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 Destiny!**

CHAPTER V.  
 A HARD PUNISHMENT.

"Will you let me put them in for you?" she said, quietly, and neatly and quickly she packed them in orderly fashion in the case.

"Thank you, thank you!" said Sir Edward. "I've a committee meeting this morning at eleven, another at one, and—thank you!" and with a final glance of surprised satisfaction, he seized the case from Floris, his hat and cane from the servant, and hurried out.

The next question now arose, what was she to do next? It occurred to her that she would go up and ask her Lady Pendleton was. She went and knocked at her ladyship's door, softly, and received the response of "Come in."

"It is I, Lady Pendleton," she said, thinking that she might have mistaken her for the maid.

"Come in. Yes, I knew it was you, my dear; I knew by your knock. All the rest of them hammer," said her ladyship.

She was sitting up in bed, wrapped in an elaborate dressing-robe, with a cup of chocolate by her and a French novel face downward on the satin coverlet.

"Are you better?" asked Floris.

"Yes, it was only a headache. I hope you enjoyed yourself last night, and weren't too tired! I am sure you ought to be very gratified—it was enough to make you vain, my dear."

"To make me vain?" queried Floris.

"Yes, the attention you got. Especially from Bruce! I never knew him so attentive. As a rule he is quite too savage—a perfect boor! I've known him sit for an hour and not open his lips, and then get up and go away. I do hope he won't go on that stupid yachting excursion until after the fair! Of course, you will help me at my stall? You will create quite a sensation, my dear, and that will be so nice."

Floris laughed softly.

"Why do you laugh, my dear? Are you laughing at me?"

"Certainly not, your ladyship," said Floris. "But—but I was wondering whether it would not be rather out of place for a companion to make a sensation."

As she spoke the maid came in, with the slightest apology for a knock.

"Lord Norman's in the drawing-room, miladi."

Lady Pendleton uttered a little cry of delight.

"So soon! My dear, he has come to say that he will stay over for the fair! I thought that he would! Oh, dear, and I'm not dressed! Do go down and see him now, Floris! Tell him I have a headache—caused by his obstinacy last night."

"Perhaps he will wait until you are dressed," said Floris, in a low voice, "or call again later in the day, Lady Pendleton?"

"Wait till I am dressed!" exclaimed her ladyship with a laugh. "Not he! He wouldn't wait for an empress."

Floris still stood by the window, with Josine looking from one to the other in respectful silence.

"Will you not write him a note?" suggested Floris.

Her ladyship laughed again.

"He would scarcely read it! My dear, you don't know Bruce. He is one of the most trying of men. No, you go down and see what you can do with him; please do, and secure him for the fair."

Floris went out of the room and down the stairs. She paused for a moment at the drawing-room door, and the flush gave place to a cold paleness that lent an air of pride and reserve to her sweet, beautiful face.

Lord Norman was sitting across a chair, his arms folded on the back. He was dressed in a riding suit of broad check, and held a whip in his hand.

"Well, Betty," he said, without looking round, "have I roused you from your slumbers sweet and deep?"

Getting no answer, he turned his head and saw Floris standing in the middle of the room, the sunlight falling upon her fresh young loveliness, and lighting up streaks of gold in her brown hair.

He sprang to his feet, dropping his whip, and went toward her.

"I beg your pardon," he murmured. "I thought—"

"Lady Pendleton has a headache, my lord, and has not yet left her room," said Floris, and in her effort to seem perfectly self-possessed, her voice sounded cold and repellent.

"I am very sorry," he said.

Then he stood switching his leg with his whip for full a minute.

"I will tell her ladyship," said Floris, and she half turned to the door.

"One moment, Miss Carlisle," he said. "I—" he stopped, and his dark eyes flashed toward her face—"I am favored by chance in thus seeing you so soon—and alone."

Floris stood calm and cold as a statue, but with a heart that fluttered in her bosom like an imprisoned bird.

"I will avail myself of the opportunity which chance has given me, Miss Carlisle, to beg your pardon."

"My pardon?" said Floris.

"Your pardon," he repeated; "and I do beg it most humbly. Last night, in complete ignorance of your name and identity, I made a statement, moved by an impulse which was too strong for my control, that must have sounded in your ears like an impertinence. Miss Carlisle, I humbly beg your pardon!"

Floris raised her eyes for a moment to look at him, then dropped them again.

"It is granted, my lord," she said, coldly. "It was my fault; I ought to have stopped you; I ought to have told you who and what I was."

"My foe—the woman I have, all unintentionally ruined," he murmured. "No, my lord, you have done me no injury. If we have suffered, it is through the law."

There was a moment's silence, during which he stood looking at her and flicking his whip restlessly, then Floris raised her eyes.

"Her ladyship requested me to ask you explain them."

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you, Lord Norman, if you would remain in England and assist her in the fancy fair?" she said, reluctantly. He turned toward her.

"Are you going to take part in this affair?" he asked.

"I do not know. I shall do so if Lady Pendleton wishes me, my lord."

"Are you interested in this fancy fair? Do you care whether I remain for it, or are you simply the mouth-piece of Betty?"

"It is a matter of perfect indifference to me, my lord, whether you remain or stay," she replied, haughtily.

"Oh, I know that!" he rejoined, hastily. "You misunderstand me! I know that my presence must be hateful to you, and that if you could have your wish you would never see me again. I am quite cognizant of your feelings toward me, alas! But for the fair's sake, would you wish me to stay, Miss Carlisle?"

"I know nothing about it," said Floris.

"Then please tell Betty that I don't care a fig for her fair; that I won't have anything to do with it, and that if she uses my name I will never forgive her," he said, morosely.

"Very good, my lord," she said, and turned to leave the room.

He waited until she had reached the door, then spoke her name.

"Wait," he said; "I have changed my mind. You can tell her that I will do what she wants in this fool's business, and she may stick my name, if it's of any use to her, all over the place. Is that any better, Miss Carlisle?"

"I have no doubt that Lady Pendleton will think it much the better answer to her message," said Floris, with perfect self-possession. "Good-morning, my lord."

"One moment more, please," he said, reluctant to let her go. "I think you said last night that you were fond of music?"

Floris inclined her head. She did not remember saying it; but as it was true she let the assertion pass.

"I have bought a box for the opera for Betty and you," he said. "Will you tell her that I will call for her soon after dinner?"

Floris bowed, without a word of thanks.

He strode toward her and held out his hand.

"In token of your forgiveness, will you shake hands, Miss Carlisle? I have noticed with more pain than I can describe that you have hitherto refused to do so."

Floris extended her soft, white hand slowly, and he took it and held it firmly grasped in his, so firmly that she could not withdraw it.

Lord Norman got on his horse and clattered down the street. He got the best box he could that was vacant, then rode to Covent Garden and purchased a couple of very handsome bouquets.

Directing these to be sent to his rooms, he turned his horse in the direction of Eaton place, and as he neared it, the cloud on his face by no means lightened.

A groom took his horse round to the stables, and a footman, in answer to his inquiry for Lady Blanche, at once admitted him and passed him on to another, who showed him upstairs into a small drawing-room.

Lady Blanche, in her riding habit, was seated at a table writing a letter. She did not rise as he came in, and merely smiled as she held out her hand.

"It was very good of you to come so early," she said, in her soft, low voice, which if he had loved her, would have made him turn and take her in his arms, to inviting and caressing was it.

"Oh, I have nothing else to do," he said. "What did you want me for, Blanche?"

"Well, for one thing to ask you about the Lynches. They have asked us to Ballyfoe for the first fortnight in the autumn. I would not give an answer until I knew whether you were going, because—well, the reason is too obvious. Are you not immensely flattered, sir?"

"Very," he said, forcing a smile, and feeling uncomfortable and guilty.

"My dear Blanche, don't throw the responsibility on me! You might not enjoy yourself, and then what remorse would fall to my lot!"

"Oh, I shall enjoy myself," she said, "especially if you come down."

He beat a tattoo on the window with his whip.

"Then of course I will go down to Ballyfoe."

"How kind of you, Bruce!" she murmured.

He hit his lip. He had just left one beautiful woman, who could find not one gracious word for him, and here was another who thanked him for nothing at all. And yet in his heart he felt as if he would rather have had the one gracious word from Floris than the sweetly-voiced thanks of Lady Blanche, and cursed himself for a fool because it was so.

"And what is the other thing?" he asked, more gently.

"Oh, it is about this fancy fair of the duchess, Bruce. She has asked me to take a stall. Would you go if you were me?"

"My dear Blanche," he protested, with a laugh, "how can I possibly tell what I should really do if I were you? Go, I suppose?"

"Very well, I will go. And, Bruce, you won't mind helping me, will you?"

"I should be very glad, Blanche, but I have promised to perform the same vague office for Lady Betty."

She did not relax her smile, but her white eyelids dropped over the brown eyes for an instant.

"Really! Well, I must look out for some one else."

"Were you going for a ride?" he asked, getting away from the very awkward subject.

"Yes, and you are riding, too! Do you mean to come with me, Bruce?"

"If you will allow me," he said.

She looked pleased, and, crossing the room, rang the bell and ordered her horse. As she did so she saw something sticking in the lining of his hat.

(To be continued.)

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**IMPOSSIBLE TASK.**  
**FRENCH HEADQUARTERS IN FRANCE, June 10.** (Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—The scene of the latest offensive is a wooded, hilly country, bisected by the River Matz, which, flowing south, joins the Oise at Mont Macq. The enemy's principal progress yesterday was along the course of the Matz. His first objective was probably to reach the Oise and therefore to take in the flank of the Oise, which might result in our withdrawal to the south bank. Supporting the enemy's objective to be Paris, he would naturally thrust a tentacle down the Oise valley and another westward from the Ourcq line, thereby encircling the vast mass of the Aigue, Compelgne, Villers, Cotterets forests, which being impregnable to frontal attack, the enemy probably intends to pass north and south thereof, bringing the tentacles together. This enemy plan is over-ambitious and impossible of accomplishment. As soon as its impossibility is realized the enemy's efforts will probably be directed at Amiens or toward Calais.

**German Brought  
 French Exact  
 5000 Hun Pris  
 ing. Task Se**

**WAR REVIEW.**

The Germans in the centre of their new attack on the front between Mont Didier and Noyon have gained additional ground against the French, but on both the right and left wings they are being held in violent successive attacks of Monday they captured the villages of Mondy, Belloy and St. Maur and also pressed forward and gained a footing in the village of Marquise, the last named place representing the deepest point of penetration since the offensive began, between five and six miles. The French still are exacting a heavy toll in lives from the Germans as they deliver their attacks in waves, and are giving ground only when forced to under superiority of numbers. Nowhere has the enemy been able to pierce the front, which has been bent back in perfect order whenever the necessity arises. The battle is described by correspondents as one of the most furious that has been fought since the war began with the enemy usually reckless in wasting life to obtain his objectives. The latest official communication from the German war office says additional ground has been gained by the Germans southwest of Noyon against newly brought up French reinforcements, and that the Germans have taken about 8,000 prisoners and some guns.

**BATTLE RAGES.**  
**FRENCH ARMY HEADQUARTERS** June 10. (Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—Throughout the night and the morning the battle raged along the new front of attack, with unabated fury. On the wings the enemy is still held on the same line despite his persistent and reckless attempts to push on. On the extreme right, Pleumont, although almost in the first garrison having beaten off successive German infantry. Montreud is still ours. In the centre of the battlefield the enemy, by pouring in fresh battalions, penetrated deeper into our line. The fighting has been of the most bloody character, the French and Germans fighting hand to hand over the ruins of every hamlet and farm. The enemy's losses have been extraordinarily heavy. This time the element of surprise was absent, the enemy's dense masses being exposed to the fire of our machine gun and artillery for the past thirty-six hours. The Germans had to assemble beside their lines under our counter preparation fire, which had been sweeping the German rear three days before the battle. The enemy has eighteen or twenty divisions in the attacking line, the divisional front being two thousand yards behind the line with his reserves ready to replace shattered divisions. A prolonged and desperate struggle must be anticipated, and also there is the possibility of meeting the shock of Von Hindenburg's disposable reserves before the enemy breaks off sweeping on victoriously as in the first days of the battle of the Aisne, is advancing painfully yard by yard and paying a full price for every step of his advance. His main effort is still in the centre toward the Oise with the object of returning the salient we hold in his line with the apex at Pontlevéque on the Oise.

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