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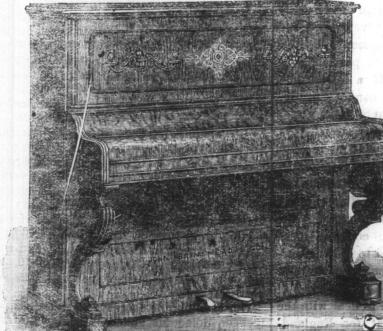
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By the Author of Dora Thorne.

CHAPTER XXXIX. (Continued.)

'It would indeed be a woman's war then, she said to herself, 'and that, at present, I do not wish. I must, for Allan's sake, discover now the secret of the will."

But, though she did not tell her, she grew so strange in manner that Miss Cameron could not understand her. She would step hastily forward at times and seize her hand, as though she had something very important to say to her, and then drop the hand, murmur a few unmeaning words, and leave her. Adelaide thought it strange—but then her companion's manner always had been strange; so she said nothing about it. The torture of jealousy seemed to be slowly and surely eating Lady Rylestone's life away. The beautiful face lost its color, and grew thin and pale; an anxious troubled look came into the dark eyes and never left them. She grew silent and sad; all the music seemed to die from her voice; it was

More than once Adelaide spoke to her young companion of what seemed to her the signs of declining health, but Margarita always gave some evasive answer. Nothing ailed her, she declared-she wanted nothing. Yet strangers, when they looked at the beautiful, restless face, wondered what hidden fever was burning within her. It was strange, almost painful, to see her, whether out in the sunshine amongst the flowers, or in the magnificent rooms, always with the same restless face, and dark, troubled eyes. So many fears haunted her; her life seemed to be spent in fighting with shadows. The fear lest, when Lord Rylestone returned, he should be angry about what she had done; the fear lest, after all, she should have run her -she could never tell what-should make Allan like Adelaide; the fear lest, even if she discovered the secret, she should not be able to do anything to help the man whom she loved with such intense, passionate love; and, the crowning fear of all, the dread lest, even if her discoveries should materially affect his interests, Lord Rylestone should refuse to forgive her for what she had done-all these were ever before her.

· It was ill considered,' she owned to herself; 'it would have been a thousand times better had it never been begun.'

Still, as she had embarked on a stormy sea, and it was too late now to draw back, the only thing left was to make the best of it-to do so much for Lord Rylestone that he should forget the fashion in which it had been done.

So time passed until September came. The autumn of that year was long remembered in England as a most fruitful one. The flowers still lingered as though loath to die; the orchards were filled with luscious hanging fruit; the rich crops of corn were yellow as gold. But all the ripe beauty of the season was lost upon Margarita-her whole soul was filled with trouble. ... some reales anider

One morning, as the two ladies sat at breakfast together-it was the second week in September-a letter came from Mr. Beale, saying that he hoped to be with Miss Cameron on the following day, when he would bring the accounts and a copy of the will with him. Miss Cameron read the letter aloud, and then she said to Margarita-

'That will be the last of the tiresome business, I hope. Margarita,' she cried, suddenly, what is the matter with you?' for the face of her young companion had suddenly grown white as death, and a great fear had shadowed

'To-morrow—so soon?' she murmured. 'Soon!' repeated Adelaide. 'It seems to me that the business has been very long on hand; I am tired of it. Why, Margarita, your lips have grown white! Surely you are

not afraid of Mr. Beale? She tried to recover herself.

'No, I am not afraid of him. Why should I be? I have seen Mr. Beale only once; and then he barely deigned to notice me. Has he anything to do with Lord Rylestone?'

She asked the question suddenly, almost sharply; the idea had just occurred to her. Adelaide looked up laughingly.

'How strange to hear you ask a question wife, about Lord Rylestone, she said, It is, Il

think, the first time I have heard you mention his name. Yes, certainly Mr. Beale has a great deal to do with Lord Rylestone; he is his lawyer—the manager of his affairs. He was the late lord's confidential adviser; he he knows all about the Walton estates; he has the whole history of the Rylestone family at his finger tips. I was going to say that no one ever had more to do with Lord Rylestone than has Mr. Beale, but that perhaps is saying

Margarita made no remark. She was think ng to herself that if he had been the late lord's confidential adviser, he must know the secret of the will-perhaps even had the making of it. Her heart beat quickly, and her face

flushed nervously; she could not have been more moved had the will been before her. 'I am amused,' continued Miss Cameron,

that you should ask such a question. I have often thought that you were not inquisitive-I am glad to find that you are human after all.' 'I do not know what led me to ask,' said Margarita, trying to speak carelessly. It

seemed to her that she was on the threshold of the mystery that she had tried so hard to

The question she had asked seemed to disoose Miss Cameron to talk. During all the months they had been together, Lord Ryle stone had never once formed the subject of their conversation. They had sat in the handsome dining-room where his portrait hung, and they had both carefully avoided looking at it-Margarita because of her great love, fearing lest she should betray it, and Adelaide from fear that if she spoke of him her secret would escape her. But now she was inclined to refer to him. It seemed pleasant to utter his name -to her it-and she wondered why she had never given herself this gratification beforewhy she had never spoken of him to the lovely woman whose eyes were so full of fire.

'I think you will like Lord Rylestone,' she said, looking up at the beautiful face, with its dark, lambent eyes, and sad, sweet lips. 'You will be sure to see him.'

'He returns from Canada in November, and he is sure to come here,' answered Adelaide. The dark face lighted up with a sudden

'Why is he sure to come here?' she askedand something in her voice caused Adelaide to look suddenly at her. Because Walton is his home, she replied

- and I hope he will come to take possession 'Where shall you go then?' asked Margarita ;

and she knew that her question was put more from a desire to see if Adelaide had any lingering love for him than from fear or anxiety about her welfare.

'I do not know. I think I should like to travel. If I go abroad, you will come with me I hope. I should never be happy without

'I cannot promise,' said Margarita, thoughtfully. She was picturing to herself Adelaide's surprise when she should return from abroad and find her at Walton Court, the wife of its

· Lord Rylestone is sure to come straight to Walton,' said Miss Cameron. 'I shall be curious to know what you think of him.'

To herself Margarita was saying that he should not come there. She would go home to the pretty villa at Marpeth, and she would keep him there. He should not see the fairfaced, golden-haired girl who loved him so dearly. She might go abroad and remain there, but she should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the opportunity of exerting her influence and the power large that the should never have the should never have the should never have the should never h faced, golden-haired girl who loved him so of her charms over him.

'I hope, when he comes,' continued Adelaide, 'that he will be pleased with the few improvements I have ventured to make to the court. Ah! Margarita, you have a dreamy, far-off look in your eyes. You are not listening to what Lam saving. Your dark eyes tening to what I am saying. Your dark eyes look at me with serene calmness. You do not take any interest in my friend, Lord Rylesstone. I think it is because so few things interest you, and because you are so given to ' Will he stay here long?' asked Margarita,

'I cannot say—perhaps two or three nights, not more. Sir William Morton has to meet him here.' And with these few careless words Miss Cameron went away.

CHAPTER XL.

MARGARITA RYLESTONE stood on the broad | dec22 western terrace with Miss Cameron when the approach of Mr. Beale was announced. It was a fine clear September day; the sky was blue, the golden gleam of the sun lay over the flowers and trees, the red-brown leaves were falling, the autumn foliage was at its richest and best. They stood watching the carriage, Adelaide thinking how soon she should be gone from Walton, and how little she should see of Mr. Beale or Lord Rylestone afterward; Margarita thinking of a thousand things-of Mr. Beale's surprise when in her he should recognize Lady Rylestone-of the coming home that would one day be hers-of the reception that would be given her when she came to Walton Court as Lord Rylestone's honored

(To be continued.)

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