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The Lie Come True

(Concluded from page 8.)

"I didn't mean to do it," she said, and now she looked at him straight and fairly with her eyes full of tears, "but you said people ought to tell lies if necessary, and then all those things you said about lions couldn't possibly be true, and I thought it would make you more inclined to let mother come back—she's ill now—very ill—I believe she'll die if she doesn't come back. Oh! I don't know how I could. I must have been insane. I'm not really a liar—I don't think—We've lived here all my life," she ended in a half sob.

HE stood staring at her, only half grasping the implications of her speech.

"Then you knew?" he said.

"Of course I knew," she stamped her foot, and in her misery the wild loveliness of her beauty reached him with a pain he had not thought possible.

"Have it all then! I knew you were coming down, and I knew you were going through the wood, and I went that way on purpose. I meant to speak to you if you hadn't spoken to me, and to make you like me if I could—and to get you to let us be caretakers. It was all a put up thing, and now you go and do this! You make my mean, wicked lie come true, and give me a fortune as if it were a handkerchief I'd dropped. How can I take everything from you like this?" "I'm only—" he said, not quite steadily, "I'm only offering the other man a drink. And I only made up the lions to amuse you. Don't worry about—"

"About what it costs you. It's not only that. It's you who ought to have it. Look how splendid you are just finding it, and giving it to me as if it were just nothing at all—and I—I don't deserve anything. It's like a horrible judgment—the lie come true—like that."

"But you've got what you wanted," he said clumsily.

"And what's the use of that? What's the use of anything, if I can never look myself in the face again?" She broke into soft weeping, and the quiet sunshine flooded the room and threaded the black hair with gold. He stood helplessly, only at short intervals he said, "Don't, please don't." He had grown very pale. At last he said,

"Listen. And don't be angry. As I went through the wood I was wishing that the lovely lady of my dreams might come along under that green arch, and that I might know what it was to wish to lay down my life for her. I had never known that before. When you came I knew that you were the lady of my dreams. And you are, and I have given you nothing but what was yours by right. And you have given me a vision and a memory that I shall never lose. I worship you. Nothing you have done can alter that. And for yourself—your tears have washed away anything that might have clouded your brightness to yourself. You played a child's trick on me and you are sorry. And everything now is as you wished it. So dry your eyes and let us say good-bye."

She murmured something half articulate.

"Ah, no," he said, "I must go. I know that I have been saying things that are not said. And when one has said such things there is nothing more left to say but good-bye."

"Promise me one thing," she said. "It's all like a dream, and I don't know what to do or say—but promise me one thing, no, two things. That you won't tell anyone about this—and that you'll let me see you again."

"Where?" he asked—even as he told himself that he must never again see her.

"Here, of course," said she, "I shall bring my mother back at once. Whatever we decide she must be made happy again. You promise?"

"Yes," said he, "I will come to see you some day."

They parted. At parting she gave him both hands, and it seemed only fitting that he should raise them to his lips. He left her in the panelled

room with the wallflowers and the daffodils.

AND now to take up the old life in the far countries where there are no manners. But that need not be yet. After all the woods of Chancton are not England's only woods, and flowers grown in other than Chancton fields. So he passed the weeks till spring warmed to summer.

Yet he would keep his promise. He would see her once before he went back to the old life. He went down one day in July when the jasmine leaves covered the trellis and the jasmine was sweet and starry among the leaves.

She came to meet him across the lawn by the weeping ash, her face was pale and her gown was black.

"Yes," she said, answering the kindness of his eyes—"six weeks ago. You never came."

"I am here now," he said, and no more. There seemed to be no more to say.

"I am glad you've come," she said. "I wanted to tell you. I have burnt that will. I cut it up in little pieces and burnt it."

"When?" he asked stupidly.

"That same night," she said. "Oh! do you think that has washed me clean again? You said tears would—but they don't—do you think I can bear to look myself in the face now?"

They had reached the seat under the weeping ash.

"It's all yours again now," she said: "you don't mind my having kept it for a little while—such a very little while—for her?"

"May I kiss your hands," he asked. "Just this once more?"

She held them out, and said, "You'll try to think kindly of me? I shall go away now. I've told you—"

"Won't you—" he asked earnestly, urgently, holding her hands and compelling her eyes to his, "it would sound insane if anyone else heard me say it, but there isn't anyone else, only you—I believe we were made for each other. I do with all my soul. Won't you stay on in the old house and let me come to see you—and let me try to make you think so too?"

She looked at him with eyes that he dared not think he read.

"Yes," she said, "you may try."

No one knows when he succeeded—but they were married last Tuesday week.

Our \$900,000,000 Navy

A BLUE BOOK issued recently on the Dockyard Expenses, etc., for the year ended March 31, 1914, gives some interesting details respecting the Navy.

The total cost of combatant ships on the strength is given at £174,166,488.

Some idea of the gradual growth of expenditure upon shipbuilding can be gleaned from the following statistics relative to the votes for dockyards and ships:—

1889-90	£14,899,055
1900-1	£29,998,529
1910-1	£40,419,336
1913-4	£48,732,621

It is interesting to note that £116,012 more than the original estimate was spent on the Iron Duke, the flagship of Admiral Jellicoe, owing to arrears from 1912-13 and replacements of materials destroyed by fire at Portsmouth. Excesses of £323,005 on the Queen Elizabeth, and of £321,707 on the Warspite, were due to acceleration in building.

The cost of several ships that have been mentioned during the year is given as follows:—

Battle Cruisers.	
Lion	£1,970,615
Princess Royal	1,967,927
Queen Mary	1,961,100
Tiger (unfinished)	1,462,457
Battleships.	
Iron Duke	1,944,803
Audacious	1,818,200
Marlborough (unfinished)	1,807,139
Ajax	1,797,088
Centurion	1,794,429
King George V.	1,778,133
Conqueror	1,749,269
Thunderer	1,746,060
Queen Elizabeth (unfin.)	1,417,566