



Ruled Destiny!

CHAPTER XX.

RULED BY DESTINY.

"Ah! but mademoiselle has not traveled alone. Ah, no!" said Josine. "The gentleman met her at the station, yes."

"The gentleman, you idiot!—what gentleman?" demanded Lady Betty, all eyes.

"Milord Clifford, miladi!" replied Josine, demurely.

Lady Betty gazed at her open-mouthed, then turned deep crimson.

"You wicked, lying girl!" she gasped.

"Miladi!" exclaimed Josine, facing round and drawing herself to her full height.

"You wicked girl!" repeated poor Lady Betty. "How dare you stand there and tell me such dreadful lies! Miss Carlisle gone off with Lord Clifford!"

"Oh, pardon, miladi!" said Josine, sweetly. "It was not I who said this, it was miladi. I only said mademoiselle met milord at the station—not that she had gone off with him."

Lady Betty could have bitten her tongue off.

"You wicked girl! I don't believe a word of what you say! I don't believe that Lord Clifford was there at all!"

Josine tried to flush, and managed to look fiercely indignant again.

"But yes, miladi, he was!" she insisted. "I myself saw him. He traveled in the same car with mademoiselle! Ah, you do not believe me! Then ask the porter—the guard, who knows him! Inquire for yourself, miladi! Why should I tell miladi a lie? Miss Carlisle will write directly and tell miladi what I now tell her, that she went from Ballyfoe with Milord Clifford!"

Poor Lady Betty sat transfixed.

Was the girl lying? It seemed impossible that she should be speaking the truth. And yet, why should she lie? What avail would lying be to her? What profit, seeing that, as she said, the truth would be known in a few hours?

Josine held up the dinner-dress calmly.

"Shall I assist miladi?"

"Don't speak to me—yet! Tell me more, Josine! I—I am sorry if—I called you names that don't belong to you; but—are you sure that it was Lord Clifford?"

"Ah, but certain, miladi!" said Josine, with a smile. "I know milord well. Besides, I spoke with him! But, and!—with a sudden look of compunction—"perhaps I ought not to tell! I have betrayed mademoiselle's confidence."

Lady Betty flushed.

"Nonsense! There is no confidence in the matter!"

"I am glad of that!" said Josine, with an air of relief; "for Miss Carlisle did offer me a large sum of money, and though I did not take it, I should not like to betray her confidence."

Lady Betty turned pale.

Floris fled suddenly, without a word of warning or explanation, and in the company of Bertie—Bertie, who had been her most passionate lover—and Floris had offered a large sum of money as a bribe to Josine!

Great Heaven, what did it mean, if it did not mean that Floris had eloped with Bertie!

From whom could the telegram have been, if not from him? As to their meeting at such an out-of-the-way place as Ballyfoe, and both going by the same train by mere coincidence, the idea was too absurd.

money, and though I did not take it, I Floris had—was guilty of such dreadful treachery, what would become of Bruce? Who was to tell him? And he and his journey from Ballyfoe.

With her head in a whirl, poor Lady Betty allowed herself to be dressed, trembling so with agitation that Josine could scarcely fasten the bracelets around her wrists.

"Look here, Josine," she said at last, after a silence, during which the whole thing had jarred and traveled through her brain; "I don't know why Miss Floris has gone off so suddenly, but—but—there is, of course, good reason for it. Now, you don't want to chatter about it—"

Josine interrupted with a smile.

"Miladi, I never chatter about anything."

"You—you are a good girl," said poor Lady Betty; "and you may have that yellow satin dress you admire so much—"

"Oh, miladi!" gratefully.

"Yes—and—and for goodness' sake don't let Lady Blanche pump you!" exclaimed poor Lady Betty.

"Certainly not!" responded Josine, with a twinkle in her black eyes.

"And now I'll go down—and what I'm to say, the goodness only knows!" groaned Lady Betty. "Oh, how I wish Bruce was at home, and yet—no, I don't!" she added, with a shudder.

She went down to dinner and was at once assailed by inquiries after Miss Carlisle's health; and one or two waited anxiously to hear the answer, for the news had floated up from the servants' hall that Miss Carlisle had left Ballyfoe.

Lady Betty, surrounded by very curious eyes, put the best face she could on the matter.

"I am sorry to say," she said, "that Miss Carlisle has been summoned home—how little she guessed that she was so near the truth!"—she was obliged to leave by the afternoon mail.

There were general expressions of regret and sorrow, Floris had made herself very popular, and several of the young men looked inconsolable.

Just then Lady Blanche glided into the room.

She was magnificently dressed, and a hectic flush burned in her usually pale cheek.

Her eyes glittered in the candle-light as brilliantly as the diamond tiara in her hair, and about her was a feverish air of excitement which attracted attention.

"Is not this dreadful about Miss Carlisle, Lady Seymour?" said one of the young men, with a doleful countenance.

"What has happened?" she inquired, looking from one to the other. "An accident?"

"No, no," said Lady Betty, hastily. "Floris has been sent for from home; that is all."

"Oh," said Lady Blanche, sympathetically; "I am very sorry! And she has gone? What a dreadful journey to take alone!"

Lady Betty looked up at her quickly, but the lovely face was placid and innocent-looking as a child's, and the next moment dinner was announced.

After dinner Floris's sudden departure was discussed from many points. The ladies, who had gathered something from their maids, were inclined to be—well—slightly suspicious; the gentlemen all deplored the absence of the universal favorite and were disconsolate.

Lady Blanche sang and played, with the usual group of courtiers around her; but after a time, when the room grew hot, she took up her fan and strolled out on to the terrace through one of the windows.

It was a lovely night—poor Floris was rushing through the air at fifty miles an hour, and Bruce, still at the

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but where they had taken him, was lying unconscious to all the world—and Lady Blanche leaned against the stone-coping and looked up at the stars.

Destiny ruled over all.

Was it her destiny to marry Lord Norman, or had she toiled and plotted, and stinned in vain?

That was her one thought. To Floris, the girl whose happiness she had destroyed, she never gave one passing remembrance; utterly remorseless, she wiped all thought of Floris from her mind.

She had been a shadow across her—Lady Blanche's path, and had now passed; that was all!

It was to Bruce she now looked. Give her but time and opportunity, and she could—she would—win back his love, and all would be well.

Suddenly while she mused, and shaped the picture under the stars with that hopefulness which comes of a successful effort, criminal or otherwise—she heard her name whispered.

She knew the voice in an instant; it was Oscar Raymond's.

She did not move for a moment or two, while she crushed back the fear and loathing that the sound of the voice had called up, then she bent over the balustrade, and saw him standing on the gravel path.

He was still dressed in close imitation to Lord Norman, and carried the whip in his hand.

So like was he to Lord Norman, so close a shadow, that even as she looked, Lady Blanche shuddered. It was as if she were looking at Bruce's ghost.

He raised his hat, and came close to the railings.

"I need not ask if our plot has prospered, Lady Blanche," he said; "I have read its success in your face. If we had failed, you would scarcely have been able to study the stars so serenely."

He spoke in his usual half-serious, half-mocking tone, which always made Lady Blanche long to leave him at the first sound of it.

She remained silent, looking down, CHAPTER XXI.

THE HOUR OF TRIUMPH.

"TWENTY thousand pounds!" repeated Lady Blanche, with very haughty surprise.

He looked at her and smiled.

"It is a large sum," he said. "With the two thousand I have promised, on your behalf, to Josine, it is a fortune—that is to most persons—but what is it to your ladyship? A mere bagatelle! You are immensely rich; so rich that if it pleased you, you could walk into Howell & James' and purchase a set of diamonds costing twice this sum, and no questions would be asked. I think, if you consider the matter, Lady Blanche, you will admit that you may gain greater pleasure from this day's work than any diamonds, however rare, could afford you."

Lady Blanche leaned against the stone balustrade, with a deep frown on her white brow.

The sum demanded was enormous. And yet what could she do? When the separation of Bruce and Floris had seemed impossible, she had promised this man anything he liked to ask for if he would bring it about; and he had brought it about. She might have guessed that his price would be exorbitant, she might have been prepared for it.

(To be Continued.)

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2488—In organdie, batiste, dotted swiss, foulard or linen, this model will be very attractive. It is nice also for crepe, gabardine, serge and other wool fabrics. The bolero could be of contrasting material.

The Pattern is cut in 3 sizes: 16, 18 and 20 years. Size 18 requires 5 yards of 36-inch material. The skirt measures about 1 1/2 yard at the foot.

A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 10 cents in silver or stamps.

A POPULAR, "EASY-TO-MAKE" AND "COMFORTABLE - TO - WEAR" MODEL.

2509—This is just the style for satin, crepe, gabardine, foulard, silk or wool jersey cloth and nice for other reasonable materials. The tunic blouse is arranged on a simple skirt foundation, cut in princess style and so combining an underwaist for the blouse. The sleeve may be in wrist or elbow length.

The Pattern is cut in 6 sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust measure. Size 38 requires 7 1/2 yards of 44-inch material. The skirt measures about 2 yards at the foot.

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Household Notes.

Don't serve fresh pineapple with anything sweet.

The old-fashioned gingerbread is coming into favour.

Sometimes a little plain lemon juice will relieve nausea.

Strawberries are good for people of a bilious temperament.

The juice of a lemon is better than vinegar on sliced tomatoes.

Honey is such a wholesome sweet

that the children should be allowed a liberal allowance of it.

Rice with grated cheese over it makes a good luncheon dish.

Lime in various forms is the best disinfectant for the household.

An occasional dose of strained root-water is good for pot plants.

New potatoes boiled until tender with new peas added and creamed, are delicious.

If you skin the rhubarb before stewing it, the flavor will not be so good.

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French

Stage Set for

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WAR SUMMARY.

Continuing their aggressive drive in the face of the impending German offensive along the west front, the French have once more attacked enemy southwest of Soissons, leading their blow from the east side of the Retz forest north of Longny.

The French have advanced over front of approximately two miles, including Chavigny farm and the north and south of it. Several hundred prisoners were captured by the French in their sudden attack.

assault may be linked up closely with the recent offensive operations of the French, and gives the French a new front line from Longny to as far as the southern limits of the bley, a distance of almost 8 miles.

Australian troops holding positions astride the Somme River east of Cambes and south of Amiens have driven the Germans back on a front over a mile, and straightened out awkward angle held by the Germans since the Australians and Americans carried their lines forward in the spirited attack on July 5th.

It mentions local attacks in the Chateaufort sector which is held by the Americans and between the Marne and Rheims. Italian forces operating on the extreme left of the Allied line in Albania have struck hard at the Austro positions along the Volvussa, which flows into the Adriatic, about 20 miles north of the town of Avlona, one of the most important places in Southern Albania.

Vienna admits the Austrian advanced positions have been drawn to their main positions, a report from Austrian headquarters probably refers to the action mentioned in the French official statement Sunday night. It was said by the office at Paris that French and Italian forces had seized the heights of Western Albania and held them against counter attacks. Although movement is as yet not fully developed, it may be that a serious offensive operation has been initiated.

Italian naval ships would be able to co-operate with the land forces, if the line is pushed back a very short distance, a re-location of the line running over the mountains of Macedonia might be necessary.

Fighting north of Avlona has been going on for at least three days, which indicates that it may be more than