

Stella Mordant: —OR— The Cruise of the "Kingfisher."

CHAPTER XLIV.
"You—you think you were," she faltered. "But—but you did not know then that you were an English nobleman; that—that you were somebody of consequence."

"Am I?" he said, unmoved by this feminine argument. "You want me to stay here? All right. It shall be as you say. Wherever you want to go, whatever you want to do, of course I will do."

"But—but," she stammered, "what have I to do with it?"

He looked at her. The lovely down-cast face was turned from him; a vague something, which he could not understand, had come between them. This morning she had clung to him willingly enough, her eyes—

He wanted to see those eyes again, and he turned to her so that he could see, not the eyes, but the long lashes.

"Stella!" he said in a low voice, vibrating with passion. "Stella!"

She did not speak or move.

"What has come to you? Why do you turn away from me? What have I done? Are you angry with me as you used to be sometimes on the island? Angry? I thought you were glad this morning? I never understand you. I remember when I carried you across the beach the day you were tired, you were angry. Stella, I—I don't understand. Look at me, speak to me!"

His heart was beating furiously; the longing to clasp her to his breast, mounting, mounting swiftly to his brain.

"What has come between us? You don't want to go back to the island—you will not speak. Ah!" With a sudden cry he had risen and stood before her. "You have forgotten me—don't care for me—you want me to go without you—to leave you!"

He broke off with a fierce laugh, the laugh of the man who knows what he wants, and who is too ignorant of

civilization to refrain from snatching it.

"You can't do that, you can't leave me! I—I should die without you! Why, I nearly died when you were carried from the island! And to lose you again!"

At the horrid thought, he caught her in his arms, lifting her bodily from the seat, and pressed her to him, half laughing, half sobbing, distraught with passion and with dread.

"Stella! I—I love you! I love you! I love you! I can't go back, I can't live without you! They can have everything else! Only you—you—you! I must have you!"

For an instant she surrendered to his passionate appeal. To lie in his embrace, to feel his strong arms round her—holding her. Ah, well; only a woman who has loved with all her heart and soul can understand Stella's sensations at that moment.

She lay still as his kisses rained on her face and hair, fierce kisses proclaiming his love and fiercely demanding hers. Then she made an effort.

"Rath! Rath! you must not—you must not! Ah, let me go! It is all changed now, all different! You are the Earl of Rattou. You are free to—

to choose."

He gazed down at her with a bewildered, non-comprehending air.

"What? What is all this you are saying? I am Rath, and you are Stella! My Stella! Are you angry with me about something? Because I am somebody else than I used to be? What does it matter? I am Rath, you are Stella! And you belong to me!"

"Ah, that—that is just it, just why—I—I cannot! Ah, let me go, Rath! I—I can't marry you!"

She expected him to loose her, to fall back aghast, overwhelmed; but in stead he smiled, actually smiled.

"All right," he said, cheerfully, but with his eyes still flashing. "Who wants you to? We'll go back to the island and be just as we were. I didn't marry you there—I was happy just because I had you with me—and I was satisfied—I think. Never mind about marrying me. Come back with me; let us go back to the old life, that's all I ask!"

She gasped, then hung her head before his innocence, his great, unselfish love. Then—oh, Eve, who bo-

quathed to all your daughters the terrible charm before which the sons of men bow the knee of the slave!—she wound her arms round his neck, and slowly—as one spins out a great delight and unspeakable joy—drew his head down to her and—of her own accord—kissed him on the lips. And with that kiss surrendered. (To be Continued.)

THE HEIR OF Lancewood

CHAPTER I.

Vivien Neslie was standing in the full glow of the sunshine, near a cluster of Gladioli, that formed a picture in themselves, all crimson and gold, bees buried in the bells, butterflies hovering round them. She had been looking at the gorgeous flowers, and still held one in her hands. There was no fairer spot in England than this sunlit garden, where the heiress of Lancewood stood with thoughtful face and dreamy eyes. Look where she would, nothing but beauty met her eyes, marvels of color, wonders of sunshine and shade. It was a garden, rather old-fashioned than otherwise, full of heavy rich roses, orange and scarlet nasturtiums, big fair clusters of hydrangea; there were blossoms of purple and white carnations, pure carnations, and lilies with white pure bells—a garden wherein a poet might dream, and a painter lose himself in the divine beauty of flower and tree. An old-fashioned sun-dial stood near the bright gladioli; not far from it was a fountain of rare and quaint design; tame white doves fluttered round, and birds of bright plumage sang in the trees. The June sun shone, and over all floated a breath of perfume sweet as the odors of Araby.

Vivien Neslie gazed round with dreamy eyes. Looking at her, one would say she was rightly placed, near the crimson and golden gladioli. She was in perfect harmony with the beauty of the garden—a tall, stately girl, with a Titian face, dark, glowing, splendid in its exquisite coloring and perfect features, the eyes of a rare purple hue, such as one sees in the heart of a passion-flower, darkening with every passing thought, bright as the stars in the sky, fringed with long lashes—mystical, dreamy eyes, full of passion and power—eyes in the liquid depths of which it was easy to lose both heart and senses; straight, imperial brows; a mouth like a pomegranate bud, sensitive, sweet, yet with some proud scornful curves—a girl that Titian would have painted, holding with white hand a crimson flower to her lips. A mass of dark hair, soft and shining, was drawn back from the beautiful face, and lay in luxuriant profusion over the white neck and shoulders. In the bloom of her girlish beauty she looked brilliant as a passion-flower in the sun.

Suddenly one of the tame white doves, fluttering round, lighted on her shoulder, and Vivien Neslie awoke from her dream.

What do girls fair and young dream of in the sunshine and flowers? Of the lover who is to come—of the love that is to crown them—of the sweet vague possibilities of life?

No such pretty thoughts occupied the heiress of Lancewood. She had been through the Hyde woods and round by the river; returning, she stopped to rest by the old sun-dial, and there her dark eyes wandered over one of the fairest scenes in England. She saw the dark masses of trees in Hyde woods; she saw purple hills rising in the far distance, crowned with rich foliage; she saw the deep, clear river gleaming in the sun; she saw rich clover meadows, golden corn fields, acre after acre of undulating fertile land; she saw a picture, scene park, where grand old trees of the growth of generations formed a shade for the antlered deer; and to the left lay the sunny Southern sea. She saw Lancewood Abbey, the home of her race, the grand, massive building that was like "a poem in stone;" and she thought that brightened the dreamy eyes was—"One day all this will be mine." All this—the wealth of wood and forest, of field and meadow—

low—even the far-famed old Abbey—! would one day be hers, for she was the only child of Sir Arthur Neslie, and heiress of Lancewood. She had the proud air of one who had always been obeyed. There was a grandeur about her such as comes only from always holding high authority, a frank independence, a certain kind of defiance—for it was a noble face, and a noble soul looked out of it.

"All this will be mine," thought the young girl, "and I will make good use of it. If I live long enough, my good deeds shall be my monument. I will leave a name that will live in the hearts of the people around me. This is my kingdom, and I shall be its queen."

It was not vanity that shone in her face as she said the words—it was something higher and nobler—pride that, rightly trained, might have made her what she wished to be, a noble woman—pride of race and of lineage, pride in a spotless name and high descent, pride in the grand old home that was second to none in the land.

All to be her own—and she would use it royally. She had often stood here by the old sun-dial, looking round on the vast domain, thinking what she would do when it became hers. She had been brought up as heiress of Lancewood. No other fate, no other lot in life, no other possibility had ever occurred to her except this. She had filled her mind with grand and noble thoughts, all for the good of others, when she would be queen of this her fair domain. It should be a pattern and model for all others—no one should be poor or sorrowful. She would be a lady bountiful, going amongst her people with open hands and open heart, relieving all distress. There should be churches where none had been built before—schools, almshouses. Her heart warmed as she thought of it all, as she pictured the white heads of the old and the fair faces of the young; and all were to be made happy by her. They were noble dreams—not out of place in the glow of the sunlight and amid the fragrance of flowers.

(To be Continued.)

What Are You Doing for that Eczema?

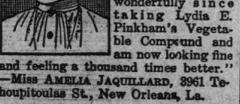
"Nothing; I've about given up trying to cure it."
"That is not wise. Do as I did and you will probably be cured in a short time. I used Zylex and Zylex Soap with it and my Eczema began to improve at once. A couple of boxes cured. You can get Zylex at your druggist's."
Zylex, 60c. a box; Zylex Soap, 25c. a cake.
Zylex, London.

Fads and Fashions.

White silk braid is used on linen suits.
Paris is using crinoline in some of its skirts.
Streamers are still worn on hats of god style.
Silk stockings may match the color of the blouse.
New evening dresses have sleeves puffed to the elbow.
Champagne seems to be the favorite summer color.
White shoes look very smart with blue taffeta dresses.
Delicately colored linens are used for afternoon frocks.
A little Irish lace is used to trim party frocks.
Oyster white khaki makes a delightful summer suit.
New parasols have their edges turned up all around.
Nothing is better suited than voile to the present fashions.
The success of a hat is largely a matter of poise and tilt.
Roses are more in favor than ever for gowns and millinery.
The smock has taken the place of the sweater in gardening.
The gay sweater over the white dress is still in good style.
Colored batiste blouses are worn with linen skirts to match.
Velvet and tulle are seen together on some of the smartest hats.
Black taffeta suits are trimmed with striped collars and cuffs.
Colored embroidered linen is used for smart little working suits.
There is a great deal of color introduced in the new neckwear.
The days of small-sized and well-adorned millinery are numbered.
Linen is assured of popularity as the hot weather draws nearer.
Soft tulle frills and open throats are very becoming to the young.

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The pretty tame doves aroused her from them. She dropped the spray of gladioli, and turned to the fountain. The gold fish almost seemed to know her as she touched the water softly.

Presently down a broad path shaded by acacia-trees came a young, handsome man, looking about him eagerly, as though in search of some one. At length he saw the glimmer of a white dress amongst the trees, and he stood still, silently watching her. She was singing just then in a low, sweet voice, and he listened to the words with a peculiar smile on his face. They were words by the poet Dibdin, quaint and sweet—

"I once had gold and silver—
I thought them without end;
I once had gold and silver—
I thought I had a friend.
My wealth is lost, my friend is false,
My love is stolen from me;
And here I lie in misery
Beneath the willow-tree."

He recognized the song as one called "The Mad Lover," and again a significant smile stole over his face.

"It is a strange song for her to sing," he thought to himself. "One never hears her singing love-ditties, as other girls do. She is far too imperial for that, I should imagine."

Then he went up to the fountain where the gold fish darted amongst the emerald-green weeds and the sun shone in the waters.

"Good-morning, Miss Neslie," he said, with a low bow.

The words of the song ceased abruptly as Vivien Neslie turned quickly round to see from whom the greeting came. A smile came over her face.

"Good-morning, Mr. Dorman; you startled me. Have the books come?"

"Yes," he replied. "I came to tell you. They are well selected; you will be pleased, I think."

"The last were all tiresome—nothing of any value in them," she continued. "Have they sent Browning's last poem?"

"Yes; we have several poetical works this time."
"If it is not troubling you too much, will you bring Browning out here to me? I should like to read in the sunshine; it is very pleasant."

(To be Continued.)

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