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ST. JOHN'S

## "Love in the Wilds"

—OR—  
The Romance of a South African Trading Station.

CHAPTER XIII.  
A NEWSPAPER STORY.

"Theatrical news. Do you care to hear anything about the theaters, Uncle Harry? Well, you don't answer, so I suppose you do."  
"Signor Torroliki has recovered from his severe cold. Madam Squalooskowski will sing at the Theater Royal, Covent Garden, on the occasion of Signor Trombont's benefit."  
"Fearful tragedy. Our readers will be pained to hear that a great calamity has fallen upon the theatrical world. On Tuesday the celebrated danseuse, Mademoiselle Belle Mervin, was found lying dead in her boudoir."  
There was a sudden cry from the sofa and the recumbent figure sprang to its feet.  
Grace dropped the paper and looked round.  
What she saw was Captain Reginald Dartmouth's face, all drawn, distorted, livid.  
But she saw it only for an instant—the next he had sprang at the lamp and knocked it over.  
Grace sprang to her feet and shrieked. The squire caught at the bell.  
The dull, red coals threw only a sullen light over the room, but by it Grace could have sworn she saw Captain Reginald Dartmouth stoop and pick up the paper.  
The servants came and brought the candles, then Reginald explained.  
"Pon my word, I'm very sorry," he said. "I woke up from a dream that the house was on fire, and so strong and real did the dream seem that, on awakening, I fancied it had been no dream at all, and made a dash at the lamp, thinking it was the fire."  
The squire stared at him. Grace did not stare, but pierced him through and through with her dark eyes.  
But his face was as calm and serene as usual—a little pale and annoyed, perhaps; nothing more.  
"By gadi!" said the squire; "it's lucky it's no worse. If you had been alone or upstairs in your room you might have set the place on fire. James, tell Mrs. Lucas to send some one to pick up the glass. Dream it, eh? By George, it must have been a strong dream, Reginald!"  
"It was," said the captain, with a low, musical laugh. "And for fear I should do it again, I'll say good night."

And the Worst is Yet to Come—



merciless heart, as ready-made a villain as the fiend could have wished.  
Now that she was dead, now that he had killed her, come what might he was prepared.  
He had paid the price for his prize, and he would have it if he had to plunge into a sea of blood to snatch it from the bottom.  
He had sold his soul; he had bartered the life of the woman he loved for the Dale lands and the Dale gold, and he would have them.

"How is the squire this morning, Captain mine?" said Captain Reginald, sauntering into the breakfast-room the following morning and accosting Grace, who, looking blooming and graceful, was seated pouring out the coffee.  
"Worse," said she. "And how are you? Had any more dreams and broken any more lamps?"  
"No," said he. "One is a fair allowance per night. Is the squire coming down?"  
"No," said Grace; "this cup of coffee is for him. Poor uncle! The gout must be very painful. I wonder whether I shall have the gout when I'm old? No, of course not, though; only men have it. Well, I wouldn't mind having the gout if I could only be a man."

The captain smiled. He was looking rather pale this morning and had black shadows under the eyes.  
"Oh," he said, "you have not grown out of that weakness of yours, Miss Grace!"  
"No, I have not, and never shall," she said, decisively. "I would like to be a man."  
"For why?" he said, humoring her, and lifting his cup to his lips.  
"For several things," she said, as coolly as before. "Who wouldn't wish to be?" she continued, half dreamily. "If I were a man I'd be able to leave the Dale and see foreign countries, I'd—"  
She stopped as she saw him smile, then continued, with a dark frown: "I'd be able to thrash you!"  
He put down the cup and seized the opening.  
"Grace," he said, dropping the sarcastic tone he generally used when he addressed her and speaking with the soft, low accent he knew well how to employ, "Grace, is it not time that we should drop our warfare and declare a peace? Have we not played at enemies almost too long? Let us change our game and be—friends."  
And with a winning smile he held out his hand.  
The attack, for the girl understood it as such, was so sudden that she shrank, and, confused by the soft glance of his expressive eyes, took his hand.  
He bent his head and laid his lips upon it.  
It was too forward a move, and he was very sorry he had made it, for the glance with which she snatched it away was expressive.  
"Come," he said, "there is our bond signed, sealed, and delivered; and now we must keep it. I will promise to tease you no longer—for I have teased you, Grace, have I not? Who could resist? And you must promise to repay me by hating me a little less. No, I went on, facing her with his soft eyes and keeping her silent, "no, I will not say this, for I do not think you hate me, Grace—I may call you Grace, remember, and you must call me Reginald—but you must try and like me. Is it a bargain?"  
Grace remained silent, her eyes fixed on his with a questioning, dazed look, and he went on:  
"Silence gives consent they say, and so I take yours for 'Yes.' And now you shall give me some coffee and I will go and look round the farm."  
He drank the coffee standing, Grace keeping her eyes upon the urn, and then he put on his hat and went out.  
Both were puzzled—the fowler and bird.  
Grace was tortured to distraction in her endeavor to solve the problem his sudden change had set her; Reginald was wondering what effect his words had made, for the set, silent regard of the dark eyes revealed nothing.  
Another girl would have read the problem at a glance; but Grace had never been made love to, knew absolutely nothing about it, and could not understand, much less name, the fear she entertained for her cousin, Captain Reginald Dartmouth, whenever he was soft and gentle.  
The sudden look he had given her when he had sprained his arm had dis-

quieted her; this conversation simply alarmed her.  
She took the cup of coffee to the squire and talked to him for a little while, then put on her hat and started for the Warren.  
Before she had reached the second field she saw Reginald Dartmouth walking beside the hedge.  
He did not see her, could not see her, where she stood; but she could see his face distinctly.  
The girl had always disliked him; for some little time she had almost feared him.  
Now as, with beating heart, she watched his close-knit brows and clinched teeth, the evil light in his eyes and the cruel look about the mouth, she dreaded him.  
What was she to do? If she moved three feet from the corner he would see her; if she stayed where she was he would come up to her.  
She did what most people would have done under the circumstances—stayed where she was.  
In a minute he saw her, and, like lightning, his face changed and was calm and smiling.  
"Ah, Grace," he said, "where are you going?"  
"To the Warren, Captain Dartmouth," she said.  
It was the first time she had used his title, and he did not fail to notice it.  
"Captain Dartmouth!" he repeated, with a reproachful smile, seating himself on the stile, with his indolent, graceful air, and looking down at her pale face and knitted brows. "Where is our bargain of this morning? Gone—vanished—forgotten? Oh, surely not already, Grace!"  
"I—didn't make any bargain," she murmured, trying to look defiant and lifting her eyes with an attempt at the old daring look; but her voice broke and her eyes dropped before the subtle look of power and cunning in his.  
She felt like a bird in the hands of the fowler, indeed. But she was no dove; the fowler may chance to snare a young eagle.  
"No bargain?" he repeated. "For shame! Come, let me tell it to you again. We were to be friends; were to give up the old snarling and teasing and have peace. We were to call each other Grace and Reginald; and last, but not least, Grace, we were to try and love each other—"  
"Love!"  
The word was spoken at last.  
At that moment Grace passed the boundary between girlhood and womanhood.  
She shrank, pale and breathless.  
"I—am—going to the Warren," she said, and turned.  
He stretched out his white hand and touched—as lightly as a feather, but it seemed a grasp of iron to the girl—the edge of her cape.  
(to be continued.)

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