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back as quickly as the wind and tide will bring you."

Nora rose, put on a thick, short pea-jacket, and her red worsted cap, thrust the packet of cakes in her wide pocket, and moved to the door.

"No; there will not be much wind, I think," she said, in the dreamy, absent way which had become habitual with her of late. She stood, appeared to linger, and the elder woman's voice saying, sharply, "Why don't you go, Nora?" seemed to rouse her.

She turned and approached the table where Mrs. Trevanion was washing up the tea things.

"Good-bye, aunt," she said, with downcast eyes, her fingers drumming softly on the table edge.

"Good-bye," said the elder woman, coldly; but still Nora stood, and seemed to wait; then she lifted her face, pale with a strange light—a wistful, thirsty light in her eyes.

"Won't you kiss me, aunt?" she said, in a low, clear voice.

Mrs. Trevanion colored a dusky red, and an expression of displeasure and surprise shone in her face. Nora had never in all her life asked for a caress. What had come to her?

The elder woman bent over the table and let her lips touch the pure white forehead with a kiss as cold as ice—as cold as charity.

Nora drew back repulsed, repelled, paused a moment, with her eyes on the cold, hard face; then, with another "Good-bye, aunt," turned and left the cottage.

She had asked for love and her aunt had given her a stone. She knew what a kiss should be. Was not Vane Tempest's burning on her lips even now?

She went with firm step down the rocky way, and launching the boat, sprung in, set the sail, and steered for Trelorne. It was only a short run, with the tide and the little wind there was in her favor.

She sat, her arm round the tiller, as she had sat that day—that never-to-be-forgotten day—she and he had sailed together.

How long ago was it? Years? Had it ever happened? Going to Australia, never to come back!

As she leaned back and steered the boat, with a skill and knowledge as unerring as that of any seaman's on the coast, and thought of every little, tiny incident on that never-to-be-forgotten day, her aunt's words rang in her ears, her heart. Never to come back! She would never see him—never—for all her life!

Her face grew paler, her heart throbbled and ached.

True, it was extremely improbable even if she remained at the Witches' Caidron, that she should see him again; but while she was in England, there was still a chance—a wild chance; but with the seas between them—with, perhaps, thousands of miles to separate them—

She could not go on thinking of it. With a shudder, she pressed her hand to her eyes and drove the thought back from her. But it would come again and again; and it so absorbed her that she failed for a time to notice that the wind was changing and that the sea was running higher.

Presently these facts were forced upon her notice by the flapping of the sails and the dash of spray above the gunwale. She put the boat on the tack, and so had to go out of her course. The evening was growing chilly. She drew out her suit of oilskins and put it on, and lay down at the bottom of the boat, still, of course, keeping her hand on the tiller. The wind got higher, a sea came on—one of those groundswells which make this one of the deadliest coasts in England.

As she watched the clouds driving swiftly across the sky in heavy banks, the thought floated into her mind, that half a turn of the helm, with the sail-sheet tight, and there would be an end of the torture, the strange torture that burned in her heart, the awful longing to see him again, to hear his voice! At the thought her hand moved half unconsciously; the boat swayed; yes, she could overturn it easily enough.

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A Millionaire's Countess Westerleigh.

CHAPTER XIII.
(To be Continued.)

"Haven't I always done so?"

"No," said Mrs. Trevanion, grimly; "not so much as you have done lately. And you seem to be in the clouds or in a dream all the time. I can't think what has come to you, or why you should behave as you do—or what you can be always thinking of," she added.

The pupils of the lovely eyes contracted, as if their owner had suffered a sharp pain.

"I think of nothing," she said, in a low voice, "I don't know what you mean. Do I not do all you want me?"

"Oh, yes, yes!" assented the elder woman, coldly. "You do what there is to be done, as you always did, and you do it willingly enough, but—she seemed to find it difficult to define the short-coming, and paused as she went and lifted the boiling kettle from the hook and made the tea—"but I don't want to complain. I know your life is hard enough. It is not my fault."

"Whose is it?" said Nora, not angrily, but so suddenly and gravely that the elder woman started slightly.

"Not yours nor mine," she said. "Why do you ask? What is it you want to know, child?"

Nora looked beyond her rather than at her.

"Am I a child?" she asked, with the same kind of gravity, as if she were

simply desirous of information—as if the question had only lately arisen within her own bosom.

Mrs. Trevanion peered at her with cold scrutiny and an embarrassment she concealed.

"You ask strange questions, Nora. What has come to you? You are not a child in the ordinary sense, but in others—you are different."

"Why am I different?" demanded Nora. "Why can't I read and write? He said that other girls as old as I am could do so. He said—"

She stopped short, and a faint color came into her face, but her eyes did not droop. She forced them to continue looking over Mrs. Trevanion's head.

Mrs. Trevanion turned and looked at her.

"He? Who?" she asked. "Do you mean Mr. Vane Tempest?"

"Yes," said Nora.

"What else did he say to you?" asked the elder woman, after a pause, during which Nora had turned her eyes to the fire.

"He did not answer the question. Was it he who taught you to be dissatisfied—to ask questions?" demanded Mrs. Trevanion.

Nora shook her head and rose.

"No," she said; "he said nothing. Why should he? I was nothing—as nothing—to him. He has forgotten me by this time."

She did not speak with bitterness; the words fell softly enough from her lips.

"Of course he has. Why shouldn't he?" said Mrs. Trevanion, sharply. "He is a gentleman as far removed—as different from us—as as Lady Isle from London town. I thought perhaps he had been putting some folly into your head—"

She looked keenly at the lovely face, but it did not flush. "But no; he is too true a

gentleman for that," she broke off, almost to herself.

There was a moment or two of silence, then she said aloud:

"I fetched you in now, Nora, because I want you to do something. The tide turns in half an hour, doesn't it?"

Nora glanced at the clock on the shelf, and nodded.

"I want you to go to Trelorne," resumed the elder woman.

Nora looked up from her cup. "To Trelorne! Not to the schooner?" she said, in a low voice.

The elder woman shook her head. "No," she said, gloomily; "I doubt whether we shall ever be able to meet the schooner again. The meek sharp lookout day and night I've had warning this afternoon that the schooner is being closely watched by a government cutter. Nora, our business, trade—call it what you will—is at an end."

She spoke firmly, with all a man's decision. "We must begin the world again—find a new life. I have resolved to leave here."

"Leave here?"

Nora repeated the words with bated breath.

"Yes, I think—I am not quite sure—that we will go abroad—to Australia."

"Australia?" The sweet red lips formed the word. "That is far from—London, isn't it?" she asked, as if unwittingly.

Mrs. Trevanion looked at her with faint, cold surprise.

"Of course it is," she said. "But I have not quite decided."

"If we go, when shall we come back?" asked Nora, her eyes fixed on the fire. They had grown darker, deeper, as she grasped the significance of her aunt's words.

"Come back?" echoed the elder woman. "Never."

The expressive eyes grew black.

"Never?" she breathed.

"Yes. Why should you want to come back? Have you been so happy here? Well, I suppose you have been happy enough; you have had no past to brood over—"

She picked herself up short, and went on in a different—a more business-like way. "I want you to go to the landlord of the inn and give him a small parcel. You will get there quickly enough on the rising tide, and come back by the fall; there will be moon enough."

"The moon doesn't matter," said Nora, calmly.

"No. There is just enough wind, and the weather bids fair. You will take care of the parcel. It is money."

Nora nodded indifferently.

The elder woman stood over the fire and looked broodingly into it.

"Yes, money. It is half the money I have saved; half the money we have saved. The man who gave me warning that the cutter was watching me that the revenue men might pay us another visit any moment, and that any money we might have would not be safe, I'd have risked it if it all belonged to me, but half is yours."

"Mine?" She spoke the word with faint surprise.

"Yes," said the elder woman, coldly. "Yours—by right of having worked for it. It is not a large sum." She drew a small parcel wrapped in sail canvas from a corner of the chimney and laid it on the table, keeping her hand on it. "I will keep mine here hidden in the old place, but I will not risk yours any longer. Take it to Penhorely, the landlord of the inn, and give it to him. There is a note inside telling him to put it in the bank. He is an honest man, and I can trust him. When we start for Australia, we can draw this money out of the bank. It will be safe there till then; and if anything happens to my share—well, it will be mine that will be gone, not yours."

"This is really mine?" murmured Nora, as she took the parcel and tied it in the bosom of her dress.

"I tell you so," responded the elder woman, coldly, sharply. "You had better take some of these cakes with you." She went on, as she wrapped up half a dozen of the scones in paper. "You may be hungry before you come back. Speak to no one but the man at the inn. Ask for Mr. Penhorely, give him the parcel, and come back."

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