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Buctouche, March 19, 1891.

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stirred a long untouched chord within his heart.

"Indeed!"
"Yes. I have been in the grounds over half an hour watching for your return." Her cheek flushed as she said this.
"Really! To what do I owe the honor of being waited for by Miss Pallis?" he demanded sarcastically.

"To this," she answered calmly, though her heart was beating furiously, and she was wondering how they could speak in pity of this grand handsome man, whose powerful arm looked well calculated to fell a lion or crush a foe. "Since you unhappily chanced to find me in the music-room last week, you have not once entered it. Now your mother has told me what a passion music is with you, and I have waited here to beg you not to keep away from the place in which you can pursue your favorite pastime on my account. I will not trespass again, believe me. I will never go there until after dinner, when Mrs. Desmond and your guests do. Please promise that you will resume your old habit of going there at any time of the day? I cannot tell you how miserable I have felt at the thought of having kept you away—I have been quite unhappy."

"And why should you be?" he asked quickly.

Something in the lovely frank eyes that gazed at him, without the slightest shadow of pity in their purple depths, quieted his angry feelings.

"You must go to the music-room whenever you wish to—at any time of the day and night at which you think fit."

"Oh, I could not," she expostulated with a little graceful gesture of dissent.

"Why not?"

"Because I would be keeping you away—debaring you from a great pleasure."

"I hardly think so. If I knew you would be there sometimes I should not mind giving place to you."

"Really?" she asked eagerly, her whole face instinct with hope.

"Yes," he answered gravely; "I am not quite a bear. You are my guest, and must enjoy every pleasure we can give you, including the free use of Blue Beard's special chamber, the use of which, however, will entail no such sad consequences on you as befell Fatima."

"And I shall not be keeping you away?"

"No."

"You promise that you will go just as often as you used to do?"

"I promise," he agreed. "But even if I did not go so often," he went on, "I should not miss it so now."

"No. May I ask why?"

"Certainly. One of my mother's lady friends has a remarkably fine voice, and, as I need hardly tell you, she sings every evening. I can hear her distinctly, my den being exactly over the music-room, and though I am extremely fond of playing myself, I infinitely prefer listening to her. Do you understand, Miss Pallis?"

"Yes, Mr. Desmond; I quite understand."

"And will you tell me who the fair songstress is?"

He gave her a keen glance as he put the question.

"Several of your mother's friends sing," she returned evasively.

"I know that," he retorted somewhat sharply. "I occasionally hear a squeak like a penny tin-whistle, or ear-splitting shrieks that I certainly do not care to listen to. The lady I allude to can sing. You must know who I mean."

"It is rather difficult," she said with considerable hesitation. "Can you not give me a better clue to discover the one you mean?"

"Yes," he replied, a ring of expected triumph in his tone; "I can. Who was it sang 'Good-bye' last night?"

"I did," she answered, while a deep blush suffused her face.

"I thought so," he exclaimed.

"Why?"

"Because you fenced about to such an extent before you would answer my question."

"Did I?"

"Certainly you did, and you know it," a touch of the old Adam breaking out.

"I—I—did not mean to."

"Perhaps not, but for all that you did. You have a lovely voice," he went on abruptly, looking at her steadily.

"Do you think so?" she murmured, in some confusion.

"I do; and you know how to use it. I thank you for the pleasure you have given me, though it was inadvertent."

"If it is a pleasure, Mr. Desmond," she said earnestly, "I will give it to you at any time you may desire."

"Thanks," he said curtly, retiring like a sensitive snail into his shell, for he guessed pity for his loneliness and misfortune prompted this speech; "I could not think of trespassing on your kindness or troubling you. I will content myself with listening when you perform for the edification of my mother's guests—your friends."

"As you wish," she said quietly, seeing that she had made a mistake, gone to far in her eagerness to help her kind friend in her plans about her son.

With a bow she passed on, and without a glance in her direction Romilly went up the narrow staircase leading to his rooms, and flinging himself into a chair gazed moodily into the fire, refusing to taste the tempting repast so invitingly spread

for him.

Nevertheless he listened attentively for the first notes from the room beneath, and did not move while the singing continued; and that night Miss Pallis sang long, ballad after ballad, and sang with such tenderness, passion, and pathos, that her hearers were entranced, and applauded loudly, not knowing that she was singing solely for one not in their midst, but sitting silent and lonely by himself in the sombre apartment overhead.

CHAPTER IV.

For some days after, Romilly Desmond fought off his longing to go down and relieve the burden of his soul at the organ, and then gave way, smothered his senseless pride, and going down, played, as was his wont, for hours.

He was a proficient. He took hold of the grand instrument as if it were a thing full of life, into which he breathed some of his own passion and force, some of the despairing energy of his storm-tossed weary soul. He made it answer to every throb of his being, and after a while lost himself in the grandeur of his own music, played himself into forgetfulness of his misery and wretchedness.

On he went—now playing a sacred theme, now a classical; then dashing into something wild, awful, weird, that rose and fell and throbbed like the wail of a human voice in dire agony, the sob of the storm-wind as it tears over land and sea, scattering desolation, death, and destruction all around, sounding like the roar of the ocean, as its mighty billows lash the foam-flecked sand.

He was not conscious of how long he played those wild uncanny airs, but he changed them abruptly, and struck the opening bars of an old Irish song—one of Moore's most charming melodies, "Believe me if all those endearing young charms;" and suddenly a voice, pure, sweet, clear as any lark's, took up the melody and sang the passionate, tender words with infinite pathos and power.

He did not turn, gave no sign that he heard even; only went on playing, though his whole frame thrilled with a long unknown rapture as he listened to the perfect notes, the faithful words:

Thou would still be adored, as this moment thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
All around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
And thy cheek unprofaned by a tear,
That the fervor and faith of a heart may be known,
To which time can but make thee more dear.

The heart that loves truly never forgets,
But truly loves on to the close
As the sunflower turns on its god when he sets
The same look which he turned when he rose.

As he struck the final note he turned and looked at her, his eyes travelling from the gold-tressed head to the little ruby velvet slipper casing her foot, and she shrank a little and turned pale as she met his piercing look.

"You sing that as though you meant it," he said at last, his eyes wandering back and resting on her face.

"Do I?" she murmured in some confusion.

"Yes, you do. But, of course, it's a mere trick, caught from a clever master; it is mere jargon to you."

"Don't say that!" she interrupted hurriedly; "I think they are most beautiful lines."

"Perfect, as far as metre and rhythm go," he responded sarcastically; "of course that is all you mean?"

"No," she said quietly; "I mean that they are beautiful in every way. The sentiment they express is noble."

"Ah, is it possible that you, who belong to the world of fashion and frivolity, can think so?"

"Quite possible," she returned, thinking how bitter he was against her sex and the world—that world composed of men and women of his own order, and what a splendid victory it would be to conquer and subdue this prejudice, to win his respect, his love!

"I should not have thought it."

"No?"

"No, indeed. One who has been as spoiled as you have been, who has received the amount of admiration, attention, and service homage that must have been your portion from the butterflies and coxcombs of your set, who love for a day, a week, a year at most, and then forget all about the object of their fleeting affections, should know little of true and lasting love such as Moore writes of, that will survive all changes, all shocks, and triumph over that deadly foe—Time."

"Perhaps so. Still, because circumstances oblige me to mix with the butterfly crowd, it is no reason that I should hold their tenets and opinions, share their creed of 'Love me to-day as well as you will forget me to-morrow in the society of another,' is it?"

"I don't know," he replied doubtfully. "It is hard to handle soot and not be blackened by it—to live with worldly folk and not become worldly also."

"Hard, yet not impossible."

"Do you mean to tell me," he went on, looking at her keenly, "that if you cared for a man you would cleave to him through all fortunes, good or bad, through all changes, all trials, all misfortunes and reverses?"

"I would," she answered steadily, meeting his glance frankly with the gaze of her great dark eyes.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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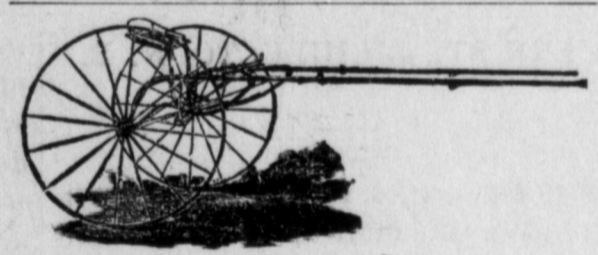
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Reserve for Unadjusted Losses, 254,523 43
Reserve for Re-insurance, 1,749,245 41
NET SURPLUS, 1,301,255 39

Total Assets, \$5,305,004 23
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New Assurance Written in 1889, 175,294,100
Premium Income in 1889, 25,337,522
Interest and Other Income, 5,035,755
Total Income, 30,242,785
Payments to Policy holders, 11,842,858

Assets, 107,150,309
Liabilities (4 per cent.), 84,329,235
Surplus, \$22,821,074

Ratio of Assets to Liabilities, 127 per cent.

Of the Life Assurance Companies of the world THE EQUITABLE has for ten years transacted the largest annual new business (in 1889, \$175,294,100); for ten years held the largest 4 per cent. surplus (December, 1889, \$22,821,074); for four years held the largest outstanding business (December, 1889, \$631,016,666); while its superior financial strength is shown by its high ratio of Assets to Liabilities, 127 per cent.

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