

Continued from Tenth Page.

An excessively grand affair it was to be. A famous chef from London had come down to assist; a cart-load of flowers had been bought in addition to those which Sir Gerald's own gardens and conservatories could produce.

One of the finest military bands was to play. And, altogether, it was to be a function such as would be talked about, and not soon forgotten.

'I am a little surprised at Gerald,' Lady Ruth thought. 'He used not to be fond of extravagance and display.'

It seemed as if this unspoken thought of hers lurked also in Lillian's breast, for one day, as she and Lady Ruth were sitting together, she said—

'Auntie, I wish you would persuade Gerald not to lavish so much money on me. It troubles me sometimes.'

Lady Ruth was on the best of terms with her nephew's wife; indeed, it might be said was genuinely and tenderly attached to her.

Lillian always addressed her as 'aunt,' and received, in the sweetest possible manner, any words of counsel which the elder lady, out of her riper experience, might have to give.

'What do you mean, my dear?' said Lady Ruth.

'Gerald is so extravagant. You must have noticed it. He insists on my getting the best and costliest of everything. He wouldn't even let me look at Madame Eloise's bill; and I am sure it was because he knew my dresses had cost so much, that I should be really alarmed to think of it.'

'Those Parisian dressmakers always do charge exorbitantly, my dear.'

'But it is not dresses alone I mean. Only think of the jewels he has bought me! I am sure they must have cost him thousands of pounds. And then this ball! Everything is to be on so very grand a scale. 'Spare no expense!' That is Gerald's command to everyone. It is as though he could not pour out his money lavishly enough. It troubles me,' repeated the youthful Lady Vere.

'My dear, your husband has a large income. You need have no fears on that account,' said Lady Ruth, gently.

'Oh, it is not that—not that at all!' cried Lillian, hurriedly. 'You don't quite understand!'

'What is it, then, my love?' questioned the elder lady.

The troubled look deepened on the face of Sir Gerald's wife.

A delicate rose flush mantled her cheek and then she said, evidently with an effort—

'It isn't that I fear he is exceeding his income, though even that ought to be thought of, of course; but—but—'

'But what, my dear?' asked Lady Ruth not a little curious to know where the root of the objection lay.

'It makes me feel, almost, as if he had bought me for his wife.'

The colour deepened in Lady Vere's face as she said this, in a low, hesitating voice.

Gentle Lady Ruth, who was thoroughly qualified to sympathize with the workings of a delicate mind, pressed her hand kindly.

'My dear Lillian, you must never have such thoughts as that.'

Lady Vere raised her beautiful eyes to her face, and said, in a firmer and more assured tone—

'At any rate, I wish I could make him understand I do not desire these things—do not greatly value them.'

'I am sure he does not value them.'

'Do you really think so? Oh, I wish I could be quite sure of it! I wonder, some times whether he surrounds me with all these luxuries because he thinks he has not my love, and hopes to buy it with them.'

'But, my dear, he has your love, and I am sure, he knows it. How could he help it? You'll forgive me for saying so, Lillian, but I never saw a more truly loving and devoted wife than you.'

'Do you really mean that? Oh, I am glad—very glad!'

A tender light broke in her eyes as she spoke.

Lady Ruth's assurance seemed to have thrilled her inmost heart with joy.

With a swift graceful movement, she left her chair, and came and knelt on the rug beside Lady Ruth.

'I will tell you what makes me so especially sensitive,' she said with a frank, sweet glance. 'When Gerald first asked me to marry him, I had to confess I did not love him. I liked him and esteemed him very much, but I did not love him and told him so. He said he would be content to begin with liking and esteem, feeling quite sure that, in the end love would come. And so.'

Coughs That Stick.

You don't seem to be able to throw them off. All the ordinary remedies you've tried don't touch them. The cough remedy for you is Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup. It loosens the phlegm, allays the irritation, heals and soothes the inflamed lung tissue.

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Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup.

Never fails to Cure.



she concluded, after a little pause—'I married him.'

'Married him without absolutely loving him, you mean, my dear?'

'Yes! Did I do wrong?'

And there was a world of wistfulness in the beautiful eyes upraised to Lady Ruth's. 'Certainly not, seeing you told him the truth frankly, and that you did feel for him a real liking and esteem. But, Lillian, my dear, may I ask you one question? Marriage has the power to change liking into love. What is your feeling towards Gerald now?'

A wonderful light overspread the face of Lady Vere.

She drooped her head. 'Now I love him with all my heart and soul!' she breathed, softly. 'Better, far better, than my life!'

The evening of the ball had come. Lady Vere, gowned in ivory white satin, veiled with net, stood at the entrance to the ball-room to receive her guests.

Everyone remarked on her imperial grace almost as much as on her great beauty. 'No wonder he married her!' said the men. 'A girl like that would have graced a coronet—ay, or even a crown!'

Her dress was trimmed with white roses, and her jewels were a superb parure of diamonds, which flashed like points of flame on her beautiful neck and arms.

Not one touch of colour was there about the whole costume—not so much as a thread of gold or a single rose leaf.

All was bridal whiteness. Perhaps nothing could have shown to such perfection the fairness of her complexion, the shimmer of her golden hair, or the dark, thrilling beauty of her eyes.

Among the earlier arrivals were the Muggletons, and with them came Kate Lisle.

She had left The Towers some weeks ago; but her aunt had been called to France to nurse a sick relative, and Kate, at V's urgently expressed wish, had come back to Hampshire.

It was quite possible she might spend the winter with her friends, the Muggletons. It so chanced that Lady Vere had never once seen Kate.

Before her marriage, she had gently persisted in keeping herself almost wholly retired from visitors.

Lady Ruth, appreciating the delicacy of her motives, had abstained from sending for her to the drawing-room when visitors were there, and thus it happened that, in spite of the friendly feeling existing between The Towers and Vivian Court, Lillian had never met Kate Lisle.

Kate had returned to Hampshire only three days ago—just in time for the ball.

She looked lovely in a gown of cream-colored silk, with a cluster of crimson flowers at her bosom.

Morewood was, of course, her escort; and very proud and happy he looked as he led her up to his friend's wife.

Lady Vere let her eyes rest for a moment on that fresh fair girl's beauty.

And, as she looked, a shade of sadness flitted over her own beautiful face.

Only for a moment did that shade remain.

Then she was murmuring a gentle word or two of special greeting to Kate, with a smile that was pure and bright as a sunbeam.

'How beautiful she is!' said Kate to her lover, with frank, generous enthusiasm, as they walked down the ball room. 'I don't wonder Sir Gerald fell in love with her.'

After a moment, she added, archly—

'I only wonder somebody else did not! Meaning me, dear?'

'Certainly!'

'Ah! I waited for you, you see. I had a sort of prescience you were coming; and, of course, it would have broken your heart if you'd found me already disposed of.'

Morewood spoke with that playful teasing in which a man likes to indulge when he is quite certain of the affection of his betrothed.

'But, seriously, John,' persisted Kate, 'I do wonder you didn't fall in love with her. If I'd been a man, I really don't think I could have helped it.'

'I was preserved for you! For which, if you are a properly-disposed young woman, you ought to be exceedingly grateful!' retorted Morewood, with a loving glance, though his tone was still a quizzical one.

He did not say how near he had been to falling in love with Lillian Delisle.

He had by no means forgotten this, but he did not choose to tell Kate of it.

It was not that he was not perfectly honourable and true-minded.

Never a more honourable man stepped than John Morewood, of Beech Royal.

But he was prudent.

He held it to be quite unnecessary, and unwise, to say things which would run the risk of waking even the tiniest flutter of jealousy in his Kate's heart.

If he had ever offered himself to Lillian, if he had even breathed so much as one word of love to her, it would have been different.

But, as it was, there was no need to mention that love which had sprung up so rapidly, and had been so quickly crushed.

The secret was confined to his own bosom, and in his own bosom it should remain—at any rate for the present.

Perhaps, at some future day, when he and Kate were playing at Darby and Joan together, when he would be sitting on one side of the fire, smoking a cigar, in dressing gown and slippers, while she would be sewing on the other—perhaps then he might tell her how in his breast there had been conceived the dawning of what might have been a mighty passion for Lillian Delisle, and how he had stood aside at the call of friendship, and had dug a grave for that dawning passion, and buried it, retaining nothing but a memory which must make him ever think very kindly of Sir Gerald's wife.

All this was to be told in the "some-day" but, assuredly, he did not mean to tell it now.

So he answered his love with quizzing

words and gay smiles, as he ever did when she asked him those tender questions which girls delight in, as to whether he had ever loved before.

Kate had the least mistrustful nature in the world, and was easily satisfied.

During the evening, Lady Vere came up to her, as she sat alone, in the conservatory, in the absence of her lover, who had gone to fetch her an ice.

'I am pleased to see you alone!' she said, softly. 'I so wanted to tell you how glad—how truly glad—I am to know you. There was no time, in all that crush. I have heard so much of you. And you are to be our neighbor soon? I do hope you will let me be your real friend, dear.'

There was the most thrilling earnestness in Lillian's sweet voice.

Her eyes, too, seconded her words' appeal.

One might alone have fancied she saw some dark shadow which threatened to cloud Kate's future, and longed to have power to save her from it.

Kate answered with grateful warmth.

She felt greatly drawn towards this beautiful Lady Vere, with the sweet voice and the wonderful dark eyes.

To her it seemed, as it had seemed to Sir Gerald when he first looked on Lillian Delisle, that those eyes were sorrow-haunted.

In spite of the sweetly-smiling lips and the sunny brow, she found herself wondering what grief had entered so early into the life of Lady Vere.

'Mr. Morewood is my husband's dear friend, as, of course, you know; and I think I may say—here, for a single moment, she pressed her hand, as if involuntarily, above her heart—'I think I may say he is my friend as well.'

At that moment Morewood came back. He looked delighted to see his betrothed conversing with Lady Vere on such evident terms of friendliness.

'Mr. Morewood, I am asking Miss Lisle to let us be real friends.'

'That is very good of you!'

And his frank eyes sparkled with grateful feeling as they looked down into hers.

The next moment, someone else entered the conservatory—the Duke of Oldacre, who had come to claim Lady Vere as his partner for the next dance.

Kate watched the graceful white-robed form as it passed through the banks of blossoms, on the arm of the duke.

'John,' she said, softly, 'I do like her so much. I believe I should love her very soon.'

CHAPTER XL.

LADY VERE ASKS A FAVOUR.

The acquaintance between Lady Vere and Kate, so auspiciously begun, ripened and developed rapidly.

Kate was constantly at Vivian Court. Sir Gerald sometimes told his young wife he felt himself growing quite jealous of Miss Lisle.

One afternoon, when Kate was at the Court, Sir Granville Grantly who chanced to be there also, began to speak of a clairvoyante, who was giving a remarkable exhibition of her powers in the neighbouring town.

'I went to her seance the other day,' he said, 'and what she did was really very remarkable. A Spanish woman, I should imagine she is. She calls herself Madame Santanello.'

Lillian, who was arranging some flowers in a vase, looked round with some eagerness.

'Do you say you saw her, Sir Granville? What was she like?'

'A very grand-looking woman, tall and stately, with a superb figure, and a handsome melancholy-looking countenance. She wore blue spectacles, which rather spoiled her appearance. Otherwise, she was a splendid-looking woman.'

'How old?' asked Sir Gerald.

'Oh, I'm not very good at guessing ladies' ages. Something between thirty and forty, I should think.'

Lady Vere turned to her flowers again.

There was a very thoughtful, and slightly troubled, look on her fair face as she bent over them.

'And what did she do?' queried Kate, eagerly. 'I have never seen a clairvoyante. I should like to try very much. I wonder whether Mr. Morewood would take me?'

'Kate, don't ask him. I mean, don't go.'

It was Lillian who thus spoke, in a singularly earnest and beseeching tone.

She left her flowers, and came and stood Kate's side, as though to urge her request with greater force.

Kate laughed.

'Why shouldn't I go? I'm sure I should like it ever so much.'

'Dear, if you knew what awful power those women sometimes have! They work infinite misery. I have known cases in which they have wrecked the happiness of whole lives.'

'Why, Lillian, how tragical you are! I verily believe you are in earnest!'

'I am in earnest!' cried Lady Vere.

And no one, who saw her then, could doubt it.

Earnestness sat on her flushing cheek, and sparkled in her eyes.

'My love, what do you know of clairvoyance?' asked Sir Gerald much impressed.

'What do I know? I have seen such misery—'

She broke off suddenly, adding, after a moment or two, in a slower, calmer voice; 'Someday I will tell you of a case I knew—the case of a young girl whose whole life was ruined by what she heard from the lips of a clairvoyante. You would understand then why I so greatly dread such people. But even the memory

of it is so painful to me, that I don't care to talk about it!'

'Lillian, I never saw you so affected before!' exclaimed Sir Gerald.

And, indeed, a mist of tears had started to her eyes.

She smiled, albeit a little sadly.

'I know I am foolishly impressionable,' she said; then she turned to Kate again. 'Kate, I wish you would promise me not to go. I have a presentiment—don't call me foolish—that harm would come of it!'

And Kate laughed, gaily.

'Can't you? Wouldn't it be harm if you heard some hateful statement or prophecy of evil, such as made your heart ache with fear and dread lest it should prove true? Don't smile, Kate. Such things have been.'

'Well, you see, if the evil had to come, I might as well know it. Besides, I don't believe in these people as you do. They are only clever cheats, are they not, Sir Gerald?'

'Upon my word, I don't know. They have certainly marvellous powers sometimes. And, you know, Shakespeare assures us there are more things in Heaven and earth than man dreams of in his philosophy.'

Sir Gerald, as has been said, had, by nature, a strong leaning towards the mysterious and metaphysical. Moreover, he had been impressed by the emotion shown by Lillian.

At this moment more visitors were announced, and the subject dropped.

But, later in the day, when Morewood chanced to be there, Lady Vere resumed it with him.

'Mr. Morewood, have you heard of this Madame Santanello?'

'Yes. A good many people have told me how clever she is.'

'You haven't seen her?'

'No. Sir Gerald wanted me to go with him the other day, but I couldn't manage it. I had an engagement.'

'Kate wishes very much to go.'

'Kate?'

'Yes. And I want you to promise me not to take her! Will you, Mr. Morewood?'

It was evening—after dinner.

Morewood had been dining at the Court, and was now sitting in the drawing room with Lady Vere and Lady Ruth, Sir Gerald having gone away to write an important letter.

Lady Ruth was sitting at one end of the room, half asleep over some wool-work.

Lady Vere was at the other end, at the pianoforte.

She had been playing a few soft chords, with Morewood standing behind her, admiring the grace and beauty of her fingers, as they wandered over the keys.

She had ceased playing when she began to speak about the clairvoyante, and now she left the piano stool, and seated herself on a tantelure near.

'I was trying to persuade Kate this afternoon, not to go,' she resumed. 'But, as you know, she is rather wilful, and opposition only makes her more determined to have her way.'

'Yes, I believe that is a little trick of hers! said the lover smiling. 'How well you know her, Lady Vere!'

'I know her well, because I love her well!' said Lillian, softly. 'Dear Kate! I ought to love her. She is so very good to me! With a smile, she added: 'But she is wilful. Because I have spoken against the clairvoyante, she is sure to want to go. If you would promise me not to go, I should feel sure she wouldn't either. Will you promise, Mr. Morewood?'

She leaned a little nearer to him, in her earnestness, the color deepening in her cheeks, her beautiful eyes shining.

The delicate-hued silks and filmy laces at her bosom were stirred a little by the quick beating of her heart.

'With pleasure, Lady Vere. I have no interest at all in such exhibitions, and I'm sure I've no wish to take Kate to see them.'

'Thank you—oh, thank you so much!'

And she leaned back in her chair, with an inexpressible look of relief on her fair face.

'But now,' he said, smiling, 'in return for my promise, do you mind telling me why you are so anxious Kate shouldn't go to this clairvoyante?'

A faint flush mantled her cheek.

'Will you promise not to think me very foolish?'

'Certainly I can promise that!' he said, with a frankly admiring glance.

'Well, then, I once knew a young girl, who was placed—in many respects—very similarly to how Kate is now. Her life seemed to promise unclouded happiness; but she went to a clairvoyante, and the woman prophesied such an awful thing as likely to come upon her, that her life was spoiled from that hour. She lived henceforward in awful dread.'

'And did the evil come to pass?'

'In part it did. I tremble when I think of the powers these mysterious people possess. It seems to me they could almost control Fate. I would not go near one for the world.'

An involuntary shudder thrilled her as she spoke.

Morewood, though gently sympathetic in outward manner, thought, privately, that she was a little too impressionable—as fine-natured women so often are.

Nevertheless, he could not help recalling that weird prophecy of Madge's.

Had she not possessed a wonderful knowledge of the future when she spoke of the baleful influence which Madeline Winter was likely to exercise on Gerald Vere?'

Might there not be some occult and mysterious power residing in these clairvoyantes which it passed the power of ordinary man to fathom?'

I shall be turning superstitious myself next,' he thought, half uneasily, half-amused, 'if I have much more to do with these mysteries.'

Aloud, he said, in that pleasant, manly fashion which made most women look up to him as a protector—

'Well you may rest assured Kate shall not consult the oracle with me. And for all her wilfulness and independent spirit,

I think she may be trusted not to go by herself.'

'Thank you, so much, Mr. Morewood. You are very good to me!' said Lillian, simply.

The next moment, Sir Gerald came back to the room, and the subject dropped.

To be Continued.

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To Impress the Neighbours.

A Lady who knows the working classes well informed the writer of one peculiar little weakness of a section of that portion of the community. 'There are some families,' she said, 'that care nothing about the comforts of the week provided they can make a show on Sundays. Their dearest ambition is to possess a relative owning at least a pony and trap, who will come to dinner on the Sabbath and leave the vehicle outside. This being so, I knew a man and his wife, owning a neat little turnout, who pretty well all the year around, had the Sunday's dinner free. Posing as relatives of people who desired to make their neighbours' mouths water, they drove out every Sunday and were welcomed as guests, the equivalent for such hospitality being found in the pleasing knowledge that the neighbours were certain to discuss the equipage kept standing at the door.'

ON A FRIEND'S RECOMMENDATION.

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'I was for a long time a great sufferer from heart trouble. I had palpitation and smothering accompanied by great weakness and painful spasms. I got very little relief from remedies, and doctors failed to give me real benefit. A friend of mine had used Dr. Agnew's Cure for the Heart, and it had been a great relief to her. I procured a bottle and it has proved a great blessing to me. I think it a great heart cure and heartily recommend it to all like sufferers. Mrs. Gampton, 46 Bishop Street, Toronto.'

Sound to Win.

The late Lord Glenig was fond of telling the following story of Mr. Lebouche, father of the first Lord Taunton, as illustrative of the enterprise necessary to the success of the poor but clever young man:

As a young man Lebouche was employed in the great mercantile house of Hope.

When it came to marry, having discreetly made his own choice of the lady, he applied to Sir Francis Baring for leave to pay his addresses to his daughter. Sir Francis demurred, as Lebouche, though a rising young man, had no fortune.

'But if Hope takes me into partnership?' said Lebouche.

'Oh yes, if Hope takes you into partnership.'

Lebouche then went to Hope, and intimated his wish for this arrangement. Hope in his turn demurred.

'But if I marry Baring's daughter?' said Lebouche.

'Oh, if you marry Baring's