

him; Vane is like his father. Sir Arthur, you know, always would have his own way."

Pauline began to feel interested in this Vane St. Lawrence, who refused to marry the wealthy heiress because he did not love her.

"He must be somewhat like me," she said to herself with a smile.

Then the conversation changed, and Lady St. Lawrence began to speak of her daughter Laura and her children. Pauline returned to Elaine, and soon forgot everything else.

She was roused by a slight stir. She heard Lady St. Lawrence say:

"My dear Vane, how you startled me!"

Looking up, she saw before her the same face which engrossed her thoughts and fancy!

She was nearer to it now, and could see more plainly the exquisite refinement of the beautiful mouth, the clear, ardent expression of the bold, frank eyes, the gracious lines of the clustering hair. Her heart seemed almost to stand still—it was as though she had suddenly been brought face to face with a phantom.

He was bending over Lady St. Lawrence, talking eagerly to her—he was greeting Miss Hastings with much warmth and cordiality. Pauline had time to recover herself before Lady St. Lawrence remembered her. She had time to still the wild beating of her heart—to steady her trembling lips—but the flush was still on her beautiful face and the light in her eyes when he came up to her.

Lady St. Lawrence spoke, but the words seemed to Pauline as though they came from afar off; yet they were very simple.

"Miss Darrell," she said, "let me introduce my son to you."

Then she went back to Miss Hastings, eager to renew the conversation interrupted by the entrance of her son.

What did Sir Vane see in those dark eyes that held him captive? What was looking at him through that most beautiful face? What was it that seemed to draw his heart and soul from him, never to become his own again? To any other stranger he would have spoken indifferent words of greeting and welcome; to this dark-eyed girl he could say nothing. When souls have spoken lips have not much to say.

They were both silent for some minutes; and then Sir Vane tried to recover himself. What had happened to him? What strange, magic influence was upon him? Ten minutes since he had entered that room hearty, whole, fancy-free, with laughter on his lips, and no thought of coming fate. Ten minutes had worked wonders of change; he was standing now in a kind of trance, looking into the grand depths of those dark eyes wherein he had lost himself.

They said but few words; the calm and silence that fell over them during that first interval was not to be broken; it was more eloquent than words. He sat down by her side; she still held the book open in her hands. He glanced at it.

"Elaine," he said, "do you like that story?"

She told him "Yes," and, taking the book from her hands, he read the noble words wherein Sir Lancelot tells the Lily Maid how he will dower her when she weds some worthy knight, but that he can do no more for her.

Was it a dream that she should sit there listening to those words from his lips—she had fancied him Sir Lancelot without stain, and herself Elaine? There was a sense of unreality about it: she would not have been surprised at any moment to awake and find herself in the pretty drawing-room at Marino Terrace—all this beautiful fairy tale a dream—only a dream. The musical voice ceased at last; and it was to her as though some charm had been broken.

"Do you like poetry, Miss Darrell?" inquired Sir Vane.

"Yes," she replied; "it seems to me part of myself. I cannot explain clearly what I mean, but when I hear such grand thoughts read, or when I read them for myself, it is to me as though they were my own."

"I understand," he responded—"indeed I believe that I should understand anything you said. I could almost fancy that I had lived before, and had known you in another life."

Then Lady St. Lawrence said something about Sea View, and they left fairy-land for a more commonplace sphere of existence.

#### CHAPTER XXXVI.

##### REDEEMED XXXVI.

"If anything can redeem her, it will be love." So Miss Hastings had said of Pauline long months ago, when she had first seen the grand nature warped and soured by disappointment, shadowed by the fierce desire of revenge. Now she was to see the fulfilment of her words.

With a nature like Pauline's, love was no ordinary passion; all the romance, the fervor, the poetry of her heart and soul were aroused. Her love took her out of herself, transformed and transfigured her, softened and beautified her. She was not of those who could love moderately, and, if one attachment was not satisfactory, take refuge in another. For such as her there was but one love, and it would make or mar her life.

Had Sir Vane St. Lawrence been merely a handsome man she would not have cared for him; but his soul and mind had mastered her. He was a noble gentleman, princely in his tastes and culture, generous, pure, gifted with an intellect magnificent in itself, and cultivated to the highest degree of perfection. The innate nobility of his character at once influenced her. She acknowledged its superiority; she bowed her heart and soul before it, proud of the very chains that bound it.

How small and insignificant everything else now appeared! Even the loss of Darrell Court seemed trifling to her. Life had suddenly assumed another aspect. She was in an unknown land: she was happy beyond everything that she had ever conceived or imagined it possible to be.

(To be Continued.)

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