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Right at Last

Joan never knew how the evening passed. She did not hear the innuendoes of the girls, and was deaf to the colonel's growls. There was no room in her thoughts now for anything or anyone but Lord Villiers. She stole away from the house at the appointed time and ran quickly down the lane.

Lord Villiers was by her side in a moment.

"My darling!" he breathed with almost an air of relief. "I fancied your courage would have failed you, it is so dark; and also so late."

As he spoke he almost took her in his arms and carried her to the carriage which was waiting; the door closed sharply, and the next moment they were off.

Joan noticed that before they started the groom extinguished the lamps, and in the intense darkness they made their way to the station.

"Wait here, dearest, till I come for you," said Lord Villiers.

He had scarcely spoken when the driver, and he went and asked for two tickets, one for London and one for Plymouth; then he ran down and muffled Joan in a voluminous wrap, brought her on the platform at the last moment, and swiftly drew the curtains.

A brougham was waiting for them at Paddington, and with the same swift decision, Lord Villiers conducted Joan to it, still enveloped in her wraps, and the carriage was the first to leave the station yard.

"So far we are safe," he said; "and now we can defy them, Joan. Look around you, dearest. We are in London at last."

It was noon, and the streets were at their fullest, with the same sense of unreality, Joan looked at the people as they whirled past, as if she were looking at a city in a dreamland.

He had no time to engage rooms, and as the brougham passed down the quiet part of Pall Mall, he kept a close watch until he saw a bill in one of the windows.

The house looked respectable and aristocratic, and, stepping the carriage, he got out and knocked at the door.

He was shown upstairs, had a short interview with the landlady, and in five minutes had made terms, explaining that his wife and himself had come up unexpectedly, and offering to pay a week's rent in advance.

"That is not necessary, sir," said the landlady, quietly. "I think I know a gentleman when I see him. What name, sir?"

Once again Lord Villiers was at fault, and he hesitated, with his own name on his lips, as the thought flashed upon his mind that to give his true name would be to provide a distinct clue to the colonel, who was by this time, no doubt, in pursuit.

"My name is Newlands," he said, giving one of the family Christian names at random.

The landlady bowed.

"And mine is Parsons, sir. I think you will be comfortable. We have only one other gentleman in the house, and he will not disturb you; his rooms are on the floor beneath yours."

Lord Villiers nodded and went out to Joan.

"I have been a long while, have I not?" he said, with a smile. "But we are at home at last; and he gave her his arm and let her in.

A comfortable fire was burning in the grate, and the room looked cosy and homelike after the long journey.

Lord Villiers drew a chair to the fire and made her sit down and warm herself, while he ordered some luncheon; then, when the landlady had left the room, he went and put his arm around Joan and kissed her.

"Joan, dearest, I have something important to tell you," he said, trying to speak lightly.

"I will do anything, everything you tell me," she said, simply.

"You will have to help me in a little harmless piece of deceit."

"Of deceit?"

"Yes," he said, smiling down at her. "For instance, you must forget that my name is Villiers. It would not have done to give the people of this house my right name, dearest! Colonel Oliver may advertise in the evening papers."

"I see," she said, slowly. "And what is your name?" and she laughed softly.

"Our name is Newlands," he said.

She raised her eyes to his with a little troubled look that almost maddened him.

"I am so sorry," she said. "But if you say it is right—and yet I am afraid I shall let out the truth!"

"Do not do that!" he said, quickly. "You must listen to me, Joan! You must keep this little secret!"

"And now I must leave you for a little while, Joan," he added, with a reluctant sigh. "Heaven knows, I hate to do so, but there is no help for it. I shall not be gone long. You will scarcely miss me before I am back again."

"Ah, you will not be gone long, indeed, then," she murmured.

The loving retort, so characteristic of her, caused him to take her in his arms and kiss her passionately.

"I am going for your sake, Joan," he said. "I am going to see about our marriage. Not having been married before, and he laughed, "I am rather strange to the business. But I am going to make inquiries, and I will be back."

He ran down the stairs hurriedly, and told her all about it.

One drove up in a moment or two, and he hailed it and got in, telling the driver to drive to the lawyer's in Lincoln's Inn.

As he entered the cab, the door of the house he had just left was thrown open, and a young man, with golden hair and blue eyes, darted out, calling him by name. But the cab had started, and Lord Villiers was out of hearing.

The young fellow stood staring, with surprise and astonishment on his face; then he went inside, shut the door, and rang his bell so furiously the landlady came hurrying up breathless.

"Did you ring, my lord?" she said.

"Yes," said Lord Villiers, for it was he, and it was to the house in which he had rooms that Lord Villiers had brought Joan. "That gentleman who just left here, I saw him go out of the door. Has he been here?"

"Yes, my lord," said the landlady; "he has got rooms here—the second floor. His wife's upstairs."

"His wife?" said Lord Villiers, staring and dropping the match which he lighted to light his cigar.

"Yes, my lord, a beautiful young creature. One of the most beautiful young ladies I ever saw. He took the rooms for her this morning."

Lord Villiers started round for a minute or two, then he said:

"I ought to call on her, Mrs. Parsons. Her husband is an old friend of mine, you know. Strangest thing in the world his putting up at the same diggings. Yes, I'll make a morning call. Just send my man, will you, and I'll get into a decent coat. And look here, you can manage a little dinner for three, eh? I'll ask them to dinner."

"Certainly, my lord," assented Mrs. Parsons. "And if I may make so bold, I think the dear young thing will be glad to see you. She seems very lonely."

"Oh, I'll call," said Lord Villiers. "Send my man, please."

His valet came and assisted his master to change his coat, and Lord Villiers walked upstairs with Mrs. Parsons.

"Just say that it's a friend of her husband's, will you?" he said.

Mrs. Parsons knocked at the door, and Lord Villiers, who had scarcely moved since Lord Villiers went out, rose and said, "Come in."

"A friend of your husband's, ma'am," said Mrs. Parsons.

Lord Villiers entered in his free and easy way, but at sight of Joan, at the slim and graceful figure, at the beautiful face, with the large dark eyes, he felt, as he would have expressed it, "taken aback." In all his life he had never seen a more beautiful face, or one that in a moment moved him more powerfully.

"I beg your pardon," he said, modestly, "but I have only learned that you and your husband were just stopping here, and—ah—"

"I thought I would call," Joan regarded him with her serene smile.

"Will you sit down? Lord—my husband has gone out"—she color came and went—"but he will be back directly."

"I dare say you have heard him mention me," said Lord Villiers, sinking into an easy chair. "My name is Newlands."

There was a pause for a moment while Joan struggled for a decision; then she raised her pure eyes and met his gaze steadily.

"I told an untruth," she said. "My name is not Newlands, and it was Lord Stuart Villiers whom you saw leave the house."

Bertie drew a long breath; the calm, sweet dignity of the confession touched him.

"I thought so," he said; "but—of course, you were right to contradict me if you had any reason or wish to keep it secret, and I beg your pardon, Lady Villiers, for intruding," and he made a movement to the door, being far more embarrassed than Joan.

At the "Lady Villiers," Joan's face flushed, then grew pale again. She had told him so much that she could not let him go away believing another lie; besides, what did it matter? Her friends, Lord Villiers, and would help them rather than betray.

She was silent for a moment, then she said:

"I think I must tell you—you are a friend of Lord Villiers?"

Bertie nodded eagerly.

"I am not his wife, but I am to be. We are to be married to-day or to-morrow."

Lord Villiers stood for a moment as if he had not heard, then his face grew deadly pale, and a wild horror shone in his eyes, as they rested on her innocent face.

"No—not his wife!—and living here alone with him!" he almost gasped.

A slow crimson mantled to Joan's face but her honest eyes met his frankly, though with a vague trouble in them.

"Yes—for a few hours. Why not?" Bertie put his hand to his brow and wiped the great drops of sweat that had started upon it.

"So young, and beautiful, and innocent! Great heavens! what a friend Stuart Villiers must be!" he thought.

A groan burst from his lips, and he paced up the room and back again, scarcely conscious of what he was doing.

"When—when did you come?" he asked, and his voice was hoarse with the sudden emotion which the revelation of her position had aroused in him.

"An hour—an hour and a half ago," said Joan, trembling, she knew not why. "What is the matter?"

Bertie walked to the window and looked out; then he turned and looked at her again, and then back to the window.

"Don't—don't speak to me for a moment, please," he said, and his voice trembled.

"What you have told me has rather startled me. Forgive me if I seem strange. I will explain directly."

"Great heavens! how should he explain! And yet he must, he would save her."

CHAPTER XIV.

Bertie stood at the window with his brain in a whirl. He had never been placed in such an awkward, painful situation before.

Here was a beautiful woman, whose innocence was evident, placed in a position of deadly peril, and by a man whom he called a friend.

Though not in the same set, Lord Villiers knew Stuart Villiers' reputation; stories of his mad exploits, during the days of his conventionalities and moralities of life had been told in many a club smoking-room, and Bertie was convinced that this beautiful creature had been deceived, and that her young life would be wrecked by the man whom society regarded as one of its most dangerous members.

He turned from the window, with his handsome face as pale as his, his frank one eyes anxious and distressed.

"I am afraid I—I have alarmed you," he said, gently. "Will you sit down? I have something to say that I must say, and that you must hear, and I find it very difficult to say it."

There was something so gentle and noble, so full of consideration for her, in his grave, frank face, and his honest eyes, that Joan felt a certain reassurance, though she knew that there was still a vague cloud of trouble in his eyes.

"Have you known Lord Villiers long?" asked Bertie.

Joan flushed, as the question brought home to her the fact of their recent acquaintance.

"No, not very long; a few weeks," she faltered.

HE FOUND THEM NO FAITH CURE

But Dodd's Kidney Pills cleaned out W. F. Black's Sciatica.

He was in agony when a friend gave him a box. Now he recommends them to everybody.

Newcastle, N.B., Nov. 21.—(Special.)—In these cold fall days when the chill winds crystallize the uric acid in the blood and cause the pangs of Rheumatism and Sciatica to bring sleepless nights to many a home, a man's best friend is he who can tell his neighbor of a sure cure for his tortures. Such a friend is Wm. F. Black of this place.

He suffered from Sciatica and lame back. He was so bad that he could not lace his boots or turn in bed. Dodd's Kidney Pills cured him, and he wants all his neighbors to know of the cure.

"Yes," Mr. Black says, in an interview, "I was so bad with Sciatica and Lame Back that I couldn't lace my shoes or turn in bed, when a friend gave me about a third of a box of Dodd's Kidney Pills, I started taking them without much faith in their curative powers, and found them all they were recommended."

"Now I am recommending Dodd's Kidney Pills to all sufferers from Kidney Disease."

Dodd's Kidney Pills are no faith cure. They're a simple but sure cure for diseased kidneys.

ing. "How dare you come and tell me this? How dare you tell me that Lord Villiers, your friend, is so base and vile? I don't believe a word of it! I believe that you are out of your mind! Go!" and she pointed to the door.

Lord Villiers returned, and she pointed to the door again with her trembling hand.

Lord Villiers stood looking at her in despair. He had done his best and it was no use.

"Good-bye," he said, brokenly. "I—I have done all I could. If—if ever you should want a friend, you will know where to find one." He took out his card and laid it on the table. "Send me any time of the day or night, to-day, to-morrow, years to come, and I will come to your side at once. I cannot say or do any more. I must remain and see Stuart Villiers, but as you do not believe me now, you would not believe me while he was standing by your side to contradict me. No, I have failed! Good-bye, and heaven help you!"

Joan was touched, notwithstanding her anger, and she said, more softly:

"Good-bye."

Lord Villiers moved to the door; as he did so, he passed the window, and looked out, half-unconsciously; he saw Lord Villiers coming across the road. At sight of him a sudden idea occurred to him. It seemed a wild, far-fetched one, but in such mental extremities men catch at straws.

He turned swiftly.

"Give me one more chance," he exclaimed, earnestly. "There is a room there, and he pointed to the door leading to the dressing-room adjoining; 'go in there and listen. You shall hear and in there and you will believe. Go in quickly, and do not speak until he has gone.'"

Stoically, hesitatingly, she passed in, and Bertie, hurrying to the window, opened it and called to Lord Villiers, who stood on the steps.

"Halloo!" responded his lordship, looking up in surprise. "Is that you, Bertie? What on earth are you doing up there?"

"Never mind. Just come up, will you?" said Bertie, as lightly as he could, seeing that his heart was beating like a sledge hammer. "Come up here—second floor."

A minute afterward Lord Villiers was heard ascending.

"What on earth—" he began, but Lord Villiers cut in with a laugh that trembled and sounded hollow in Joan's ear, as she stood with the door slightly ajar, her body leaning against the framework.

(To be Continued.)

Shiloh's Cure

quickly stops coughs, cures colds, breaks the throat and bronchitis. 25 cents.

Pandora's Box

Pandora was a woman fair, and that is why I wish to tell you of her very much like this:

A receipt for apple pies. A receipt for a box of her eyes. Some other goodies for her eyes.

A novel by Correll. A pattern for a summer hat. A manner Chancery. Two switches and a tuffet for purposes of charity.

A list of Best Sellers. Some samples for a chiffon veil. A list of blue and white veils. A copy of a garden book. Called Fifty-seven Bous.

In blue and white veils. A list of blue and white veils. A copy of a garden book. Called Fifty-seven Bous.

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BROTHERS

(By Stuart B. Stone.)

By the flickering light of the brushwood fire, Clarence of Keokuk read the column headed "Vanity Fair."

Hamburg said the Shoshone Tough and the others listened with languid interest, interjecting here and there facetious remarks about the foibles of the rich.

"Here's a dame who wore a peck of green diamonds to a dogo prince's ball," observed Clarence of Keokuk. "Now one of them sparklers would 'a' kept this bunch in hay and oats for a year. Taint right—it ain't!"

The others chuckled their acquiescence and one brought crumbling fennel sticks to make a bonnier fire. Clarence of Keokuk turned again to the column of Vanity Fair, and as he read his scowl became deeper.

"Here's a lady who four hysopos in her name went and gave a pink ball and strung a yard of pearls around everybody's neck for favors. And there's the Shoshone Tough and me hungry for buckwheat cakes!"

"With 'hisses' put in the Shoshone Tough, licking his rough lips.

"I tell you, these aristocrats is a phony bunch!" persisted Clarence of Keokuk, glaring savagely at the others.

"What would you do if you was one of 'em?" asked the Tough. "You'd waste good coin on 'hysopos' teas and dinners to get educated ant eaters—you know you would!"

Clarence of Keokuk turned fiercely upon his accuser. "I would not," he said. "I'd spend it every cent for the brotherhood of man. I've some feelin' I have."

"Yes," interjected Hamburg, "along about dinner time."

Clarence of Keokuk became vehement. "Everything ought to be divided—everything," he declared, pointing his fist upon a hickory chip. "What's yours is mine, Tough. What's mine is yours. That's right, ain't it?"

The Tough took a long pull at his snuff pipe. "Oh, it's de right dope, all right," he agreed, "but taint human nature."

"I wish I had a million dollars," declared Clarence of Keokuk. "I'd prove it. I'd give it all away. I'd—great, sizin' aristocrat! Look at this!"

The bunch aroused and peered over the shoulder of the reader at the scrap of newspaper which he had just turned. They read:

"Keokuk, Ia., July 12.—A diligent effort is being made to discover the whereabouts of Clarence J. Richards, who disappeared from this city some years ago. Young Richards is the sole heir to an immense fortune left by the last survivor of the Welch branch of his family."

"Hu!" snorted the Shoshone Tough. "Here's six of us here. A sixth will do me fine as silk."

"Immense fortune!" repeated Clarence of Keokuk, in a daze. "I wuz dead wuz to the fact that I didn't belong wid dese chaps and de walkers."

"A sixth for me, too," chimed Hamburg. "Get! Clarence, when does we get our share?"

"In a million years," answered Clarence, dreamily. "I got to go down to the hotel and wash up."

The bunch arose. "We're your pals. We'll go wid you."

"Nary a go-nary a pal!" denied Clarence of Keokuk. "Do you think a gentleman wants to walk into town with a dog on a leash, look-step, hang-dog gang of musk like you chaps?"

With a snarl he turned and vanished into the dark. The gang relaxed by the blazing brushwood.

"Don't go to givin' any pet rhinoceros dinners, Clarence!" called Hamburg.

It was just two months later that Hamburg read in the Shoshone Tough, in the shade of a Rio Grande water tank, the story of a millionaire, whereat the great of honor was a laughing hyena and the souvenirs were cigar cases of dazzling gold studded with diamonds of Kimberley.

Origin of Windfall.

What precisely is the origin of the expression "a windfall" which Mr. Asquith, Lord Asquith and others use, each with an application of his own, in speaking of budget matters? An old encyclopedia explains that some families of the English nobility held their land on a tenure which forbade them to cut down trees, these being reserved as the property of the royal navy. But any tree which fell down without human assistance they might keep, so that a hurricane causing a great "windfall" was heartily welcome. It seems probable, however, that the expression was simpler in origin. Even an apple that fell to the ground without the trouble of picking it, and which a passerby might often snatch without feeling that he was a thief, would be a lucky "windfall."

London Chronicle.

The Way of It.

"We will never give up," said the South American military leader.

"Give up what?" asked the eddily practical man.

And after a moment of reflection the military leader candidly replied: "Anything we can get our hands on."—Washington Star.