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The Mystery of Rutledge Hall
— OR —
"The Cloud With a Silver Lining"

CHAPTER XV.

At that same moment there came the sound of wheels on the drive in the front of the house, and the dressing-bell rang, its loud clear summons pealing through the quiet house.

Stephen Daunt, passing out of the library, at sound of the dressing-bell into the pretty oak-paneled hall, saw the hall door open and Lloyd Milner just alighting from the carriage which had been sent to meet him at the station; and the next minute the two men had clasped hands in a close, friendly pressure, and the young barrister was looking with keen regret at the sadness of the grave, handsome face of his friend, which even Stephen's pleasure at seeing him could not quite dispense.

"Delighted to see you, old fellow," Stephen said, heartily. "We ought to feel grateful to you, I am sure, for leaving London and its pleasures even for a short time."

"London and its what?" Lloyd Milner returned, laughing. "If you call fogs and east winds, draughty courts and dingy chambers pleasures, you may well sympathize with me for leaving them; but such pleasures as those begin to pall sometimes."

"Do they? All pleasures get monotonous at times," answered Stephen rather wearily. "You look well, old fellow, in spite of fogs and east winds and the other delights of a barrister's life in Pump Court."

"That is more than I can say for you," the young barrister said, with a touch of gravity underlying the lightness of his voice and manner. "You look anything but fit, Stephen."

"I am all right," Daunt answered, carelessly. "I have been pretty hard working since our return from abroad—making up for arrears, you know."

"You must have had a delightful tour."

"Oh, very!" Stephen said, dryly. "Will you come and see Sidney before you go to your room? I think she is still in the drawing-room."

He crossed the hall as he spoke, and, opening the drawing-room door, looked into the room. It was apparently empty, and he turned away.

"I am afraid she has gone up to

child, you must be dreaming! Look here! What have you been doing?"

As he spoke, he touched the heavy, damp folds of her gown and the soft, waving hair; and Lloyd Milner, looking at her in some surprise and anxiety, saw her face change, and a look of startled consciousness replace the bewildered, vacant expression. Then she burst out laughing, suddenly and almost violently.

"How very stupid of me!" she said. "My head ached, and I went out for a few moments, and I did not notice that it was raining. I am afraid you have brought us bad weather, Mr. Milner. Have you had a very tedious journey?"

"Not at all," he answered, smiling. "Mrs. Daunt had better get rid of those wet garments at once," he added, anxiously, seeing Sidney's languid, inert manner, and feverish, bright eyes.

"Yes, indeed," Stephen said, hastily. "How could you be so imprudent, Sidney?"

"I did not think of the imprudence," she answered, looking up at him with eager, shining eyes. "I am not likely to take cold."

"I don't quite see how you can be exempt from doing so," her husband said, gravely. "Lloyd, I will show you your room. Easthorpe is not Lambewold, you know. You will have no difficulty in finding your way about in it," he added, with a slight laugh.

They all went up-stairs together; but Sidney left them then, with a smiling little nod of farewell to Mr. Milner; and the young barrister went to his rooms full of anxiety and uneasiness at what he had seen.

The few minutes he had been at Easthorpe had shown him only too clearly the unhappy state of things existing between the master and mistress of the beautiful home. Stephen's grave worn face showed a weariness the cause of which lay far deeper than in the hard work by which he had accounted for his altered looks, and Sidney's manner, so strangely cold and indifferent, had impressed him strongly.

What was wrong? he wondered, as he hurriedly unpacked and began to dress for dinner. What had come between them? If ever two persons had married with a bright prospect before them, these two had done so. They had youth and health and prosperity—even riches; and that a great and mutual love existed between them Lloyd Milner had never doubted. Surely a great happiness was in store for them, he had thought on that bright June morning when he had seen them made man and wife, and but four months had elapsed since then—four short months—and this was the end, coldness and indifference and disunion. Whose was the fault? he wondered. Not Stephen Daunt's. He knew him of old, how true and gentle and brave and honorable he was. The fault must have been hers. Perhaps, after all, the beauty which made her so pleasant to look upon, the charm of manner which made her so fascinating, were but the outer covering; the kernel of the nut is often rotten at the core when the shell is fair and so smooth without. And yet she was so beautiful, and she looked so unhappy.

The young barrister's clever, pleasant face wore a grave and troubled look as he went down-stairs, but it brightened suddenly as he caught sight of a graceful white figure moving lightly across the hall, a figure which turned its head at sound of his step and disclosed Dolly's lovely smiling face lighted up with gladness at the sight of her brother's friend.

"So you have come at last!" she said, giving him her hand with a smile. "You could never find time to come to Lambewold all through the summer, but you managed to come here."


"Are you upbraiding me for having come?" he asked, with a touch of reproach in his pleasant voice.

"No," she answered, quickly, "but for not having come."

"If I had thought you," he was beginning, then paused abruptly. What right had he, a struggling barrister, to utter words of tenderness to the daughter of such a wealthy man as John Daunt?

Dolly looked up at him inquiringly, with her innocent smiling eyes full of wonder; and the young man resumed, finishing the sentence in other words than those which had risen to his lips in his pleasure at knowing that she had wished him to come.

(To be continued.)



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SIDE TALKS.
By Ruth Cameron.

ALL IN THE APPROACH.

"It's all in the approach," So says my neighbor. She has been married two years and has just begun to get the full force of that interesting truth which every married woman who is capable of learning anything at all about human relationships gradually learns.

A specific experience brought it home to her with such force that she communicated the discovery to me.

This was the experience: She wanted to wear on a week-end visit a certain frock which her husband, who is a decided conservative, regards as rather too striking. It was really the only frock in her wardrobe that was exactly suitable for the occasion. She has a last year's frock that to her husband's eye was perfectly all right but she had worn it to the same place the year before.


He thought it was his idea.

"If I'd told him I was going to wear that dress, he would have been cross and he would have sulked and just spoiled the visit. And if I'd asked him

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New American Plane
RACES ON AT 270-MILE SPEED IN TESTS.

New York.—Partly throttled, the first of the three Curtiss racing planes built for the Pulitzer air races, made 270 miles an hour in two preliminary test hops at Mitchel Field recently.

On the second flight, with the army's alternate racing pilot, Lieut. J. H. Doolittle, flying, the terrific air pressure tore off a two-foot strip of fabric from the top of the upper wing.

Two disks, stream-lined hubs of the landing wheels, ripped off for the same reason in the first test with Lieut. Al Williams, navy pilot, at the stick.

The speed of 270 miles—an unofficial reading—is four miles faster than Lieut. Williams' greatest officially recorded speed and only eight miles less than the world's record.

"It's a better flying plane than any we've had before," said Lieut. Williams as he climbed out of the cockpit.

As Usual, Somebody "Leaked."

Determined efforts were made to keep secret the speed of the Curtiss racer after the two unofficial test flights. Officially it was stated that the air speed indicator had failed to work and that there was no record for the flight. Both Lieut. Doolittle and Lieut. Williams corroborated this.

It was revealed, unofficially, however, that 270 miles an hour was indicated while the throttles was partially choked.

With the "gun" full on, the 30 miles an hour that Curtiss' engine predicted is expected of the plane. That speed, if reached in recent tests, however, might have stripped every bit of canvas from her wings.

Even so, the plane might still have flown for two-thirds of the wing section is made of brass and serves as both wings and radiator.

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Household Notes.

Serve creamed salmon in a model rice ring and garnish with peas. Shir eggs in individual ramekins with creamed ham or dried beef. When making peas, be sure to add a pinch of salt and a little vanilla. Garnish cold sliced meat with thin slices of pickles and stuffed olives. Stuff pitted prunes with grated cheese and roll in powdered sugar. With roast goose or duck serve apples flavored with a little lemon. All utensils used in making coffee should be kept spotlessly clean. Cook raisins until plump in olive oil, drain and roll in cinnamon-sugar.

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