







All's Well That Ends Well.

Colonel Kemp sat at breakfast on a fine September morning in the dining-room of his country house, situated in a beautiful Berkshire glade not far from Windsor.

The Colonel, who was a widower, had gained considerable renown during the war in the Peninsula. He had earned a great deal of prize-money and numerous medals and orders, and, having, beside his pension, much private property, partly derived from his deceased wife, he was enabled to keep up two a country seat and town house to his good style.

His daughter Victoria owned her name to her father's extreme loyalty to his sovereign. She was the "apple of his eye," and "well did she deserve" his warmest affection.

It was not long since that the Colonel, who had been for some time irritable between his fingers, was coming one of his letters with a perplexed look.

"What on earth does it mean?" he muttered. "I can't make head or tail of it."

Victoria had been posing, knowing perfectly well that by doing so she would soon be enlightened.

"Here's a letter," continued the Colonel, "from my friend Woodland, who, I believe, is my old friend Cheyenne, containing a very extraordinary proposition—most extraordinary, my dear—most extraordinary!"

Here the Colonel hesitated, adjusted his eye-glasses, and glanced nervously at the letter.

"Well, papa, dear, what is it?" his daughter ventured to ask.

"What is it? Just listen, Vic." And the Colonel read:

"My Dear Sir:—I have many things to say to you, but I will not say more than that I feel satisfied that you will do me the honor to accept of my offer to do as I think best."

Victoria looked at the reading of the letter with a pale face.

"Well, papa," she said, "you have often wished you had a son; now you will have a son-in-law."

"A pretty thing," murmured the Colonel, "to be plunged in my old age by some overgrown, overpaid brat."

"But, papa, why, surely Mr. Cheyenne cannot have young sons?"

"How do I know that?" returned the Colonel. "Many a man makes a fool of himself in his old age."

"But, papa, if Mr. Cheyenne was one of your old companions-in-arms, he must be about your own age; and it is not likely—"

"That's true," muttered the Colonel, quite comforted.

"So you see you must submit with a good grace, papa! And now," she continued, rising, "since you have finished breakfast, I will leave you to read your paper and go and make preparations for this young fellow, who may be expected any day."

"Very well, dear," said the Colonel, groaning inwardly as he took up his Times—"since there is no help for it."

Victoria, who had been prepared to see a boy of certainly not more than 16, for once entirely lost her presence of mind and colored deeply as she returned young Cheyenne's graceful bow.

She felt that she was positively awkward, that her demeanor was more that of a village girl than of a well-bred young lady. She was angry with herself accordingly, and the consciousness of her awkwardness did not assist her to appear less gauche.

Sydney Cheyenne came to her relief.

"You were singing, Miss Kemp. Pray do not let me disturb you."

"But," put in the Colonel, "have you dined, Mr. Cheyenne?"

"Oh, yes—before I left town."

"But your butler is seeing to them. They're being taken to my room."

"His room?" thought the Colonel. "Confound his impudence!" He said aloud, "At least you will let us offer you a cup of coffee!"—and he rang the bell and ordered a fresh supply of cake.

"With much pleasure," said the visitor, "on condition that I do not disturb Miss Kemp."

"Oh, your daughter was only singing to me a Scotch ballad. I have a foolish partiality for Scotch airs."

"Ah! so have I! Miss Kemp was singing 'Auld Robin Gray,' I think. I caught the air as I came up the stairs; and he looked with interest at the young lady.

"Go on then, Vic, since Mr. Cheyenne permits it," said the Colonel.

Victoria hesitated. It seemed, at so early a stage of acquaintance, very like being "trotted out for inspection."

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from their companions, but they did not appear to be aware of the fact, or, if they were, it did not cost them to be so.

"That's just it. And now will you forgive me, Victoria?"

"For what?"

"For having descended to a subterfuge unworthy of a gentleman."

"She looked up at him, her brown eyes full of a tender light."

"It was not a right thing to do," she said; "but I am the gainer by it, and so I forgive you, Sydney."

"The young man took his pardon from her lips."

"But," added Victoria, "I don't know what you will say to all this."

"But after having heard a story of his 'ward' the Colonel came to the conclusion that 'all's well that ends well.'"

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