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RIGHTED AT LAST

BY MARY CECIL HAY

Author of "The Arundel Motto," "Nora's Love Test," "Back to the Old Home," Etc.

(Continued.)

If Phoebe had had any idea of the storm she had invoked, she would not have tripped quite so happily past her guardian when she reached the Larches at last; but Phoebe Owen was not gifted with the power of seeing below the surface in any single matter whatever.

Lawrence was ill—that fact appeared to be patent to Miss Haughton the moment she met her brother in the hall, as she invariably did; and Lawrence apparently found it less trouble to assent to this than to clear his gloomy brow, and shake off the sullen silence which pressed upon him, and nothing that was said elicited a smile, or even an amiable word.

"You are very poorly, I am afraid, Lawrence," fretted Jane, pathetically; "and I knew it would be so this morning when you took those mushrooms."

"It is your head, Lawrence, I can see," said Phoebe, softly; "I will fetch my eau-de-Cologne."

"Nonsense," cried Jane, authoritatively; "it is not the head, and I know what will do him more good."

Phoebe had rushed off for her scent-bottle.

"Foolish girl," muttered Jane, following her, stiffly; "as if I did not know best what is the matter with my own brother."

"You never offer scent, or stimulant, or sympathy, Honor," said Lawrence, when they two were left alone; and now his tone, though vexed, was neither rough nor sullen. "Why don't you tell me what is the matter—as they do?"

"Don't they remind you," asked Honor, as she took a rosebud from one of the vases on the table, "of the shoemaker in 'The Relapse,' who told Lord Foppington that he was mistaken in supposing his shoe pinched him?"

Lawrence laughed as if he had not been poorly for a year.

"There is no deceiving those beautiful eyes of yours," he said; "give me that rosebud; pin it in my coat yourself, and that will cure me."

But, with the utmost care and deliberation she fastened it in her dress.

"There, Lawrence, just drink this, and you'll be all right," said Jane, entering fustily with some mixture in a glass. "You ought to have come home early and nursed yourself; you are so neglectful of your health."

"I've read somewhere," remarked Honor, sedately, "of a young captain of marines who was shot in the arm in battle, and when he asked permission to go below to have it amputated, he apologized for leaving action for 'such a trivial occasion'; he was like Lawrence."

"Exactly," assented Jane and Phoebe in a breath, having heard the words, but being in much too great a fuss to notice the tone.

"For pity's sake, sit down, both of you!" cried Lawrence, in sudden, inexplicable anger. "Take these womanish condiments away."

Captain Hervoy Trent, all unconscious of any of Mr. Haughton's feelings toward him, pursued his way to De-



A man will defend his honor with his life. What is more dishonorable than unnecessary failure? Thousands of men make failures of life and die premature deaths, leaving wives and children unprovided for, because of their reckless neglect of health. No man can do good work or be successful in business who suffers from biliousness, digestive and nervous disorders such as sick headache, giddiness, dizziness, drowsiness, cold chills, flushings of heat, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, fullness and swelling after meals, wind and pain in the stomach, costiveness, blotches on the skin, loss of sleep, disturbed sleep, frightful dreams and nervous and trembling sensations.

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grove that evening, in a state of placid satisfaction, chiefly by himself, but, in a secondary degree, with one or two other people; and what he pondered as he went was betrayed by a few words which even passed his lips as he opened the gate at Deer Grove.

"I hope that, when I and Theodora are married and settled here, Honor will still be living close by us—not married to Lawrence, detestable idea, that!—but still living here, or equally near us. I shall take care always to be kind to her; she is troublesome, of course; but I don't object to taking a little trouble for her."

When her visitors had all left East Cottage, Mrs. Payte heaved a sigh which sounded like an expression of relief, but still it was with her usual eager briskness that she questioned Mrs. Dishrove on various speeches, which she must very well have known were intended only for that lady's private ear.

"I guessed as much," she ejaculated, as complacently as if she had been drinking in a string of compliments, "I saw that Mr. Haughton was out of temper with me, and that Captain Trent was bored to death, and that that little Dutch-faced girl only stayed with me because her guardian did. And Honor Craven was disgusted with all I said to you."

"No!" put in the invalid, anxiously.

"Yes," returned Mrs. Payte, with that shrewd glance of hers, which showed how hard it would be to deceive her. "She was whispering to you about me just before they went."

"She only said," answered the sick lady, with a smile of pleasant recollection, "she thought you did not mean your words to be hard and sharp, as I said they were."

CHAPTER VIII.

Leaving Kinbury, Royden Keith rode along the highway toward Abbotsmoor; past the wall that skirted the park, and past the high hedge bordering the wood. Then he turned aside to a lane which ran at right angles with the highway and bordering the wood on the other side. He rode slowly here, not only because the lane was rough and deeply rutted, and Robin Hood of his own accord slackened his dainty steps, but apparently because Robin's master had no idea to hasten now.

He had ridden about a mile up the lane when he drew bridle, for he had come upon a solitary cottage, just at a turning in the lane. The walls were propped, the thatch torn and the windows patched with paper; but a curl of thin, blue smoke from the broken chimney rose against the dark background of the Abbotsmoor woods, and Royden, seeing this, dismounted without a moment's hesitation. Fastening Robin to an alder-bush which grew beside the rickety garden-gate, he walked up to the door of this desolate-looking dwelling, and knocked upon it with his riding whip.

"It has been a comfortable dwelling," he said to himself. "Can all the cottages on the Abbotsmoor estate have been left to fall to ruin when they would, as this one has?"

There came no answer to his knock, but, just as he stepped back to assure himself again of the presence of smoke that should betoken human occupation, an old man came round the corner of the cottage, with a spade upon his shoulder. He had evidently been at work in the garden behind, and so had not heard Royden's summons.

"What is it?" he inquired, suspiciously.

"I want to ask you," said Royden, in his pleasant, high-bred tones, "a few questions about this cottage and its late tenants. If you will answer them for me, I shall feel very much obliged to you."

The man put down his spade, and leaned upon it as he stood. Royden, resting his arm upon the branch of a stunted apple-tree, looked toward the cottage door, as if he would rather have gone within, gloomy and desolate as the place might be.

"Have you lived here long?" he asked, when he saw that he was expected to hold his interview there.

"I dunno what you call long," returned the old man sulkily; "I've lived here better'n seven year—will that do ye?"

"You took the cottage, did you not, from a man named Territ?"

"Not I."

"Did you not? I understand he was living here about ten years ago. He was a miner, and had a daughter named—"

"I know her name," put in the old man, scraping the sole of his boot upon the spade he held. "If that's all ye want, I can tell ye that—sir." The last word was added, apparently against the speaker's will, as he glanced at the face and figure opposite him. "Her name was Margit. I've heard of her. She married from this cottage, and went with her husband to the county town. I've heard nothin' of her since

then. What should I hear, if she's a respectable woman, and stays at home?"

"Then you did not know either of them personally?"

"Not I."

"Do you happen to know the name of Margit's husband?"

"No—I never heard it. That's a fine dog o' yours, sir—fleet as the wind, I'll warrant. No, I don't trouble about my neebors' name—not I. Margit married a town chap, and I know none o' them. Is there anythin' more you'd care to ask?" added the old man, still gazing critically at the greyhound, which sat waiting at his master's feet.

"Margit's father—is he dead?"

"Dead! Yeets and years ago. A fine horse that at the gate, sir—is it yourn?"

"Yes, it is mine," said Royden, pleasantly; "but, before I mount him, just let me look round your cottage kitchen, will you?"

"Ye're welcome," said the old man, in anything but a gracious tone. "There's naught to see in there, but if ye like to take the trouble, why ye can."

Saying this, he stuck his spade into the soil among his cabbages, and opened the door of the cottage.

Desolate as the little dwelling had looked from without, it was far more desolate, to Royden's eyes, within. Everything bore evidence of poverty, and nothing breathed the presence of a woman's care or thrift. But whether it was only of this that Royden was thinking, as he stood and looked round the bare and gloomy kitchen, no one could judge.

(To be continued.)

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