

SANDRA THE JEALOUS

By Jane Phelps

ROSE WRITES THAT SHE IS UNHAPPY

CHAPTER CXI.

I returned to the nursery. "Mr Graham insists that I apologize to you, Miss Lane. I do so to please him, not because I feel I am in the wrong."

"Most second wives think they should rule," she returned calmly, her face without change of expression. "I understood; she was settling even with me for my old maid."

"I paid no attention but left the room boiling with anger. "I'll get rid of her some way, she'll see if I don't!" I said to myself as I winked back the hot tears. I wouldn't cry; if I did she might think I was crying, because of what she had said. I'd not give her that satisfaction."

Just then Hetty brought in the mail. I was delighted when I saw Rose's bold chirography. At least I could forget that odious Miss Lane for a while. I had given up all idea of a walk.

"Dear Sandra," she commenced. "I am so miserable I must talk to someone, and there is no one here that I know well enough, and I also don't want to make mother unhappy by telling her. But I feel sometimes as if I should go mad! Walter goes out night after night. When I ask him where he has been, he refuses to answer or else he lies. He isn't honorable, Sandra. Your husband was right. No woman ever could be happy as his wife. As a sweet heart, yes. Then he was all courtesy, all thought for my comfort, all seeming love toward me. Now he is so different."

"Do you think I have lost all pride to write you in this way, Sandra? I haven't! I would cut my arm off before I'd let the home folks know, and for goodness sake don't tell Mr. Graham. He is an honorable man, good and kind if he is so much older than you. Do you remember how I used to say to you, I would be unhappy to be number two; to marry grandpa? Any you are so comfortably happy now—or seemed to be when I was there. No one knows how much in love I was with Walter—or thought I was, which amounted to the same thing in my case. But I cannot feel that he is true to me. I try to get rid of that thought, but it is impossible for me to believe otherwise. He escorts women I do not know to restaurants and theaters. There may be nothing wrong in all this, but I cannot endure it much longer."

"We have moved from the hotel into our own home. I thought he might feel more responsibilities as regarded me. But it gives him more license. It only I had listened to Mr. Graham. He was older, wiser than I. But we think we know it all, then pay the piper. "This is an awfully big letter to send off. Fear it up, Sandra, as soon as you have read it, I wanted you to know how unhappy I was so what ever happened you would understand. For after all we have been closer than other girls. "I am going off in my looks, Sandra, horribly! Walter tells me so every day. I have cried so much—passed so many sleepless nights that it is no wonder. I look ten years older than you do, and I used to look younger, and everyone said I was pretty. No one would dare accuse me of being pretty now. I no longer seem to have any interest in how I look, what I wear. Isn't it strange how a man can change a girl? If I thought Walter loved me nothing would be too much trouble to do to please him. But now that I am convinced he does not, nothing seems to count. "Write me soon, Sandra. But say nothing of what I have said. Walter might get hold of your letter—he seems to be jealous, although he cares nothing for me. Remember me to your nice old husband, and kiss that wonderful baby for me. "Lovingly, Rose."

"Poor Rose!" I said aloud, then a wave of crimson swept over my face as I thought that had it not been for Everett, I would have received Walter Kemp; listened to what meant less than nothing to him—a philanderer. "I had a letter from Rose today," I said to Everett, when he came in.

His Death Expected

New Brunswick Man Saved

Mr. Isidore Thomas, of Tilley's Road, Gloucester County, N.B., while expecting death, availed himself of help that was offered at random. Here is part of a letter he wrote to us:—"I beg you to publish my letter, so that people may know what Gin Pills did for me. My case was very serious. I was so sick everybody expected my death any day. Finally, on advice from friends, I tried Gin Pills, and in a short time was well again, and soon had gained 20 pounds."

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"She is rather blue. She asked to be remembered to you. I think she is lonely, off there, away from everyone she knows," I added, fearing I had not quite kept faith with Rose because I had said she was "blue."

"I am sorry for the child. Kemp is absolutely without honor as far as women are concerned. She wouldn't be warned, so now will have to make the best of things. Did you apologize to Miss Lane?"

"Yes."

"Be very careful not to offend her again. I desire very keenly to keep her for Junior."

SANDRA IS UNHAPPY AGAIN

DISTURBED BY GOSSIP

CHAPTER CXII.

I answered Rose's letter, comforting her as well as I could. Had it not reached me at a time when Everett was cross with me because of my attitude toward Miss Lane, I think I might perhaps have written differently. I remembered afterward that some things I said might be construed that I too was unhappy, that my husband wasn't all I wished he were. I had kept all my troubles to myself ever since I had married; I had no intention of telling any now, especially as my present troubles were so slight compared to what I had considered the others—when I first married. But, one expression which I had used I regretted. I had said: "Don't think you are the only person in the world who has trouble, and is unhappy; for you are not." Of course she might take it as a generalization; again, she might think I was writing of myself. I thought of something Everett had said to me when we were first married: "Give your confidence to no one except your husband, Sandra. You will save yourself many regrets if you remember this advice. It may be a relief at the time to tell your troubles, either real or imaginary, but in the end it always brings regret, often embarrassment."

I really had followed his advice in that I had kept my own counsel in many ways. Often when tempted to tell of something which had disturbed me, or to write to Mother when I felt lonely and neglected, I remembered what Everett had said and waited. Invariably I had been glad I had done so. I had not felt any happier about Miss Lane. She had adopted a manner of hurt silence toward me, never speaking unless I spoke to her unless it was unavoidable. I tried to ignore her as much as possible—as much as she did me. But it is hard to have your baby in the hands of someone with whom you cannot talk freely of his cunning ways, his beauty, etc. As often as possible I took Hetty and we would go to the park with him. Then I was really and truly happy. Hetty and I would admire him to our heart's content, gloating over him like a couple of misers. Hetty disliked Miss Lane even more than I did, I think, although I never had mentioned my feelings to her.

"She thinks no one knows nothing about a baby but her, and she wants to know more about it than anyone else in the house," Hetty sputtered—a common complaint of servants when a nurse is employed. I have since discovered. "I guess she does know a lot, or the doctor would not have spoken so highly of her," was my reply. "There is no reason why you should not go, Everett said impatiently. He had asked me if I would like to go to the theater, and I had demurred because of Baby. Miss Lane is perfectly capable of taking care of Junior."

"Very well, I can go if you wish it," I had not forgotten him for making me apologize to Miss Lane, and my answer was ungracious. "I do wish! Look your best." It seems as if I never was to have any joy in my life. Gossip had made my marriage almost an unhappy one for years, by talking of Everett's first wife; and now gossip was trying to take away my joy in my darling boy. That the gossip, of either sex was a person of no importance I had yet to learn. I could not help attaching a certain meaning to what I heard. Once I heard Mrs. Gray say: "There's never much smoke unless there is a little fire," when she referred to something Hetty told her. Therefore, when, during imprisonment, that fat Mr. Lovelidge came over to speak to us, and he congratulated me at again being out, and turned to Everett to say in his oily manner something about the baby, I listened intently. He said: "Well, Graham, I suppose you feel vindicated now because you married Mrs. Graham. I expect you are as proud as a peacock over the youngster. Can't say I hope he will resemble you. He will be far better looking if he looks like his lovely young mother, instead of an old has-been like you." He chuckled at what he evidently considered a facetious remark. But Everett had flushed painfully, and I heard him mutter: "The d— fool!" As Everett never swore, I knew he had been very much annoyed. I had been made distinctly unhappy. It was the same old thing. Everett had not married me because he loved me.

BARRETT EDMONDS CALLS AND TALKS OF ROSE KEMP

CHAPTER XCIII.

Everett was strangely quiet all the way home from the theater. Some way, I felt sorry for him. He wasn't to blame for being old, if he were to blame for marrying me. Finally I stole my hand into his, and his closed around it in a strong warm clasp. "Am I so horribly old, Sandra?" His question was asked in a whimsical manner, but I knew he had been hurt.

"I never think of your being old except when you are stern and cross with me, or when you treat me like a child. Then I think of you as older, but never at any other time."

"Suppose you are referring to my insistence that Miss Lane remain with us? Oh, Sandra, when will you learn! I cannot, for the sake of humoring your likes and dislikes, allow the boy to suffer. What do you know of taking care of a baby—of children's diseases—of what to do for him when he frets? I don't want you to lose your looks by being deprived of sleep. And until he is older we cannot trust him with some young thing simply because it would please you better to have her around, than to have a competent, settled woman like Miss Lane. When he is older we can perhaps have one of the trained nurses for children. Until then we must have Miss Lane, or someone like her."

"I said no more just then. He had spoken kindly, I had noticed before that whenever anyone spoke of Leola or anything he had done (like marrying me when I was so young), he was always rather obviously kind. I sometimes wondered if he felt sort of guilty."

The next day Mrs. Barton called. "I heard you were in the theater, last night, so I might run in and see that baby I hear so much about."

"Indeed you may!" I replied. All feeling of jealousy had left me since Irma Barton had told me she was to be married, and we had been friendly. We never would be intimate. I sent Hetty for the baby.

"Tell Miss Lane, a friend of Mr. Graham's has called, and wishes to see Junior," I explained. I half feared she might refuse to allow him to be disturbed. She often had when he was asleep, or feeding. Irma Barton looked keenly at me. "Nurses are awful autocrats aren't they?" she asked. "But it makes a perfect slave of a woman not to have a good one, one who understands children." It was one of her uncanny speeches. It seemed always she could read my thoughts.

"Miss Lane is very competent, the doctor says," I said demurely, then as I caught the twinkle in her eye, we both laughed.

"It's no use, Mrs. Graham, you don't like her, and hate to have her bossing your baby—usurping your rights. But be glad you have someone to relieve you of responsibility while he is so young. Oh—what a darling!" she broke off as Hetty came in with the baby. "Oh, you precious angel!" and for the remainder of her visit her attention was all given to Junior. As she gave him to me, saying she must go, she remarked: "I expect that husband of yours is at last satisfied. I know he has always longed for a son."

"Yes, I think he is," I responded gravely. But she was hurrying out and didn't see to notice. I was ready to cry, but had no time because Barrett Edmonds came in right away.

"Have you heard from Rose lately?" he asked after he too had admired the baby, before I sent him back to Miss Lane. "Yes, I had a letter the other day. "Nothing much. But I have just been to Chicago. Kemp is up to his old tricks. I hope it is nothing more serious. But his name is being linked with that of a wealthy widow in a way that looks bad for Rose. Poor girl, why in the world did she run off with that lady-killer?"

"She was absolutely infatuated, Barrett. I do hope things aren't as bad as you think. It would be terrible for her if he should leave her. Did you see her?"

"Yes, but she didn't see me. She was with him, and had been crying. She has gone off terribly in her looks. She looks ten years older. I should have stopped and spoken, but they seemed to be having a heated discussion over something, so I passed on."

"I used to build air castles about you and Rose," I told him. "There never was a chance, little girl."

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AN UNPLEASANT REMINDER OF LEOLA

CHAPTER CXIV.

I said nothing to Everett of what Barrett Edmonds had told me of Rose. But I could not get her out of my mind. Gay, inconsequent Rose Grandon a sad neglected wife, and not yet married a year!

"I know how she feels," I said to myself. "Everett often neglects me." He was out that night and I was feeling lonely and alone. Miss Lane had refused to allow anyone to go into the nursery after Baby had gone to bed, and since this was in the near room with the door between wide open, there was no comfort in trying to combat her in that particular. I often longed to creep in and kiss him good-night again, but the thought of that open door, that stern-faced woman sitting where she could see every move I would make, deterred me.

I wrote Rose a long letter. I told her Barrett had called and that we had talked of her, and that nothing of his having been in Chicago, she might feel hurt that he had not called. But I wrote her a long, chatty letter, and sent her the baby's picture—a snap shot Everett had taken and which was very good, considering the baby was so young.

Then I wandered about forlornly. I went into the library, and for the first time in months I looked at Leola's picture, with the old resentment. Now that I had thrown him a cold, the least Everett could do would be to take down that picture. But I never would ask him to again, never so long as I lived.

Hetty interrupted my unhappy musings. "A lady to see you, ma'am."

"Didn't she give you a card—or her name?"

"No, ma'am. She said you used to know her."

"Perhaps some one from home!" I grasped eagerly upon the thought. "Show her in, Hetty."

A woman of perhaps thirty-five or six years old, rather showily dressed, but with a hard face and crafty eyes, came in. I never had seen her before, and waited for her to speak.

"I want to see Mrs. Everett Graham."

"I am Mrs. Everett Graham," I replied coldly, still standing. I had not relished her tone.

"You're not the one I want. They used to live here. Perhaps they have moved." She made as if to go.

"Perhaps you mean the first Mrs. Graham? I am Mr. Graham's second wife." It was the first time I had willingly said that of myself. But something about the woman made me feel she had not made a mistake; that she was in the right house.

"What was her first name? Was it Leola?"

"Yes."

"She's the one I want to see. I suppose he divorced her?"

"She is dead."

"That's her picture," she had turned so she saw the painting for the first time. "You say she's dead, that woman there?"

"Yes, she has been dead for many years."

"I might as well go! I only came to show her a bit of her work," she paused and, as I made no remark, she went on after a moment. "That looks just like her. Only the picture don't show her hair—that was like yours. I hate a woman who's had colored hair! I was happy I had been married only a few months when my husband told me she never cared anything about him—just playing with him. But he was crazy about her. He took me to Europe to live, when he found out that she never cared for him. He died a while ago, and in his delirium he talked constantly of her. He died with her name on his lips. I was less than nothing to him after he met that vampire woman. That was what she was—a vampire." Then more quietly: "So I came back here to tell her how happy she had made him, and me, just for a bit of sport, or to make her own husband jealous. They said she used to do it for that. Now I'll go. You look young and good."

Don't ever play with human hearts, especially the hearts of men. It don't pay, and before I could think of a word to say, she had gone from the room and was out of the house!

Should I tell Everett?

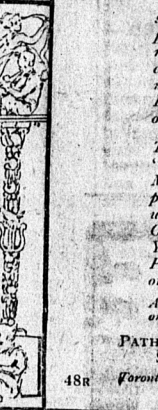
For once I decided to be unselfish. It could only bring him pain to repeat what the woman had told me, and it might not be true. Yet as I said it, I knew that it was true, and that fascinating, irresponsible Leola had been the cause of my own unhappiness, just to satisfy her love of admiration. Perhaps, too, Everett knew of this, or of other things like it, and that was why he had been so strict with me.



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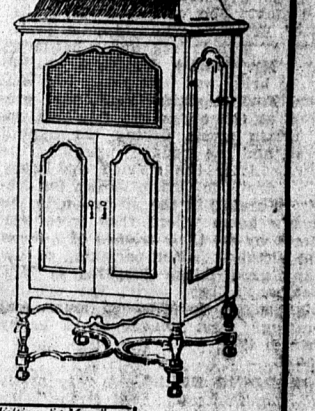


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SANDRA IS SHOCKED BY A LETTER FROM ROSE

I had another long letter from Rose Kemp. My heart ached as I read it, and tears filled my eyes. Often during the reading I had to wipe them away so that I could see the words. "Dear Sandra: The end has come! I am about to leave Walter. I can endure no more. I have suffered so that I feel old, oh, so old. And I look old too, which in his eyes is unforgivable. He has been so open in his affairs, that I can no longer retain a shred of respect and live with him. I might have known that a marriage begun in deceit—it was deceit when I did not tell father and mother, or you—would end in failure. But I loved him so, Sandra. I was afraid I would lose him if I did not do as he asked. I knew his reputation, spoke to him about it. But he swore he never had loved as he loved me, and that was the reason; he had been called a philanderer; that now he loved me, he would never stray again. "I, little fool that I was, believed him. He was handsome, he made love so wonderfully. I was his angel his heaven." I winced at the expression, "his little love, and a thousand other things that I longed to hear, and that I believed he meant. "The sad, the awful part of it is that I still love him—still love to hear him say those very things he said when he was urging me to marry him. Now I KNOW he doesn't mean them, yet I shut my eyes and my mind and try to comfort myself that he does think a little of me. I think, Sandra, that men who "protect too much" are never men of deep feeling. Walter protested overmuch. He is shallow, and without honor—with women—as I wrote you before. It is strange what a queer angle some people have on things, in Chicago, as he had in Hendon, of being strictly honorable in business. His word is considered as good as his bond among men of affairs. Yet he will lie to wheedle, and cajole one woman after another without the slightest compunction. "Once I told him I wished he would meet some woman whom he REALLY loved, and that she would treat him exactly as he had me. What do you think he said? That he was 'love-proof.' Then he went on: 'I did love one woman, but she was as 'necessible as the stars. Because she had the bad taste to love her husband.' "Can you imagine anything more cruel than that speech? Somehow I have always thought he liked you, Sandra. Do you suppose, just because he knew he couldn't have you

he imagined himself in love with you? But he couldn't really be in love with anyone but Walter Kemp. "I know you will regret that I am so miserably unhappy. I have written father; told him the whole story of repentance on my part; of the neglect and unhappiness caused because I was so selfish, so self-willed. But I also tried to make him understand how dearly I loved Walter. Dear old dad, he DID understand, and there is nothing but love and forgiveness at home for me. He wrote me to come at once and he would attend to all details for a divorce if I still wanted one. I DO want one at times; then at other times I feel that if I free Walter I never can be happy again, because I will have lost all hold on happiness when I lose him. I cannot eat or sleep, I am so miserable. Perhaps if I leave him for a few weeks, he will miss me and want me back. I think I shall try that. I will go home although it will be hard to face the girls and boys if they know, and see what happens. "I think of you often, dear Sandra, you and your husband and that precious baby. How wonderful it must be to be married to a man who loves you, thinks of you—instead of one who neglects and embarrasses you. Love from your unhappy Rose."

"Poor Rose!" I said as I laid the letter away. "Poor girl. Then I added, "My troubles seem small compared to hers, yet I too have been unhappy a good deal of the time. "Then a still small voice whispered: "Yes, but never have you been truly doubtful of your husband's faithfulness. And ROSE KNOWS."

AVOIDING THE TANNIN IN TEA

The simple, old-fashioned way of bringing fresh drawn water to a "quick boil and pouring it over the leaves (one level teaspoonful to the cup and one for the pot) in a heated spot, which is then covered with a "cozy" and left to steep for three to five minutes, is all right if one pours off the tea at once. But if left standing on the leaves the second cup will contain too much tannin for either the palate's pleasure or the stomach's safety. Herein lies the advantage of some of the special devices provided for making tea. The London Tea Bob saves the tea maker all responsibility and trouble by bobbing up automatically when the tea has steeped for five minutes. This is no magic, but is brought about by a "time cup" in the top of the teapot, into which the boiling water is poured. The cup rests in a deeper perforated receptacle in which the tea is held. About the top of the time cup are large perforations through which the water passes downward through the tea, leaving a measured quantity in the cup, which drips slowly through a tiny hole in the bottom of it. At the end of five minutes the water has all escaped, and its weight being gradually removed, the float slowly rises, raising the tea leaves out of the water. No straining is necessary and the second cup of tea is no more bitter than the first. The tea ball and the teaspoon provide the same sort of safeguard, but require more attention. The leaves are held in a little perforated metal basket which is lowered by the chain into the hot water, and at the end of the three or four minutes period the ball is easily lifted by the knob and held with the chain in the upper position for it in the cover of the teapot.

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