

attending. Whitmore had never been held in high esteem by the college men and was always looked upon as being a little shady. Rumour said it was something of this nature which had cut short his academic career, but Glover was unwilling to trump up any past reason for not being civil to an old classmate, and he shook hands with ready grace.

"It seems I run into Varsity men everywhere," he laughed.

"Can't keep them down! No, by the Lord, you can't. Didn't ever expect to meet you here, though, Prince! Have you got the fever, too?"

"No. I'm trying to help my uncle out by acting as temporary manager. He is laid up in the hospital."

"Heavens, yes! That smash at Scardon! They say he has a good thing in mines here. Is that your sit?"

"Yes, developing as fast as my experience will permit."

"Turning out rich?"

"Well, not so far. I fancy I am to blame. I shall be glad when uncle gets out. Things will boom then. The place is rich, no doubt, but we haven't found the veins."

Whitmore jerked a hand toward the tables. "Easier mining silver here," he chuckled—"and gold, too!"

"Perhaps for you, but not for me!"

"Never play?"

"Never in my life!"

"Come and try a hand! I'll put you onto the kinks."

"No," said Carl, "it's against my principles."

"Fudge! It is square."

"It is purely chance."

"Like everything else in the world! A man takes his chance against everybody. Why not here?"

"Entirely different!"

"How?"

"In purpose."

"Explain, please," Whitmore said with a good-natured laugh.

"It's too obvious. Life pits you against many a man, and you take your chance on the uphill fight, but every effort made is one for ennoblement, the satisfying of high ideals and worthy ambitions. Here you chance your money and time for the sake of a passion."

"And gain nothing?"

"Nothing but more passion."

Whitmore looked at him through the haze of his cigar smoke. "By gad! Prince," he said, "you're the same out and out chap. Never a change. You always had principles—and some of us, well—had none."

"Where have you been since you quit?" Carl asked, his voice softer, half out of pity.

"Wandering," Whitmore said, bitterly, "wandering God knows where. When a man's cast out without a show, even on his own fault, the devil sticks mighty close. I have been all over the States and Europe. Landed back in old Canada a month or so ago. Lived like this," he added, nodding toward the roulette.

Glover looked at him for a minute, then before he could make any comment a finely modulated feminine voice came across the table. "I never saw you refrain so long before, Mr. Whitmore," it said.

Both men looked up. "Ah! Miss Theodore," Carl's companion said, "it is you. The truth is, I have been renewing an old acquaintance. Allow me to introduce a former classmate, Mr. Glover, better known as 'The Prince.'"

"What a delightful sobriquet," the dark beauty trilled, greeting Carl with a rare smile.

"Nothing but a campus slander," he said, lightly, with an effort to keep back his laughter.

"And a true one I can vouch for," Whitmore declared.

"You see, Miss Theodore, it was football. That's his outdoor forte. He—"

"That's sufficient," Carl jokingly interrupted. "Write it out, Whitmore, or print it and give it to Miss Theodore to read at her leisure. If I mistake not, she is engaged just now."

She had laid some gold pieces out on the green cloth about to wager them on the turn of the wheel. Carl had heard of the refined female patrons of Monte Carlo, but it was his thought at this moment that they could hardly be any more refined, aristocratic, graceful, or attractive than the lady of the gamester's paradise suddenly unveiled to him in the midst of a gaunt, outlying mining camp. They moved round to her side to watch the issue.

Red turned, and she won. A second time, a third, and a fourth. Her delight sparkled out in musical mirth.

"The little gods of fortune are kind to me to-night," she smilingly said to Glover, looking to him with upturned face. Carl was struck with its perfect symmetry and colour. "Perhaps they will be as considerate to you," she continued, "and you shall use one of the same coins for good luck."

"Thank you," Glover said, "but I never play."

Miss Theodore raised her eyebrows in surprise. "Have you never played?" she asked.

"Never."

"Won't you try now?" The smile was full of sweet persuasion.

"It is most embarrassing to refuse a lady anything, but, really, I cannot. It is a matter of principle with me."

"And you refuse me?" She laid the coin upon the

edge, almost at his hand.

"No, I don't refuse you. I refuse my other self. I cannot play."

"You remind me of Shakespeare," the lady mused, devoting herself to the wheel once more. "Did you ever act?"

"Never. I have not the talent."

"Are you not inclined to art?"

"I do a little on canvas, a very little. The atmosphere of the camp wilds I sometimes feel as a wonderful inspiration, but I have no materials in which to utilize the power. Coming in haste as I did, that was one of the farthest things from my mind."

"I do amateur work myself," Miss Theodore said. "I have plenty of material. You are quite welcome to use as much of it as you want. There are, truthfully, some magnificent landscapes in Temiskaming."

"A thousand thanks," Carl said, "I shall be very, very much indebted, after wishing for that one thing all these days."

She twisted away from the roulette, for it had turned to her loss thrice in succession.

"You have angered the gods," she said in mock pettishness. "They left me after your refusal, and I am tired. I wonder if there is a seat left."

He found an empty divan in a small alcove and they rested there. Carl ordered coffee for two. Whitmore had disappeared some time previous. As they sipped their drink, the talk ran on over art and its various phases, college life, travel, literature, everything in fact but Cobalt. Jointly they seemed to forget that they were in Cobalt. All Carl knew was that a beautiful woman was beside him in an entrancing little alcove. Somehow she exerted a spell over him. It was not love. He knew that. Yet some hidden power drew him, something which made him vaguely uneasy because of its mystery. Vague uneasiness, however, and mystery, both made the tete-a-tete more delicious, and it was with regret, when a thin, elderly man, approached, that she said: "My father! I must go now."

Carl looked at his watch. "Eleven!" he exclaimed. "I didn't dream I was keeping you so long, although it has been a great pleasure. Can you forgive?"

"Freely," she answered, "the pleasure has been mutual. My father, Mr. Glover—he knows your uncle."

"Why yes," Colonel Theodore said—"for years! Painful accident of his in which he has my full sympathy! Excuse my brevity, Mr. Glover, but I am an hour later than I should have been, and I have some business letters to attend to before morning. Come and see us. We shall be glad to see you often. Your uncle and I come from the old land, the same old English soil. Call any time when I happen to be at leisure, and I warn you I am then inconsiderately garrulous. Rita, are you ready?"

"Quite ready," her soft tones assented. "We shall expect you, Mr. Glover."

"Thank you, yes," Carl bowed. "It will be a great privilege."

The last thing he saw that night in the Clan was her smile. The first thing to enter his brain at morning was her name—Rita.

CHAPTER VI.

FREEMAN was not at breakfast, and Carl was pleased with the fact. He ate lightly and hastily, then hurried away to find Ridgeley in order to go over the ground with him. The mine owner he met coming out from his lodging, so they walked briskly toward Graham's property. The Sabbath morning was bright with sunshine. Its level rays coming down over the bluffs, threw the calm valley air into slanting planes of gold. Woodfolk called from deep haunts on all sides as they did at every week's end since then no clamouring noise crashed out to cause them to hide in lair or rift.

"Pretty! Pretty," Ridgeley commented on reaching the spot.

"Magnificent," Carl said. "It is worth something just to have the nature richness of it."

They went to the shaft houses. Ridgeley examined the shafts, ground, and sinkings, while Carl waited expectantly.

"Hem!" the mine owner said at the first, "no signs. How deep did you say?"

"Fifty feet."

"You might go deeper. Run any drifts here?"

"Not yet."

"There might be some chance, but rather slight."

Number Two shaft was no better. Robert Ridgeley pronounced it very uncertain, and Carl knew his experience and reputation was such as to make his opinion valuable.

"You have done well, though," Ridgeley assured the nephew. "The development is above the average, especially on Number Two. That's when you came on, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Carl, with a thrill of exultation.

"Better work! Have you studied mining?"

"Only some manuals since I came here."

(Continued on page 24.)

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