

# Right at Last

"And if we don't, the public will" said Emily. "I wonder how it is," she added, with her head on one side, "that everything you put on seems to become you? Now that color would try half the women I know, but it seems as if it were made for you."

"I have turned Miss Montessor out, Miss Jones," said Joan, "or shall I turn my head?" and Emily ran out laughing. Mr. Giffard came once, but said little beyond, "A great triumph before you tonight, Miss Trevelyan!"

"Or a great failure!" said Joan. "But I will not fail, for your sake, Mr. Giffard," she added, with the smile which won people's hearts more than anything else about her.

The house could be heard from where she sat, patiently waiting, and she recalled the night when she had sat and waited in the same fashion. But then she was a nobody, and now she was—

The orchestra commenced, and the actors in the first scene were called. Joan did not make her appearance until near the end of the first act, and she stood as the wings and watched. One of the best romantic actors of the day had been engaged to play lover to her, and she received a pleasant welcome from the audience, which encouraged the rest. The house was crammed; Joan thought that she had never seen it so full before, and certainly never with so brilliant an audience.

Presently her time came. She gave just one glance, womanlike, at the small girls that hung at the wings, then glided on. There was an instant's pause—the audience was struck dumb by her beauty, and more than all else by the exquisite refinement of her presence—then there came an ovation. She paused for a moment, inclined her head slightly, and with a slight tremor in her voice went on with her part.

"She was playing carefully, takingly, but she was reserving herself."

The drop went down amidst considerable applause, and they wanted to call her back, but she refused. "No," she said, "let me wait until the end. They may be sorry that they have called me to go on now and fall afterwards."

There was nothing else to do in the first act.

She went down, and changed her dress to a fresh, bright morning gown, and went on in the second act.

It was in this that one of her opportunities came. Her lover was led to believe her false by his disappointed rival, the villain in the piece, and Joan was called upon to display indignation, tenderness, despair, all, as it were, in a breath.

For a time she played with reserved force, as is called, then, at the proper moment, not a moment too soon or too late, she "let herself go."

The words seemed to spring from her parted lips like flames of lightning, then well and glow like fire, and lastly, as if wail as the first sign of the devastating storm.

The house listened and watched, spell-bound and enraptured. This was acting which they had not seen for many a year, since the past and some moments of comedy had faded from the garish lights, and left until now no one to replace them.

Her voice fascinated them, and the pale face, glowing with genius and reflecting every emotion proper to the difficult part, stole upon their hearts and moved them now to sympathetic wrath and again to tears.

As the drop fell, leaving her alone upon the stage in her misery, a loud roar of approval, admiration, awe, delight, rose from the audience, and it did not cease until Mr. Giffard led her, almost by force, before the curtain.

Then, after bowing over and over again, she glided up to the box in which Mordant Royce usually sat.

He was sitting there now; his face was pale and set, his lips drawn together as if with suppressed excitement.

He had watched her with his passionate love heightened by admiration into a fever. He could have killed the roaring poling house that dared to applaud.

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That evening Bertie had arranged to join a small party at the club, but the day before he had received a note saying that his host was going to the Coronet to see the new play, and that no doubt Bertie would like to go also, there fore the dinner was postponed.

Bertie didn't mind the least. There was one thing he enjoyed more than a dinner with "cards to follow," and that was going to the play, and that was a quiet evening at home, where he would be free to take out his portrait, and setting it over the mantle-shelf, smoke a cigar and gaze at the beautiful face.

This evening he dined alone, and, dismissing his man, lit a cigar, and, un locking the cabinet, put the portrait in its accustomed place.

He had got into the habit, unconsciously, of talking to the lovely face as it smiled down at him, and as he leaned in his chair and looked up at it he murmured:

"Well, beautiful one! I wonder what you are thinking about to-night? I wonder why you always smile so sadly? Yours is an unhappy life, I know, for you smile so bravely. I suppose you would laugh outright if you knew all that I have said to you; if you knew that a young man was idiot enough to fall in love with you because you look like a girl he once saw for half an hour and then lost sight of forever!"

"Would you laugh, though, or would you pity? There is a tender heart behind those soft, half-smiling eyes of yours, my queen, and perhaps you would pity! Only for half an hour I saw your living likeness, and then she vanished out of my life like a dream! I wonder where she is now? Could you tell me, if you could speak, my queen, about her than you tell? Why are you so like her? Who are you? What is your history? Ah, no, you won't speak, will you? No, not you. You will only smile and smile at the young fool who lost his heart to the girl whose face is so like yours, sweet one!"

"And yet I'd like to know where she is; whether she is alive or dead, miserable or happy. I'd give something to know that, I hope she is happy!"

"Poor child, she was wretched enough when I parted from her! So wretched that she could not endure to face me, even me who saved her! What brutes men are, the best of us, where women are concerned! But what a fond Stuart Villiers must have been to plot the ruin of that beautiful girl who was so like you, my picture, that I have fallen in love with you, with your sad, smiling eyes, for lack of her?"

He nodded and smiled at the sad eyes, and puffed at his cigar for a moment in silence, then he rose with an impatient, self-mocking sigh.

"What a fool I am becoming! I am rapidly taking leave of the small amount of sense nature bestowed upon me! What would the fellows say if they knew that I had fallen in love with a picture and spent hours talking to it? I must break myself of this idiotic habit, my dear creature. You must go into the cupboard and get a couple of months and see if I can forget you, and her whom you are like yes, that's my only chance. In you get 'good night,' and taking the picture down from its perch, he locked it up. "For two months!" he said.

Then he began to stroll about the room, presently he yawned.

The evening was young; hours and hours stretched between him and bed; he didn't feel inclined to go to the club; besides, all the men had gone to see the girl at the theatre whom all the world was raving about.

"George?" he exclaimed. "I'll go and see my myself."

He rang the bell, and his man helped him into his overcoat, and he strolled down to the Coronet.

He noticed as he entered that there seemed to be a great deal of bustle and excitement about, and he went up to the box office and asked for a stall.

The man in charge laughed respectfully.

"A stall, my lord?" He knew Lord Bertie, as did most people. "There hasn't been such a thing to be had for the last fortnight."

"Oh," said Bertie. "Well, it doesn't matter."

"I daresay you might find standing room, my lord," said the man; "but the drama is half over, all but the last act. A tremendous success up to now, my lord; tremendous! Never saw anything like it! They say that she's the greatest actress on the boards."

"And who's she?" asked Lord Bertie, carelessly.

The man stared.

"Why, Miss Trevelyan, my lord."

"Oh," said Bertie, "well, give me a stall, or something! I don't suppose I shall stay longer than five or ten minutes."

Bertie got his ticket, and walked in. The stall-keeper shook his head.

"There's not an inch of room here, sir," he said. "Go upstairs, sir, you might find standing room in the circle! If you make haste you'll be up before the commencement of the last act."

There were a great many people in the stalls when Bertie knew, and he exchanged nods.

"Wonderful success!" said a man, a critic on one of the principal papers. "Quite a genius! What a glorious career before her!"

Bertie, only feeling the faintest interest in it, went up stairs.

The box-keeper received him with a cold welcome.

"Not a seat, scarcely standing room, my lord," he said.

"Not a box?" inquired Bertie, listlessly.

"Comes here every night?" exclaimed Bertie.

The man smiled with respectful ingenuity.

"Yes, my lord, most every night. He is here to-night, leastways he was, but he's gone out. He'll be back directly, sure to be."

"No matter," said Bertie, "put me in that. I am a friend of Mr. Royce's, and there is plenty of room."

The man led him to the box, and Bertie made himself comfortable.

The act commenced, but Royce had not returned.

Bertie, thinking more of the strange fact that Mordant Royce should visit the Coronet every night than of the play, leaned over the box edge and watched the scene.

In this act the villain of the play, who has, or thinks he has, the hero and Joan's lover in his power, offers to free the hero if Joan will give her hand to him, the villain.

The play was well written, the scene a strong one. Joan did not make her appearance for some time, and Bertie was trying to make out who it was, and get a clue to the plot, while the well-dressed villain was indulging in the soliloquy which stage villains, whether well or ill dressed, always indulge in, when Joan, in a plain black dress, with her face worn by poverty and sorrow, came upon the stage.

A faint roar of welcome, instantly suppressed, greeted her, and Bertie leant forward to look at her, for she had come on upon his side of the stage and was not easy to see.

"You here!" she said to the villain, and at the voice, more than at the face, Bertie fell back as if knocked down by a sudden blow.

Merciful Heaven! it was the picture come to life! It was the beautiful girl whom he had seen in the rooms above his own, the girl he had rescued from Stuart Villiers!

For a moment his brain whirled and the blood rushed to his face, then he laughed.

"Mad indeed!" he muttered. "I've got to the pass when I take a girl on the stage for her! I had better choose a comfortable asylum while there's time!"

And he leant back and would not look at her, just to cure himself of his mad craze.

But as Joan went on speaking, and her voice continued knocking at the door of his memory, his face grew paler and his breath came quickened.

He took up his glasses, very much as Royce had done when first he had recognized her in the same way, and with trembling hands held them to his eyes.

Slowly, surely, the fact—not to be laughed away, not to be argued out of existence—bore in upon him.

The girl on the stage, Ida Trevelyan, the girl he had saved from Stuart Villiers, the girl who was like the picture looked up in his cabinet.

He dropped the glasses; he was so near the stage that he did not need them, and, keeping behind the curtains, watched her with feverish, burning intensity.

She was playing magnificently, but he took no note of that. If she had been talking "double Dutch" and dancing a cellar-flap, it would have been all the same to him.

The house hung enraptured upon every word; they sat there with breathless interest, while the villain tempted her, and when at last, maddened and tortured by his insidious sophistry, she raised her hand and struck him across the lips, the huge audience rose at her with a wild roar of approval and delight.

The play was stopped for a second or two; Joan stood first making no sign. She would not take any notice of applause in the middle of the act, and after a second or two the play proceeded.

Bertie watched, stunned and bewildered.

This magnificent, beautiful creature, with the men and bearing of an empress, the helpless, tearful girl he had rescued from Stuart Villiers! He could scarcely believe his eyes, his ears! And yet it was true. He could not be mistaken.

Suddenly, as he sat, his gaze riveted to her face, he saw a thin streak of misty vapor rise from one of the wings opposite him.

He watched it absently, unconsciously for a moment or two, then, as it grew in size and density, his attention woke to it.

What was it?

While he asked himself this question, a yellow tongue of flame shot out of the files, and he knew that what he was looking at was—fire!

Nobody else seemed to see it but himself; it grew and expanded with devilish rapidity, noiseless as yet, but persistent.

It reached the top of the fringe under the proscenium and caught there.

And in another instant it glided into the sight of the crammed and packed audience, in a second the awful cry arose: "Fire!"

In another second everyone, every man and woman, seemed to rise as if moved by one impulse, and the wild cry "Fire!" rose from a thousand throats.

In yet another second the tongue of flame had licked round the proscenium and gained the scenery, and the whole of the back of the stage was a sheet of flame.

It was awful to see how quickly it spread! There was a wild yell of terror and despair.

Men sprang on to their seats and, waving their hands, women fainted; a panic made for the doors, which becoming rapidly choked, blocked the exit as surely as if every entrance was masked with iron. Yells, imprecations, prayers, rose in wild confusion.

And in the midst of the uproar, in front of the now blazing scenery, stood the exquisite figure of Joan—of Ida Trevelyan—her face pale but calm, her white hands lifted imploringly.

"Keep your seats! Keep your seats and you are safe!" Bertie heard her cry; the pure, clear voice ringing out like that of a bell across the din.

It mattered him.

"But you! But you! But you!" he shouted. "But you! But you! But you!" he shouted.

He was near enough to hear her cry. She looked up at him in that awful moment when she saw that he was there, she saw that he was there.

## Lands for the Settler

Large areas of rich agricultural lands, convenient to railways, are now available for settlement in Northern Ontario.

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THE DIRECTOR OF COLONIZATION  
Parliament Buildings,  
Toronto.

Then she shook her head. "Save them! Make them keep their seats!"

As she spoke a tongue of flame shot out towards her, and seemed to touch her.

Bertie, with a cry of warning, leaped to the edge of the box, and, jumping down, seized her in his arms.

"Come!" he said. "Come, or you are lost!"

She struggled with him for a moment or a minute—which—then she let him take her in his arms and carry her off the stage!

CHAPTER XXXIII.  
Joan struggled for a moment or two in Bertie's arms, still calling to the people to keep their seats and all would be well; then, in sheer desperation, he raised her to his shoulder and rushed to the wings.

There he was met by a sheet of flame which seemed to strike from end to end and bar his progress. He turned and made for the other side, but a wing had fallen across and here again was a barrier.

At the back of the stage the flames were rapidly making their way round, and columns of smoke rose and floated towards him.

He glanced frantically at the front of the house, but the sight presented by the struggling people, madly endeavoring to force their way through the exits, made it evident that to carry his burden in that direction meant death, or at least broken limbs.

There was nothing for it but to make his way through the back of the stage before they were enveloped in a fiery and deadly ring.

He had faintly felt the faintness of death, the weight and heat of the deadness of her weight and her quivering, and he felt almost glad, for if she had still struggled time would be lost and their case hopeless.

(To be Continued.)

## SHE CURED HER HEART DISEASE

When She Cured Her Kidneys With Dodd's Kidney Pills.

Mrs. Henry J. Jacques Found a Speedy Relief for All Her Troubles, and Now Enjoys the Best of Health.

St. Rose du Lac, Minn., Jan. 23.—(Special.)—Heart Disease is one of the results of disordered kidneys, and is consequently easily cured by Dodd's Kidney Pills, as the experience of Mrs. Henry J. Jacques, of this place, shows.

"My heart troubled me all the time," said Mrs. Jacques in an interview, "and I knew what terrible results might follow. The fact that my limbs would swell and my back ache led me to believe that I also suffered from Kidney Disease. I determined to try Dodd's Kidney Pills. I bought four boxes, and before I had finished the third box the swelling was gone, my back was well, and my heart no longer troubled me. I am now in the best of health, and I owe it all to Dodd's Kidney Pills."

Heart Disease is one of the penalties that come from neglected kidneys. They fail to strain the impurities out of the blood, and these impurities are bound to affect the heart, which is the engine that propels the blood through the body. To cure a heart Disease cure the kidneys with Dodd's Kidney Pills to prevent Heart Disease keep the kidneys toned up and healthy by using Dodd's Kidney Pills.

## CONCRETE STATUE.

Memorial of Black Hawk 48 Feet High and Three Years in the Making.

A concrete statue of the famous Indian Chief Black Hawk has been erected in the State of Illinois. The statue stands above Eagle's Nest, across the river from Oregon, Ill. It was in process of making three years.

The statue's great size, forty-eight feet without counting either the artificial base, the natural rock foundation, 20 feet high, on which it is placed, puts it on a scale with the Goddess of Liberty, in New York Harbor, and the great statue from the British to the New England coast.

The third and greatest claim to fame is that it is built to be permanent. It is believed that it will outlast the Sphinx, the Pyramids, and even the stones of the Druids, says the Cement Age. The sculptor was Lorado Taft. Mr. Taft had noted the remarkable time-proof qualities of concrete in ancient European structures, and there came to him the great idea for the means of making an enduring statue.

With this process in mind, it was not long before an adequate subject presented itself. For thirteen years he had his summer home and studio at 225 West 57th Street, New York City. He had never failed to remember that it was the "white" advance. As he drew the pure, clear water, ringing out like that of a bell across the din.

It mattered him.

## JOSEPHINE'S WILL.

Napoleon's Divorced Wife Did Not Blame Her Husband for Ambition.

Count Leopold Palle has just published in Italy the text of the will made by Josephine de Beauharnais, the first wife of Napoleon. This document has hitherto been unknown, as the original disappeared from Malmaison the day after the ex-Empress died, in May, 1814. An authentic copy remained in the hands of a Corsican named Fabrizio, from whom it has passed from father to son until to-day it belongs to Paul Fabrizio, an Italian Senator, who has given a copy to Count Palle.

The will is a profession of faith by Napoleon's repudiated wife rather than a disposition of her property, of which it speaks only vaguely. She declares that she has always believed in God and religion, despite the efforts of Bonaparte to destroy her faith, she does not blame her husband: "If he was an unbeliever and atheist the fault lies on the vile courtiers who by their sycophancy made him believe there was no God, and that he was a god. How then could he have made him a god, how then could he retain any Christian humility?"

The ex-Empress swears before God and the Bourbon royal family that she was innocent of the Duke d'Enghien's death. She did all she could, she declares, to save the unfortunate prince. She recommends her children, Queen Hortense and Prince Eugene-Napoleon, to the kindness of the Bourbon family, and concludes by expressing the hope that the Emperor will come to recognize how great the difference was between herself and Marie Louise, for whom he sacrificed her.

## MRS. HARRIMAN TO WED A COLONY

She is to marry a man who has been a member of the United States Navy.

Mrs. E. H. Harriman, New York club and society gossip reports her engaged to wed Col. E. R. Bacon, a well-preserved bachelor of sixty. Neither has given out either denial or affirmation of the report.

## A NEW OCEAN GIANT.

About once in a decade a new fleet of ocean liners is launched, setting a new standard for size, luxury and safety at sea. The great ships which are thought to express the "last word" in boat building are suddenly found to be dwarfed by their new sisters and relegated to second place. Always the new fleet, now under construction, surpasses all the great ships that have gone before. Scarcely has the world become accustomed to using the Mauretania as a synonym for the great ships which are thought to express the "last word" in boat building are suddenly found to be dwarfed by their new sisters and relegated to second place. Always the new fleet, now under construction, surpasses all the great ships that have gone before. Scarcely has the world become accustomed to using the Mauretania as a synonym for the great ships which are thought to express the "last word" in boat building are suddenly found to be dwarfed by their new sisters and relegated to second place. 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