IN THE TOILS;

But Happiness Comes at Last.

CHAPTER VI.

SIX MONTHS LATER.

At the end of the street Derrick hesitated.

"I have been very rash," he said, "accepting your invitation. There are lots of things I have to do—letters, and that kind of thing."

Stephen Rawdon looked up with a quick, almost eager, remonstrance.

"You won't change your mind!" he said. "Surely you will come, if only for an hour or two? My wife will be delighted to welcome you. Oh, come, if only for an hour or so! You say you have no engagement?"

"None," said Hastley Derrick, "but I have a great deal to do. Do you mind giving me an hour's grace? Give me your address, and I will follow you home in an hour's time to the minute. I can't ask you to wait, because that would not be fair to Mrs. Rawdon; but I will follow you, if you will let me."

Stephen Rawdon flushed in the light of the gas lamp.

"All right," he said; "I will go on and prepare the way. You will follow in an hour—is that so?"

"That's it," said Derrick, pressing his arm. "The address!—don't forget that."

"Tell the cabman to put you down at Thorn Villa, Ashby Road," said Stephen Rawdon.

Derrick repeated the name, to make sure of it.

"Thorn Villa—a rose without a thorn," he said. "Adieu for an hour, my dear fellow."

And he strode up the street to his chambers.

Stephen Rawdon stood looking after him thoughtfully, then he turned and walked away slowly, his lips set tight and his eyes cast down. He was thinking hard.

Presently he put his hand in his pocket and took out a few shillings, weighed them mechanically, and frowned; then stopped suddenly, as if struck by a sudden thought.

It was either a very pleasant or very unpleasant one, for it made his dark cheeks flush and his eyes flash.

"Would she do it?" he muttered. "She shall do it!" he ground out fiercely, as if in answer.

Then he put up his coat collar and walked on, looking about him. Presently he came to a chemist's; with his handkerchief to his face, he went into the shop and asked for a little laudanum.

"For the toothache, sir?" queried the shopman blandly.

Stephen Rawdon said, "Yes; he could not get any sleep."

"Be careful of the quantity, sir," said the man. "If you want to get to sleep quickly, take a dose up to the first mark in the bottle."

So Stephen Rawdon said that he would be careful, paid for the laudanum, went out, and hailed a cab.

"Drive me to the corner of Ashby Road, St. John's Wood, quickly, and I will give you double fare," he said.

"Jump in, sir," was the response, and the horse sprang forward with a start, as if it had heard and understood the compact.

Thorn Villa was one of those convenient little boxes which the soul of the moderately well-off artist and actor delights in; it stood by itself, a little back from its neighbors, and was rather isolated. People in the neighborhood were rather curious as to its occupants, and when the lady of the house went in or out, heads appeared at the windows, and curious eyes peeped over blinds and from behind curtains; but the lady, young and probably handsome, wore a veil, and curiosity was disappointed. She went out but seldom, and was never seen without the veil, which, though not thick enough to be conspicuous, was sufficiently opaque to conceal her features.

The young lady, about whom her neighbors were so curious, was sitting in the drawing-room of Thorn Villa, and, while Stephen Rawdon's cab is on its way, we may, invisibly precede him, and satisfy our curiosity.

The room is small but comfortably furnished, almost elegantly, indeed, so far as can be seen in the only light thrown by the glow of the fire. There is a piano, good pictures, books—plenty of books. The young lady has one in her hand, but it is too dark to read, and she sits with her finger between the pages; it is Shakespeare, and the finger is between Act I., Scenes II. and III. of "Hamlet," and her head is resting on her hand.

It is six months since we saw that face last, and, though changed, we recognize it. It is Olive. Six months ago the face was that of a girl—absorbed, vaguely wistful, innocent; it is now the face of a woman, though still girlish in its exquisite contour and soft moldings—a face almost perfect in its loveliness, almost intense in its power of expression. The eyes seem to have grown darker, deeper; the mouth more resolute, the thick, dark brows more distant and characteristic. But there is still a more marked change in her expression: once wistful, it is now sad, as if the dream had gone and an awakening had succeeded. There is a touch of restraint, of doubt, and cloud upon it that is pathetic in the extreme; pathetic and touching in a marvelous way; it rivets the attention and haunts one.

There is a change, too, in her dress. In place of the old, well-worn stuff frock, is a soft and elegantly made cashmere, with the glistening of satin here and there, to mark the graceful curves of the undulating figure; a slight band of black velvet sets off the white, shapely throat and the pale, beautiful face above it. There are no rings on the slim, stainless fingers; no jewelry anywhere: but the face nor form require any ornaments they are enough in themselves. And this is Olive, the girl whose disappearance had caused an excitement unprecedented in the country village; the girl who had left the poor shadow of a protector and the mockery of a home at the word of a lover whom she had seen but thrice, and to whom she had not been drawn by love but driven by necessity.

She is thinking of it now, as she looks steadily into the fire with the dark eyes wide open dreamily, and it seems a dream. The flight, the private marriage, the new home, the new life which the man she had trusted had sworn should be so bright and happy.

Bright and happy; well, bright if not happy for the time—for the time. As she looks back, the first two months of her new life rise before her; when Stephen Rawdon, in the freshness of his passion, thought nothing too good for her; when the days passed in a round of pleasures; when the world looked bright and glad, and she had begun to think and to dream that she could give him back something of the love she—and he—fancied that he gave her. A life of change and pleasures, the greatest of all being that one delicious delight—the theater. The jewels, the dresses, the luxuries of her new home, all paled before that one pleasure—the theater. Can she ever forget the sensations of that first night, when the wonders and the glories of the mimic world were unfolded before her! How her husband had laughed at her excitement, and teased her respecting the tears with which she witnessed the misery of Ophelia and Juliet. The theater! As she sits now, with that dark cloud that has fallen upon her—that cloud that has come, not suddenly, but gradually and surely—the remembrance of those nights when Stephen Rawdon had taken her to see "Hamlet," "Macbeth," "The Lady of Lyons"—all the plays so familiar to most persons, so strange and novel to her—soften the keen edge of her musings.

Yes, the cloud has gathered quickly; two months of ardent passion, a month of gradual coolness, and now—The mobile lips tighten suddenly and the brows droop, the face looks almost tragic in the glow of the firelight.

Her husband had grown tired of her.

There was the hard, naked truth that stared her in the face. Other things had changed also—the jewels had disappeared; money which had been so plentiful, had grown scarce; letters came, and were received with an audible curse. The dark, handsome face had assumed a scowl in place of the eager smile; there were no more theaters, no more excursions of pleasure; a blight—the old blight, which had been her companion from childhood, seemed to fall on this new life also, and Olive sits, dreading she knows not what, and seeing visions of evil in the firelight.

It was all so like a dream. After four months she cannot help reflecting that she knows no more of her husband than she knew on that moonlight night when she—she—had asked him to marry her. He had said that he was an artist, but he had not touched the blank canvas on the easel in the room he called his studio; he had said that he was well known, but he had not introduced her to a single friend. No one but the tradespeople came to the house; he had taken her to no other. Ignorant as she was of the world and its ways, their course of life seemed strange to Olive, even during the first few months, but now its mysteriousness struck her with a foreboding chill.

She had plenty of time to think and ponder on it now, too, for Stephen Rawdon, who would scarcely leave her side at one time, had left her early in the morning, and often did not return till late—sometimes did not return until the following day. A muttered, reluctant excuse was all he vouchsafed in explanation. Vague complaints of ill luck and misfortune were the principal themes of his conversation when they were together, and often he sat for an hour, silent and moody.

Olive was too proud to ask for an explanation; ever before her rose the memory of that night. It was she who had asked him to rescue her from the tyranny of her only protector; it was she who had gone to him; and that memory kept her proud and silent.

So she drew within herself, as it were, taking refuge in the one sole pleasure left her—her books.

In Stephen Rawdon's neglected studio was a bookcase, the key of which he had given her with a laugh, telling her that she would find nothing but musty old plays and poems—he had bought them of some fellow student in difficulties. These musty old plays—and Shakespeare at the head of them—were Olive's delight. She learned some of them by heart, and often during the absence—the mysterious absence—of Stephen Rawdon, she would walk up and down the room, her hands clasped loosely before her, her head thrown back, repeating the Ophelia's or Juliet's lines.

There was not a female character in the plays she had seen with Stephen Rawdon that she did not muse over, weighing the actress' manner of delivering the words, or gestures, and unconsciously criticizing them. She had no definite idea or longing in all this; she did it because she was alone, and it was natural to her.

(To be Continued.)

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Any druggist can supply you with 2½ ounces of Pinex (50 cents worth). Pour this into a 16-oz. bottle and fill the bottle with plain granulated sugar syrup. Shake thoroughly and it is ready for use. The total cost is about 55 cents and gives you 16 ounces—a family supply—of a most effectual pleasant tasting remedy. It keeps perfectly.

It's truly astonishing how quickly it acts, penetrating through every air passage of the throat and lungs—loosens and raises the phlegm, soothes and heals the inflamed or swollen throat membranes, and gradually but surely the annoying throat tickle and dreaded cough will disappear entirely. Nothing better for bronchitis, spasmodic croup, whooping cough or bronchial asthma.

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This style is simple, attractive and comfortable. The right front overlaps the left at the closing. The sleeve may be finished in wrist or elbow length. The fulness at the waistline is to be confined by a belt or to be gathered, with a casing underneath. Gingham, seersucker, drill, linene, linen, alpaca, chambray, gabardine, flannel, flannelette and serge are all good for this style. The Pattern is cut in 6 sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust measure. It requires 6¾ yards of 36-inch material for a 36-inch size. The dress measures about 2¾ yards at its lower edge.

A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 10 cents in silver or stamps.

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Waist—2321. Skirt—2319.

Here is a dainty combination of Ladies' Waist Pattern 2321 and Ladies' Skirt Pattern 2319. In dark blue serge with trimming of gray braid, this will make a pretty and also practical dress. With blue wool velours, black braid could be used. For a smart dressy gown, one could have satin or crepe, or gabardine with fur trimming. The waist pattern is cut in 7 sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. The skirt is cut in 7 sizes: 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32 and 34 inches waist measure. It will require 9 yards of 44-inch material for the entire dress for a 36-inch size. The skirt measures about 2⅝ yards at the foot.

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EARLY MES

IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT OPENED AT NOON.

King George, accompanied by the Queen and Prince of Wales, who is on leave from the Italian front, performs the ceremony of opening Parliament at noon, with the absence of some of the customary spectacular features. It was decided that in view of the war peers and peeresses will not wear their gorgeous titular robes and coronets, while naval and military members of both Houses will wear service dress, instead of flashy gold laced full dress uniforms.

KING'S SPEECH TO PARLIAMENT.

LONDON, Feb. 12.

In his speech at the opening of Parliament to-day, King George said the struggle had reached a critical stage which demanded more than ever the full use of the country's energies and resources until recognition is offered of the only principles upon which an honorable peace can be concluded. The King declared it is the duty of the British to prosecute the war with all the vigor they possess. Complaints that Ministers have interfered with the military chiefs have been resuscitated recently and voiced outspokenly in a section of the press. This subject will be brought to a debate in association with the demand for an explanation of the enlargement of the powers of the Supreme War Council at the recent meeting at Versailles. Before concluding the debate which may continue for two or three days, the Radical and Labor members will again urge their views regarding the war aims and peace by negotiation, and may also move an amendment criticizing the policy of the Versailles Council, whose official statement referred to vigorous prosecution of the war as the only immediate task of the Allies, and regretting that the door was thus closed to the peace congress. A conversation of a joint Allied statement of war aims may also be demanded.

RUSSIA CONCLUDES PEACE.

LONDON, Feb. 12.

Confirmation of a German report that Russia has withdrawn from the war is contained in an official Russian statement received here to-day. The statement says that Russia declares war with Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria to have ended. Russian troops simultaneously received an order for complete demobilization on all fronts. For the defence of the frontier some detachments of younger soldiers will be left.

THE PREMIER'S SPEECH.

LONDON, Feb. 12.

Addressing the Commons to-day Premier Lloyd George said he had read with profound disappointment replies given to President Wilson and the declarations of the British Government by Count Von Hertling, German Chancellor and Count Czenin, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister. The Premier added it was perfectly true that as regarded the tone there was a great difference between the speeches and he wished he could believe there was a difference in substance. Lloyd-George said the government stood by the considered declaration made at meetings with the Trades Union representatives, early this year, and the Government, the Premier added didn't recede in the least from its war aims as they had been stated. It was no use, he said, crying peace when there was no peace. Regarding the Supreme War Council he said it was impossible to make a statement as to the decisions it had reached without giving information to the enemy. Lloyd George said he would like any member to point out anything in the speeches of Count Czernin o possibly lo the Centr make pea regarded many's a Premier p declaratio had no re been give could be declared. regarding legitimat of her l had been Italian r Austrian better pr in any sp til the C to consid which th it would duty to necessary national r in Novem that the have exc then Ru and a had been front fro had beco Allies ha sider the menace House of with the way was Field Ma bertson session and appr ier requ the Gov ments ma blow of that Ger ment no eastern mind wh of the a real be The situ pletely asserted Supreme minded of gala country the futu If inform to be gi fer the other si military sending East to which ler said whole sc France, should be where th rangement which ha mies a menace scene of remarks, vulge the War Co the enem get. Am mier Asq strongest tion that mation what Ger Council largely jected in imputatio with a support

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