Can I be of any service? I assure you it would give me great pleasure."

Something urged her to tell him that she was worried over the lack of employment, and she did, telling him of her ability.

Mr. Hale's face became a wreath of smiles.

"I'm in need of a stenographer at present. How would you like to enter my employ? I assure you I'll make things as comfortable as possible."

"It's very kind of you to take such an interest in a stranger," she said, "but I imagine it's your bigness of heart, rather than your need of my services that prompts you to make the offer."

"Not at all," he protested. "I really do need a stenographer, and you appeal to me as just the sort of a woman I should like to have in my office. Won't you come?"

Ora drew a long breath and tried to think. To accept would bring her in constant association with Gordon. Of course, Mr. Hale need never know of their relations, and she had no fear that Gordon would tell him anything. She had to obtain some sort of employment, and a position with Mr. Hale would give her an opportunity to see Donnie occasionally.

She accepted Mr. Hale's offer, much to that gentleman's pleasure, and then started to look for lodgings.

In the morning she reported at the office and was introduced to Gordon as Miss Janis, his assistant. Gordon stood like a man turned to stone, but Hale was too much concerned with his new acquisition to note any difference in Gordon. In fact, Hale paid so much marked attention to Ora that he was oblivious of Gordon's existence. When she was left alone with Gordon, he came to her and looked at her wistfully.

"Ora, have you no word for me after all these months? Must I believe you sane when you secured that divorce?"

Ora's heart beat wildly, almost suffocating her. She longed to tell him that she still loved him, but that would not be protecting him from himself as she had vowed to do. For a reply she removed, from a chain around her neck, her wedding ring and gave it to him.

He accepted it mechanically, and was about to make some remark when ap-

proaching footsteps sent him back to his desk. Hale entered and hovered about her desk for the remainder of the day.

The next morning she found Gordon alone in the office when she arrived. As she sat down at her desk, he came to her side and tenderly took hold of her hand.

"Ora, dear," he said, with all the old love and tenderness in his voice, "I can't believe that you have really turned from me. Some wild, mad impulse has made you act as you have. Tell me, dear, tell me that you do love me just a little yet. This suspense, this seeing you hour after hour without being allowed to caress you will finally kill me!"

She had neither inclination nor strength to withdraw her hand. How soothing was his touch! Still she steeled herself against uttering the words in her heart. Later, when he found himself back in his rightful station in life he would be thankful to her. What might have been the outcome of another plea he was about to make had not Mr. Hale's approach cut it short, would be difficult to say. In a way she was glad that Hale entered.

Another week passed, but during that time she never found herself alone with Gordon. Hale became her shadow, took her motoring, out to the theatre and to dinner. There was something about her fatherly employer that appealed to her lonely heart. Her slightest wish was immediately gratified, and he seemed to be living solely for her happiness. If money could bring forgetfulness and happiness, she knew it would be hers to command, if she so desired.

When she had been in Hale's employ about a month, he came in one morning more sprightly than ever, and sent Gordon out on an errand. As soon as Gordon left, he took a seat beside Ora.

"Miss Janis," he began a bit nervously, "I know there is a big difference between our ages, but nevertheless, I love you—love you as I've never loved any woman. I know youth loves youth, but very often youth does not appreciate youth and beauty as age does. If you could learn to care just a little for me, I'd ask for nothing more in this world, and the remainder of my life would be devoted to making you happy. Do you think you could?"

Ora dropped her eyes and hurriedly analyzed the situation. As long as she remained unmarried, Gordon would live in hope and misery, and would make no attempt to go back to his proper position. On the other hand, if she were to marry Hale, Gordon would give up hoping. Possibly Gordon might turn Donnie over to her care, or she might provide for his education. Guided by these thoughts, she told Hale that she thought in time she could learn to care for him as he wished.

"You are an angel!" Hale cried, pressing her to his heart.

That moment witnessed the end of her office work, and she did not see Gordon until the day set for the wedding. Nevertheless, not a day passed that she did not give him part of her thoughts.

On the day of the wedding as she stood arrayed in her bridal gown, her reverie was suddenly broken by a commotion outside. The door flew open and a policeman came in, bearing a child in his arms. At that moment Gordon entered through another door. He was carrying a bag, and appeared to be ready to start on a journey. An exclamation escaped from her lips as she recognized Donnie. Gordon took Donnie in his arms.

"He was knocked down by an auto," the policeman exclaimed.

"Send for a doctor," Gordon ordered.

Ora forgot everything and kissed the child several times. Then she turned to the troubled face of Gordon, breathed his name and fell back in a swoon.

Willing hands quickly came to her assistance, and after placing her in a chair, worked over her until she regained consciousness. At this juncture Hale entered, excited and nervous, and went to her side. Gordon's pleading eyes were riveted upon her and they seemed to be saying: "If not for my sake, Ora, stop for Donnie's, before it is too late!"

Ora rose and advanced toward the couch as the doctor came in. Fortunately Donnie had been more frightened than hurt and needed very little attention. Regardless of the eyes upon her and the presence of Hale, Ora went to the couch and kissed Donnie fervently.

"What does all this mean?" Hale asked, perplexed and obviously nervous.

Looking squarely into Hale's eyes, Ora said,

"Forgive me. I believed I could blot out what I thought was an unhappy marriage and learn to care for you, but I can't. Mr. Eames was my husband until I divorced him several months ago. I love him too much to marry another, and I'll never be happy without him. The child is ours. I'm sorry, Mr. Hale, but it cannot be helped."

As she finished speaking Gordon's arm stole around her trembling waist, and Hale dropped into a chair, crestfallen and sad.



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