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The Lost Will;

OR,

LOVE TRIUMPHS AT LAST!

CHAPTER X.

Perhaps he ought to warn her that the path to the stage is a flinty one, and that the stage itself, when you get there, is not exactly a paradise. On the other hand—well, there was something about the girl that made him hesitate.

"It's a tremendously hard life," he said—"a good many blanks and precious few prizes. Don't know much about it myself, but I've heard that, unless you're at the top of the tree, it's not all beer and skittles."

"I'm not afraid of hard work. I know all you've said; I've read about the struggles, and the hardships, and the rest of it. But—oh, I'd be ready to go through anything, for I know that I should succeed."

"Jack tilted his hat on one side and scratched his head; there was something in the girl's voice which lent assurance to her bold assertion.

"Well, I'm not so sure that you wouldn't," he said, reluctantly. She flashed a grateful glance at him from the violet eyes, and Jack made haste to add, "But my opinion's worth nothing—nothing at all. Anyhow, I can see it's no use my trying to set you against the idea; you have evidently got the stage-fever badly, and you'll have to get through it or—or go on with it. Look here! I don't know whether I'm doing right or making a silly ass of myself. But if you've set your heart on the thing, and your mother consents—"

"I'll tell her presently," said the girl in a low voice. "I won't yet, until I've studied a little more. I want to learn some more parts, and to be sure—quite sure—that I'm not making a mistake."

"I see," said Jack. "Well, I'll send you some books; books of plays, I mean. Now, you're not going to refuse?"

She had hesitated and the colour had risen to her face again, but suddenly she looked up and replied, in a low voice:

"No, I accept; it's—it's different from taking money. Thank you very much. When—when will you send them?"

"Directly I get back to town," said Jack, amused and yet touched by her eagerness. "I'll run into French's and choose a few for you."

At this moment, as the girl, with a mute gesture of gratitude, was turning away, the Chertson victoria, with Mrs. Feltham and Nora in it, came along the road. Jack raised his hat; Maud hurried on, but suddenly she stopped and, running back to him, said, with a little gasp:

"Mr. Chalfonts, you will not tell Miss Norton—anybody—especially Miss Norton? I don't want her—any one—to know. Will you promise me?"

"There's nothing to make a fuss about in my lending you a few plays," remarked Jack, with a smile.

"Promise me," she said, pleadingly, her hand upon his arm.

"I promise," he said. "Don't you worry yourself; no one shall know."

He went on his way, and the girl returned to the cottage. With her hand upon the gate she paused and looked back at the retreating figure; her eyes were shining, her lips were apart. There was something more than gratitude in the expression of her vivid face, and it was as well that Jack was not there to see it.

And if he had seen it, it is quite possible that Jack, who was a modest man, and no lady-killer, would not have appreciated or understood it; and certainly, if he had, he would not have guessed that this little friendly, benevolent action of his was to serve as the introduction into his life of a girl who was fated to turn his current into tortuous and perilous channels.

CHAPTER XI.

AT the moment the victoria had approached Jack and Maud Delman, and Nora had recognized him, she was conscious of some slight surprise; for it had been at the most eager of Maud's pleadings, and there was something that indicated a kind of familiarity in the attitude of the two figures—and the expression on her face; but Nora's surprise was swallowed up in her admiration of the girl's beauty.

"What an extremely pretty girl!" she said, under her breath, and Mrs. Feltham, putting up her lorgnette, assented almost as warmly; for both these women were generous and ready to admire beauty in their own sex.

"Yes, she is very pretty," she said; "that hair would have driven Titian mad; just look at it where the sun catches it."

"Who is she?" asked Nora, with frank interest. "Mr. Chalfonts seems to know her very well—I mean, she is without a hat and they are talking as if they were old friends."

"Oh, that's Jack's way," said Mrs. Feltham, with a laugh. "He always talks to every one, especially to a woman, as if he had known them all their lives. That's one of the things that makes Jack so dangerous. I mean," she went on quickly, "that persons who meet him for the first time are apt to jump to the conclusion that Jack has taken a great fancy to them, whereas it's only 'pretty Fanny's' way; he is very popular with men, but women and children and dogs go down before him at the first shot."

"You don't mean that Mr. Chalfonts is insane?" said Nora, her brows drawing together. "He does not strike me—"

"Jack is insane!" laughed Mrs. Feltham. "My dear Nora, he is the most genuine thing on earth, and I don't know any man who would tell you the truth to your face with such absolute naïveté as Jack will; no, it's

asked Nora.

"That is Bentham Abbey, the Ferndales' place," said Mrs. Feltham.

"Ferndale? Yes, I think I have heard Mr. Horton mention the name," said Nora. "Oh, yes; it was about a piece of land, a little wood, that Lord Ferndale wanted to sell, and Mr. Horton thought I ought to buy. I meant to speak to Mr. Chalfonts this morning about it, but forgot." As she spoke, she was smitten by the strangeness of the fact that "she, Nora Norton, should be able to buy land.

"Ah, yes, I dare say," said Mrs. Feltham. "Poor Lord Ferndale would

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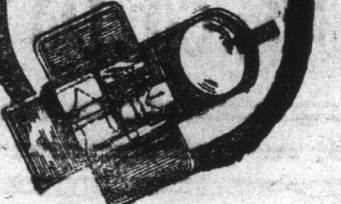
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Just because he can't help being pleasant and—

"I see," said Nora, still thoughtfully. "Do you know who the girl is?"

"Yes; her name's Delman—Mary, or Martha—no, Maud. She lives with her mother in one of those pretty but disgraceful old cottages—"

"I believe Mr. Chalfonts is going to pull them down," put in Nora.

"You mean you are, my dear," corrected Mrs. Feltham, with a smile.

"Same thing," answered Nora, absently.

"The Delmans are not natives; they came from London; the mother is a faded, rather reserved and reticent woman, who has come down in the world. I imagine she is the widow of a well-to-do tradesman of the smaller kind. The girl is of a higher type than the mother. You are wondering how I come to know all this, seeing that I've been here so short a time; but I've been down to the village several times, and I went into the cottages in search of a needlewoman. Jack has no doubt been in to look at the condition of the cottages. Of course, he knows every man, woman, and dog in the place, and has made friends with them. Strangely enough, though that young man is anything but clever, people are apt to rely on him, we women especially."

"Yes," said Nora, as if the subject had ceased to interest her.

She looked about her with eager curiosity as they drove through the village into the open country; it was difficult to realize that the luxurious carriage in which she was reclining, the pair of splendid bays, were hers, the aristocratic men in livery on the box were her servants; still more difficult to realize that the land which they were passing in such stately fashion belonged to her. She was silent, and Mrs. Feltham, with her quick sympathy, did not interrupt the girl's reverie. Presently they had left the Chalfont lands, and came upon a lodge and a magnificent pair of wrought-iron entrance gates. Both the lodge and the gates were old, and much out of repair; the broad drive was ill-kept and grass-grown, and the avenue looked neglected.

"Do you know what place that is?" asked Nora.

"That is Bentham Abbey, the Ferndales' place," said Mrs. Feltham.

"Ferndale? Yes, I think I have heard Mr. Horton mention the name," said Nora. "Oh, yes; it was about a piece of land, a little wood, that Lord Ferndale wanted to sell, and Mr. Horton thought I ought to buy. I meant to speak to Mr. Chalfonts this morning about it, but forgot." As she spoke, she was smitten by the strangeness of the fact that "she, Nora Norton, should be able to buy land.

"Ah, yes, I dare say," said Mrs. Feltham. "Poor Lord Ferndale would

be glad to sell all the land, if he could. I suppose this particular piece is un-entailed. The Ferndales are as poor as church mice, and there is very little left to them besides the Abbey there. It is a very beautiful place; I remember going there when I was quite a small child, in the old Earl's time."

"Lord Ferndale is an earl?" said Nora. "I thought earls were always rich."

"Not necessarily, my dear," explained Mrs. Feltham; "some of them are terribly impecunious. Did you notice the condition of the lodge and the drive as we passed? I should think that the place required at least half-a-dozen gardeners, and I suppose that there is only one. And the Abbey itself, a big, dream of a place, is run by three or four servants."

"Is there a Lady Ferndale?" asked Nora.

"No. Lord Ferndale is not married; he lives there with his sister, Lady Blanche. She is an invalid, owing to an injury to her spine—a very beautiful girl. The brother and sister are devoted to each other, and the devotion is very strong on Blanche's side; she worships her brother. The peerage is an exceedingly old one, and Lord Ferndale looks every inch an earl. I met him in London two or three years ago; he is exceedingly handsome, with dark hair and eyes, a Volsaque kind of face; a very silent and reserved man with a stately and somewhat melancholy manner."

"Did Mr. Chalfonts know them?" asked Nora, innocently.

Mrs. Feltham paused for just a second at this. She could scarcely inform Nora that a vast social gulf stretched between the Earl of Ferndale and Mr. Chalfont, the financier.

"I should think not," she replied. "They may have met. But the Ferndales go out very little; and they certainly do not entertain in the ordinary acceptance of the word; for I do not think they could afford to do so."

"Why do they not let their beautiful place and live in a cottage, if they're so poor?" asked Nora, simply.

"It would be the sensible thing to do," said Mrs. Feltham; "but it's the kind of thing people of their position can't do; and indeed, I don't think they could do it for another reason. I know that they are both very proud of the Abbey and deeply attached to it; and I imagine that they would rather live there in—well, something like real poverty, than let it go into a small and strange place."

"I think that's rather fine," said Nora, musingly.

"Fine! Yes, but rather foolish," observed Mrs. Feltham.

"Why, that's a deer!" exclaimed Nora, with sudden eagerness, as a fallow deer ran across the road and sprang into the wood on their left.

"Yes, there are deer at the Abbey—always have been," said Mrs. Feltham. "It would be more sensible of the Ferndales to keep cows, of course. But deer have been there ever since Henry VII's time, and I take it that Lord Ferndale would as soon think of getting rid of them as of cutting down the trees."

"I think I understand," said Nora. "Poor man! I'm sorry for him. I think I will ask Mr. Chalfonts to buy that land."

Mrs. Feltham laughed sympathetically.

"You've a soft heart, my dear," she said simply. "It's to be hoped that Jack's head is of harder material, or you would soon be getting into trouble."

The carriage rolled on for another half-mile, when a small accident happened; the near horse stumbled, the coachman administered an admonitory touch, and the horse, starting forward, suddenly broke a trace. The footman jumped down, and was fumbling at it when a pony-carriage came round the bend of the road. The carriage was a simple affair, a kind of basket-chaise, very old, and drawn by a Shetland pony.

(To be Continued.)

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The fall season is now approaching—the cold, wet season—when "the Boys", if they have nothing interesting to do to keep them under shelter in Barracks, are likely to be tramping the streets, getting wet and contracting heavy or fatal colds. Now especially must we guard against this.

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The Recreation Hut Committee.

Fashion Plates

The Home Dressmaker should keep a Catalogue Scrap Book of our Patterns Out. These will be found very useful to refer to from time to time.

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2517—Here is a model easy to develop and easy to adjust. Skirt and waist portions are in one piece. The sleeve may be made in wrist or elbow length. Gingham, khaki, galles, percale, seersucker, and chambray are good for this design.

The Pattern is cut in 7 sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. Size 38 requires 5 3/4 yards of 38-inch material. The dress measures about 2 1/2 yards at the foot.

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Lens Evac

Germans Retire From the Coal Region—Albania in Full Retreat --- Enemy Everywhere in France—Enter Roulers, 60 and 100 Guns Last

WAR REVIEW.

Lens, the heart of the great coal region in Northern France, and Arras, the gateway to Belgium, are being evacuated by the Germans. The German fortified positions between Cambrai and St. Quentin have been definitely smashed, and the Austro-Hungarians in Albania, forsaken by their former allies, the Bulgarians, are in full retreat northward toward their border from the North Sea to the Lake Ochrida. Of the reconquering of invaded Belgium and the progress of the French and Franco-American forces respectively north of Rheims and eastward in Champagne to the vicinity of Verdun, the tale remains the same—the Germans slowly but surely are being forced every-where to give ground, and their vital defense daily continues to be eaten into, notwithstanding the strong resistance that the enemy is imposing to make null the efforts of the Allies to close in on all sides of the great battle area from the North Sea to the Swiss border, and compel the German army's high command to reconstruct its fighting line in Belgium and Flanders. The Belgian, French and British troops are keeping up their eastward progress in their endeavour to compel the Germans to give up Ostend and Zeebrugge, their naval bases on the North Sea. Roulers, the important railway junction with its lines of steel radiating to the North Sea and eastward to Ghent, has been entered by the Belgians and at Hoogledge to the north King Albert's men are virtually upon the Roulers-Ostend railway. To the south Menin and Courtrai are seriously menaced. Across the border in France, the capture of Arras by the English and Lille, capital of the department of the Nord, within striking distance, and the evacuation of Lens, places Douai, the fortress northeast of Arras and all the territory between Arras and Menin virtually in the hands of the British. To the south from Cambrai to St. Quentin the German resistance is still strong, but nevertheless the British, Americans and French on all sectors which are essential to the carrying forward of the Allied programs, have valiantly attacked and withstood counter attacks, smashed the old Hindenburg positions and materially advanced their lines. Sequehan, north of St. Quentin, which the Germans in a violent counter attack recaptured from the British Wednesday, again has been taken by Field Marshal Haig's men who now are out on the rolling country to the eastward as likewise are all Allied troops from St. Quentin northward. Northwest of Rheims the Germans are offering more resistance to the French along the Aisne, and in the sectors which are protecting the eastern end of the

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