

Ruled Destiny!

CHAPTER XIII.
"COURTING TIME."

Some one else noticed it also, for as the ladies trooped off to the drawing-room, Floris felt Lady Betty's fan on her arm, and heard her whisper:

"How strange she looked to-night—Blanche, I mean!"

"Strange?" said Floris.
"Yes," said Lady Betty, pulling her down to an ottoman. "I have never seen her look like that. Do you know I'm afraid Blanche is up to mischief!"

"Aren't you inclined to be unjust to Lady Blanche?" Floris said, gently.

"You don't like her, you know—"

"No, I don't. We never could get on," assented Lady Betty, "and I am always suspicious of her; but I dare say I am unjust—oh, I've no doubt I am. After all, what mischief can she do?" and she looked at Floris, thoughtfully.

Floris shook her head.

"What indeed!" she said, laughing.

"One would think, hearing us talk that she was a naughty schoolgirl in perpetual danger of playing some trick or other."

"Hem!" said Lady Betty. "Hush!" here she comes, and she got up to make room for Lady Blanche.

If there had been any malice in the glance which Floris had met across the dinner table, her manner stoned for it now, if it did not entirely wipe out all remembrance of it.

Under the influence of the rare smile and the soft, dulcet voice, Floris found herself lulled into a belief that the beautiful creature could not possibly be guilty of anything approaching deceit, and she was in that state of mind when the door opened and the gentlemen entered.

She saw Lord Norman look around and discover her, and then come across the room with the directness and the speed of an arrow from a bow.

"Well!" he said. "You two talking scandal?"

"We have been having a charming chat," said Lady Blanche, "so nice and absorbing that we had quite forgotten you."

"All right," he said, "then I'll go away again."

"No, you need not do that," she said; "you can sit down and talk to Floris. I am going to play," and with a slow, graceful ease she glided to the piano and commenced playing.

"It is awfully warm," he said. "Let us go into the conservatory; we can hear Blanche's waltz just as well there. What a crowd it is! People

Ringworm on
Child's Head

Caused Great Distress and Spread to Neck and Ears—Cure Was Speedily Effected When Right Treatment Was Recommended.

There is no disease of the skin more obstinate than ringworm, and the mother who writes this letter does so fully realizing what it will mean to other anxious mothers to know about Dr. Chase's Ointment.

This remarkable cure was brought about two years ago, and as there has been no return of the distressing disease there can be no doubt that the cure is permanent.

Mrs. D. Stebbins, Grand Bend, Ont., writes: "I am going to tell you of my experience with Dr. Chase's Ointment. My little girl had some come out on her head which looked like ringworms. They were spreading fast, and I tried home treatment, but nothing helped her. I took her to the doctor, and he opened some of the sores, which were as big as the yoke of an egg. The salve he gave me to put on was very severe, and the poor child would cry for an hour or more after an application. For six weeks it continued to spread all over her head, and came down to her neck and ears. She suffered terribly. At last some kind ladies told me about Dr. Chase's Ointment, so I got a box, and the first time I put it on she was relieved of pain, and the second time the swelling was all gone. Before we had finished the first box the sores were nearly all gone. I have told all the people around here about your Ointment, and I cannot praise it too much. It is now two years since my little girl was troubled in this way, and it never came back, so you can see she is completely cured. You are at liberty to use this statement for the benefit of others who may be suffering in a similar manner."

Joseph Brenner, J.P., endorses this statement as follows: "This is to certify that I am personally acquainted with Mrs. D. Stebbins, of Grand Bend, Ont., and believe her statement with reference to Dr. Chase's Ointment to be true and correct."

Dr. Chase's Ointment, 60 cents a box; all dealers or Edmondson, Bates & Co., Limited, Toronto. Be suspicious of the druggist who tries to talk you into accepting a substitute.

come and go here as if it were open house for all the world."

He drew her arm through his, and they made their way into the large glasshouse which ran the whole length of one end of the room.

There, leaning against a marble statue of Venus, he stood and looked down at her, talking to her in that softened voice which is the best medium for love's confidences; and Floris, with half-closed eyes, sat and listened, forgetful of the world outside, even of the little world so near them.

Suddenly while she was sitting there, she heard a strange sound behind her, the sound as of some one trying to open a window.

For a moment or two she paid no attention to it, and it was Lord Norman who remarked it.

"There is an awful draught all of a sudden," he said. "Some one has opened a window."

And he turned and walked some steps behind her.

Floris heard him speak, and looking around saw, to her amazement, the thin figure of Josine standing close up against the glass wall.

She was very pale, and her black eyes shone with a half-frightened, half-defiant glare for a moment, then drooped, as she made a respectful courtesy.

"What are you doing here?" asked Lord Norman, quietly.

"Pardon, milord," said Josine, glibly; "I have lost my way."

"Lost your way!" he said, in his grave, clear voice. "Where were you going, then?"

The question was so sudden that for a moment Josine was nonplussed. She had expected Lord Norman would point to an open door in silence.

"To miladi's room, milord," she replied.

Lord Norman looked at her keenly.

"To the upper corridor! What are you doing here then?" he demanded.

Josine had gathered her wits by this time, and raised her eyes with a deprecatory glance.

"Pardon, milord. I had a letter for her ladyship, and hoped to get an opportunity of delivering it. Milord, a thousand pardons! I have dropped it!"

Lord Norman looked at her sternly in silence.

"Yes!" she exclaimed, under her breath, her eyes roving over the floor.

"It is certain that I have dropped it," Bruce pressed Floris' hand to prevent her speaking, and she stood skilfully looking down, while Lady Blanche held the letter daintily between her finger and thumb.

"You had better go and find it," he said, pointing to the open door behind her. "Go through that door and you will find yourself in one of the open passages to the hall; there are servants there who will direct you, as you know, and might have remembered! Do not, please, enter this part of the house unless you are requested to do so!"

"Yes, milord, certainly," she murmured, and with a drooping head and gait, eloquent of the deepest contrition and humility, she passed out.

They waited a little while longer, then Floris got up.

"Let us go in now," she said, falteringly; and she drew away from him to the drawing-room.

As she did so she saw something white lying on the ground at her feet, and pointed to it with her fan.

"What is that, Bruce?" she asked.

He stooped down and picked it up.

"It's a letter," he said, carrying it to the light; "and addressed to—"

"Lady Betty," she broke in. "Bruce, admit that you have done poor Josine an injustice."

He held the note up with the direction toward him.

"Admit that in your mind you have done me an injustice, if you please!" he retorted, smiling. "This letter is addressed to the Lady Blanche Seymour!"

"To Lady Blanche Seymour!" echoed Floris. "What a strange coincidence that Josine should lose a letter for Lady Betty, and that you should find one on the spot addressed to Lady Blanche!"

"Isn't it?" he assented; then he looked at the address thoughtfully.

"Strange!" he said. "The handwriting seems familiar to me, and yet I cannot remember whose it is." Floris went and looked over his arm at the envelope.

"Why, it has not come through the post, Bruce," she said, then she laughed. "How dreadfully curious we are! It is awfully bad manners to examine another person's letters so minutely. Pray take it to her at once."

He put the letter in his pocket, still thoughtful.

"No, I can't remember; and yet the writing is as familiar to me as my own. Floris," suddenly, "do you think it was this note that girl had lost?"

"No," she said distinctly that it was for Lady Betty."

He shook his head.

"I mistrust that girl. Let us take it to Blanche."

A great German maestro was playing on the grand piano, a buzz of conversation filled the room, and at the farther end, surrounded by several men, they saw Lady Blanche.

She was sitting in a deep, high-backed chair, leaning indolently back, her fan moving to and fro listlessly, and her eyes fixed on vacancy.

She might have been listening to the music, or to the man who was talking to her, or lost in her own thoughts; to Floris' mind she made a splendid picture of beauty conscious of its power, and Floris stopped Lord Norman by pressing his arm.

"How beautiful she is, Bruce!" she whispered.

"Eh? Oh! Blanche?—yes!" he said, with emphasis. "I think her the loveliest woman I have ever seen—no, no! you must not indulge in such silly flattery!" for he had whispered a word or two of a beauty that was sweeter to him than Lady Blanche's. "See how they hang upon her for a word or smile. If she were a queen she could not be more courted. If I were a man I should not be able to resist her."

He laughed softly.

He was so happy, so free from care, so entirely wrapped up in his passionate devotion to the beautiful girl on his arm, that he could afford to laugh at his fancy for Lady Blanche as a midsummer madness past and gone.

"Let us give her her note," he said. They went up to the little group, and Lady Blanche raised her eyes and smiled up at them, a half sleepy smile such as Cleopatra might have dwelt in, as she lay on board her yacht surrounded by her slaves.

"I've something for you, Blanche," said Lord Norman.

"Yes?" opening her eyes wide and

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holding out her hand.

The little crowd looked on for a moment, then man by man cleared away, and the three were left together.

"What is it? I am continually dropping my bracelets and things. Give it to me, Bruce."

"It is not a bracelet, Blanche," he said, and he held out the letter.

She took it, glanced at it, shook her head.

"Who is it from? How did you come by it?"

"How can I tell? Open it and see."

"May I?" with a glance at Floris.

"Yes, we are all curiosity," he said, smiling.

She raised her eyebrows.

"Will you promise to pay it for me if it should be a bill? Will you—"

She stopped suddenly, and the blood rose to her pale face, dying it a deep crimson, then left it paler than before.

Floris was astonished. Lord Bruce looked grave.

"Is it bad news, Blanche?" he asked. She looked up at him steadily.

"Bad news? No! Why should you think that?" she asked, laughing softly. "It is a bill, and so exorbitant a one that it made me feel quite angry. I wish you had promised to pay it," and she let the paper fall into her lap, but so "carefully carelessly" that the blank side fell upward.

At that moment, with a final crash, the great maestro's performance came to an end; a murmur of applause broke out; there was a general movement—people always move about at the end of a piece of music or song, as if they had been listening patiently, instead of talking loudly as they invariably do—and some one spoke to Lord Norman, and drew his attention away from Lady Blanche.

When he looked around, a minute or two later, she had gone, and she did not appear again that evening.

In the privacy of her own room, having locked the door, she took out the paper and read it again, and as she did so her lips grew pale and hard, and her brows knitted with the look of care and anxiety which Lady Betty had noticed.

"Will you meet me in the plantation by the bridge to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock?" ran the note.

There was no signature, but though Lord Norman had forgotten the handwriting, Lady Blanche had not. It was Oscar Raymond's.

With an inarticulate cry she drew herself to her full height, crushing the paper in her hand, almost as if the writer were before her, and she could crush him with her scorn, and contempt, and defiance.

"He writes—he orders me—as if I were his slave!" she muttered, fiercely, between her teeth. "Oh, fool! fool! that I was, ever to have listened to him! And yet—and yet—if it can be done! Oh, how I hate her! If it can be done! If he can tear them asunder, I do not mind this humiliation, this disgrace! Her happiness mocks and maddens me! And it is for Bruce's sake, not for mine alone! He would tire of her in a month, while I—I know that I would keep his love for my life! Oh, love! love! to what depths am I dragged for your dear sake!"

The plantation was not a recent addition to the estate, for the first had been planted three generations back, and were grown high and large enough to form a little wood, that served as a cover for the game and made a pretty point in view from the house.

Lady Blanche knew the spot well, and knew, too, why Oscar Raymond had chosen it.

From that point of the plantation which he had chosen, the whole of the coast could be seen, and no one could come upon them unawares—at any rate, from the house.

Sir Joseph had formed a riding party for that morning, and Lady Blanche had promised to join it, but she sent down a message by her maid that she had a headache, and did not appear in the breakfast-room, in which breakfast was kept going from nine till noon, and which presented the appearance of a London restaurant from the number of people who dropped in at all times between those hours, and the continued moving to and fro of the servants.

At ten o'clock the riding party started, and Lady Blanche, having made inquiries, learned that Lord Norman had gone with it, but that Miss Carlisle had remained in the house with Lady Betty.

(To be continued.)

Remember to use butter on the table, but not in cooking and that cream is to be regarded as a food and not as a luxury.

Fashion Plates

The Home Dressmaker should keep a Catalogue Scrap Book of our Pattern Cuts. These will be found very useful to refer to from time to time.

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Blouse—2483. Skirt—2381.

Comprising Ladies' Blouse Pattern 2483 and Ladies' Skirt Pattern 2381. White linen, with checker-board bands in black and white, is here illustrated. The design is also good for gingham, poplin, voile, satin, foulard, taffeta and shantung. The skirt is a two-piece model. The belt holds the fullness of the one-piece blouse. The Skirt Pattern 2381 is cut in 6 sizes: 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 32 inches waist measure. It requires 2 1/2 yards of 44-inch material for a 24-inch size. The Blouse 2483 is cut in 7 sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. Size 36 requires 4 1/2 yards of 44-inch material. The skirt measures about 3 1/2 yards at the foot.

This illustration calls for TWO separate patterns, which will be mailed to any address on receipt of 10 cents FOR EACH pattern, in silver or stamps.

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