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## The Lost Will; OR, LOVE TRIUMPHS AT LAST!

CHAPTER XIX.

"Oh, yes, rather!" exclaimed Mrs. Feltham, enthusiastically. "I've never known Jack guilty of a mean thought or action; and I've known him since he was a child."

The elder woman's words warmed the heart of the younger one, and there was something like a smile on her face as she turned and threw over her shoulder:

"He will never need a champion while you're alive."

"Father not, dear old Jack!" laughed back Mrs. Feltham.

Nora rode to the Abbey, her heart lightened by Mrs. Feltham's praise of the accused one; in the face of such a testimony Jack's guilt seemed impossible. Lady Blanche was on her garden seat, and she stretched out her arms to Nora with a loving greeting.

"Do you know, I was wondering whether you were coming over. And I was longing for you all day yesterday, for I felt terribly lonely. Edward had deserted me for the first time for—oh, ever so long. He went up to town suddenly, on important business, two days ago—I don't know what it was." She smiled as she caressed Nora's hand. "It is not often that Edward has a secret to keep from me; but he said nothing about this business, and this morning, when I asked him, all he would say was that it had turned out quite satisfactorily."

"I am glad of that," said Nora, leaning back on the bench and regarding Lady Blanche affectionately.

"Do you know, I shouldn't like a man who had no reserve; he would be too much like us women."

"That's very true," responded Blanche, with a laugh. "We tell everything, don't we? But, then, we've so little to conceal. Oh, I don't mean that Edward goes in for mysteries; but he is rather silent and reticent. Although I missed him so much, I am glad he went up to London and got a little change. I often think that it must be very dull for him here—until we came to know you, Nora, dear. He has been quite changed since then; ever so much brighter and more cheerful."

Lady Blanche looked at Nora lovingly; but Nora was gazing straight in front of her, thinking, not of Lord Ferndale, but of Jack Chalfonte.

"Oh, yes; the little change has done Edward good," continued Lady Blanche. "In fact, I never saw him more cheerful and light-hearted than he was when he came back from London just now. It was exactly as if something had been lifted from his mind. I think he enjoyed himself

there. He told me that his lawyer and he went to the theatre, to one of those amusing musical comedies, and that afterwards they went to supper at the Carlton. Edward was describing the place to me; it must be very bright and gay. I should like to see it," she went on, but quite uncomplainingly. "Have you ever been there?"

Nora shook her head. "No. When I was in London I lodged in a grimy little house in a poor quarter. I have never been anywhere—I mean to any of these grand places. I came straight to the Hall."

"Some day you must go, dear," said Lady Blanche. "It is only right that you should see something of life, enjoy yourself. Edward says that there is a beautiful band at this place, the Carlton, which plays during supper, and that it was quite crowded with smart and fashionable people. Oh, by the way," she went on, innocently, "Edward said that he saw Mr. Chalfonte there."

"Jack?—I mean, Mr. Chalfonte?" said Nora, mechanically, but with awakened interest.

"Yes; he was having supper with a very pretty girl," responded Lady Blanche, still with perfect innocence. "Edward said she was a remarkably pretty girl, with bright bronze hair. He thought that he knew her, remembered her; and, from his description, I thought for a moment that it must have been that girl in your village, Miss—Miss—I can't remember her name."

"Delman?" said Nora, quite calmly, but with a strange sinking of the heart.

"Yes, that's the girl, I mean. But, of course, it could not have been she."

"Of course not," said Nora, her heart changing slowly from flesh to lead.

At this moment Ferndale came out from the house. At sight of Nora his sombre face lightened; he came forward and grasped her hand, pressing it with an emphasis which was new to Nora.

"I am glad you are here, Miss Norton," he said; and Nora, notwithstanding her misery, noticed the unwonted brightness of his tone.

"I was telling Nora of your journey to London," said Lady Blanche; "and your strange meeting with Mr. Chalfonte. Do you think, Edward, that the lady with him was really like that pretty girl in the village, Maud Delman?"

"Yes, it was she," replied Ferndale, quite casually; for the fact was no affair of his, and he did not dream that it concerned Nora.

"Did you speak to him?" asked Lady Blanche.

"No; we merely exchanged a bow," replied Ferndale, as casually as before. Then he turned his dark, Don Quixote eyes to Nora. "The water-lilies are in full bloom in the fountain, Miss Norton; will you come and look at them?"

Nora rose at once. They walked together to the stone fountain, lichen-covered and broken in places; and Ferndale, kneeling on the coping, with difficulty severed one of the blooms and, still on his knees, offered it to Nora.

"Will you accept this, Miss Norton?" he asked, with deep gravity.

"Thank you," responded Nora; and she lifted the scentless flower to her face.

"It is not much to offer you," he said, rising and standing beside her, and looking down at her—though he had not far to look, for Nora was by no means short—with a strange, intentness. "And what I am going to offer you is still very little. Miss Norton—Nora—I love you; will you be my wife? One moment—when I said that I had very little to offer you, I meant literally what I said. I am not young, I am very poor; I have had a chequered, a shadowed life. It has set me apart from my fellow-men; it has fettered me, in mind and action; there has been a ban on my life. I

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will not tell you what it was. It has been removed. I stand here this morning, free, unexpectedly free, to offer you my love and my hand. I am not given to many words; and I can only say that I do love you with all my heart, that you will make me very happy if you will accept what I offer you."

There was a silence, so intense, so pregnant, that it felt to Nora like something tangible, like a pressing weight that she must thrust from her. Her heart was dull and heavy, but her mind was acute and active. In her innocence, Lady Blanche had proved the same things to her—which was scarcely possible, for poor Jack was not capable of eloquent phrases, and, when he was not moved, he was more inarticulate than usual—but if Jack had said all this she would have nestled to him, laughed at him, and told him that it was she who placed her life in his hands. With this man she could find no words with which to respond; and again he was not dissatisfied, for he wanted no protestations from her; her simple consent had been enough for him.

"We must go and tell Blanche," he said; "the news will make her very happy. I suppose you know"—he smiled—"that, from the first moment we met you, she assigned me to you?"

"I am glad Lady Blanche will be pleased," said Nora, in a low voice, feeling that her tone was cold, though Heaven knew! she tried to make it warm.

They went across the lawn, but there was no need to say anything; for, as they approached her, a blush rose to Blanche's face, the light of joy and gladness shone in her eyes, and she murmured just "Oh!" with a long breath of wonder and delight.

"Yes," said Ferndale. "Behold your work—matchmaker!"

The tears came to Blanche's eyes as she put her arms round Nora's neck and drew her face down to her.

"Oh, my dear, my dear!" she murmured. "I am so glad! You have made me so happy. I have been longing for it all the time; but it seemed too good to come true. Edward, you are the luckiest man in the world!"

"I know, dear," he said, as he took the hand she outstretched to him. "Far luckier than I deserve. Now I will go and order the lunch," he added, knowing that Blanche would like to have Nora with her for a few minutes. "I suppose we shall not be too happy to eat something."

Blanche watched lovingly his tall form as he went towards the house.

"Dear," she said, "I'm sure you will be happy. He loves you very much, and with Edward love is a very serious, solemn thing. And to think that I have a real sister! Oh, I feel so bewildered with joy that I can scarcely realize my dream has come true."

Nora might have said that she, too, was so bewildered that realisation was impossible to her; but she murmured, gently:

"He is very good—I will try to make him happy."

"You will not have to try very hard, Nora," said Lady Blanche, with a laugh. "You have only to go on loving him, and he will be quite content. Seriously, Edward is the easiest man in the world to get on with. Oh, but what am I talking about? Any one can get on with the woman he loves. I'm trying to think of the future," she continued, after a pause, during which Nora sat with downcast eyes. "I hope you will live at the Abbey, dear. Of course, it would be only natural that you should want to see life, to go into society—in London, I mean; but you will make your real home here? I wonder what will become of me?" she added, with a cheerful smile. "I suppose I shall go up to Aunt Mildred—she's an aunt we've got in Scotland."

Nora turned to her quickly. "What do you say? Oh, no, no! Of course, you must stay with Lord Ferndale, as you have always done."

Blanche's eyes filled with tears, and she pressed Nora's hand.

(To be Continued.)

WORTH A GUINEA A BOX

BEECHAM'S PILLS

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man who disliked any display of emotion. Though he had been thrilled by passion, his avowal had been made calmly and with that reserve and self-command which characterised him; he had not expected Nora to fling her arms round his neck, to offer him her lips, and, to tell the truth, his sense of dignity would have been shocked if she had done so. He had accepted her surrender as a quite complete and satisfactory confession of her love for him, and he felt that her demeanour was just what it should have been that this girl would indeed justify her elevation to his rank. Presently he said:

"I cannot tell you how happy you have made me, Nora. You have lifted the clouds from my life, and have caused the sun to shine on me. I hope I shall make you happy, dear. I shall endeavour to do so. Your wish shall be mine—you shall fix the course of our life. I place mine in your hands."

It was beautifully said. It had the ring of truth and earnestness, but there was no responsive thrill in Nora's heart. If Jack had said the same things to her—which was scarcely possible, for poor Jack was not capable of eloquent phrases, and, when he was not moved, he was more inarticulate than usual—but if Jack had said all this she would have nestled to him, laughed at him, and told him that it was she who placed her life in his hands. With this man she could find no words with which to respond; and again he was not dissatisfied, for he wanted no protestations from her; her simple consent had been enough for him.

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The pattern is cut in 7 sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. Size 36 requires 5 1/2 yards of 44 inch material.

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Size . . . . .

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GERMANY'S REPLY.

Germany has replied to President Wilson's note saying she accepts his condition for an armistice. She declares Germany now has a parliamentary form of Government and says orders have been given to submerge commanders not to sink passenger steamers henceforth. The German reply received by wireless in London says Germany agrees with the President that the military leaders shall arrange an armistice and the terms for the evacuation of occupied territory. Denial is made that the Germans have been unnecessarily destructive in retreating from occupied territory. It is admitted the German people previously had no word in making war and peace. The new Government recently formed under Prince Maximilian, the reply says, is responsible to the Reichstag and is supported by the German people and it is this Government with which the President is dealing. The new Government it is declared has undertaken to alter the constitution of the German empire to give the representatives of the people power over the Government. The reply in full follows:

"In accepting the proposal for an evacuation of occupied territory the German Government has started from the assumption that the procedure of this evacuation and the conditions of an armistice should be left to the military advisers and that the actual standard of power on both sides in the field has to form the basis for arrangements safeguarding and guaranteeing this standard. The German

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