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THE HEIR OF Lancewood

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"He is living and well," returned Gerald; "he is on his way now to America with one who will take the greatest care of him—one who will make him a good, honest, honorable man. He is so young that he will soon forget all about Lancewood. He can live in affluence, if you please, but away from here, and Lancewood will remain in proper hands."

She stood like one turned to stone; the setting sun shining on her face showed that it was white, and cold, and still as the face of the dead. She never moved nor spoke. The shock was so terrible to her that in after years she wondered that it did not kill her.

"May Heaven forgive me," she said slowly—"and you also! I can never pardon myself, Gerald. I feel like a murderer."

"Nay," he returned; "so far as the boy is concerned, the change is far better for him; instead of growing up a dissipated, unprincipled, spoiled tyrant, he will be made a useful man and a good member of society. He would never have been that here."

"Shall," she said, dreamily, "I do not understand. You were away in London when Oswald disappeared—how could you have been concerned in his abduction?"

"I went to London merely to obtain a disguise," he answered. "Shall I tell you the story of the abduction, Miss Neslie?"

She bent her head for a minute and then, raising it, said—
"Yes; tell me all—tell me every detail."

CHAPTER XXXV.

"Tell me all about the abduction of little Oswald," repeated Miss Neslie to Gerald Dorman.

"I will tell you everything," he promised. "I had planned it in my own mind even before I had left your side on the evening that you gave me your ring. I told you I was going to London on the morning following; I thought you understood that it was for this."

"I never even dreamed of it," said Vivien, slowly.

"I went to London and there purchased for myself the disguise of an old man—a white wig and a white beard. These, with a broad-brimmed hat, so disguised my face that I hardly knew myself. I next purchased the dress of a little girl, and then I returned to Lancewood. For days I wandered about here, watching an opportunity to waylay the boy; that opportunity came at last, when I found him by the banks of the river. He did not know me, and I persuaded him to go into the woods with me."

He stopped abruptly—a low moan from Vivien's lips had startled him.

"Miss Neslie," he said, "believe me, the evil is not without remedy. Just as I would have died to do it, I would die to undo it."

"Tell me all," she said, presently. "I will tell you. In the disguise I had purchased I met the child, and he did not know me. I took him into the woods, and, by telling him some story or other, persuaded him to change his clothes and put on the little girl's dress that I had bought. He enjoyed the fun, and talked all the time; then, I leading him by the hand, we walked down to the river-side, and, unseen by him, I threw his hat and cape into the water—further down I flung in his whip. Many people who afterward joined in the search met that day an old man and a little girl, as they thought, without the least idea who they really were. Then we went straight across the country, took a main at a leading junction, and went to London. My brother, who is devoted to me, has undertaken the entire charge and education of the boy; but he does not know who he is, and he treats all he says about Lancewood as the result of a diseased brain—or, if he suspects, he says nothing. I have promised him five hundred per annum, and with that he is to provide handsomely for the boy. He will be well fed, well dressed, well educated; he will have the training of a Christian gentleman and will be taught a trade or profession, whichever he prefers. He likes my brother, and remained with him willingly enough."

"But, asked Vivien, in a low voice, "Did he not cry for his home or his mother?"

"No; the novelty of traveling, and going to sea, more than compensated for home. Indeed, Miss Vivien, I do not think the child ever liked his mother. He is so young; at his age every impression soon fades. Before he has been a year with my brother he will think his life at Lancewood a dream. I posted my letter from London, that I might not appear to be in any way mixed up in the affair. I spent the greater part of my time in Liverpool, making preparations for the boy's departure. I assure you, when I saw him last, he was living and well; he stood on the deck laughing and waving his hand to me. I assure you also of another thing—he was a far better boy when he went away than he had ever been here. My brother is a good man, who will train him well. If he suspects any mystery at all, it is nothing like the truth. He may imagine that the boy is Lady Neslie's son—he does not know that he is heir to Lancewood. The advertisements and rewards that attracted so much attention never met his eyes."

She stood quite silent, leaning against the passion-flowers; then suddenly she raised her face to the blue sky.

"I did not mean you to act as you have done," she said. "That day I was mad with shame and misery, but I did not mean it—I swear I did not. And I did not think you would take me at my word."

He looked at her sadly. "I understand. On that day you felt capable of anything; afterward you repented."

"I did not think much of it afterward," she replied. "Gerald, my brain is not clear—I am dazed. I forget if I really meant it. I forget if I felt sorry afterward. I only remember that I thought anything better than to let Lancewood fall into such unworthy hands."

His face brightened. "Then perhaps, after all, I have not displeased you?" he said. "Remember that I would die for you, and that death would be more acceptable to me than your displeasure."

She stood motionless, her hands clasped together; she heard the rustle of Mr. Greston's paper, the faint ripple of the fountain, the sweet whisper of the wind; she heard, and it all seemed to her outside her own life—she was alone with this terrible decision before her—alone with the terrible secret that had almost slain her. Should she say "Yes," and see the old times renewed in all their horror—see mildred with her train of followers return—see ruin, destruction, dissipation, even shame, once more at Lancewood—see the ill-trained child of a strolling player master and lord? Or should she say "No," and see more than the ancient honor of Lancewood revive? Should she say "Yes," and purchase for her own soul peace, even at the price of Lancewood? Or should she say "No," and never know peace again?

How long they had both stood there they did not know; hours might have passed in the agony of that interval. At last Vivien raised her face once more to his. It was quite colorless, with an expression in the eyes that afterward never quite left them.

"I have decided," she said, in a hoarse whisper. "Let matters remain as they are."

He caught her hands in his own. "Do you mean it? You will not repent, you will not regret it?"

"I mean it," she said—"no strolling player's child shall be lord of Lancewood. I shall never repent or regret my decision—it is for the best."

And that was the sin of her lifetime. Once before, she had said the same thing, but it was in the hurried passion of the hour, when she was goaded past all endurance. Now there was no anger, no passion. She stood under the calm summer's sky, the world at rest, the wind whispering of peace, the flowers of Heaven. She had time to reflect, to deliberate, to judge calmly; and she decided that things should remain as they were—that the heir of Lancewood should not regain his inheritance; and so she committed the sin of her lifetime.

Gerald saw her bow down over some crushed passion flowers in her hand—flowers not more crushed than the noble soul that had fallen into such an abyss of guilt.

Defy Dyspepsia!

Among the symptoms of Dyspepsia or Indigestion may be mentioned a heavy, cutting pain soon after eating; a distended, full feeling of the stomach and bowels; belching of wind and flatulence; a burning sensation in the stomach, which indicates acidity; heartburn; palpitation of the heart; oppression of breathing; pain under the ribs and shoulder-blades; headache through the temples and eyes; dizziness, coated tongue and constipation; sometimes nausea or vomiting.

Abbey's Effervescent Salt is the natural specific for all these conditions. Being an antacid, it immediately relieves the acidity of the stomach and stops the fermentation. It stimulates the secretion and muscular action of the stomach and bowels, and overcomes the constipation. When its use is kept up the normal action of all the organs of digestion is re-established.

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She looked at him with sad dreamy eyes, his meaning quite lost upon her.

"It can all be remedied, Miss Neslie," he said. "You have but to say the word, and I will undo the evil. I will go at once to America and bring the boy back. I can say that he was stolen by tramps or gypsies. I can fabricate a story that will have every appearance of truth. I can say that he was stolen for the sake of the reward that would be offered. Lady Neslie would be so delighted to recover him that she would be quite content to pardon the theft. I should tell her that those who had stolen the child awaited her promise of full pardon before returning him. Trust me—even as I have done this deed, I will find some way to undo it. Miss Neslie, everything rests now in your hands. On the day that you wished the boy got rid of you may have spoken unguardedly, under the influence of unbearable irritation; afterward you may have repented what you said; but now you have time to think, so I leave the matter in your hands. If you say 'Yes,' I will bring the boy back at once, and take all the consequences upon myself; if you say 'No,' I will let him be where he is. It is for you to decide."

"Yes," she answered faintly. "I do not ask for your life; I ask for your love. You remember the king of old who said, 'Ask of me what you will—even if it be half of my kingdom—and I will give it to you.' You have said more than that to me; I ask for your love."

She looked at him vaguely, as though she did not understand. "I know," he said, "that I am far beneath you—only the greatness of my love elevates me and places me by your side. I have no money, no position, but I love you with a devotion of far more worth than gold or lands. Your father trusted me; you have trusted me. He left you in some measure to my care—my whole heart and life lie at your feet."

She interrupted him suddenly with a gesture of command. "Hush," she said. "I did not understand before; you are making love to me!"

"I am laying my heart, my life, my soul, my love at your feet," he replied. "Words are all too weak to tell you how I love you. I have loved you from the first moment I saw your beautiful face, and I shall love you until I die."

"Yet you have helped me to sin terribly!" she said, with a shudder. "Is it a sin that takes power from worthless hands and gives it to a noble woman who will use it nobly? Is it a sin to save a boy from the worst of all lives—that of an idle profligate—and make of him an honest man? Even according to your own creed, Miss Neslie, is it a sin to take Lancewood from the child of a strolling player and give it to a loyal descendant of the grand old Norse race?"

"Yes," she answered sadly. "You and I may use what sophistry we like—we may gloss it over, we may call it by any fine name we choose—none the less it is a mean, pitiful, terrible sin."

"Will you undo it?" he asked patiently. "I have told you 'No.' Do not torture me," she replied quickly. (To be Continued.)

ITALY PREPARES FOR WINTER.
New York, Aug. 18.—More than 2,500,000 yards of material will be required in the manufacture of 800,000 overcoats, orders for which are said to have been placed by the Italian Government, through its purchasing agency in this city with the C. Kenyon Company, Sigmund Eisner and Heidelberg, Wolf & Co. There are two separate orders calling for 400,000 overcoats each. It is reported that contracts for much of the material have been made with Massachusetts mills, principally in the Pittsfield section.

The American Woolen Company and S. H. and C. B. Newhouse, it is said, have received Italian orders for more than a million pairs of blankets.

The Textile Manufacturers Journal says good sized orders are also reported to have been given by Russia in preparation for another winter's campaign.

"Reports regarding activity by Belgium and France," it continues, "are said to be without foundation, as it is declared on good authority that the supplies on hand for those Governments are sufficient for some time to come."

There is nothing better for the girl's play outfit than bloomers and a middie blouse. The neckline, as well as the waistline, is not a stationary thing. It may be high or low.

He did not interrupt her—he stood patiently by her side, watching her intently, longing to say some word of comfort or hope, but not daring to do so. Then the sun set and the dew began to fall—he saw some drops on her dark hair and some on her dress, and bowels; belching of wind and flatulence; a burning sensation in the stomach, which indicates acidity; heartburn; palpitation of the heart; oppression of breathing; pain under the ribs and shoulder-blades; headache through the temples and eyes; dizziness, coated tongue and constipation; sometimes nausea or vomiting.

He never forgot the face she raised to his, so white was it, so full of pain and anguish, the dark eyes dim with unshed tears. His whole heart went out from him in a passion of pity.

"Miss Neslie," he said, "now that we are here, talking for the last time, I hope, of this subject, which distresses you so greatly, I take courage and venture to speak to you of my reward."

"Your reward?" she echoed. "Yes; you remember your words—that to the man who would save Lancewood you would give your life? You remember that?"

"Yes," she said faintly. "I do not ask for your life; I ask for your love. You remember the king of old who said, 'Ask of me what you will—even if it be half of my kingdom—and I will give it to you.' You have said more than that to me; I ask for your love."

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387th Day of the War LATEST From the Front. Messages Received Previous to 9 A.M.

OFFICIAL.
LONDON, Aug. 24. The Governor, Newfoundland: The French Government report a German destroyer sunk off Ostend by two French torpedo boats; also German trenches captured in Vosges. The Russian reports confirm the German losses in the Gulf of Riga. The Russians are offering strong resistance in the region of Brest. The Italian Government reports strong enemy trenches captured at Carso. London, Aug. 25.—The French Government report violent fighting in the Vosges, with the enemy repulsed. The Russian Government report Osowiec evacuated. **BONAR LAW.**

FORCING OF DARDANELLES—RUSSIAN STRAITS ALREADY FORCED.

LONDON, Aug. 25. Forcing of the Dardanelles and an attack on Constantinople may be looked for at any moment now, is the opinion of military authorities here. Rumors were rife to-day that the Straits had already been forced by the Allies, and one official, stating that he had it on unimpeachable authority, but refusing to give details, made the following enigmatical statement: "Something of such importance has already occurred at the Dardanelles that the price of wheat will shortly be greatly affected."

It is probable that many of these rumors take their origin in a statement from Athens, this morning, that two British cruisers had penetrated the Dardanelles, sunk four Turkish transports and destroyed several shore batteries, a story that caused great enthusiasm in London to-day.

On the heels of this story came the French official statement, issued to-day, telling of great British gains on land and the sinking of a Turkish transport by a French aviator.

Though all this proves that terrific fighting has been taking place on Gallipoli Peninsula recently, the British War Office and Admiralty have made no official statement, but a report from General Sir Ian Hamilton is expected at any time.

Other stories from Athens state that the Turkish capital is overflowing with wounded; that every hospital and every spare public building in the city is filled, and ships

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By S. S. Florizel, Thursday, August 26:
50 brls. NEW POTATOES, 29 brls. APPLES, 10 cases CAL. ORANGES, 10 bunches BANANAS, TURKEYS, CHICKEN, N. Y. CORNED BEEF.

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